By Sir Anthony Van Dyck (1599 – 1641)
Oil on canvas, about 1638
86 x 52 1/2 in. (218.4 x 133.4 cm)

Lord George Stuart (1618 – 42) was the son of the Duke of Lennox. He was brought up in France, inheriting the Seigneury of Aubigny in 1632. At the outbreak of civil war he joined King Charles I and was killed at Edgehill in 1642. He was described by Lord Clarendon in his ‘History of the Rebellion’ as ‘a gentleman of great hopes, of a gentle and winning disposition and of a very clear courage’.

This full-length portrait depicts Lord George Stuart standing in the guise of a shepherd, facing towards us, in the midst of a landscape. He is clothed in a vivid blue knee-length tunic and a contrasting warm yellow-brown cloak. The cloak is fastened on his right shoulder with a brooch of pearls.

Lord George Stuart leans in a languid pose with his right forearm resting on a rock, bearing the inscription ‘ME FIRMIOR AMOR ‘, ‘Love is stronger than I am’. The cloak, falling behind his right upper arm, is caught beneath his forearm and slips over the edge of the rock. His left arm and hand are...
concealed under the cloak. His left arm is bent, the elbow jutting out to our right, sweeping the material of the cloak across his chest, his hand gathering it up at his waist where it falls in elegant curving folds.

His right sleeve is full, pushed up to the elbow and opened to reveal the soft white material of his shirt. The skin of his forearm and hand are pale. He holds the metal-topped agricultural tool, called a spud, loosely against his body, the first two fingers extended downwards. The crook slants upwards across his body to our left forming a strong diagonal line in the composition. Lord George points his right foot towards us, drawing our attention to soft leather knee-length boots decorated with vertical rows of five blue ribbons. The hose are of the same warm colour as the cloak.

Viewed against a cloudy sky, Lord George’s youthful face is long and pale; brown heavily lidded eyes gaze into the distance. He wears a sparse moustache and his dark brown hair is long, curling to his shoulders.

Behind the rock on our left, the dark mass of a tree with a branch curving above Lord George’s head
acts as a framing device at the top of the painting. He stands on raised ground, the freely painted landscape falling away to distant mountains on our right. A tree in the middle distance partly obscured by his arm, bends to our right acting as a foil to the angle of his body. In the foreground on our right there is a dark bunch of thistles. Van Dyck shows his virtuosity in the portrayal of light as it falls on a small waterfall gushing at the bottom left edge of the painting and catches the delicate pink petals of a wild rose hanging above it.
Lord George Stuart 1618 – 42
The Capel Family

By Cornelius Johnson (1593 – 1661)
Oil on canvas, about 1640
63 x 102 in. (160 x 259.1 cm)

Arthur Capel (1604 – 49) was a devoted royalist who suffered for his loyalty, dying on the scaffold in the same year as Charles I.

Arthur Capel and his family are arranged across the foreground of this horizontal, three-quarter length portrait. He is seated towards our left, drawing his young son Charles against him, his right hand resting gently at his son’s waist. Charles gazes at us, his small hands crossed on his father’s right knee. At our extreme left, the eldest son, Arthur, later 1st Earl of Essex, engages us with large grey eyes. He was eight years old at the time the portrait was painted. He stands with his left hand on the arm of his father’s chair. His mother, Elizabeth, is seated next to her husband on our right, clasping her baby son, Henry on her lap. Henry stares directly at us as if suddenly distracted. His arms are stretched out to our right where his sister Mary looks up at him, offering a pink rose from her basket. Mary’s elder sister, Elizabeth, who is about
a head taller stands on the extreme right, her arms folded at her waist.

Their father, Arthur Capel, is turned to our right, his left hand posed limply over the arm of the chair. His grey eyes stare haughtily out of a narrow face. He has a prominent nose, a small neatly trimmed beard and a moustache turned up at the ends. He wears his dark brown hair fashionably long, curling to his shoulders. His doublet and breeches are of black silk; openings in the silk visible on his right sleeve and at the front of his doublet reveal a white shirt. His white collar, known as a ‘falling band’ is turned down, spreading out across the shoulders, edged with lace and tied with fine cords at the front. White cuffs are turned back, also edged with lace. His outfit is set off by green hose just visible at the bottom of the painting.

Elizabeth looks towards her husband with large grey eyes. She too has a prominent nose and her mouth is small and set. Her hair is dressed in the same style as her daughters, gathered in a knot at the back, with curls falling over her ears, teased out to frame her face. A golden ribbon on her hair is discernible on our right. Golden ribbon laces the
bodice of her vivid blue dress and is tied into bows at the neck and waist. She wears drop pearl earrings and a white kerchief collar, edged with scalloped lace, emphasising the sloping line from her neck to her shoulders. The collar is fastened in the centre with a small jewelled clasp. Her older children are also elaborately clothed like miniature adults: Mary and Elizabeth in gowns of golden silk, edged with white lace and decorated with pale blue ribbons. Arthur, wearing a doublet of pale pink, holds a black, widebrimmed hat in his right hand. The youngest boys are not yet breeched and are dressed in long white gowns. Henry’s coral teething ring hangs on a long red cord, tied around his waist. Coral was said to keep the illness at bay. All the children share a strong family resemblance with round faces, large grey eyes and solemn expressions.

In the background, Arthur Capel’s wide-brimmed hat lies on a table at the left edge of the painting. Two orange-red curtains are parted behind the adults, revealing a section of dark, panelled stone wall and the base of a column. Out of the window beyond Elizabeth and Mary there is the vista of the formal, geometric gardens at the family home,
Little Hadham, extending towards a distant landscape. Tiny details of fountains and urns on a balcony containing valuable tulips are picked out in silvery paint.
The Capel Family
George Fleetwood 1622(?) – after 1664

By Samuel Cooper (1609 – 1672)
Watercolour on vellum, 1647
2 1/4 x 1 3/4 in. (5.7 x 4.4 cm)

George Fleetwood (1622(?) – after 1664) was MP for Buckinghamshire in the Long Parliament of 1640. One of the commissioners for the trial of Charles I and a member of Cromwell’s House of Lords in 1657, he was condemned to death at the Restoration but was never executed.

This exquisite oval miniature, small enough to be held in the palm of a hand, depicts the head and shoulders of George Fleetwood. The artist gives us a three-quarter view of his face, turned to our left. His shoulder-length wavy hair is of a rich ginger-brown, eyebrows and thin moustache of the same colour though lighter in tone. The warm colour of Fleetwood’s hair is emphasised by a black background. A strong straight nose gives definition to the rounded face, the pale skin delicately modelled. His expression is serious; blue eyes look sharply to our right, pale lips are unsmiling.

A white collar falls over the neck of dark glinting armour, the light portrayed with tiny dabs of white
paint. Golden rivet points are visible across the breast plate and pauldrons protecting the shoulders.

Half way up near the left edge of the tiny picture are the artist’s initials S C and the date 1647 written in gold paint. The miniature is framed with a thin edge of gold. The gold frame is twisted to resemble loops of ribbon at the top, enamelled in a turquoise blue and decorated with curves of a darker blue that have worn away in places. The whole of the back of the frame is also of a rich turquoise blue enamel.
George Fleetwood 1622(?) – after 1664
George Fleetwood 1622(?) – after 1664
The future Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell (1599 – 1658), is shown in armour. The light catches his arm, crooked to hold his commander’s baton before him. It also shines on the armour on his neck and right hip which are turned towards the viewer. His face is stern and serious. An unnamed boy servant, dressed in russet-coloured clothes, ties a pale blue sash around Cromwell’s elbow.

Cromwell is shown bareheaded, with slightly thinning shoulder-length hair and a small moustache. Unlike most seventeenth-century portraits, it is not a particularly flattering representation, although the artist, Robert Walker, has somewhat softened Cromwell’s features. A deep vertical wrinkle is visible above Cromwell’s nose and beside it are lumps in his skin.

The background is sea and sky with white and grey clouds. Behind Cromwell and the boy is a tree.
By Daniel Mytens (1590 – 1648?)
Oil on canvas, 1631
85 x 53 in. (215.9 x 134.6 cm)

The youngest son of James I and Anne of Denmark, Charles I (1600 – 49) came to the throne in 1625. He inherited his father’s belief in the divine right of kings and his mother’s interest in the visual arts. He became the greatest of all British royal art patrons and collectors, but his dismissal of Parliament and personal rule led the country to civil war. He was defeated and tried on the charge that he ‘traitorously and maliciously reined war against the present parliament and the people therein represented’, and he was executed outside the banqueting house, Whitehall, on 30 January 1649.

In this full-length portrait, Charles I aged 31 stands facing to our left, right foot turned outwards, left foot towards us. Wearing beige gauntlets, his right hand is stretched out, the palm resting on top of a walking stick. His left wrist is positioned across the hilt of a sword, drawing it against his hip.

We are given a three-quarter view of his face, recognisable from many paintings. Large heavily-
lidded dark eyes convey a sense of vulnerability. A pointed beard emphasises a rather long thin face, framed by dark wavy hair, parted down the centre and falling to his shoulders. A full moustache is brushed upwards at the ends in the fashionable style of the time. His forehead, pale above black eye-brows is narrow. There is a blush of pink on his cheeks. A quite feminine face is given firmness by a well defined nose. The jaw line and beard are accentuated by a brilliant white lace ‘falling’ collar.

The king’s costume is of a mid-grey material, richly decorated with silver braid. Golden lining is revealed where there are vertical slashes on the breast and sleeves of the doublet. A bright blue shoulder belt from which the sword is suspended is visible across the chest. The waistline of the doublet is pointed; the short skirt of the doublet formed by overlapping sections of material, known as tabs. The two tabs at the front come together to form a point. The breeches are fairly full and are gathered in just above the knee.

They are attached to the doublet by many lengths of lace, tipped with metal points passing through eyelets concealed by braid at the waist. They form a
highly decorative feature at the waist and at the lower edges of the breeches. His boots are of soft beige leather to match the gloves. They are folded down to mid-calf and turned up to form cuffs. The cool tones of the costume are set off by a rich red velvet cloth over a table to the king’s right and two red curtains, one falling behind the table, the other, looped up at the top right corner of the painting. On the table are the symbols of office: at the edge of the painting, a golden orb, next to it a crown encrusted with jewels including rubies and pearls. Lying diagonally in front is the sceptre.

Behind the king’s left shoulder there is a column standing on a stone balustrade and beyond we glimpse three of his subjects, tiny in the distance at the edge of the sea.
King Charles I 1600 – 49
King Charles I 1600 – 49
By an unknown artist, background by Hendrik van Steenwyck (about 1580 – 1649)
Oil on canvas, about 1635
85 x 53 1/4 in. (215.9 x 135.2 cm)

The youngest daughter of Henry IV of France and Marie de Médicis, Henrietta Maria (1609 – 69) married Charles I in 1625 when she was sixteen. She gave the king loyal and loving support, but her Catholicism alienated many of her English subjects. She contributed much practical assistance during the civil war by personally bringing munitions from France and pawning her jewellery to raise funds.

In this full-length portrait, Henrietta Maria at the age of twenty-six stands facing to our right, her head turned towards us. She is positioned against and near the edge of a shadowy stone wall, a column to her right. The three-quarter view of her face is a pale oval shape framed with teased-out black curls. Her large dark eyes engage with us as if inviting us to accompany her; the fan in her left hand indicates the edge of the wall where the background opens out to distant green houses and a colonnade beneath a silvery grey sky.
Henrietta Maria is richly dressed in a gown of dark green silk with a low-cut square neckline, revealing the creamy skin of her neck and chest. She is adorned from the delicate coronet fastened on the back of her hair to the hem of her skirt with thousands of gleaming pearls. Her hair, arranged in curls, covers her ears but a large drop pearl earring is visible on the right side of her face. A single strand of pearls encircles her throat. A drop pearl suspended at the front gown.

Pearls in swirling shapes form a pattern down the front of her gown that is repeated in the sleeves. The sleeves are full, edged at the top with scalloped lace and finished below the elbow with white lawn, stiffened into many points to form elaborate cuffs. Her fingers are long and white against the silk of her skirt. Warm touches of red in the fan held in her left hand, a small bow at her waist and a thin bracelet on her right arm enliven the dark green of her gown.

A contemporary account describes her as a short woman, perched on a chair with long arms, irregular shoulders and teeth protruding from her mouth like a fence. None of these features however are
evident in this elegant portrait.
Henrietta Maria 1609 – 69
Henrietta Maria 1609 – 69
Venetia, Lady Digby 1600 – 33

By Sir Anthony Van Dyck (1599 – 1641)
Oil on canvas, about 1633-4
39 3/4 x 31 1/2 in. (101.1 x 80.2 cm)

Venetia Stanley (1600 – 33), was noted for her beauty and intelligence and was associated with scandal.

She became Lady Digby when she married the diplomat and author, Sir Kenelm Digby. The scandal was that she had been the mistress of Edward Sackville, 4th Earl of Dorset while betrothed to Digby, who was abroad at the time. The tale of romance with Digby and the restoration of Venetia’s virtue are told in her husband’s memoirs, ‘Loose Fantasies’. Digby’s family opposed the marriage but he insisted that ‘A wise man and lusty could make an honest woman out of a brothel house’. After nine years of marriage, she died suddenly at the age of thirty-five quite possibly after drinking her husband’s ‘viper wine’, a concoction reputed to preserve beauty. Digby mourned her loss extravagantly. Shortly after the death of Venetia, Kenelm Digby commissioned this portrait from his friend Van Dyck, and it was part of his extravagant mourning. Venetia
Digby sits full length and right of centre. Wearing a classical style dress, she sits in a wooded landscape, leaning her left arm on a large rectangular stone. This may well be a symbol for Christ, the cornerstone. Venetia looks thoughtfully into the light and towards her right. Her high forehead and ivory complexion are framed by delicate ringlets of golden brown hair in a 1630’s style and large pearl earrings. A long perfectly straight nose above a perfectly proportioned bow mouth gives her the appearance of an idealised classical beauty.

Around her neck is a pearl necklace. Over the loose folds of her white dress she wears a dark green robe clasped with a jewelled golden cord across her breast. A red satin shawl lies across her lap, twining round beneath her ample right arm and passing behind her to reappear over her left shoulder where it folds around her arm and covers the edge of the rock. Within this fold a dove rests under her hand while in her lap her right hand holds a serpent. These details refer to the Gospel of Matthew, where Christ says ‘Behold I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. So be wise as serpents and innocent as doves’. 
Three naked winged babies, classical putti, hover overhead and are ready to crown her with a laurel wreath to celebrate her triumph in virtue. Under her right foot Cupid lies asleep with his bow and arrows on the ground. Crouching behind Cupid and with his body facing the extreme left of the picture is a muscular male figure loosely wrapped with animal hide. His wrists are tied in front of him. On the back of his head a second face looks up at Venetia. This figure represents two-faced Deceit. The evils of passion and deceit lie vanquished by the triumph of Venetia’s prudence and chastity.
William Harvey (1578 – 1657), discovered the circulation of the blood and the role of the heart in propelling it around the body. He studied in Padua for five years under Fabricius the celebrated anatomist, who was already studying the valves of the veins. He gained his own insights from both an elaborate series of dissections, and also by careful studies of the motion of the heart and blood in a wide range of living animals. Such precise observations set a standard for future biological research.

Harvey published his ‘Anatomical Essay on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals’ in 1628. This explained the experimental method and gave an accurate account of the mechanism of the circulatory system. Working without a microscope he omitted the role played by the capillaries. He did, however, propose their existence. Harvey also conducted work in embryology and argued that life arose from the egg and was not spontaneously
generated as previously thought. He was elected a fellow of the College of Physicians in 1607 and appointed physician to St Bartholomew's Hospital. Recognised as one of the most distinguished doctors in England, he was appointed physician to King James I, whom he attended in his last illness, and to his son, Charles I.

This portrait of William Harvey at about the age of fifty is an image of sober simplicity. It shows Harvey’s head, a white pleated ruff around his neck, and a simple black garment covering his upper body. He faces slightly towards his right and the direction of the light, in front of a dark brown background within an oval canvas. His brown hair, receding from a wide brow, is brushed back behind his small ears. His pale face is narrow and angular and his pointed short beard adds to this effect. He looks at you with heavily lidded brown eyes recessed under angular eyebrows. Each eyebrow has a shallow arrow shape raised in the middle. His eyes observe you as if looking down from a greater height. A heavy greying moustache bridges his upper lip and spans his lower face. The name ‘Doctor William Harvey’ is inscribed in italic handwriting on the background alongside his left ear.
William Harvey 1578 – 1657
By Mary Beale (1633 – 99)
Oil on canvas, about 1665
43 x 34 1/2 in. (109.2 x 87.6 cm)

Mary Beale (1633 – 99), was a portrait painter working professionally from the mid-1650s. Born Mary Craddock, the daughter of a Suffolk clergyman and Puritan, she was one of very few women artists working in England during the seventeenth century. In 1652 she married Charles Beale, an amateur painter, and by 1654 or thereabouts the family were in London where Mary embarked upon a semiprofessional career as a portrait painter. In 1666 she established a studio and became friends with Sir Peter Lely, the leading portrait painter of the day. Her husband Charles became her assistant, mixing her paints and keeping the books. Mary Beale worked steadily until she died aged sixty-six and is buried at St James’s, Piccadilly.

In this self-portrait Mary Beale appears three-quarter length, seated to the left, and facing slightly to her right so that her left cheek is nearest. She has long slightly plump face and the suggestion of a double chin. Thick curling medium brown hair surrounds...
her face, while much of it is gathered high at the back of her head with one long tress falling on her left shoulder. Both thick brown eyebrows taper to fine line as they make long shallow arches away from her straight nose. Mary Beale looks at you with gentle and serious grey-green eyes.

Her greyish brown dress is cut low on the shoulders. A white underdress shows at the neck and under the short sleeves. These are gathered up and pinned beneath the shoulder so that her arms are exposed. Red drapery lies over her lap and passes under her right arm before twining around behind her body to reappear over her left shoulder. While her left hand rests on the red cloth as it lies on her left thigh, her right hand rests on an unframed canvas.

The canvas shows an oil sketch of two young boys’ heads with long flowing unkempt hair and pale complexions. The youngest, nearest to her, looks about six years old and the other might be twelve. These are her sons Bartholomew and Charles, the youngest. Charles later became a painter. Above the sketch an artist’s palette hangs prominently on the wall at the extreme left of the picture. The palette and canvas affirm both her work as an artist and her
status as a mother.
Mary Beale 1633 – 99
Mary Beale 1633 – 99
John Evelyn (1620 – 1706), was a writer, government official, and a Royalist. Evelyn corresponded with Charles II and wrote ‘An Apology for the Royal Party’ in 1659. After the Restoration, in 1660, Evelyn held many governmental positions. He was a founder-member of the Royal Society, and is thought to have suggested the title. Evelyn wrote more than 30 volumes on a variety of subjects, including art, architecture, politics, gardening, forestry, engraving, numismatics, air pollution, and refrigeration. He is best known, however, for his diary, which covered the years 1640 to 1706 and was first published in 1818.

Evelyn’s diary provides an account of the principal events of the seventeenth century as well as penetrating character studies of important public figures. Among his other work of importance is ‘Sylva, or Discourse on Forest Trees’, 1664, which contained a plea for reforestation at a time when English industry was depleting forest reserves. He
recorded in his diary that he sat for the painter Robert Walker on July 1st 1648 and that his portrait was intended to accompany a treatise on marriage that he had written for his thirteen-year-old wife Mary Browne.

John Evelyn appears in this head and shoulders portrait in the traditional pose of melancholy, his clothes awry. Evelyn looks like a mournful philosopher or poet at a table, leaning his head heavily on his right hand and propped up by his right elbow. He leans from the far side onto a tablecloth which crosses the base of the picture.

Above his head there is a stone wall to the left, a wide architectural column bearing a Greek inscription at the centre, and a dark curtain to the right. Evelyn wears a white open neck shirt with sprawling loose sleeves, he leans the weight of his head on his right elbow. He is wrapped in a dark robe that passes under his right arm but covers his left shoulder and folds around his left upper arm. Green-grey eyes look wistfully towards us while a bushy mane of shoulder length dark hair surrounds his face. Dark eyebrows arch into a very long thin straight nose. Otherwise cleanshaven, there is a
shadow of a moustache on his top lip while his sad bow mouth adds to his forlorn appearance.

His left forearm and hand rest horizontally on a skull at the centre of the tablecloth. From underneath the skull a piece of paper appears, lying on the table to the left of the skull. On it is a quotation from Seneca, in Latin, advising the reader, ‘Be ready for death when it comes’. The Greek motto above signifies ‘Repentance is the beginning of all wisdom’.

Evelyn, aged twenty-seven, hadn’t intended such a solemn message for his young wife. Alterations were made to the painting years later, presumably at Evelyn’s instructions. Originally the portrait showed him holding a miniature or medal of his wife. The gold chain to which it was attached is still visible around his neck, hanging down behind the later addition of the skull. The mood of the picture has been changed from the image of a young man lamenting separation from his wife to that of a young man preoccupied with death.
John Evelyn 1620 – 1706
John Milton 1608 – 74

By an unknown artist
Oil on canvas, feigned oval, about 1629
23 1/2 x 19 in. (59.7 x 48.3 cm)

John Milton (1608–74), is regarded as one of the greatest English poets and a master of political pamphleteering. He was forceful and idealistic, and served Cromwell as Latin Secretary, writing pamphlets to justify the execution of Charles I. The first pamphlet, ‘The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates’ (1649), asserted the rights of the people against tyrants: ‘No man’, he wrote, ‘who knows aught, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were born free’. Milton also made suggestions for government reform and argued against a professional clergy and in favour of allowing people to interpret scripture according to their own conscience.

He experienced both bereavement and imprisonment. In 1652 his young first wife died after a short and troubled marriage. In the same year at the age of forty-four he lost his sight. His second wife and her child died in 1658 after two years of marriage and upon the restoration of Charles II in
1660 he was arrested, fined and imprisoned for his anti-Royalist activities. The tone of his work often reflects the feeling of a life filled with adversity.

Milton is best known for his epic poetry, ‘Paradise Lost’, ‘Paradise Regained’ and ‘Samson Agonistes’. His most famous prose work is ‘Areopagitica’, an impassioned plea for freedom of the press, in which he demands ‘the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience’.

This portrait creates an image of the poet at odds with one created by a knowledge of his later life and work. Here John Milton is seen as a fresh-faced young man in a head-and-shoulders portrait. He faces slightly to the right. A white pleated circular ruff high under his chin hangs down around his neck. Surrounded by long brown hair, covering his ears, his oval face looks soft and his large dark eyes and full lips make him look feminine. He has pale arching brows and looks at you directly. The rest of the picture is dark: he wears a black doublet against a dark brown background in an oval shape.

The picture has been reduced in size and at one time the portrait was within a complete oval on a rectangular canvas. Now it has been cropped so
that arcs appear across the corners of the canvas.

This portrait is probably that described by John Aubrey: ‘His widow has his picture drawne very well and like when a Cambridge schollar. He was so faire that they called him the Lady of Christ’s College…’. His looks troubled Milton and two years after the portrait was made, at the age of twenty-three, he wrote about the contrast between his youthful looks and his inner maturity: ‘Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth/ That I to manhood am approached so near/ And inward ripeness doth much less appear’.
John Milton 1608 – 74
The Family of Sir Robert Vyner

By John Michael Wright (1617 – 94)
Oil on canvas, 1673
57 x 77 in. (144.8 x 195.6 cm)

Sir Robert Vyner (1631 – 88), first Baronet and Lord Mayor of London was a wealthy banker and goldsmith. He made the regalia for the coronation of Charles II in 1661. At the time this portrait was painted the loans Vyner had made to the government had not been repaid; a decade later he was bankrupt. He died broken-hearted two months after the death of his son.

In this intimate three-quarter-length portrait, Sir Robert Vyner is depicted with his wife Mary and their two children in the garden of their house, Swakeleys in Middlesex. Lord and Lady Vyner are seated next to each other. On the left is Bridget Hyde, aged eleven, Lady Vyner’s daughter by her first marriage to Sir Thomas Hyde. Bridget stands beside her mother. Charles Vyner, aged about seven, is positioned between his parents, his father to his left.

Bridget Hyde’s dark brown hair, framing a pale oval face, is parted in the centre, full at the sides and
gathered at the back, a few tendrils arranged to fall across her shoulders. She is dressed in the style of the time as a miniature adult; her gown is of silvery-blue silk with a low-neck line and full short sleeves drawn into lace ruffles. Bridget’s head is tilted slightly to our left and she gazes at us with a candid expression. She holds the edge of an apron filled with flowers in her left hand. With her right hand she offers two white flowers to her brother.

The portrait is animated by the relationship between the two children. Charles Vyner leans against his mother. Reaching out his right arm to receive the flowers, he looks towards his sister with a playful expression, his small hand resting on Lady Vyner’s right forearm. She steadies her son with her right hand placed gently against his chest. A black and white spaniel viewed from the side looks up at Charles as he strokes its head.

Charles Vyner is dressed in a long coat of mid-blue-grey brocade decorated with yellow ribbons on the sleeves and at the neck above a lace cravat. The coat has buttons all the way down the front but is open to reveal a white shirt. A shoulder belt falls across his chest, the hilt of a sword visible on his
left side. Lady Vyner is turned slightly to her left. She has a strong face and the intelligent expression in her dark eyes engages with us. Her dark brown hair is dressed with full curls over the ears, two ringlets brought forward onto her shoulders. The décolletage is low and circular, exposing pale skin, adorned at the throat with a string of pearls. The dress is partly covered; a loose robe of a similar shade to Bridget's gown is fastened at the front, falling away to reveal a red skirt patterned with silver foliage and stripes of silver and dark brown. She raises her left hand above Charles’s head in a graceful gesture to draw back a gauzy scarf from her shoulder.

Sir Robert Vyner is dressed with studied nonchalance as if ready to greet guests at the early morning levée. He wears a patterned dressing gown of brown silk over a white shirt with full sleeves, a white cravat tied at the neck. A dark brown full-bottomed wig frames a florid face with a square jaw. Dark eyebrows are arched over heavily lidded eyes. His nose is narrow, lips thin and sensuous. His moustache is small and neatly trimmed. The fingers of his right hand are curled over the edge of the armrest as his left palm is turned upwards,
forefinger pointing to flowers visible at the right edge of the painting.

A red curtain, drawn back, borders the painting at the left edge, a tassel hanging over Bridget’s head. Behind Lady Vyner and her daughter is the base of a stone column. In the background we glimpse the shadowy stone architecture of the garden: a balustrade to the right with a statue beyond and an elaborate gateway between Robert Vyner and his wife. In the distance there are dark trees beneath a cloudy sky, a gleam of sunlight along the horizon indicating early morning.
The Family of Sir Robert Vyner
The Family of Sir Robert Vyner
Catherine of Braganza 1638 – 1705

By or after Dirk Stoop (about 1610 – about 1685)
Oil on canvas, about 1660-1
48 1/2 x 39 1/2 in. (123.2 x 100.3 cm)

Catherine (1638 – 1705), the Roman Catholic queen of Charles II, came to England in 1662. She was the daughter of John, Duke of Braganza, afterwards King of Portugal. Shy, solemn and pious, she was devoted to Charles, who although he hurt her by his infidelities, was genuinely attached to her.

This is a three-quarter-length portrait of Catherine of Braganza at the age of about twenty-two, before she came to England. She stands facing us, with her head turned partially to her right.

Catherine of Braganza has a pale round face, slightly retroussé nose, rosebud mouth and cheeks blushed red, giving her a sweet, child-like appearance. Dark almondshaped eyes with heavy eyelids are widely set. Her shoulder-length black hair is stiffly crimped at the sides. A glossy lock curves across a broad forehead and is fastened at the back of the head with a white ribbon, just visible to our right. She is dressed in the Portuguese court style with a wide farthingale skirt flattened at the
This style was deeply unfashionable and mocked at the English court. King Charles II is known to have said that they had brought him a bat instead of a woman to marry. The costume is sombre in contrasting black and white with a bodice and full sleeves of rich black velvet. A very broad white lace collar spreads across her shoulders. The sleeves have vertical slashes, revealing soft white material beneath. The cuffs are of stiffened white lace turned back to form wide cone shapes. A black cloak attached under the collar slips over the edge of the skirt on her left and is brought forward under her right arm to fall over the front of the skirt. Half of the skirt of shimmering white silk decorated with vertical strips of scalloped silvery lace, is revealed at the front.

Her pale hands are arranged elegantly to display long, tapering fingers; the right lying on top of the cloak, the left holding a black glove against the white silk of the skirt.

A red curtain frames the portrait on our left, partially concealing a column at the edge of a window. The dark foliage of a tree spreads out behind Catherine’s head and shoulders. A glimmer of light
in a grey cloudy sky is visible above a distant hill.
King Charles II 1630 – 85

Attributed to Thomas Hawker (died 1722)
Oil on canvas, about 1680
89 1/4 x 53 3/8 in. (226.7 x 135.6 cm)

Charles II reigned from 1660 – 85. After the execution of his father, Charles II (1630 – 85) spent his youth in exile on the continent, but remained resourceful and optimistic. He was restored to the throne in 1660, amid great rejoicing, but with limited powers. He became adept at outmanoeuvring the opposition to his policies, particularly in matters of religion and foreign affairs. His brilliant court was notorious for its easy-going morality; the king had fourteen children by various mistresses, but no legitimate heir. He was succeeded to the throne by his brother James.

This portrait of the king was painted near the end of his life and is not particularly flattering. He is depicted full-length, seated, leaning back on an elaborately decorated throne in a pose that could be interpreted as dissolute. Short petticoat breeches reveal shapely legs clad in tight hose of white silk with garters below the knees.
His feet in light beige leather shoes with high tongues and broad ribbons are planted apart on a golden cloth that spills from an urn at the bottom right of the painting. The knuckles of Charles's left hand are pressed against his upper thigh. The slack fingers of his right hand hold a golden sceptre. Carved golden angels on the back of the throne raise a crown above the king's head.

Charles's face, turned to our left, is coarse; deep lines are visible between the nose and corners of the mouth. His lips are set in a sulky pout but his left eyebrow, slightly raised, conveys a sardonic knowingness. A dark full-bottomed wig hangs over his chest on either side of a white lace cravat. His costume gives an overall impression of extravagant curves and flourishes. The most striking feature is a cloak of intense blue with a shimmering silver lining.

The cloak falls behind his left arm; the fabric, brought across the back of his body, is arranged over the right knee and drops to the ground, spreading to the edge of the painting on the left in elaborate folds. His right arm emerges from a large oval shaped sleeve in the cloak, the material turned back to expose the silver lining. The full sleeves of a
white shirt are visible emanating from the shorter sleeves of a coat edged with silvery lace ruffles. An ornate red shoulder sash from which a sword is suspended, crosses over the king’s body to his left and is tied at the waist, the hilt of the sword just visible behind his left thigh.

A looped red curtain frames the portrait at the top left. Shadowy stone architecture is discernible in the background and there is a glimpse of a garden through an archway at the right edge of the painting.
King Charles II 1630 – 85
King Charles II 1630 – 85
Louise de Kéroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth
1649 – 1734

By Pierre Mignard (1612 – 95)
Oil on canvas, 1682
47 1/2 x 37 1/2 in. (120.7 x 95.3 cm)

This alluring portrait shows one of Charles II’s mistresses. Louise de Kéroualle (1649 – 1734) has rosy cheeks and full, curly dark hair fashionably styled with one long curl on her right shoulder. She is sitting, turned slightly to her right wearing a cloth of gold dress with deep blue sleeves. A white shawl is loosely draped across her right shoulder. On her left shoulder is a round red ruby with a large teardrop pearl hanging from it. The Duchess also wears a similarly shaped pearl earring.

The Duchess’s right arm circles a young black servant girl in a dark green gown. At her neck is a string of pearls. She leans over her mistress’s lap, presenting two gifts; in her left hand are two branches of smooth red coral, in her extended right hand she holds a large shell filled with white pearls.

The scene is framed along the top by a red curtain with a pendant tassel and on the right is a white rose bush.
Louise de Kéroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth
1649 – 1734
Louise de Kéroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth
1649 – 1734
Samuel Pepys 1633 – 1703

By John Hayls (1600? – 79)
Oil on canvas, 1666
29 3/4 x 24 3/4 in. (75.6 x 62.9 cm)

Famous for his Diary, Pepys (1633 – 1703) was an important naval administrator, and was appointed Clerk of the Acts and Clerk of the Privy Seal in 1660, Surveyor-General of the Victualling in 1665 and Secretary of the Admiralty in 1673. He fell from favour in 1679 and again in 1689, and spent brief periods in the Tower of London. His Diary, a unique social document, written in shorthand, was begun on 1 January 1660 and ends in 1669 when Pepys believed, mistakenly, that he was going blind.

Samuel Pepys emerges from a very dark shadowy background. The portrait is half-length; with his body turned to our left, he looks at us over his left shoulder. He wrote on 17 March 1666 ‘This day I began to sit (to Hayls), and he will make me, I think a very fine picture. He promises it shall be as good as my wife’s and I sit to have it full of shadows and so almost break my neck looking over my shoulders to make the posture for him to work by’.
The left side of his round florid face and long dark brown curly wig are in shadow. Light falls across a broad nose and illuminates a full bottom lip. The top lip is curved and the mouth slightly open as if he is about to engage in conversation. The face is animated by strong highlights in the large dark eyes but a deep line between the eyebrows suggests an anxious or pained expression.

Pepys is dressed in a loose Indian gown of yellow-brown silk hired for the occasion. The light on the folds in the sleeves and front of the gown is broadly painted. A white cravat and shirt cuff are brilliantly lit. In his left hand he holds a sheet of music, cut off at the top corner by the edge of the painting, indicating to us his own setting of a lyric by Sir William Davenant, ‘Beauty Retire’.
Samuel Pepys 1633 – 1703
John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester
1647 – 80

By an unknown artist
Oil on canvas, about 1665 – 70
50 x 39 in. (127 x 99.1 cm)

A poet and courtier, Rochester’s (1647 – 80) satirical wit and licentiousness alternately fascinated and enraged Charles II, who dismissed him from court at least once a year. He is best known for his amorous lyrics, biting satires and obscene fantasies, but was also a patron, albeit a fickle one, of poets and dramatists, including Dryden.

This three-quarter-length portrait has a self-mocking message almost certainly of Rochester’s own devising. He stands in front of a stone wall facing to our left. His narrowed brown eyes look to our right as if encouraging a witness to his actions. In his left hand is a manuscript. Between the forefinger and thumb of his right hand he holds the poet’s laurel wreath over the head of a monkey. The monkey squats on two books placed one on top of the other on a stone ledge at the left side of the painting, its tail curving down over the edge. Holding a red book open at its side, the monkey grins up at Rochester and offers him a crumpled page. Torn pieces of the
page are scattered about on the ledge.

There is a hint of amusement in the expression on Rochester’s long pale face. Sensuousness is conveyed in the full red lips and knowing brown eyes. His nose and chin with its slight cleft are prominent.

Rochester is dressed theatrically. The long curls of a light brown wig fall across his chest. He wears a white lace cravat over the golden yellow silk material of a cloak, draped across the front of his body and right arm. The short sleeve of the doublet is visible on his left arm, fashioned from lengths of red ribbon over the full-length white sleeve of the shirt, gathered at the wrist with a lace ruffle. Pleated red petticoat breeches and the doublet created with overlapping circles of stiffened red silk are discernible on the left side. The doublet gives the impression of armour plating.

In the top right corner of the painting there is a small area of landscape with a cloudy sky and far in the distance, a stone archway.
John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester
1647 – 80
Queen Anne 1665 – 1714

By Michael Dahl (about 1659 – 1743)
Oil on canvas, 1705
93 1/4 x 57 in. (236.8 x 144.8 cm)

Queen Anne (1665 – 1714) was the first ruler of a united England and Scotland and last of the Stuart dynasty. She was born in 1665 and reigned from 1702 until her death in 1714. Anne was the second daughter of James II and Anne Hyde. In 1683 she married Prince George of Denmark. Sadly, all but one of her seventeen children died in infancy. When Prince William died aged eleven she had to contemplate a Protestant Hanoverian succession to bypass her Catholic half-brother.

When she succeeded to the throne Anne was intimate with and dependent on Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, whose husband, the Duke, controlled the war against France. However, she dismissed the Marlboroughs in 1711, largely because of her sympathy with Tory opposition to the Duke’s conduct of the war. Queen Anne proceeded to base her administration on the advice of her Tory ministers, who directed England’s efforts against France and Spain in the War of the Spanish
Succession. The most important constitutional landmark of her reign was the Act of Union between England and Scotland in 1707.

This is a formal portrait of Queen Anne as a figure of state. She appears with reserved elegance standing full length and life size in a palace interior. To the left is a stone column while a crimson curtain is gathered across the top right corner of the picture. The curtain rests on a table also draped in crimson velvet. On the table under Anne’s left hand her golden orb lies on a crimson cushion beside the royal crown.

Queen Anne has a high bouffant fringe of dark brown hair and a pony tail which lies on her left shoulder. She angles her head slightly to her right and looks at you with quiet dark eyes under horizontal dark eyebrows. Her down turned mouth and heavy cheeks give her face a slightly sullen expression. Queen Anne’s golden shoes peep out from under a low cut golden gown. It has wide sleeves gathered by jewelled pins above her elbows. Her lower arms emerge from wide spreading decorative lace cuffs. Beneath the opening in her dress she wears a large winged
brooch hanging at the centre of a horizontal blue ribbon. Her right arm is held across her waist pulling her royal blue robe over her right hip so that it trails on the floor at her right side. The robe is lined with the traditional royal ermine fur, which is white interspersed with the short black shapes of ermine tails. Queen Anne was forty years old when the portrait was painted. The facts that she was suffering from gout and by all accounts was overweight suggest that there is a measure of flattery in this dignified but rather staid image.
Queen Anne 1665 – 1714
Queen Anne 1665 – 1714
James Scott, Duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch 1649 – 85

By Jan van Wyck (1652 – 1700)
Oil on canvas, about 1675
31 1/8 x 40 7/8 in. (79 x 103.8 cm)

James Scott, Duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch (1649 – 85) was the son of Charles II and Lucy Walter. He was born in Rotterdam, and after being raised on the Continent, was brought to England in 1662, where Charles subsequently acknowledged him as his son and created him Duke of Monmouth. He married Anne Scott, Countess of Buccleuch in 1663 and took her surname and the title Duke of Buccleuch. Captain of the king's troops in 1668, Monmouth was promoted to captain general of all English forces in 1678. He defeated the Scottish Covenanters at the Battle of Bothwell Bridge in 1679.

The eldest of Charles II’s fourteen illegitimate children, Monmouth was charming, ambitious and unprincipled. He was put forward as a Protestant candidate for the throne in place of his uncle James, Duke of York, at the time of the ‘Popish Plot’ in 1678. Then at the accession of James II, he landed in England at the head of a Protestant army,
but was defeated at Sedgemoor, captured and executed.

Under skies filled with clouds and smoke James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, rides into the picture on a white horse at the extreme right hand side. He wears a red coat with gold buttons and a star embroidered on the right breast, knee length black riding boots and a sword at his left side. A wide black hat curls upwards along both sides of his head, carrying white and pink feathers on top as if in a large shallow bowl. Long brown hair falls down onto James’s shoulders around a white cravat at his neck. He looks at you confidently with an oval clean-shaven face. His left arm is towards you lifting the reins in front of his waist with his hands in brown leather gloves. He is ready to lead you into battle.

The horse under his control is wide eyed and eager with a thick powerful neck and shoulders. Its ears and its gaze point forwards towards the battle ahead at the centre of the picture. On either side of the Duke’s white horse dark figures confront each other. A barricade extends from the extreme left hand edge to a barrel, a third of the way across the
picture, in which a red flag flutters from its pole. Two soldiers behind the barricade are dragging a gunpowder barrel towards others who face away from you toward the battlefield beyond. At the centre of the painting, in the sky beyond the barricade, cannonballs are in flight above the battlefield. Amidst soldiers and a flurry of flags a distant soldier in a wide-brimmed hat rides another white horse into the battle.

This portrait commemorates the Duke’s role as commander of the English auxiliary force against the Dutch in 1672 – 3. The scene in the background may be intended to depict the siege of Maastricht in 1673 in which he played a heroic part.
James Scott, Duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch 1649 – 85
James Scott, Duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch 1649 – 85
The eldest daughter of James, Duke of York, later James II and Anne Hyde, Mary (1662 – 94) married Prince William of Orange in 1677. In the turmoil of the 1688 Revolution she supported her husband and Protestantism rather than her Catholic father, and she was invited to return to England in 1689 to share the monarchy with William. She proved to be a wise and effective ruler, especially during William’s absences at war, and her many charitable schemes included the William and Mary missionary College, Williamsburg, Virginia.

In this elegant portrait, Queen Mary II is seated on a stone bench turned to our left. It was painted by the most fashionable artist of the time, Sir Peter Lely, in 1677, the year of her marriage to William of Orange. We are given a three-quarter view of a thin pale face with a pointed chin framed by brown hair parted in the centre, full curls covering the ears. Her nose is prominent and straight, lips full
and red. She gazes to our right with narrowed eyes.

Queen Mary’s right leg concealed by the long skirts of her morning gown is raised perhaps on a footstool not visible in the painting. The morning gown is of russet brown silk and is loose, unboned and comfortable. Her neck, shoulders and much of her small breasts are revealed above a low circular décolletage, lightly masked by a small white frill. A light gauze scarf is caught at the breast by a string of large pearls, looped over the shoulders and attached at the front by a jewelled brooch with a drop pearl suspended from it. The sleeves of the gown are short and bell-shaped with openings, one visible on the left sleeve, fastened with a jewel, exposing a ruffled white chemise sleeve reaching just below the elbow. Her left hand gathers up the fabric of a rich red cloak that falls across her left thigh. The cloak covers the armrest of a bench on her right side. Her right forearm is positioned on top of the armrest, the hand arranged to fall over the edge, displaying long dainty fingers.

At the right edge of the painting, level with Mary’s head and shoulder, roses of white, pinky-red and
russet amidst dark foliage emphasise the colours of her costume. A dark brown brocade curtain is looped up at the top left and in the background we glimpse stone architecture in the shadows.
Queen Mary II 1662 – 94
Queen Mary II 1662 – 94
Sir Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727) was an immensely influential mathematical scientist. At the age of twenty-three, when driven from Cambridge by plague, Newton formulated within one year a series of important theories concerning the prism of light and colour, calculus and the ‘universal law of gravitation’. According to tradition, he developed the latter theory after seeing an apple fall from a tree.

He was a firm opponent of the attempt by King James II to make the universities into Catholic institutions and was elected Member of Parliament for the University of Cambridge in 1689. In 1696 he moved to London as Warden of the Royal Mint. He became Master of the Mint in 1699, an office he retained to his death. Elected as Fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1671, he became President in 1703, and was annually re-elected for the rest of his life. His major work, ‘Opticks’, appeared in 1704. Isaac Newton was knighted in Cambridge the next year.
He also studied alchemy, ancient philosophy and mythology and tried to find historical links between these and Biblical texts. He was a notoriously absent-minded professor, never easy to know and he remained single. Growing increasingly nervous, he was vicious in his attempts to discredit rivals. However he left a memorable and humble assessment of his own achievements: ‘I do not know what I might seem to the World. But as to my self, I seem to have been only like a boy, playing on the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me’.

Newton’s head and shoulders appear within a painted oval, which is a very dark brown shape on a dark brown rectangular canvas. His head is slightly to the left and catches bright light from in front. His forehead is broad and high above a long face with a square jaw. He has a long sharply pointed nose and angular dark eyebrows that are near horizontal, rising slightly at their centres, and becoming furrowed as they meet his nose. His large dark grey eyes look at you intently. He attempts to bring a smile to his full mouth, but lines of tension
around the corners of his mouth suggest an awkward and even tetchy character. Beneath rosy cheeks his stubborn clean-shaven cleft chin rises above the informal unbuttoned neck of his loose white shirt. A long mane of luxuriant brown curls, probably a wig, surrounds his face and falls down his chest below his shoulders. He wears a loose garment like a large reddish-brown dressing gown, which blends in with the dark background. Although he was in his early seventies at the time of this portrait he has the powerful and robust presence of a much younger man.
John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough
1650 – 1722

By Sir Godfrey Kneller, Bt (1646 – 1723)
Oil on canvas, about 1706
36 1/2 x 29 in. (92.7 x 73.7 cm)

A soldier and diplomat, Marlborough (1650 – 1722) rose from page to confidential agent of James, Duke of York, later James II and pursued a distinguished military career; he was created Baron in 1682. He was chiefly responsible for crushing Monmouth’s rebellion in 1685, but he deserted James II in 1688 and was awarded an earldom by William III. He was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces in the War of the Spanish Succession by Queen Anne. For his resounding victories over the French he was rewarded with wealth and honours, but the increasing unpopularity of the war and his personal arrogance contributed to his dismissal by Anne in 1711. He was reinstated by George I in 1714.

The elements of this allegorical oil sketch are fluidly drawn and much is left to our imaginations. In the centre, the Duke of Marlborough, dressed in armour, with red skirts and a blue shoulder sash sits astride a horse. The horse, viewed from the side,
facing our right, rears up on its back legs, foaming at the mouth.

Marlborough turns to stare at a group of figures at the bottom left edge of the painting and in his outstretched right hand he points a commander’s baton towards them. A crouching woman in a diaphanous cloak with an ermine collar raises up a small model-sized castle. Behind her stands the bearded figure of Hercules who gazes at Marlborough with humility. In his left hand he grasps a club over his shoulder, in his right, he holds a key, possibly a symbol of submission.

Beyond him there is an indication of fire and smoke billowing over a city. At the bottom right, the personification of Discord, portrayed as a cadaverous hag, stringy hair flying in the wind, lies under the horse’s front hooves. She looks away from Marlborough, mouth open, right arm raised to her head, left arm supporting her body. A slavering dog, its head lying in her lap, looks up at Marlborough. Next to the dog in the foreground, there is a glittering shield on a white cloth and behind the figure of Discord, the suggestion of turbulent blue waves.
Flying in a stormy sky, accompanied by a winged cherub to his right, the foreshortened figure of Victory, a blue cloak wrapped round his body, raises a laurel wreath above Marlborough’s head. To his left is a dark eagle, sacred to Jupiter and the ancient symbol of power and victory. In the top right corner, two entwined cherubs tumble and play. Opposite, small and pale in the distance, Justice sits on a cloud holding what could be a fasces, an axe held in a bundle of twigs, the Roman symbol of authority.
John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough
1650 – 1722
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