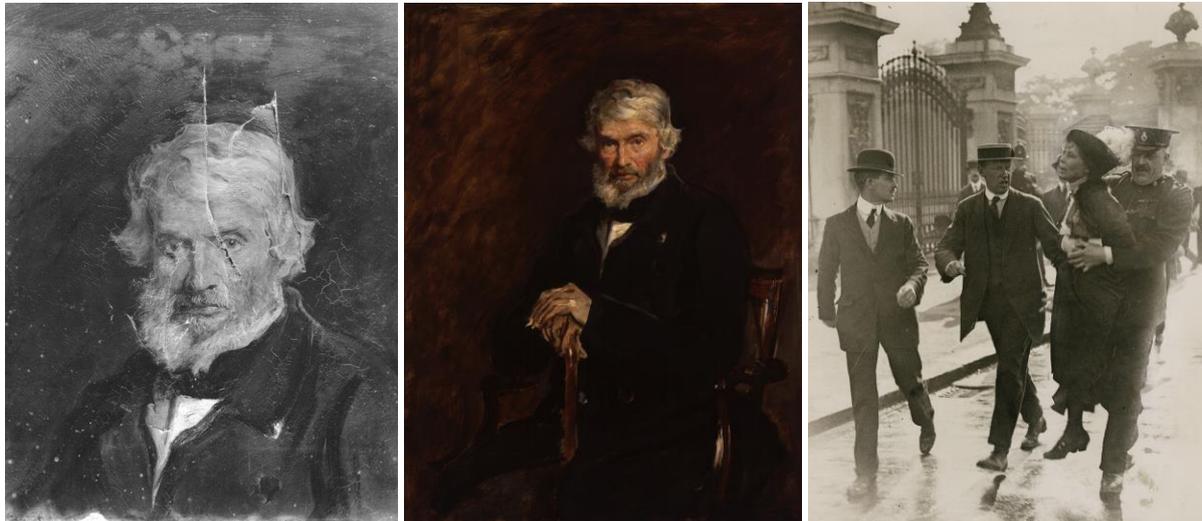


News Release

Monday 29 January 2018

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY REVEALS HOW A PAINTING OF ITS FOUNDER WAS SLASHED WITH A CLEAVER BY A SUFFRAGETTE

The art of struggle: how portraits helped women get the vote



Emery Walker photograph of damage to the portrait of Thomas Carlyle by Sir John Everett Millais, 1st Bt, 1877 © National Portrait Gallery, London; **Thomas Carlyle** by Sir John Everett Millais, 1st Bt, 1877 © National Portrait Gallery, London; **Emmeline Pankhurst's arrest at Buckingham Palace** by Central Press, 21 May 1914 © National Portrait Gallery, London;

A portrait slashed with a butcher's cleaver by a suffragette in the National Portrait Gallery will go back on display there for the first time in over twenty years. A photograph showing the damage will be included for the first time in a complementary display devoted to the suffrage movement that inspired the attack in July 1914.

The portrait of one of the Gallery's founders, Thomas Carlyle, by Sir John Everett Millais, goes on display as part of the Gallery's year-long *Rebel Women* season to coincide with the new display ***Votes for Women*** opening January 29 2018.

The National Portrait Gallery has revealed archival accounts of the incident that was carried out by Anne Hunt following the re-arrest of Suffragette leader Emmeline Pankhurst. On the morning of the attack, which occurred on a student day, meaning all non-students paid an entry fee, gallery staff attendant David Wilson recognised Anne Hunt from the previous day; he had thought her American 'from the closeness from which she then examined the pictures.' Wilson's suspicions were aroused because 'no American would have paid the 6d entrance fee twice over'. Unable to follow her beyond

his post, he then heard glass shatter. Two female students were copying portraits when Hunt struck at least three times, slashing Carlyle's portrait. One student, followed by an attendant, rushed to restrain her.

Prompted by unsympathetic press coverage that characterised Hunt as a 'Hatchet Fiend', 'Wild Woman' and 'Fury with a Chopper,' a member of the public immediately wrote to offer a replacement portrait of Carlyle. The Gallery immediately set about restoring the work but despite efforts to safeguard the Collection, the Deputy Chairman of the Trustees said: 'we really are at the mercy of women who are determined.'

At her trial Anne Hunt said: 'This picture will be of added value and of great historical importance because it has been honoured by the attention of a Militant.' She was sentenced to six months imprisonment, complained of forcible feeding in custody, and was released on July 27. Hunt revisited the Gallery on August 31 and Assistant Keeper Milner afterwards reported: 'Wilson said he got quite a shock when he saw her, she smiled and nodded to him... if Carlyle's mutilator should return she is not to be admitted...'

With a response 'to keep the Gallery open outrage or no outrage,' records show a lack of engagement with the political aims underlying militant attacks with senior staff often preoccupied with everyday business. This is shown by a letter Milner wrote parodying the long process of printing Gallery publications on August 21 1914. All slept, 'until some gentle lady came along with a hammer, smashed some glass and woke up the whole house. Then all went to sleep again'.

From as early as January 1913, however, fear of Suffragette action at museums and public buildings meant female visitors were instructed to leave bags, muffs and parcels in cloakrooms in case of concealed weapons. Following a second attack on paintings at the National Gallery in May 1914, Assistant keeper James Milner wrote: 'If women are to be admitted to public galleries there seems no alternative but to hand-cuff their hands behind their backs and to put up a grille to prevent them butting or barging into the pictures. Only under these conditions do I think it safe to admit them.'



The report written by Attendant David Wilson on July 17 1914 about the attack on Carlyle's portrait; Dame Millicent Garrett Fawcett and Henry Fawcett by Ford Madox Brown, 1872 © National Portrait Gallery, London; Dame Christabel Pankhurst by Ethel Wright, 1908-9 © National Portrait Gallery, London

Votes for Women (29 January-3 June 2018) contains the document issued by Scotland Yard to the National Portrait Gallery following Mary Richardson's attack on Velázquez's painting *The Rokeby*

Venus (The Toilet of Venus) at the National Gallery in March 1914. The display also includes the sheet of identity photographs issued to the National Portrait Gallery by Scotland Yard of women serving sentences in Holloway and Manchester prisons, many taken undercover in prison exercise yards.



Surveillance photos of Suffragettes issued to National Portrait Gallery by Criminal Records Office © National Portrait Gallery, London

A selection of the Gallery's Collection of postcards produced by suffrage organisations to promote membership and to inspire loyalty towards their leaders also go on display for the first time. In these images the sitters appear well-dressed, elegant and demure, providing an antidote to press photographs, in which Suffragettes often appeared dishevelled or distressed.

As well as portraits of the Pankhurst sisters, the display includes a rarely seen and intimate painting by Ford Madox Ford of Millicent Garrett Fawcett with her husband and fellow 'suffragist', Henry Fawcett, who had been blinded in a shooting accident in 1858. As president of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies from 1897, Millicent Garrett Fawcett was one of the most influential figures in the campaign for women's suffrage and favoured political lobbying and peaceful protest. This year she becomes the first women represented by a statue in Parliament square, in a work by the artist Gillian Wearing.

Votes for Women is part of **Rebel Women** a year-long season of events at the Gallery to mark the centenary of women gaining the vote in Britain. *Rebel Women*, in addition to reflecting on the suffrage movement, focuses on the contemporary relevance of active citizenship, political engagement and the ongoing battle for equality. *Rebel Women* examines wider issues of leadership, influencing change, campaigning, representation and feminism. The Gallery is centrally placed for these discussions with regards to the Collection and to our location next to Trafalgar Square, historically known as a site of protest. Partnerships and collaborations will develop across the year.

A Gallery trail highlighting key inspirational women in the Collection will be developed and there is a rich programme of events for all audiences including the public programme and a rich schools offer to inspire and engage young people.

A new Gallery book *100 Pioneering Women* will feature portraits of women from its Collections. From Elizabeth I to Zaha Hadid, the book celebrates the accomplishments of women throughout history, highlighting not only well-known figures but also women whose stories have been forgotten.

In partnership with the National Trust the Gallery has loaned portraits from the Gallery's Collections for **Faces of Change: Votes for Women** at The Workhouse, Southwell, Nottinghamshire (April–July 2018), Killerton, Devon, (August–November 2018) and Mount Stewart, Northern Ireland, (November 2018–February 2019.) The touring display presents an overview of the campaign for Votes for Women from the late 19th-century until 1918 including portraits of key figures. The Gallery's existing regional partners, National Trust properties Montacute and Beningbrough, will also open new displays as part of the Trust's *Women and Power* season this year.

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director of the National Portrait Gallery, London, says: 'We will be marking the centenary of Britain's Representation of the People Act with a major season of talks and events celebrating the accomplishments of women. New displays will present a vivid portrait of the Suffrage movement, from the images of suffragettes on the postcards they produced to the shocking Criminal Records Office surveillance photographs.'

Rebel Women

A season of displays and events at the National Portrait Gallery exploring the accomplishments of women www.npg.org.uk/rebelwomen: #RebelWomen

DISPLAYS:

Votes for Women! Room 33, Floor 1, Admission Free (29 January– 3 June 2018)

Votes for Women: Pioneers A complementary showcase display highlighting Victorian pioneers of the movement is on display in Room 25. (Until December 2)

PUBLICATION: *100 Pioneering Women*

This richly illustrated gift book presents 100 pioneering women from the Collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London. From Elizabeth I to Zaha Hadid, this book celebrates the work of women throughout history, highlighting not only well-known figures but also women whose stories have been forgotten. Paperback. £7.95

For further press information and image requests please contact: Neil Evans, Media Relations Manager, National Portrait Gallery, London Tel: 020 7312 2452 (not for publication) Email: nevans@npg.org.uk

Press images: npg.org.uk/press

National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place WC2H 0HE, opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday: 10am – 6pm (Gallery closure commences at 5.50pm) **Late Opening:** Thursday, Friday: 10am – 9pm (Gallery closure commences at 8.50pm) **Nearest Underground:** Leicester Square/Charing Cross **General information:** 0207 306 0055 **Recorded information:** 020 7312 2463