

English Landscape – 2:

# John Constable, John Clare & Local Attachment





## C17 Mediterranean Landscape



## C17 Dutch & Flemish Landscape



Top left: **Claude Lorrain**, *Landscape with Hagar and the Angel* (1646-7)

Top right: **Peter Paul Rubens**, *A View of Het Steen in the Early Morning* (c.1636)

Lower left: **Salvator Rosa**, *Landscape with Tobias and the Angel* (?1660-73)

Lower right: **Jacob van Ruisdael**, *Two Water Mills and an Open Sluice* (1653)





Jacob van Ruisdael, Evening Landscape – a Windmill by a Stream (c.1650)

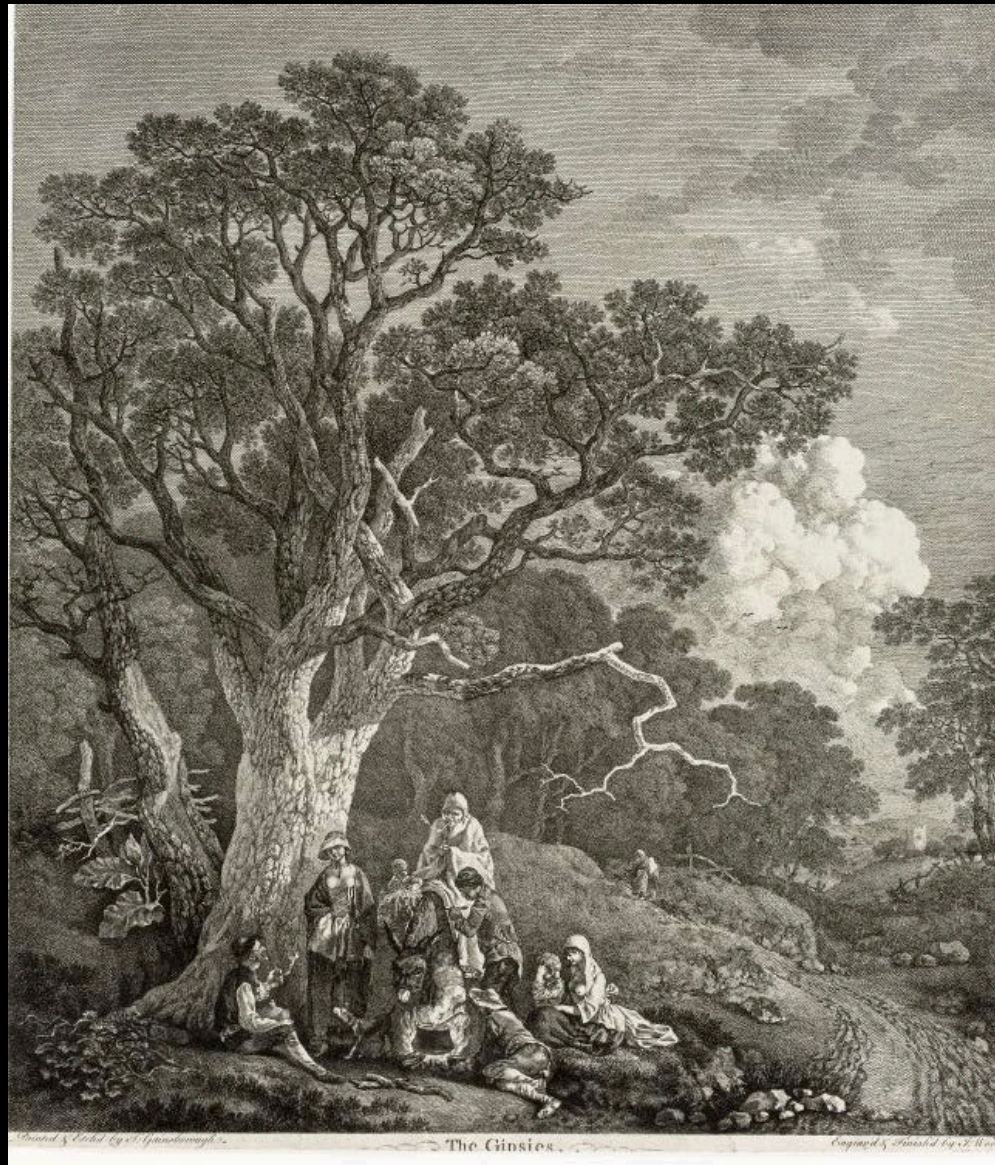


John Crome,  
*Road with  
Pollards*  
(1815)



John Sell Cotman, *Drainage Mills  
in the Fens, Croyland, Lincolnshire*  
(1835)



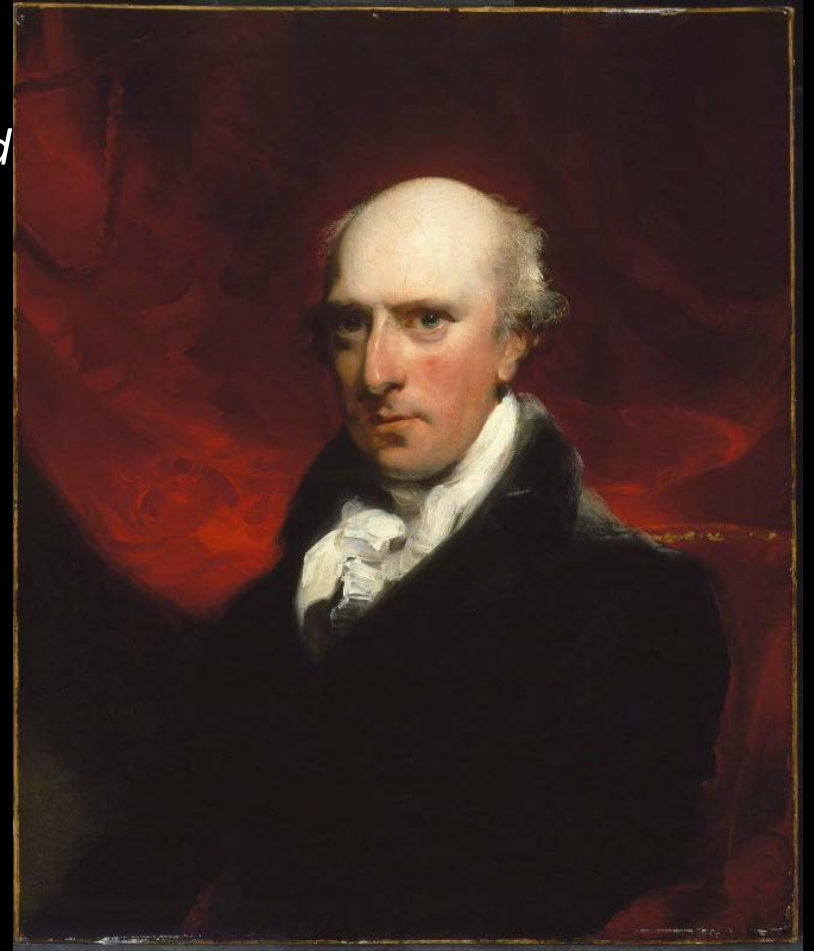


Thomas Gainsborough, *Wooded Landscape with Gypsies Gathered Round a Fire* (1753/54)



## Sir Uvedale Price 1747-1829

1794: *Essay on the Picturesque, As Compared  
with the Sublime and The Beautiful*  
(revised ed. 1796)



Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Sir Uvedale Price* (1747-1829)



Robert Price (Uvedale's father), 'Wooded Landscape, after  
A Waterloo' (?mid-C18)



The moment this mechanical common-place operation (by which Mr. Brown and his followers have gained so much credit) is begun, adieu to all that the painter admires – to all intricacies -- to all the beautiful varieties of form, tint, and light and shade; every deep recess – every bold projection – the fantastic roots of trees – the winding paths of sheep – all must go; in a few hours, the rash hand of false taste completely demolishes what time only, and a thousand lucky accidents, can mature, so as to make it become the admiration and study of a Ruysdal or a Gainsborough; and reduces it to such a thing, as an Oilman in Thames-street may at any time contract for by the yard at Islington or Mile-End.

(Uvedale Price, *An Essay on the Picturesque*, 1796, pp.39-41.)





Thomas Gainsborough, *Wooded Landscape with Peasant and Donkeys* (nd)



Thomas Gainsborough, *Drinkstone Park* (1747)



William Bree, *A Much-Repaired Gate* (1804)



John Constable, *Broken Gate* – detail from *The Cornfield* (1826)

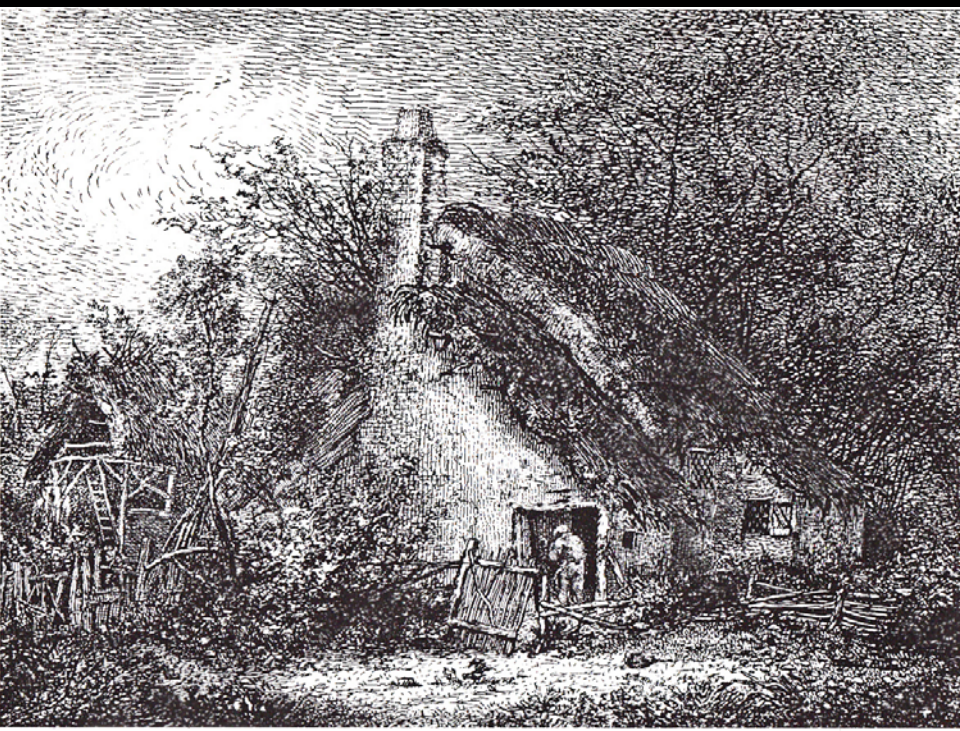
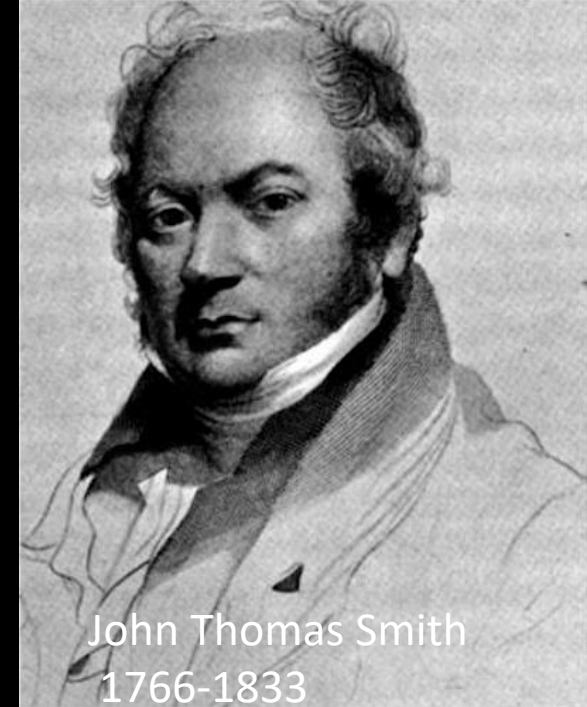


Thomas  
Gainsborough,  
Detail from  
*Cornard Wood*  
(1748)





Palaces, castles, churches, monastic ruins, and the remains, and even vestiges and conjectural situations, of our ancient feudal and ecclesiastical structures, have been elaborately, and indeed very interestingly described, with all their characteristic distinctions, while the objects comprehended by the term *cottage scenery* have by no means been honored with equal attention; and this, it should seem, merely because, though of equal excellence in the scale of picturesque beauty, that beauty happens not to be of the heroic or sublime order.  
(J.T.Smith, *Remarks on Rural Scenery* 1797)







John Constable, Drawings of Suffolk Cottages, c.1796

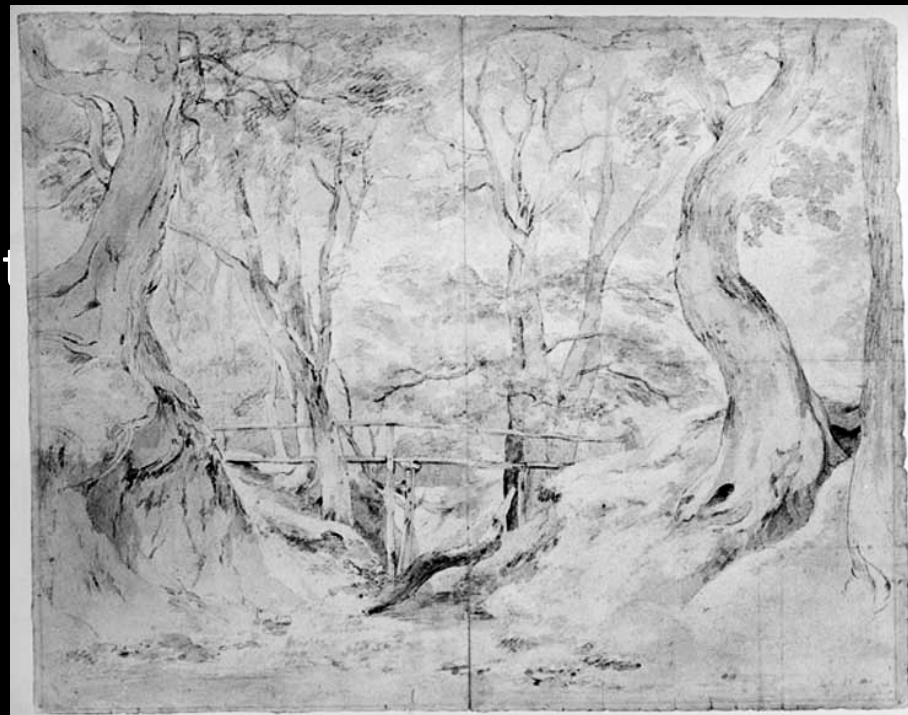




Anthonie Waterloo, *Landscape with a Brook in Foreground*: etching (nd)



Jacob van Ruisdael, *The Three Oaks* (1649)



John Constable, *Helmingham Dell* (1800)





Thomas Gainsborough, *Wooded Landscape with Figures outside a Cottage Door* (1775-1780)



John Constable, *Cottage Among Trees* (1799)





Claude Lorrain, *Landscape with Hagar and the Angel* (1646)



John Constable, *Dedham Vale* (1802)





Meindert Hobbema, *Woodland Road* (c.1670)



John Constable, *A Cornfield* (?1817)





Claude, *Landscape with Goatherd and Goats* (1636-37). National Gallery, London



John Constable, *Landscape with Goatherd and Goats* (1823).  
Art Gallery, New South Wales

‘It contains almost all that I wish to do in landscape,...a noon day scene – which “*warms and cheers but which does not inflame or irritate*” – Mr. Price. It diffuses a life & breezy freshness into the recess of trees which make it enchanting.’ (Constable, Letter to Fisher, 2 November 1823).



John Constable  
*The Cornfield*  
(1826)







John Constable, *A Cornfield* (?1817)

‘I do hope to sell  
this present  
picture – as it has  
certainly got a  
little more eye-  
salve than I  
usually  
condescend to  
give to them’

John Constable,  
*The Cornfield* (1826)





Old narrow lanes, where trees meet over-head;  
Path-stiles, on which a steeple we espy,  
Peeping and stretching in the distant sky;...  
Old ponds, dim shadowed with a broken tree; --  
These are the picturesque of Taste to me;  
(John Clare, 'Pleasant Places',  
*The Rural Muse*, 1835)







Fenbridge Lane, East Bergholt



John Constable, *The Cornfield* (1826)



‘to increase the interest for, and promote the study of, the Rural Scenery of England, with all its endearing associations, its amenities, and even in its most simple localities... [the author] may be pardoned for introducing a spot to which he must naturally feel so much attached; and though to others it may be void of interest or any associations, to him it is fraught with every endearing recollection.’

VARIOUS SUBJECTS OF  
***LANDSCAPE,***  
**CHARACTERISTIC OF ENGLISH SCENERY,**  
PRINCIPALLY INTENDED TO DISPLAY  
THE PHENOMENA OF THE CHIAR'OSCURO OF NATURE:  
FROM PICTURES PAINTED BY  
**JOHN CONSTABLE, R. A.**  
  
ENGRAVED BY  
**DAVID LUCAS.**  
  
London:  
PUBLISHED BY MR. CONSTABLE, 35, CHARLOTTE STREET, FITZROY SQUARE  
SOLD BY COLNAGHI, DOMINIC COLNAGHI, AND CO. PALL MALL EAST.  
—  
1833.



**‘[the author] may be pardoned for introducing a spot to which he must naturally feel so much attached; and though to others it may be void of interest or any associations, to him it is fraught with every endearing recollection.’**



**John Constable, 'Frontispiece, Paternal House and Grounds of the Artist. -- Evening': *English Landscape Scenery* (1834)**



...the sound of water escaping from Mill dams, &c., Willows, Old rotten Banks, slimy posts, & brickwork. I love such things. ...As long as I do paint I shall never cease to paint such Places. They have always been my delight.... I should paint my own places best -- Painting is but another word for feeling. I associate "my careless boyhood" to all that lies on the banks of the *Stour*. They made me a painter (& I am grateful)'

(Letter to Rev. John Fisher (23 October 1821), from *John Constable's Correspondence*, part 6, pp. 76-78.)



No country, then, is fair to all alike;  
No landscape with inherent beauty glows;  
But different objects different creatures strike...  
The mind alone, from habitude bestows  
On each material form its shadowy grace:  
And thus a never-ceasing pleasure flows  
Or to the human, or the bestial race  
From those ideal charms we all attach to place.

John Constable, *The Leaping Horse* (1825)

Richard Polwhele, 'The Influence of Local Attachment with Respect to Home', 1797)



‘the Londoners, with all their ingenuity as artists, know nothing of the feelings of a country life, the essence of landscape’

John Constable, Letter to John Fisher, 1 April 1821

‘what appears as beautys in the eyes of a pent-up citizen are looked upon as consciets by those who live in the country’

John Clare, from ‘Fragments 1825-37’: *The Prose of John Clare*, eds J.W. & A. Tibble, 1951), p.33.



## JOHN CLARE

1793 Born into labouring class family

1820 Married Martha Turner (with whom he had 7 children)

*Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery*

1821 *Village Minstrel and Other Poems*

1827 *Shepherds Calender*

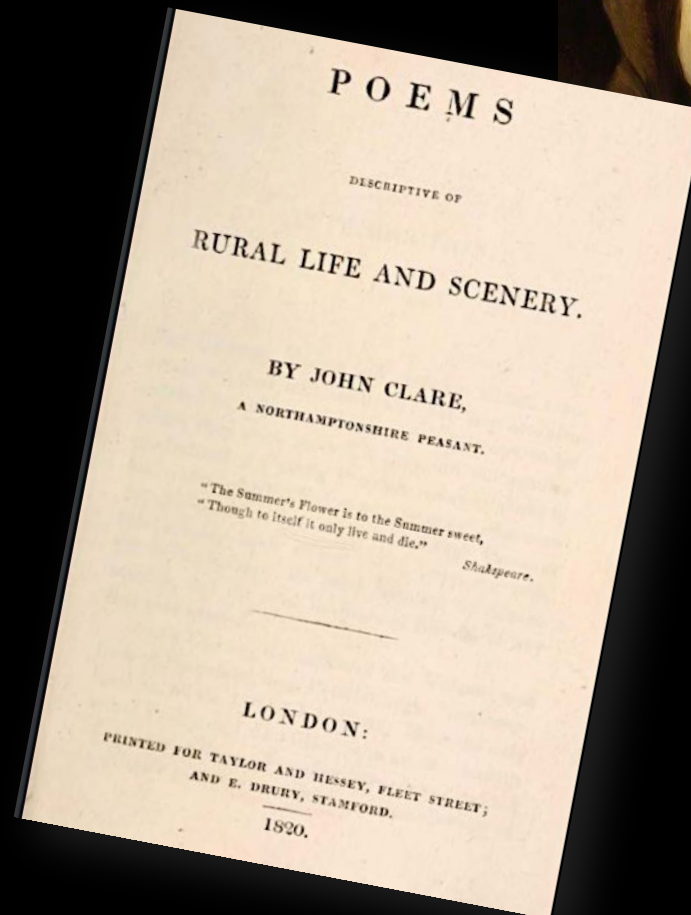
1835 *The Rural Muse*

1835-7 Mental health deteriorates

1837-41 Committed to High Beech Asylum

1841-1864 Northampton General Lunatic Asylum

1864 Died, aged 71



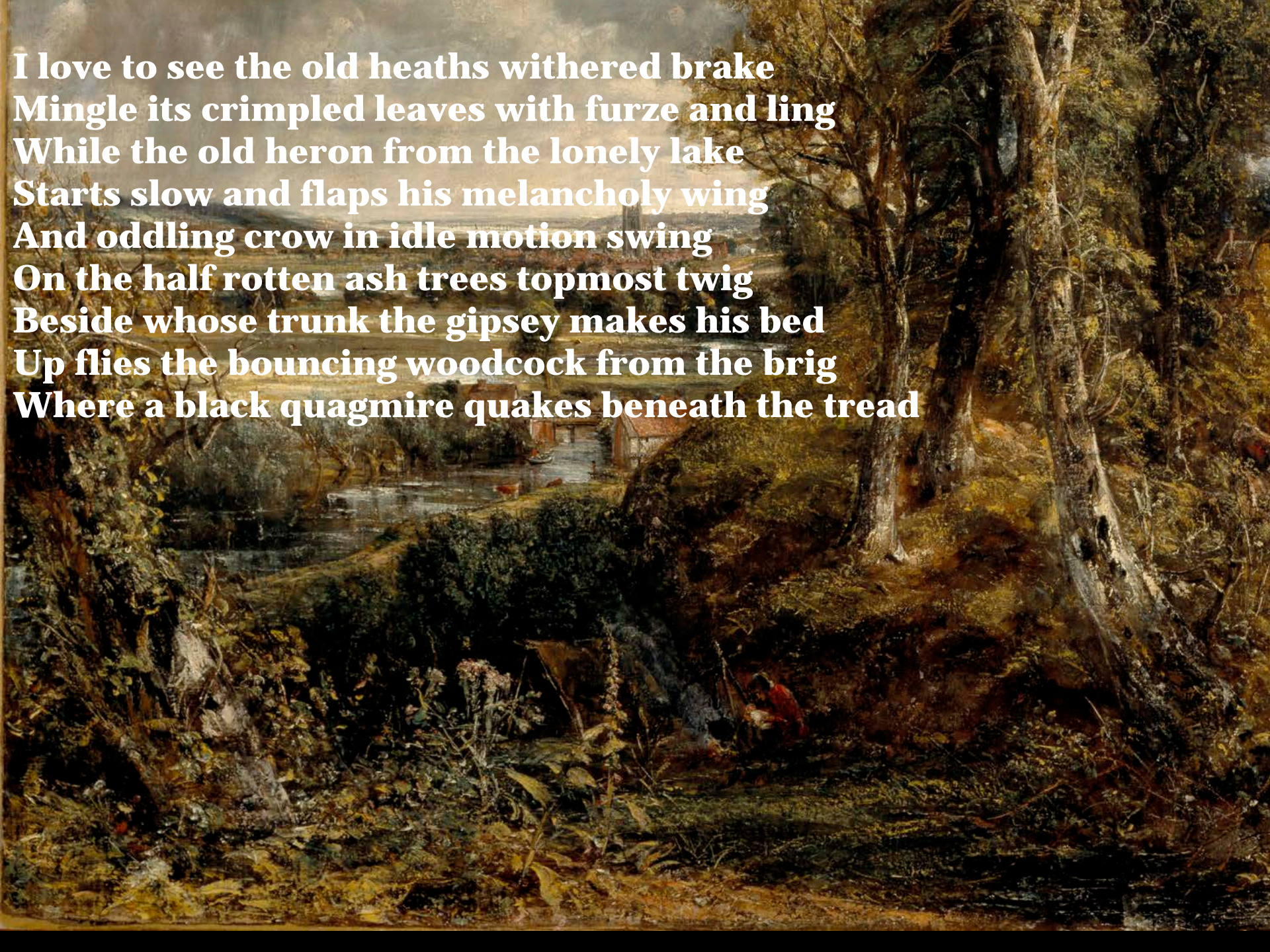
William Hilton,  
*John Clare*  
(1820)



Associations sweet each object breeds...  
[The man of true taste] loves each desolate neglected spot  
That seems in labours hurry left forgot  
The crank and punished trunk of stunted oak  
Freed from its bonds but by the thunder stroke  
As cramped by struggling ribs of ivy sere  
There the glad bird makes home for half the year  
But take these several beings from their homes  
Each beautiful thing a withered thought becomes  
Association fades and like a dream,  
They are but shadows of the things they seem  
Torn from their homes and happiness they stand  
The poor dull captives of a foreign land  
(John Clare, from 'Shadows of Taste', 1831)



**I love to see the old heaths withered brake  
Mingle its crimped leaves with furze and ling  
While the old heron from the lonely lake  
Starts slow and flaps his melancholy wing  
And oddling crow in idle motion swing  
On the half rotten ash trees topmost twig  
Beside whose trunk the gipsey makes his bed  
Up flies the bouncing woodcock from the brig  
Where a black quagmire quakes beneath the tread**









DE WINT! I would not flatter; nor would I  
Pretend to critic-skill in this thy art;  
Yet in thy landscape I can well descry  
The breathing hues as nature's counterpart.  
No painted peaks, no wild romantic sky,  
No rocks, nor mountains, as the rich sublime,  
Hath made thee famous; but the sunny truth  
Of nature, that doth mark thee for all time,  
Found on our level pastures – spots, forsooth,  
Where common skill sees nothing deemed divine.  
Yet here a worshipper was found in thee;  
And thy young pencil worked such rich surprise  
That rushy flats, befringed with willow tree,  
Rivalled the beauties of Italian skies.

John Clare 'To De Wint'

