

A CALENDAR OF
TREASURES FROM
THE RUSKIN
COLLECTION
(with additional material)

APRIL

Guild of St George
With thanks to Museums Sheffield

Text by Louise Pullen and Stuart Eagles
Images selected by Stuart Eagles
Images scanned by Museums Sheffield
Edited & designed by Stuart Eagles

www.facebook.com/guildofstgeorge/

Follow us on Twitter
@RuskinToday



<http://collections.museums-sheffield.org.uk/>

Visit our website
www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk

GUILD of St GEORGE

You are here: **Welcome** Search:

Welcome

- Jobs
- Press Releases
- Events (Sheffield)
- Events (General)
- Past Events
- Background
- Early Years
- The Guild Today
- Ruskin Collection
- Triennial Exhibitions
- RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD 2016
- RinS 2015
- Rural Projects
- The Ruskin Lecture

Welcome to Ruskin's Guild of St George

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was a polymath. As a writer, he commanded international respect. He was an art critic and an art patron, a skilled draughtsman and talented watercolourist, and a fierce critic of prevailing social and political norms. He wrote about nature and architecture, craftsmanship, geology, botany, Greek myth, education—a dizzying variety of subjects. Driven by his deep faith in social justice, he established the Guild of St George in the 1870s to right some of the social wrongs of the day and make England a happier and more beautiful place in which to live and work.

RUSKIN AND POLITICS
CLICK TO WATCH

POLITICAL THEORY - John Ruskin

The founding aim of the Guild was to acquire land and—through labour, wind and water power—to bring it into useful production.

The Guild's activities today are mainly focused around the [Ruskin Collection](#) in [Sheffield](#) and its [woodlands and rural projects](#) in the [Wyre Forest](#). We also host [symposia](#) on issues of

News

NEW JOB OPPORTUNITY
The Guild is please to announce that it is seeking to appoint a new Administrator. More...

RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD 2016
Member of the press are invited to download our RUSKIN in SHEFFIELD 2016 press release. More...

April Newsletter
The April Newsletter of the Guild of St George is now available. More...

APRIL 1



John Leech (1817-1864) "Mrs Brotherton putting the House of Commons to Bed" (1844). This is a preliminary drawing for one of Leech's cartoons, which he drew for "Punch". It was published in April 1844. It is a political caricature that comments on Joseph Brotherton, MP for Salford between 1832 and 1857. During the week Leech published this, Brotherton and another MP, William Williams had tried to bring the sittings in the House of Commons to a close earlier than usual. During his time in office, Joseph Brotherton gained a reputation for trying to end debates early, although this was usually around midnight. Often parliamentary sittings continued until 2 or 3 in the morning. Brotherton also opposed parliamentary debates starting before midday. Ruskin greatly admired Leech's work, writing that he was an "absolute master of the elements of character." He added that Leech's drawings gave "the finest definition and natural history of the classes of our society, the kindest and subtlest analysis of its foibles, [and] the tenderest flattery of its pretty and well-bred ways." He saw therefore that while Leech's drawings might be grotesque or ugly, he was truthful and observant, qualities that Ruskin celebrated in all artists. Whilst Ruskin felt in general that artists who pursued caricature over more "noble" forms of art, were in danger of losing their sense of beauty, he also believed that true caricaturists were born with the talent and that it could not be taught. Yet Ruskin wrote of "the kind and vivid genius of John Leech, capable in its brightness, of finding pretty jest in everything, - but capable in its tenderness, also of rejoicing in the beauty of everything, - softened and illumined with its loving wit the entire scope of the English social scene." Ruskin placed around 100 of Leech's comic drawings in Sheffield's Ruskin Collection. Around half are from "Punch" and the others are book illustrations towards "The Comic English Grammar" and "The Comic Latin Grammar" by Percival Leigh, both published in 1840.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 2

Edward Donovan: "Study of Invertebrate Animals" volume I (1799-1810).

This is not a book as such, but a volume of collected watercolour illustrations that were bound together in the 1870s for the Ruskin Collection. It contains watercolour studies made for several of Donovan's books of natural history. He produced a number of these, under titles such as "The Naturalist's Repository, or Miscellany of Exotic Natural History Exhibiting Rare and Beautiful Specimens of Foreign Birds, Insects, Shells, Quadrupeds, Fish and Marine Productions" which he published between 1822 and 1827. More famously, Donovan produced "The Natural History of British Shells" first published in 1799, which became one of the most popular books on shells during the 1800s, owing to its beautifully produced, hand-coloured illustrations. All of his books were notable for their vivid and detailed studies. Not only did Donovan paint the preliminary illustrations for his books, he also made sure he had control over the final book illustrations by etching, engraving and hand colouring them himself.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>





APRIL 3



TREASURES OF THE
RUSKIN COLLECTION
(Museums Sheffield).

On This Day: St Mary of
Egypt (Feast Day).

Angelo Alessandri, "St Mary
of Egypt" after Tintoretto
(1885).

Tintoretto's original work was
commissioned as part of a
cycle of biblical paintings by
the Scuola Grande di San
Rocco in Venice, the meeting
halls of a powerful religious
and charitable organisation. It
isn't part of the larger
narrative, but is used to fill a
small wall-space in the
building. Ruskin hugely
admired Tintoretto's paintings
at the Scuola, considering
them among the most
important cycles of paintings
in Italy. He wrote a critique of
the cycle in his "Venetian
Index" of 1852 and told
visitors to "pay unembarrassed
attention and unbroken time"
to the paintings. In 1885,
Ruskin wrote to Alessandri
asking for watercolour copies
of the complete series of
paintings at the Scuola,
commenting that "nothing
would be more valuable to me
than a complete series of it."
Ruskin noted particularly the
hurried manner of Tintoretto's
original painting of St Mary,
which Alessandri has imitated
in the loose brushwork of his
copy.

This image is available as a
greetings card (ref C2) [http://
www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/
shop/](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/shop/)

APRIL 4



Frank Randal, "Study of Woodcarving, Lions, Detail from Choir stalls, Church of Montréal, Yonne, France" (1882).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 5

Edith Spiller, "The Biography of a Snowdrop; Development of the Bud" (1896-7).
<http://www.gildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 6

On This Day 1528: Albrecht Dürer died.

"Hercules at the Crossroads" (1498)

by Albrecht Dürer.

Dürer's engraving relates to the story told in the writings of Xenophon, the Ancient Greek historian. Hercules, (or 'Heracles' in Greek) was a warrior who was famous for his strength and the 12 Labours (extraordinary feats of work) he carried out. Yet rather than choosing to depict any of these Labours, Dürer presents Hercules at the crossroads, a symbolic representation of the choice of good over evil. In Xenophon's story, Hercules was on a journey, and when the road divided he had to make a choice about which way to go. One was easy, the other more difficult. Two women were at the crossroads and each offered to help Hercules down a path. The first woman, Vice, offered to take Heracles down the easy route. The second woman, Virtue, offered to lead him down the difficult one.



Hercules chose to take the difficult path with Virtue, and therefore good triumphed over evil. In this print, Vice sits in the lap of a satyr, a mythical creature who was generally lazy, deceitful and lustful. Virtue, modestly clothed, is attacking her with a club. At its lowest level, this seems to be a moral comment on the jealousies of love. To Hercules' right is a cherub. He grasps a bird, a common symbol of the soul, in one hand, yet also seems to be attacking either Virtue or Vice. At first glance, he could be Cupid, the bringer of love, but also the cause of many troubles, ranged on the side of Vice, with a soul ensnared by her. Yet often figures of the Infant Christ are depicted holding birds to suggest a soul saved by faith. Dürer thus seems to be linking a secular image of the power of good over evil with this Biblical imagery.

Ruskin admired Dürer's engravings and woodcuts principally for their demonstration of his mastery of form. He felt Dürer could depict objects and scenes with simple lines and yet their textures, tones, and a sense of light and shadow were also evident. Ruskin described how each line was so deliberately drawn or inscribed that to misplace just one of them would give an entirely different effect to the work. For Ruskin, Dürer's work was a useful teaching aid. In "The Elements of Drawing", Ruskin's book on practical art, Ruskin suggested that his pupils try to get hold of Dürer's prints so that they could learn how to master form, texture, light and shadow by following his methods.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 7

Frank Randal, "At Vignetta, near Lecco, Italy" (1885).

The town and lake of Lecco is in northern Italy. It is a tributary of Lake Como and is surrounded by lush hills and rocky mountains. In this watercolour, made for John Ruskin, Randal seems to follow Ruskin's instructions from an earlier visit to Lecco: "always try to get interesting groups of cottages...near rock." Ruskin sent Randal to Lecco to holiday over the winter months. In practice, though, he was still expected to work for Ruskin whilst there, and was sent regular instructions: "Get a warm cell of a lodging under the rocks, with windows to the lake, and study skies and distant mountains, until further orders; and row and fish, if the days are fine, but don't work more than five minutes of sketching in pencil out of doors." Randal himself complained to Ruskin about the wintery weather, but most of his views at Lecco are clear and bright, suggesting he did enjoy some sunshine too.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 8

William Blake (1757-1827), illustrations to Thornton's "Pastorals of Virgil": "Colinet Resting at Cambridge by Night".

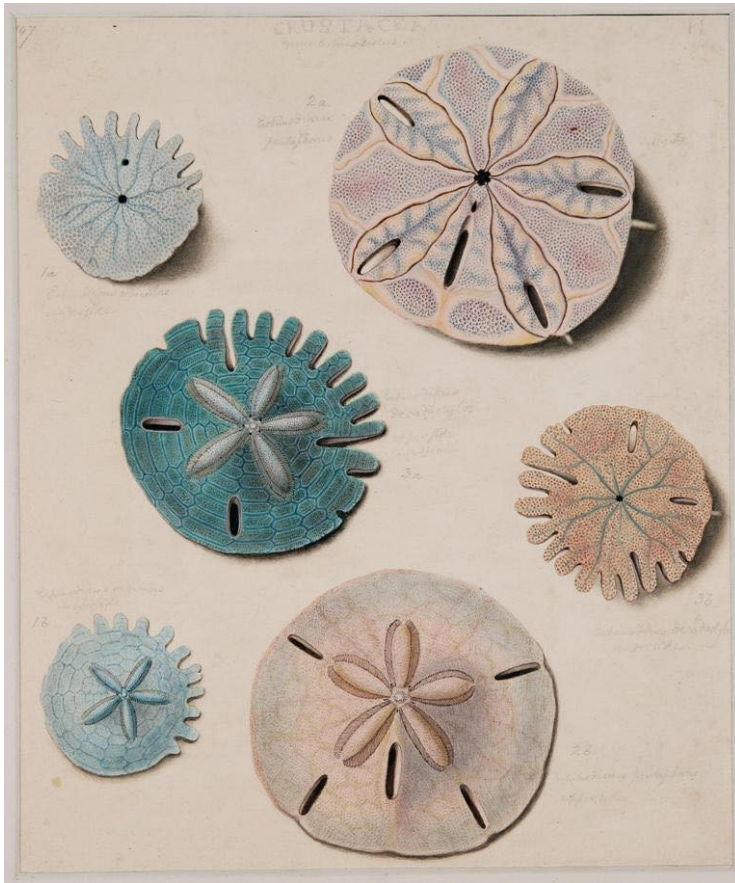
Ruskin greatly admired Blake's poetry as well as his engravings, and ranked his genius with that of Turner. But his praise was not unqualified, Ruskin believing that Blake's mind had been "driven into discouraged disease".

Thornton's Virgil, properly called "The Pastorals of Virgil; with a course of English Reading, adapted for schools", was edited by Dr Robert John Thornton (1768-1837) and contained stories written in imitation of the Roman poet, Virgil. This woodcut is from a series commissioned to illustrate a story re-told by Ambrose Philips (1674-1749) entitled "Imitation of Virgil's First Eclogue." It tells the tale of two shepherds, Thenot and Colinet. The young Colinet, dissatisfied with his life, argues with the elderly but contented Thenot, and sets off to see more of England. He travels through many storms and is ridiculed by people in the cities he visits. Colinet and Thenot later find each other again, and Thenot, taking pity on Colinet, invites him home to share in the happiness of the world around him. This woodcut, the tenth in the series, depicts Colinet resting at the side of the road with, he says, only the cold, damp grass and a tree-trunk for his bed.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 9

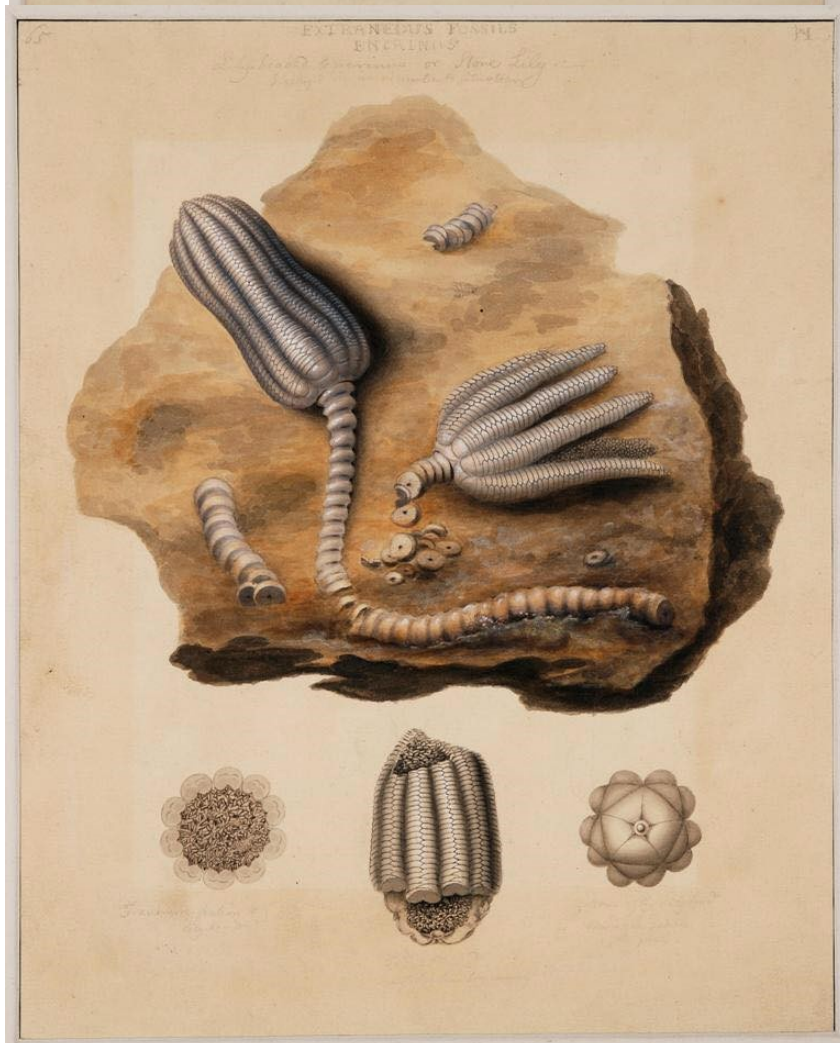
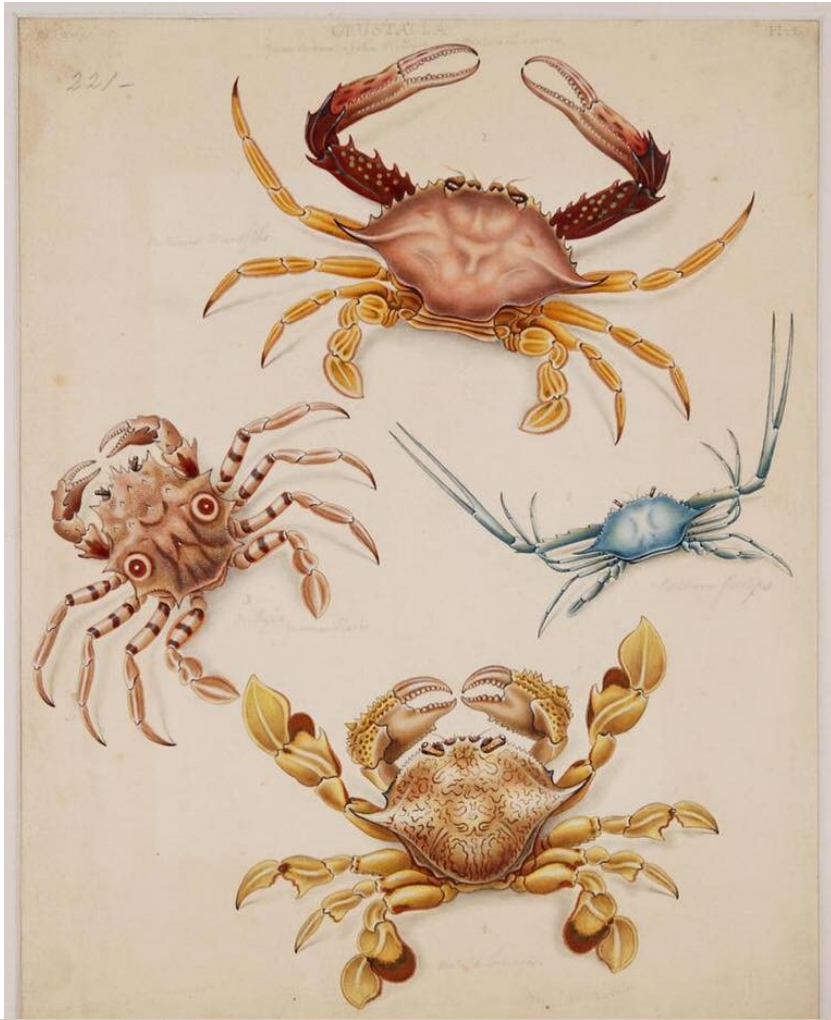


Edward Donovan: "Study of Invertebrate Animals" volume I (1799-1810).

This is not a book as such, but a volume of collected watercolour illustrations that were bound together in the 1870s for the Ruskin Collection. It contains watercolour studies made for several of Donovan's books of natural history. He produced a number of these, under titles such as "The Naturalist's Repository, or Miscellany of Exotic Natural History Exhibiting Rare and Beautiful Specimens of Foreign Birds, Insects, Shells, Quadrupeds, Fish and Marine Productions" which he published between 1822 and 1827. More famously, Donovan produced "The Natural History of British Shells" first published in 1799, which became one of the most popular books on shells during the 1800s, owing to its beautifully produced, hand-coloured illustrations. All of his books were notable for their vivid and detailed studies. Not only did Donovan paint the preliminary illustrations for his books, he also made sure he had control over the final book illustrations by etching, engraving and hand colouring them himself.

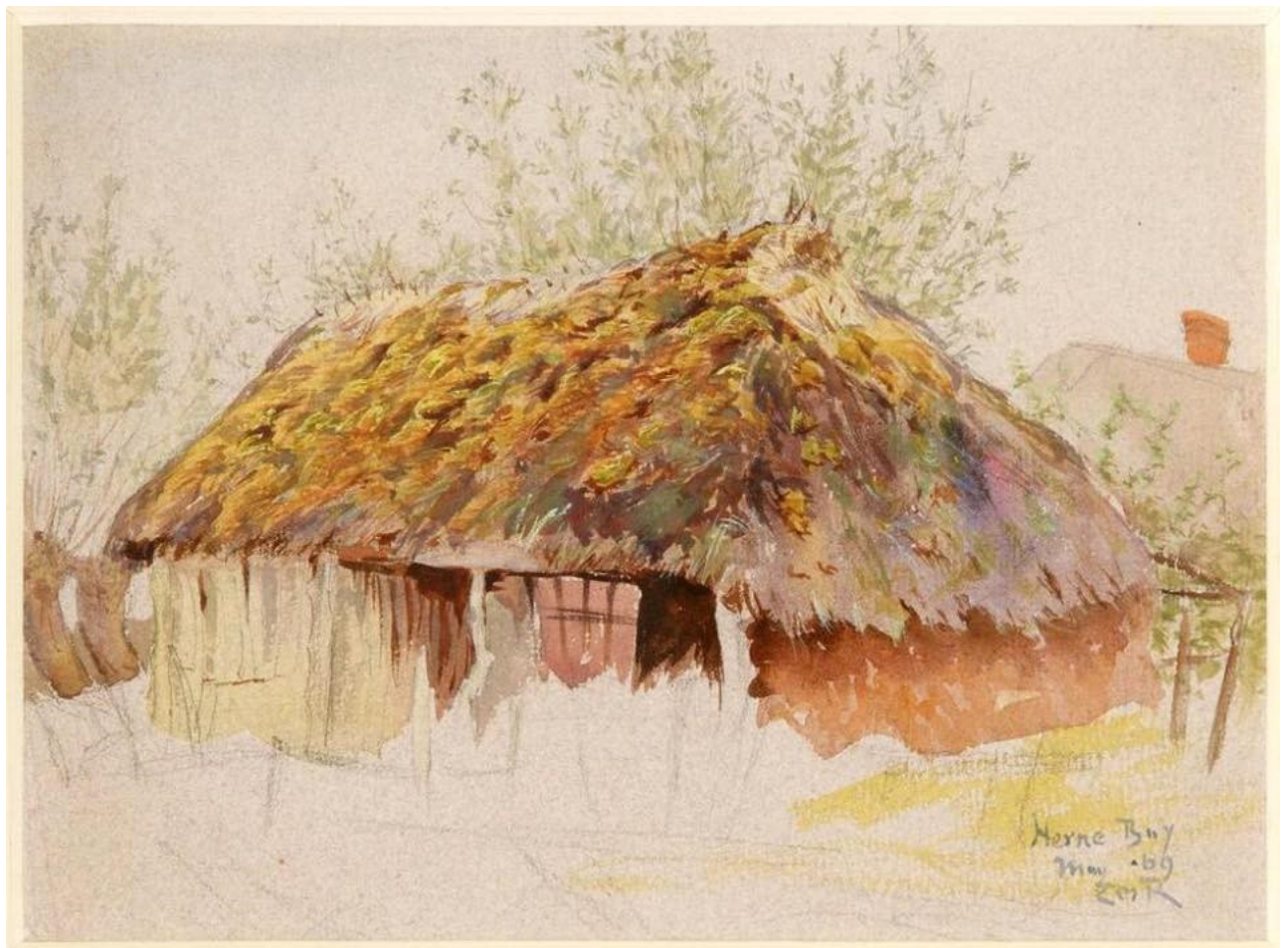
<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>





APRIL 10

Thomas Matthews Rooke, "Barn at Herne Hill, Kent" (1869).
<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 11



Frank Randal: "Tower of St Vincent's College Chapel, from the Ramparts, Senlis, France" (1881).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 12

Arthur Burgess, “Detail from the North-Western Portal, Rouen Cathedral, France” (1880) (photograph). This photograph is one of a set, which together record the north-western portal or doorway of Rouen Cathedral. This particular detail is part of a scrolling pattern that runs up each side of the portal. Ruskin described how the Gothic craftsman carved foliage into the stone, making it “twisted and wreathed so as to make the stone look ductile”. Ruskin drew this portion of the porch himself



several times, and placed plaster casts of the scrolls in the Ruskin Collection too. Ruskin commissioned the set of photographs from Arthur Burgess in 1880. The Cathedral staff allowed Burgess to erect scaffolding at the portal so that he could capture the details at eye-level. In general, Ruskin preferred hand-drawn to photographic records of architecture, but he recognised that photography was a fast and accurate way to record architectural features that were under severe threat of destruction either by neglect or so-called “restoration”..

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 13



Charlotte C Murray, "Study of Three Wild Flowers" (c. 1880).

This study is part of a botanical series by Murray. Ruskin chose several of her flower studies for Sheffield's Ruskin Collection in 1881 as he felt that the "tender, yet effective laying of colour" and "instantaneously right contour" of her flower painting was "unsurpassable". Murray gave the rest of the series to the Collection after Ruskin's death. Ruskin felt that flower studies were important because the artist needed great powers of observation to perceive the colour and delicacy of the flowers accurately,

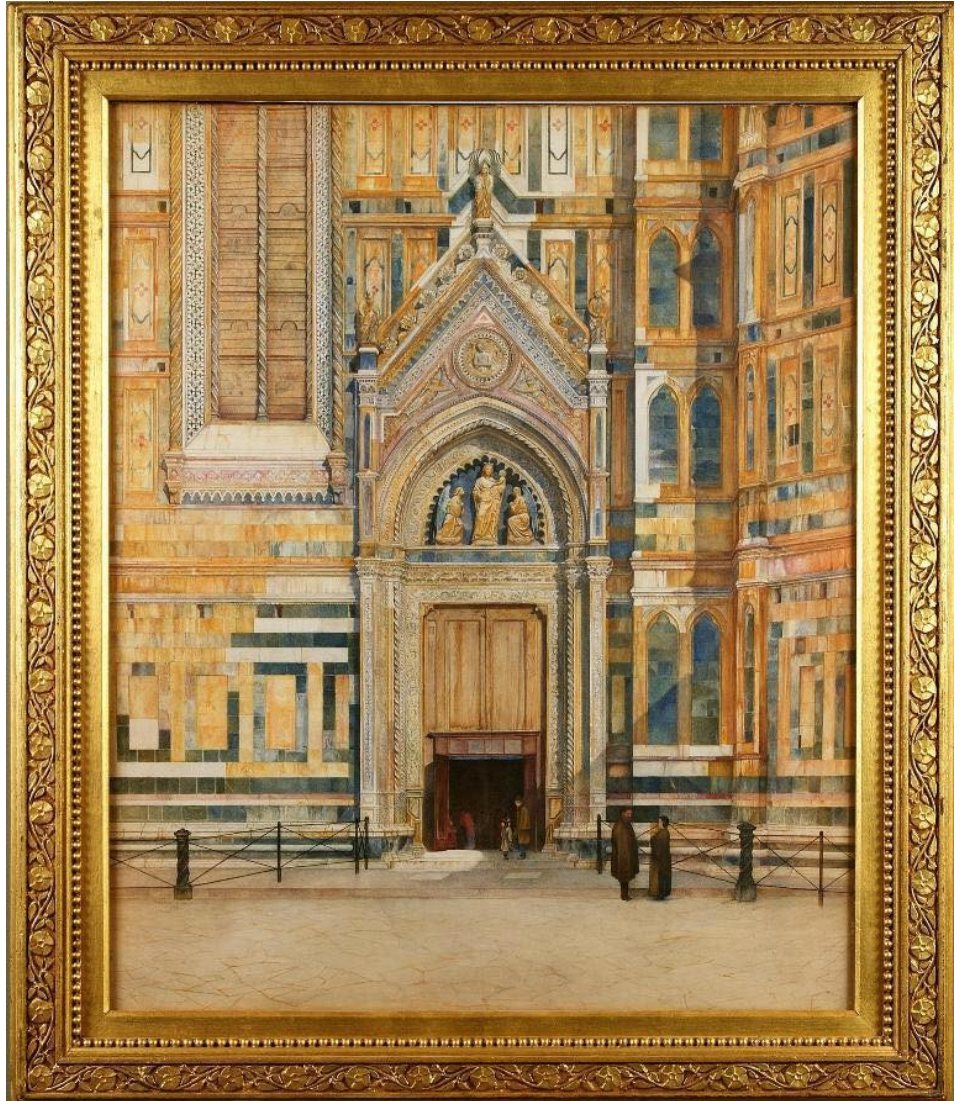
and then great artistic skill to capture the many colours correctly in paint. Despite the difficulty, Ruskin still felt that an artist should "day by day... draw some lovely natural form or flower ...choosing for study, in natural scenes, only what is beautiful and strong in life." That was a sure way to find a new sense of beauty in one's surroundings.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 14

Henry Roderick Newman,
"The South Door of the
Duomo, Florence,
Italy" (1881).

This doorway was one of
Ruskin's favourite
examples of sculptural
architecture. He described
its "inconceivable
exquisiteness" and the
beauty of its neighbouring
windows. Looking closely
at the doorway, Ruskin
described how the leaf and
animal decoration around
the doorway appears
uniform at a distance, but
when observed more
closely, the details of the
leaves and the animals are
seen to adopt a much more
natural style. For Ruskin,
this showed a "harmony of
classical restraint" and
"exhaustless fancy." The
building dates from the
1300s. By the 1870s, the



coloured marble that decorated the walls was being replaced with newly-cut slabs. Ruskin much preferred the weathered medieval facings thinking that natural wear and tear was more in harmony with the door's ornamental carving. This watercolour clearly shows both old and new marble. When Ruskin commissioned it, he applied to Florence's authorities to stop the construction and remove the scaffolding that hampered Newman's view.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

On This Day in 1940: former Guild Master (1925-34), Hugh Charles Fairfax-Cholmeley died.

Read a short account of him here: [http://](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../Hi.../EaglesPastMaster.pdf)

www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../Hi.../EaglesPastMaster.pdf

Download an obituary here: [http://](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../.../PMFairfaxCholmeley.pdf)

www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../.../PMFairfaxCholmeley.pdf

APRIL 15



John Wharltton Bunney, "View of Florence from the Boboli Gardens, Italy" (1864).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 16

Louise Blandy, "Study of Seven Angels" detail from "The Resurrection" after Fra Angelico (1883-4).

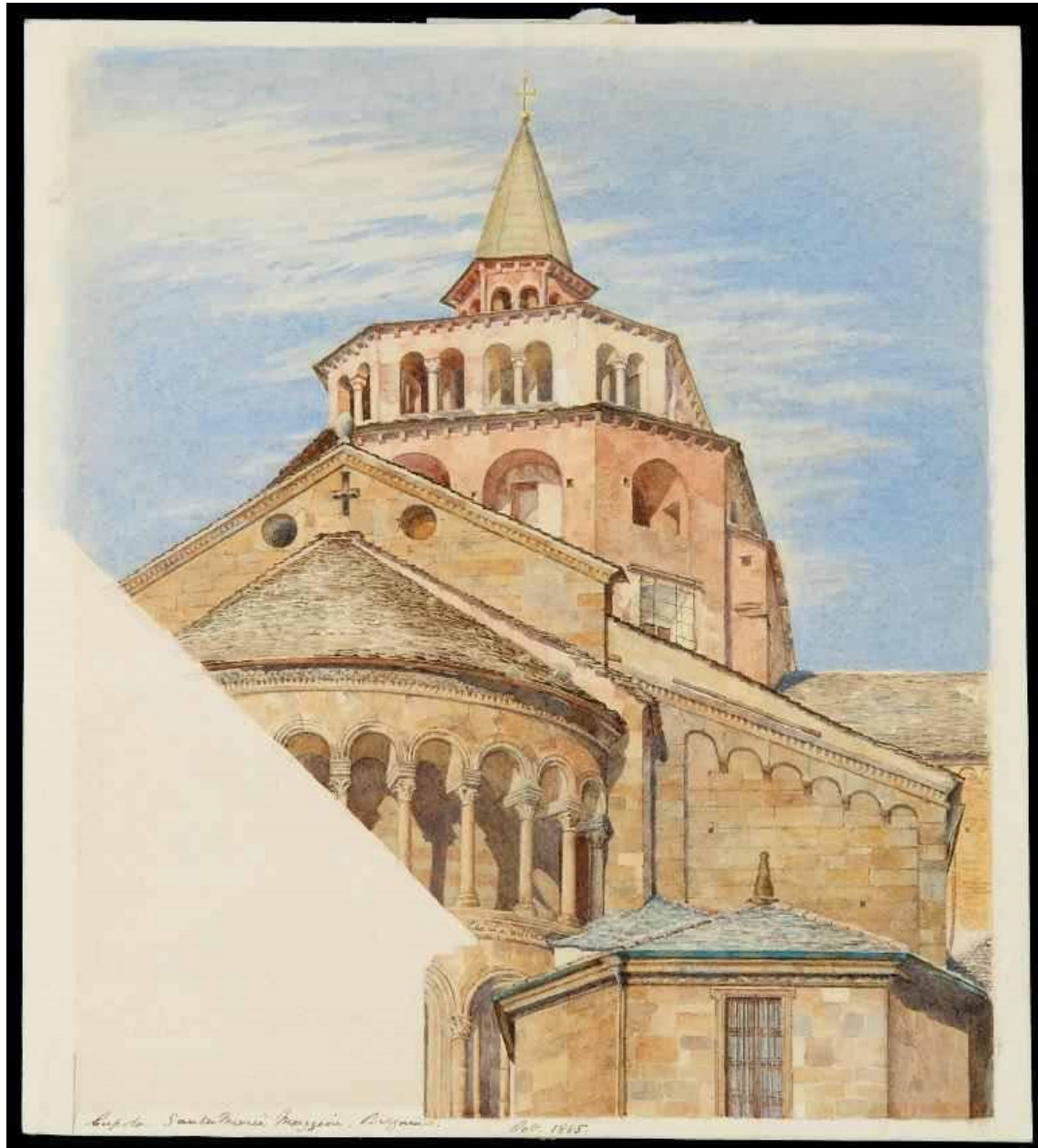
This detail is taken from the lower left area of an altarpiece, "Christ Glorified in the Courts of Heaven" also known as "The Resurrection," painted by Fra Angelico in about 1423-4. This particular panel is one of four "predella" panels, or lower panels that are placed below the main section of an altarpiece. The whole work shows Christ at the centre, holding a banner with the symbol of the resurrection: a red cross on a white background. He is surrounded by 266 angels. According to legend, Fra Angelico took the inspiration for his painting directly from his miraculous visions of heaven and consequently John Ruskin described his work as the "will of God."

Ruskin found Angelico's figures to be of the "highest beauty" and his "power of expression by bodily gesture" very great. Blandy made this copy for Ruskin at London's National Gallery. Informally, Ruskin was her art teacher, and he did much to encourage the development of her skill and talent.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



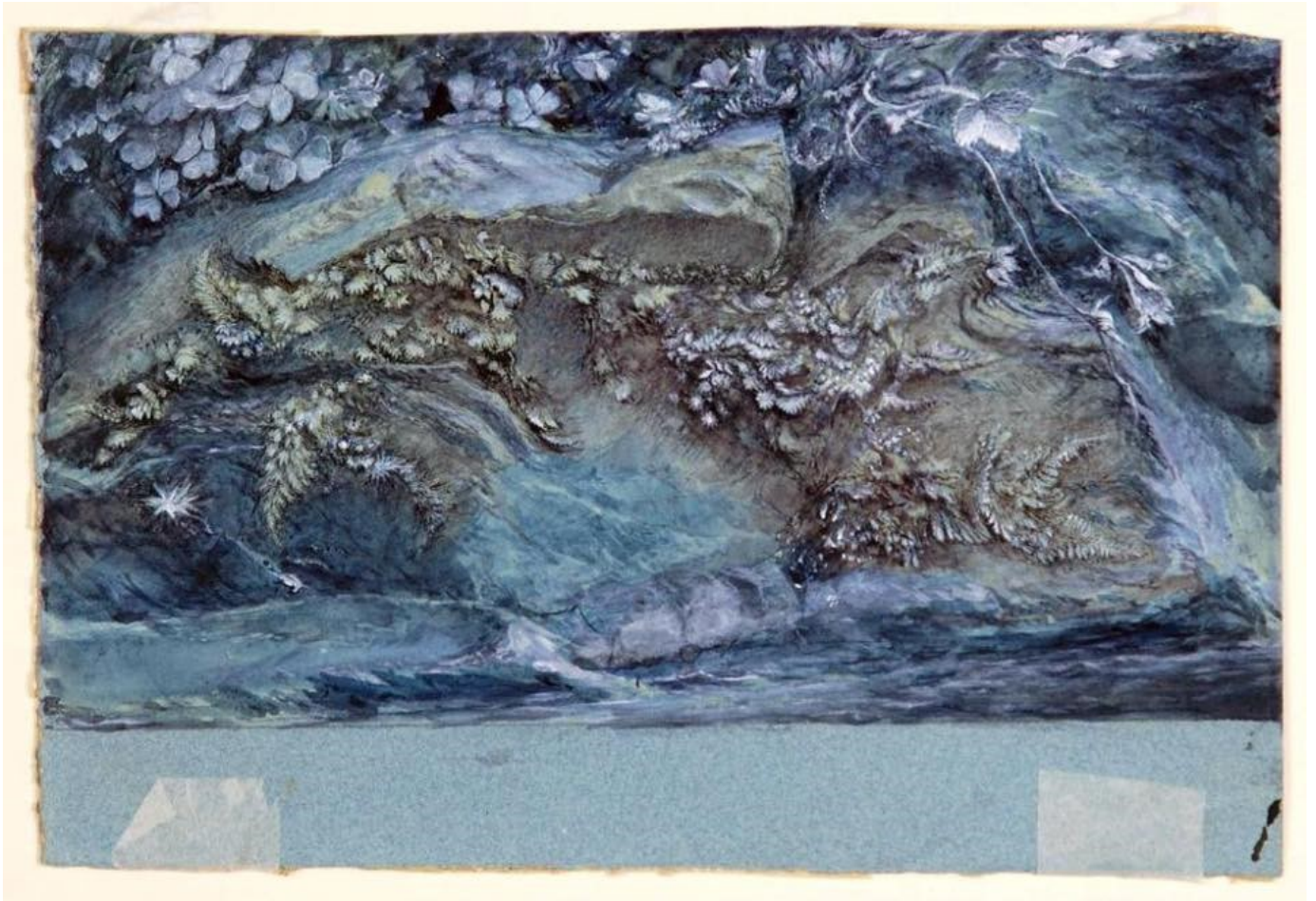
APRIL 17



Frank Randal, "The Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, from the East, Bergamo, Italy" (1885).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 18



John Ruskin, "Study of Moss, Fern and Wood-Sorrel, upon a Rocky River Bank" (1875-9).

Ruskin initially titled this drawing "Study of Moss and Wood sorrel, shown natural size for their sculpturesque forms". He added it to a picture cabinet called "Treatment of Foliage in Sculpture" along with other leaf studies. Ruskin hoped that sculptors would find inspiration in the contours of leaves, stems and tendrils so that their work would reflect the beauty of nature. Ruskin cited many examples of medieval sculptors who looked to nature to inspire their carving. Ruskin said of a sculptor who had worked on Dunblane Cathedral in Scotland, for instance, "that man was content to work under Nature's teaching; and instead of putting a merely formal dogtooth, as everybody else did at the time, he went down to the woody bank of the sweet river... [and] took up a few of the fallen leaves that lay by it, and he set them in his arch." Ruskin wrote of this drawing, in a private comment to Henry Swan, the first curator of what is now the Ruskin Collection, that "the strawberry leaf and oxalis are well painted. The moss is a failure; but has qualities."

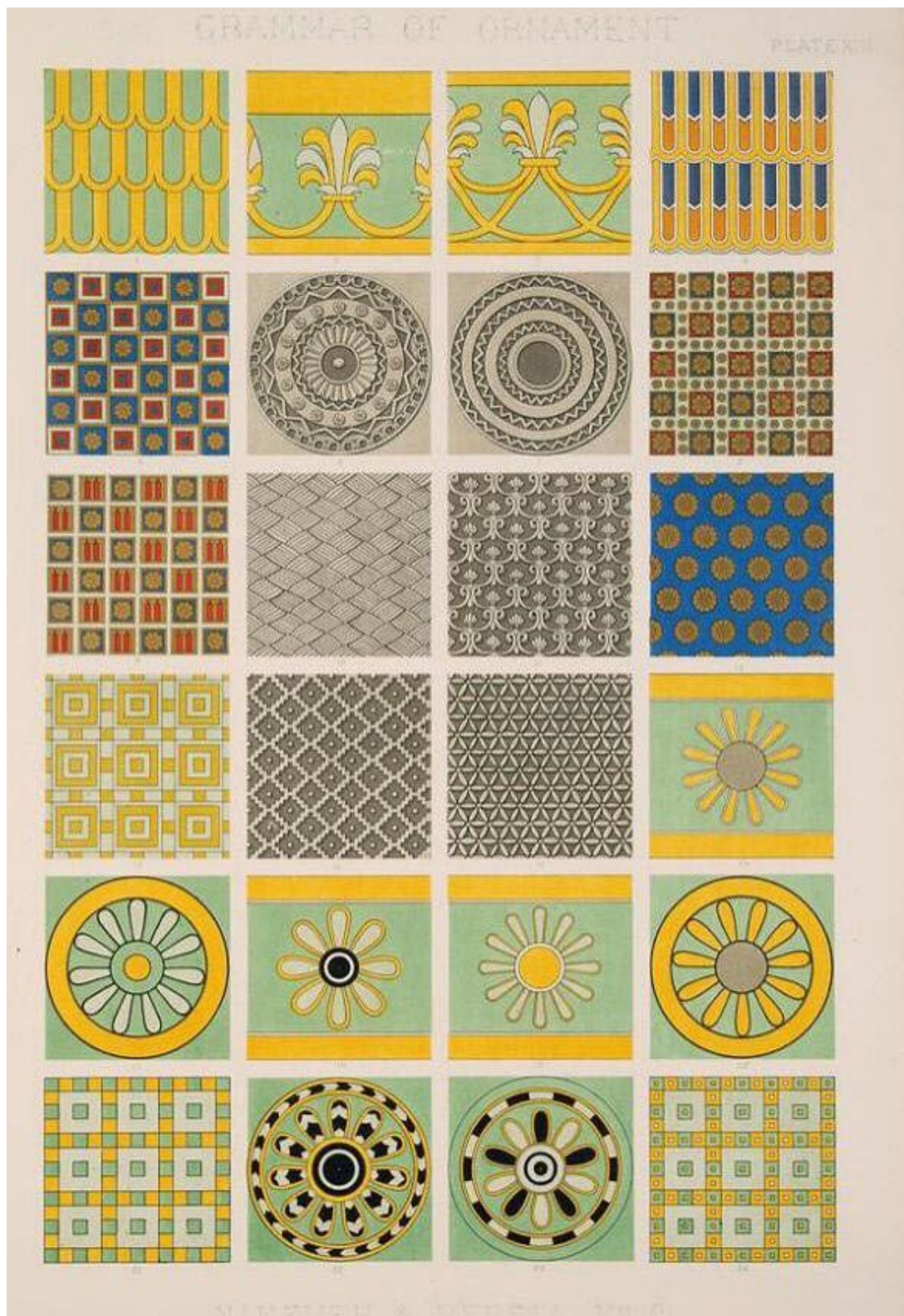
<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 19

On This Day in 1874: death of Owen Jones (1809-1874).

"Nineveh & Persia, No. 2" from "The Grammar of Ornament" Plate XIII (1856) after Owen Jones.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 20

On This Day in 1899, Joseph Wolf (1820-99) died.
Joseph Wolf, "Upland Buzzard" [*Buteo hemilasius*] (1844-50). From the Eyton Collection.

<http://www.gildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 21



Angelo Alessandri, "Ponte dei Servi, with the Campanile of Santa Fosca, Venice, Italy" (1877).

Ruskin said this campanile (i.e. belfry) was "late gothic uninjured by restorations and peculiarly Venetian in being crowned with a cupola, not the pyramid."

[http://](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/)

www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/

On This Day in 1816: Charlotte Brontë was born.

Charlotte Brontë on Ruskin's *Modern Painters*: 'I have lately been reading *Modern Painters*, and I have derived from the work much genuine pleasure and, I hope, some edification; at any rate it made me feel how ignorant I had previously been on the subject which it treats. Hitherto I have only had instinct to guide me in judging of art; I feel now as if I had been walking blindfold — this book seems to give me eyes. I do wish I had pictures within reach by which to test the new sense. Who can read these glowing descriptions of (J. M. W.) Turner's works without longing to see them? However eloquent and convincing the language in which another's opinion is placed before you, you still wish to judge for yourself. I like this author's style much; there is both energy and beauty in it: I like himself too, because he is such a hearty admirer. He does not give Turner half-measure of praise or veneration; he eulogizes, he reverences him (or rather his genius) with his whole soul. One can sympathize with that sort of devout, serious admiration (for he is no rhapsodist) one can respect it; and yet possibly many people would laugh at it.'



—Letter (1843).

APRIL 22



Charlotte C. Murray, "Study of a Crocus and Other Spring Plants" (1874).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 23



Happy St George's Day.
Albrecht Dürer, "St George on
Foot" and "St George on
Horseback" (c.1508).

John Ruskin bought a number of
Dürer's engravings for the Ruskin
Collection of the Guild of St
George. St George served as the
symbol of Ruskin's utopian society,
so he was particularly keen on these
prints. Ruskin admired Dürer for his
engravings and woodcuts

principally for his mastery of form.
He felt Dürer could depict objects
and scenes simply with lines and
yet their textures, tones, lights and
shadows were always evident.

[http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/
the-collection/](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/)

"St George on Foot" is available as
a greetings card (ref. C15) from the
Guild shop - see our online

catalogue: [http://
www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../201](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../201)



Happy St George's Day.

(Right) "St George and the Dragon":
Miniature in the Grimani Breviary (late
19th Century).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



(Below) J. W. Bunney, "West front of
San Michele, Florence, showing the
Statue of St George [on the left], by
Donatello" (1865).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>





Happy St George's Day.

Frank Randal, "Study of Stained Glass, 'St George', Chartres Cathedral, France" (1881).

This window is found in the clerestory at Chartres, high above the nave. St George is recognisable by his armour, weapons and banner. Below is his martyrdom. Legend says that before being beheaded, St George was tortured by a wheel of swords that was turned around him. John Ruskin commissioned Randal to make illustrations of medieval stained glass, as if they were "missal illuminations" i.e. without "troubling... about effects of light." Along with colour, he was interested in the windows' story-telling qualities saying: "Whenever you want to know whether you have got any real power of composition or adaptation in ornament, don't be content with sticking leaves together by the ends—anybody can do that; but try to conventionalize a butcher's or a greengrocer's, with Saturday night customers buying cabbage and beef. That will tell you if you can design or not." Ruskin felt very pleased with Randal's studies, writing that they were "the very best drawings from glass I have ever seen."

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



John Ruskin, "Upper Part of the Figure of St George" (1872) after Carpaccio.
This detail is part of a large painting that depicts the moment St George slays the dragon with a lance. It shows St George in a rocky landscape, surrounded by the corpses of the dragon's victims. The princess whom St George rescued stands to his right and the city of Silene appears in the background to his left. Ruskin painted another copy of the whole painting [see May 13] this work showing these details at much the same time as this painting, putting this work in Sheffield's Ruskin Collection too. The original work is by Vittore Carpaccio, a Venetian artist who worked in the late 1400s and early 1500s. It is part of a cycle or group of paintings in the Scuola of San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, which Carpaccio painted between 1502 and 1507. Carpaccio decorated the Scuola with paintings showing the stories of the patron saints of the Schiavoni brotherhood: St George, St Jerome and St Tryphon. You can purchase this image as a greetings card from the Guild shop (ref. C21). Download the online catalogue: http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/.../2016/Guild_FullCatalogu...

APRIL 24



Charlotte C. Murray,
Three Studies of
Flower Stems (c.
1880).

[http://www.guild
ofstgeorge.org.uk/the
-collection/](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/)



APRIL 25

Frank Randal, "Apse of Amiens Cathedral, France" (1881).

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame d'Amiens is the second tallest of the French Gothic cathedrals. Its nave, or main section, is over 42 metres high. Work began on the cathedral in 1200, partly in honour of Amiens' precious relic, the head of St John the Baptist, which had been brought back to the city during the Crusades. The building was complete by 1264, but it took until 1406 for both towers to be completed. The towers are of different heights, but because most of the nave and choir were built within one century, the style of the building is largely uniform. Many sculptures decorate the inside of the cathedral and also the massive portals, or arches, around the doorways at the western front of the Cathedral. These were originally painted in many colours to create a stunning visual effect.

Ruskin often mentioned Amiens Cathedral in his writings and produced an architectural and theological guide to the cathedral and city called "The Bible of Amiens" between 1880 and 1885. In this work, Ruskin wrote that the magnificent building was "built by the faith of the Franks" and was the "Parthenon" of Gothic architecture (Viollet-le-Duc said the same of Beauvais Cathedral). Ruskin described the apse itself as "formed merely of a series of windows surmounted by pure gables of open work". He wrote that this was "not only the best, but the very first thing done perfectly in its manner, by Northern Christendom... a perfect work... of Gothic Architecture."

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 26



On This Day in 1785:
John James Audubon was born.

"American Pelican" (1836) after John James Audubon. This plate comes from Audubon's "Birds of America," which is considered to be one of the most beautiful illustrated books ever produced. Audubon observed and painted many of the birds and their habitats from life, but also shot and stuffed birds so he could study them properly. He wired them into positions he had witnessed the birds make, so that they appeared more lifelike in the actual watercolours. Nevertheless, Audubon was worried by large-scale hunting, and saw "Birds of America" as a way of recording America's birds for conservation purposes. Even so, Audubon arranged the book's 435 plates for visual effect rather than scientific accuracy in order to make the book

interesting to art collectors as well as natural scientists. The Audubon plates in the Ruskin Collection were collected originally by the ornithologist Thomas Campbell Eyton, who cut up and folded his plates so they would fit in folders he had made to hold his collection of 7000 bird images. This is one of the book's largest plates, and Eyton's folds are clearly visible.

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 27

Thomas Matthews Rooke (1842-1942) "Auxerre Cathedral and Town from the River, France" (1886).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 28

On This Day in 1897: the death of printmaker, James Charles Armytage, responsible for this plate, "Wall-Veil Decoration, San Michele, Lucca" by John Ruskin, published in Ruskin's "The Stones of Venice" volume I (1851).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>



APRIL 29



Angelo Alessandri, "The Fall of the Giants"—Fresco in the Piazza delle Erbe, Verona, Italy (1884).

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

APRIL 30

Edward Donovan (1768-1837)
"Studies of Invertebrate Animals"
volume II (1790-1810).
Butterflies and Insects.
This is not a book as such, but a volume of Donovan's collected watercolour illustrations that were bound together in the 1870s for the Ruskin Collection. It contains studies made to illustrate several of his books on natural history, which he produced under titles such as "The Naturalist's Repository, or Miscellany of Exotic Natural History Exhibiting Rare and Beautiful Specimens of Foreign Birds, Insects, Shells, Quadrupeds, Fish and Marine Productions". Donovan made sure he had control over how these watercolours were reproduced in the books by engraving and hand-colouring them himself. Ruskin considered Donovan's illustrations "entirely beautiful and wonderful". He also praised Donovan as one of the many artists of an earlier age who made spectacular natural history illustrations "for love and truth, and not for lust and gold".

<http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/the-collection/>

