

John Roddam Spencer Stanhope (1829-1908)

Brief biography

Perhaps the most written about of the artists in the Hidden Art project, Roddam was the son of John Spencer Stanhope of Cannon Hall (1787-1873) and Lady Elizabeth Wilhelmina Coke (1795-1873) daughter of Thomas Coke, 1st Earl of Leicester. He had four sisters and a brother Walter (1827-1911) who inherited Cannon Hall.

Roddam and Walter together with the Rev. Charles Tiplady Pratt, were the force behind the building of the Cawthorne Victoria Jubilee Museum which now holds work by Roddam, the Hold family and Samuel Swift, all part of this exhibition. The Spencer Stanhope family also encouraged and supported Thomas Witlam Atkinson who also features in the exhibition.

Educated at Rugby School and Christ Church Oxford, Roddam became part of a group of Pre-Raphaelite artists. Living at Norwood Farm, Elmbridge, Sandroyd, near Cobham and Hill House, Cawthorne, Roddam moved to a villa near Florence in 1880 for health reasons.

The two small works loaned from the Cawthorne Victoria Jubilee show the rural landscape of Tuscany. Their frames are also of note. They are Pre-Raphaelite in style but it is not known if they are of English or Florentine manufacture. It is a style he has used many times for works given to the museum.

Roddam painted the panels of the Annunciation for a pulpit, made in Florence, but created for the Parish Church of All Saints Cawthorne.

In the 1870s Marlborough College Wiltshire, decided to upgrade their school chapel. The architect was G.F. Bodley. Roddam was commissioned to create twelve works (approximately eight feet by five feet) to decorate the chapel. These are represented pictorially in the exhibition along with two small family portraits by him.

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