

‘THE STATE OF THE BRITISH COAST STUDY’

Observable Changes Through Imagery 1770-Present Day

This year long study, which commenced in June 2018, is being led by Coastal & Geotechnical Services working in partnership with a wide range of coastal management and art-related organisations. It aims to bridge the disciplines of science and the arts and thereby improve our understanding of 250 years of physical, environmental, and cultural heritage change around the British coast.

What lessons can we learn from observations of changes affecting the British coast since the late eighteenth century? How and to what extent have our coastal landscapes, natural environments and cultural heritage been affected by both natural and human influences over that time?

Increasingly sophisticated technologies now allow us to observe and monitor changing conditions within our coastal zones, but alongside these tools we can now also take particular advantage of the wisdom of hindsight by interrogating a vast additional resource of historical artworks that are becoming increasingly available online.

Over the last decade the Public Catalogues Foundation (PCF), a registered charity, in collaboration with public art galleries, museums and other owners of artworks, arranged the photographing of all the nation's 212,000 oil paintings; these are now available for research and interrogation on the ArtUk website (<https://artuk.org/>). *The Watercolour World* (www.watercolourworld.org/), under the joint patronage of HRH the Prince of Wales and HRH the Duchess of Cornwall, has started to create a visual online topographical record of the world through watercolours spanning the period from 1600-1900, and it will be launched in February 2019.

The Watercolour World will display watercolours recording, for example, topography, architecture, flora and fauna drawing on the estimated 6.5 million watercolours in public collections in the United Kingdom, as well as some private collections; these will be indexed geographically on its website. In view of the fine detail of the watercolour painting technique, this medium also provides the opportunity to reappraise not just the physical changes affecting the British coast but also changes to the natural environment and our rich cultural heritage over time.

The *State of the British Coast Study* is being undertaken by *Coastal & Geotechnical Services*, which has a long-standing experience of both coastal management and the interpretation of historical imagery following studies supported by The Crown Estate, the European Commission and Historic England.

3. ‘Unloading a Coal Boat at Horseshoe Bay, Bonchurch, Isle of Wight’ by Thomas Miles Richardson Jnr. Watercolour. 1861. Courtesy: IW Council Heritage Service.



1. ‘Plymouth Sound, Devon’ by François d'Orléans. Watercolour, c.1856. Courtesy: Royal Collective Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2018.



2. ‘St Monance, Fife’ by John Blake MacDonald. Oil. 1884. Courtesy: © 1992 Christie's Images Limited.



Importantly, this previous research allowed the development and refining of an art ranking system, which enabled the preparation of a short-list of those artists and their works that are deemed to be most accurate in their depictions of each part of the British coast.

The study is being undertaken in close collaboration with a wide range of coastal organisations, interest groups, museums, art galleries, arts charities and other stakeholders in England, Wales and Scotland.

These include statutory bodies, coastal groups, networks and cultural heritage interests that are responsible for or involved in environmental protection, nature conservation, coastal planning and management, culture and heritage.

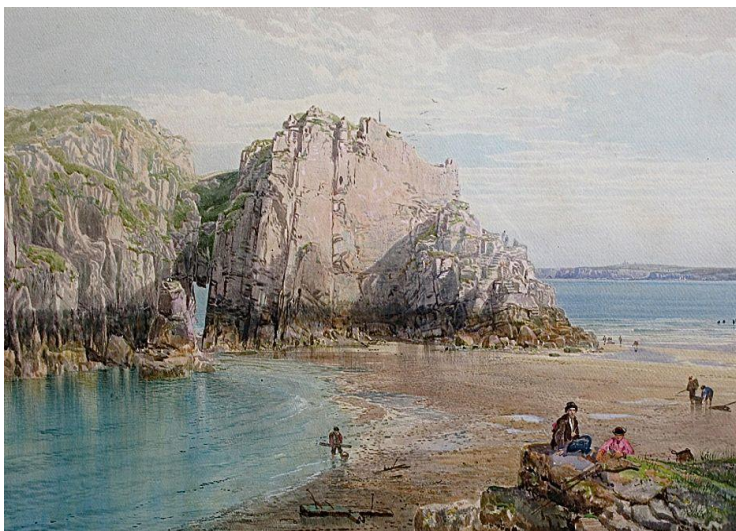
An assessment of changes to the British coast that are observable through 250 years of artworks will be evaluated through 32 case study sites (15 in England, 4 in Wales and 13 in Scotland).

To read the Study Brief and newsletters visit:
www.coastalandgeotechnicalservices.com.

4. *'Bow and Arrow Castle, Portland, Dorset'* by John W Upham.
Watercolour. 1821. Courtesy: Guy Peppiatt Fine Art.



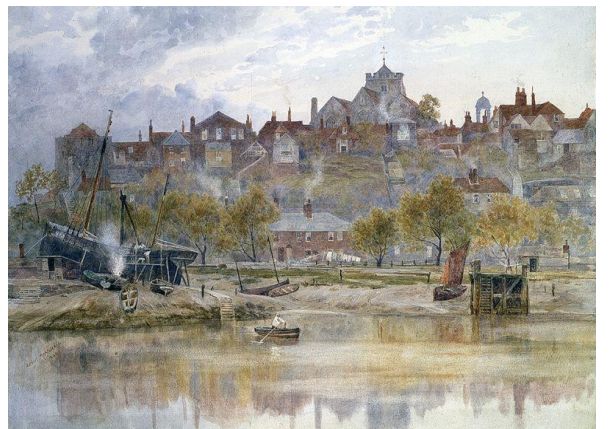
5. *'St Catherine's, Tenby, South Wales'* by George Wolfe (1834-1890).
Watercolour. Courtesy: Newman Fine Art.



6. *'On the Seafront at Largo, Ayrshire'* by Duncan Cameron (1837-1916). Oil. Courtesy: Lyon & Turnbull.



7. *'Start Point, Devon'* by George Wolfe (1834-1890).
Watercolour. Courtesy: Maas Gallery.



8. *'Rye, East Sussex'* by Herbert M. Marshall.
Watercolour. 1860. Courtesy: Chris Beetles Gallery.

***A small selection from over 600 images
contained in the developing Final Study
Report.***

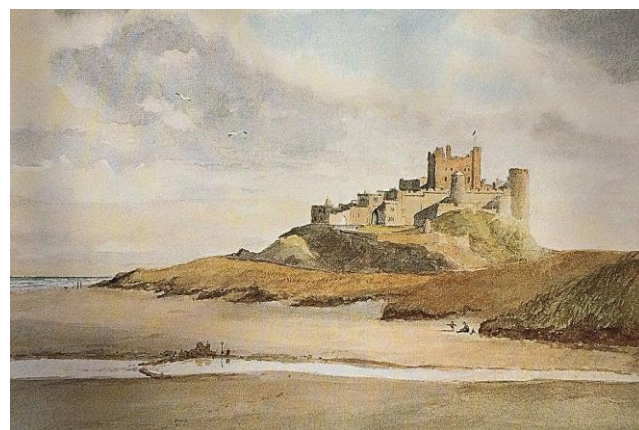


Above: 'Great Orme's Head near Llandudno' by Thomas Lindsey (1793-1861). Watercolour. Courtesy: Newman Fine Art.

Top Right: 'Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland' by William Daniell RA. Aquatint. 1822. Courtesy: Grosvenor Prints.

Middle Right: 'Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland' by David Addey. Watercolour. 1999. Courtesy: David Addey.

Bottom Right: 'Bambrough Castle, Northumberland'. Courtesy: Paul Broadbent/Shutterstock Images.



Can you assist this study?

As this year long study develops we will be searching for more highly detailed artworks of the coastline of Great Britain, painted between 1770-1930. If you have an artwork or other art image of the coast that shows the coastal zone, cliffs or shoreline in great detail, do please contact us by email at rgmcinnes@btinternet.com.

For more information about this study visit: www.coastalandgeotechnicalservices.com.



Over 70 sequences of images such as these (above), spanning the time period 1770-Present Day, illustrate the nature of change within the 32 case study sites.

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THE WATERCOLOUR WORLD





12. (Above) *'No Man's Land, Margate, Kent'* by William Parrott. Oil on Board. 1869. Courtesy: ©1989 Christie's Images Limited.

13. *'Grange over Sands, Cumbria'* by Sidney Percy. Oil. 1824. Courtesy: Willow Gallery.

