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The category 'Christian' is far more decisive both for the theologian and the art critic, than such categories as 'classic', 'romantic', or 'realist', which belong to the literature of aesthetes rather than to the nature of human experience.[1]

INTRODUCTION

Recently, formalist art criticism was in vogue to the practical exclusion of all other approaches to art. The work of art was judged on the basis of aesthetic considerations only. The system of values or the philosophy which animated the work was consistently ignored. The emphasis was on form, method or process. Discussion of the content, or the motivation that had stirred the artist to portray things in such a way and not in another, and to paint this and not that, was taboo. This particular approach often went together with a view which considered figurative art (which after all deals more obviously with subject matter than abstract art), an anachronism.

We are at last witnessing a reversal of this approach, for example in the recent exhibition of abstract American art at the National Gallery in Washington, surprisingly entitled: American Art at Mid-Century; the Subjects of the Artist. Anne Brodsky, referring to this exhibition in her Arts Canada editorial, said:

> If we, jaded by the sixties' and seventies' rhetoric of formalist criticism have wished for a more concrete and emotional approach to abstraction, one that marries the interpretation of form and structure with meaning, were astounded that a theme exhibition had been mounted on the basis of the "subject matter" of abstraction, artists of our acquaintance were elated, reassured, but altogether unamazed, because these artists, all of them "abstractionists", know that their art is rooted in subject matter.[2]

Was subject matter taboo because it was thought to be the sole

prerogative of figurative art? Now that even abstract art has been conceded subject matter, maybe a rehabilitation of figurative art will also ensue.

The shift in emphasis then, is from questions concerning the how of art, to questions concerning the why. The how is obviously extremely closely linked with the why. It is its expression, but the why question is maybe more urgent in our age where techniques have so often taken precedence over meanings.

I propose therefore, to study the work of Stanley Spencer precisely by focussing on his subject matter, on the inspiration which was the determinant of the form of his powerful paintings. Spencer wrote in one of his letters;

> ...in the days of Botticelli and before him, it was a foregone conclusion that a man can paint. How to paint was never considered; they knew that their important consideration was what to paint, and my contention is that they only knew how to paint, because they knew what to paint. It was knowing clearly what to do that inspired them and gave them ability (as inspired always are able) to paint what they wanted.[3]

Stanley Spencer remains a riddle. He is not easily classified in relation to the movements of his day. Was he a naif painter? a Cubist? a Symbolist? or maybe an Expressionist? Critics do not agree on the label that fits him best. In this thesis I try to show that his work can best be understood, not by aesthetic criteria, but by examining the faith that inspired his work. Eric Newton corroborates my intuition in the quote that precedes this chapter.

I propose therefore to look at both the family background and the

social milieu which helped to form Spencer, the man of faith. I will look at the artistic currents which had an effect on the painter. I will then examine his work under the three following classifications; 'realistic', 'erotic', and 'religious'. I will study his beliefs as expressed primarily in his paintings but also in his writings, in relation to traditional Christian doctrine. I will try to ascertain if and with what Christian spirituality Spencer can be identified with. Finally I will try to situate Spencer in the context of contemporary art. I do not hope to come up with definitive answers. All this study can hope to do, is indicate and suggest.

To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognised need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define. A human being has roots by virtue of his real, active and natural participation in the life of a community which preserves in living shape certain particular expectations for the future. This participation is a natural one, in the sense that it is automatically brought about by place, conditions of birth, profession and social surroundings. Every human being needs to have multiple roots. It is necessary for him to draw well nigh the whole of his moral, intellectual and spiritual life by way of the environment of which he forms a natural part.[4]

Simone Weil

Chapter I. ROOTS

Spencer was born in 1891, the eighth child in a family of nine surviving children. His father, William Spencer, was descended from a family of builders and cabinet makers that had been settled in Cookham, Berkshire, for many generations. Stanley remembers walls and buildings in Cookham which had been built by one or another of the Spencers in the previous generations. He also remembers the shop that his grandmother kept when he was a child. His father was a self-taught man, an organist and a piano teacher, also a poet of sorts and an amateur astronomer. He was on friendly terms with the Boston family, the gentry of the area. It was in their observatory that the Spencer father pursued the hobby of astronomy, and it was through them that Stanley would one day be able to finance his studies at The Slade.

Mr. Spencer had placed particular hopes in the education of his older children. He was proud of the musical talent of his oldest son Will who was a prodigy of sorts. By the time that Stanley and Gilbert the two youngest were of school-going age, Mr. Spencer, who was by then semi-retired, had lost interest in their education. The Spencers though no longer well off, retained some pretensions, and would not consider a state school for the two boys. They were therefore sent to a little local school run by their two older sisters, which was housed in a hut at the bottom of their garden and eventually in a house next door to theirs. The schooling thus obtained by the boys was extremely rudimentary. Even the two sisters considered them very ill-equipped at

the age of fourteen.

The Spencer family was extremely religious. William Spencer read the Bible aloud to his family in the evenings. Grace was said before each meal. The children went to Chapel with their mother who was a Wesleyan. As they grew older the Methodist Chapel was sold on account of lack of funds. They then attended the local Anglican church. Anglicanism was the father's religion, but Spencer throughout his life would remain more partial to the non-conformism of his mother's Methodist religion.

Stanley Spencer's father had a passion for music and literature. He shared those interests with his family. Besides the Bible, he read poetry and the Classics aloud to them. Stanley as a child had read Pilgrims Progress, to which he had even devised illustrations. He had also read children's versions of Brer Rabbit, Don Quioxte, Gulliver's Travels, and Tanglewood Tales. He continued to read the Bible throughout his life, and when in the army during the first World War, he was to become a voracious reader. Some of the authors with which he was familiar at the time according to his brother Gilbert, were Crashaw, Swinburne, Milton, Meredith, Hardy, Browning, and Dickens.

Music was another great influence in the Spencer home. Nearly all the Spencers played some instrument, and some of them were very good. The oldest boy Will would later hold a post as teacher at the Cologne Conservatory of Music. At night, William Spencer formed a quartet with his three eldest sons. Stanley and Gilbert heard them practice at nights. Stanley himself could play Bach by ear on the piano, and claims to have composed some of the Burghclere murals basing the composition on the structure of the fugue.

Spencer's exposure to the visual arts was limited to illustrations in books. As a child he was familiar with the Rackham illustrations, so popular in Victorian England. He was encouraged as a boy to take flower painting lessons from a young neighbour. Her father, though a village plumber, was an amateur painter. Stanley saw his landscapes of Cookham, two of which hung in the Spencer home.

The younger children had more freedom, under the supervision of their sisters, than the older children had had under the watchful eye of the parents. Stanley and his brother Gilbert roamed the neighbouring countryside and knew intimately every nook and cranny in Cookham. The semi-retired father organised community projects in which the children were also involved. One of the projects was the setting up of a lending library for the villagers in the Spencer home. The Everyman volumes so popular in those days were made available. The venture was a failure as no one turned up to loan the books but Gilbert and Stanley who labelled the books, had improved their spelling. Mr. Spencer also dictated articles from the local newspaper to the boys to improve their writing skills. This sketchy and incomplete education had nevertheless exposed Spencer to the richness of the Bible, to literature and music in a free, unhampered setting. His imagination and his faith developed producing the religious visions which would one day materialise into paintings. Spencer stored these mystical visions in his memory, and was to draw on them until his death. They were an amalgam of Cookham village life and scenes from the Bible. Spencer was to say of that period:

> My feelings for things being holy were very strong at the time.[5]

Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta was painted in 1959, the year of his death. It is an accurate rendition of an annual event which occurred in the village some fifty years in the past.

Stanley's childhood had been intensely happy. It endowed him with a sunny disposition. His poetic gifts and mystical leanings coupled with this happiness, were to produce paintings full of joy and vitality. Even his latter erotic paintings which were sometimes tinged with scatological connotations, were at heart inspired by a goodwill toward the whole of creation.

Stanley was of a very small stature. He had an extremely sensitive nature and often suffered from acute headaches as a child. He probably felt overwhelmed by this large family, and particularly by the dominant figure of his father. The father figure, sometimes identified with God, sometimes with the Holy Ghost, frequently appears in his painting, particularly in the long unhappy period after the breakdown of his second marriage. The drawings done at the same period often contain three figures. They are Stanley with a female companion and a third figure of the Holy Ghost who, in Stanley's own words is the 'condoner' or 'approver' of the situation. The Holy Ghost appears as an older, bearded figure, reminiscent of William Spencer, (plate I, page 11).

The archetypal couple, so obviously inspired by his parents, is perhaps the most recurrent element in Spencer's work. Whether they be lovers, as in Apple Gatherers (plate IV, page 26) or as God-the-Father and God-the-Son in Resurrection Cookham (plate VII, page 40), where these two members of the Trinity are strangely portrayed as man and wife, they reappear constantly in Spencer's work. The family played an enormous role in Spencer's life. As one of the younger children,

he remained dependent on it for longer than most. When at seventeen he had to travel to London to attend classes at the Slade, he at first needed to be accompanied. He never spent a night away from home until he was twenty-one. His brothers and sisters and his wife remained his most important friends. The relationships which occur in family life became for Stanley Spencer the models of God's love. The tenderness of family members for one another hinted to him of what love and union between people would be after death.

Cookham had been Spencer's first love. He was later to get involved with other communities in his life, but he always retained a special relationship with Cookham, its people and its landscapes. It meant home to Stanley, who was to remain homeless for so many years. He eventually did return to Cookham to spend the last years of his life there.

Spencer's family resembled many other Victorian families. Though accustomed to a simple style of life, even to hardships at times, the artisanal families based in rural England were unaffected by the poverty and degradation of the industrial towns. The Victorian era for the well-to-do and for those in the villages who had a certain degree of comfort, had been an era of domesticity. The families were often large, extended ones, and tended to include live-in servants. (Stanley remembered the maid and her room in their home. Fantasies connected with angels conversing in that room were to be later portrayed in one of his paintings). Education of the children often took place at home under the supervision of the Victorian father or mother. The pattern of family-centered home life often produced eccentric, creative and highly individualistic personalities. In the cultivated upper-class families, religion had often been abandoned already in the generation

Plate I. ELSIE CUTTING STICKS, 1943

pencil on paper, 10" by 15"

The Viscount Astor Collection

of the Spencer parents. It had been replaced with intellectual pursuits such as the study of the arts or sciences. Many of the brilliant members of Bloomsbury were products of such agnostic Victorian families.

Spencer on the other hand, much as his later friend and colleague Eric Gill, came from an artisanal, rural background. Religion had been one of the most important elements in their family education, in fact was part and parcel of their family life. It remained later the prime motive of their art. Eric Gill was to become a sculptor and founder of the Distributists - a Catholic, Socialist, back-to-the-land movement, with an emphasis on the practise of art as craft. Spencer would similarly become a religiously motivated artist, a poet and a mystic, who drew inspiration from his childhood visions throughout his life.

So the Victorian patterns of family life which were soon to disappear had played an important role in shaping Spencer the believer. Though he lacked the sophistication and erudition of his upper class contemporaries, he had nevertheless absorbed elements of the religious and literary culture of his day. Some feel that the village and small town life which he portrayed suffered from the limitations of parochialism. Yet Spencer had been able to find the holy in the ordinary. His family tradition had provided him with a religious faith and a joy so sadly lacking in his more sophisticated contemporaries. Spencer had seen Paradise in Cookham, much as another mystic, Samuel Plamer, had seen it in his beloved Shoreham. Spencer's roots, modest as they may appear to us today, had put him in touch with the Christian roots of the European tradition.

I now believe in nothing to put it shortly; but I do not the less believe in morality and co., and co., I mean to live and die like a gentleman.

Leslie Stephen
(Virginia Woolfe's father)[6]

...the Will that determined, face to face with its needs, the direction for the modern world, has reared up the steel trees where the green ones were lacking; has exploded in useful growths, and found wilder intricacies than those of nature.

Wyndham Lewis[7]

Chapter II. PRELUDE TO THE WAR OF 1914

It was in 1909 that Stanley Spencer went to London to attend art classes at The Slade, the leading art school of the day. At the time, the English art scene was undergoing the most significant transformations of its history.

Whistler (1834-1903) had revolutionised Victorian painting by freeing it of anecdote and by emphasizing such formal aspects as colour and composition for their own sake. Later, Sickert (1860-1942), a disciple of Whistler adopted the loose brushstroke, the lightened palette and the spontaneous composition of the Impressionists. He spent long periods in France and had inspired admiration for Degas among his disciples in England. But at the age of fifty when Cezanne and the Post-Impressionists were being shown in London for the first time, Sickert did not belong to the admirers.

In 1910, Roger Fry, avant-garde critic and painter, organised a 'scandalous' exhibition. It was held at the Grafton Galleries and was entitled 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists'. Gauguin as well as Cezanne, Picasso, Matisse, Renoir and other painters of the Paris school, were represented. These artists were being shown for the first time in England and they caused a stir.

But other even more radical occurrences had been accompanying the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition of 1910. Since 1904, Kandinsky, who was gradually moving towards complete abstraction, had been regularly showing his work at the London Allied Artists Salon. Exhibitions of

Severini, a leading Italian Futurist, as well as Exhibitions from Germany and Russia followed in 1913. Marinetti was asked to speak at the renowned dinner in the Restaurant Florence in London, where he recited in a most dramatic manner a poem about the siege of Adrianople. Wyndham Lewis and friends were present at the dinner. The impact of Severini's exhibition and of Marinetti's sheer animal vitality was enormous on the young English artists. It was eventually to crystallise into a programme and even a movement under the dynamic leadership of Wyndham Lewis. At first, however, the sympathisers of this revolutionary mood seemed to merge with the general modernising tendencies which were rife in the aftermath of the Post-Impressionist exhibition.

Fry organised a second Post-Impressionist exhibition in the autumn of 1912, which included an English section showing among others, work by Duncan Grant, Wyndham Lewis, Henry Lamb, Vanessa Bell and others. Eric Gill, the sculptor and graphic artist and future friend of Spencer's was also one of the participants in this exhibition. While lecturing at The Slade, no doubt on the Paris school, Fry had spotted Spencer's student work entitled John Donne Arriving in Heaven. He admired it and included it as the only student work in the second Post-Impressionist exhibition.

By 1914 the change in the London art world was evident. Artists had begun to assimilate the tendencies pouring in from abroad with which they had been bombarded since 1900. They began to split up into groups according to ideological and temperamental tendencies. The Exhibition of the Camden Town Group and Others, from December 1913 to January 1914, brought the different factions of innovative painters together, but the unity was illusory. In fact there were two distinct

tendencies, one springing from influences due to the French school, and the other inspired by the Italian Futurists.

So it was due to the initiative and enthusiasm of Roger Fry that London was exposed to the Paris school in the few years before the First World War. He was also instrumental in introducing and explaining Cezanne in the years when the London public and the London art world were totally unprepared for it. He was also the founder of the Omega Workshops, an atelier where artists worked as decorators, furniture and textile designers which enabled them to survive while they did their own experimental work on the side.

It is worth mentioning here that from 1910 Fry was an active and influential member of a group of friends that met regularly in the home of Virginia, Vanessa, and Adrian Stephen, in Fitzroy Square, London. The group had originated in Trinity College Cambridge in 1899, at a time of extreme philosophical brilliance. McTaggart, Bertrand Russell, Whitehead and G.E. Moore were all fellows of Trinity. Some of them had been members of a semi-secret Cambridge society called the Apostles. Their discussions bore on literary, philosophical, and social questions. Maynard Keynes, the renowned economist, and Toby Leslie, brother to Virginia Woolfe, were some of the original members. In 1904, the group began to meet in London. Thoby died tragically in 1906. By then Vanessa Stephen had married the art critic Clive Bell and the group had enlarged to contain some artists and art critics. However, it remained primarily an intellectual and literary milieu. When Roger Fry became acquainted with them in 1910, he had unprecedented influence on the group's esthetic tastes and theories. Fry was older than the original Cambridge based group, and had a totally different intellectual background. He had never been a disciple of G.E. Moore and his background

had been solidly Quaker which was to have a profound influence on his thinking.

Fry's friends were predominantly upper-class, if bohemian and unorthodox in style. They were highly sophisticated, erudite, brilliant. They thought of themselves as liberal, tolerant and curious. The virtues they valued most were intellectual honesty and objectivity. Their attitudes were iconoclastic with regard to the hypocritical Victorian mores. Lytton Strachey, one of the group, had published a book called Eminent Victorians in 1915, which caused a stir because it treated some of the most revered Victorian figures like Cardinal Manning, General Gordon, Florence Nightingale and Thomas Arnold as personalities with flaws rather than heroes. Some of the most respected English intellectuals and men and women of letters of the epoch such as Maynard Keynes, Virginia Woolfe, and E.M. Forster were members of the Bloomsbury group. Among the painters and art critics we can note, Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell, Roger Fry, Dora Carrington, Clive Bell, most of whom participated in the Omega Workshops.

Because of the liveliness of the London scene, artists were attracted to it from other countries and even continents. Ezra Pound, a young and talented poet from New York, came to live in London in 1908, and so did the sculptor Jacob Epstein. Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, another sculptor, came from Paris. Pound coined a new word, 'the vortex', which was picked up by Wyndham Lewis. For Pound it meant a central magnetic field, towards which the innovative ideas of the day were gyrating. The industrial connotations were obvious. In the meantime, Wyndham Lewis had left the Omega Workshops with a bang on account of some misunderstanding with Roger Fry. They were to become enemies for

life. Lewis, excited by the presence of the Italian Futurists in London decided to form his own milieu. He founded the Vorticists, and inspired a doctrine which resembled the Italian Futurists revolutionary theories, but which prided itself on being distinctively English. The Vorticists hoped to change not only art, but society. They were tempted by abstraction and placed an emphasis on the purely formal aspects of art, but they never totally abandoned figuration. They produced hard-edged paintings with dynamic diagonal compositions, where basic colours predominated. The Vorticist pictorial theory was an inconsistent as the painting tended to be uniform. The work of the Vorticists was an amalgam of the static ideas of cubism and the kinetic dynamism of the Futurists. A few talented painters like Bomberg participated in the Vorticists shows without entirely subscribing to their theories. Lewis hoped to distance his movement from what he called the 'insipid domestic scenes' of the Paris school which he considered outdated in 1914. He was also alien to the Futurist preoccupations with time and movement. He was hoping that the Vorticists would develop a status of their own as a genuine English school. The Rebel Workshop rivalling Fry's Omega was set up. A few months after the outbreak of hostilities, the Vorticists published a Manifesto, and an art journal called Blast. The feverish activity of Wyndham Lewis, painter, editor and organiser subsided only when some of the artists were called to arms. Some were killed at the front, and the impetus behind the movement could not be regained. Lewis tried to resuscitate Blast after the war, but his attempts were unsuccessful and by 1920 the Vorticist movement had died.

Vorticism had been keen to cut all ties with the past and with tradition. It left a body of work characterised by its energy, its lack of meditative qualities, and its angular forms inspired by an industrial

age. It is relevant to this study in that it set the stage for post-war British art and helped to break the links with the values of the Victorian era.

Though Bloomsbury was primarily a literary and intellectual movement consisting of quite disparate individuals, it nevertheless represented a particular stance which valued sensibility and reason above all other qualities.

These two movements are in no way comparable. Bloomsbury was primarily a literary movement. The artists and critics associated with it did however play the important role of preparing public opinion in Britain for the advent of abstraction in art. The Vorticists on the other hand were primarily artists. They, like similar groups in Germany, Italy and Russia at the time, had a militant programme advocating man's mastery of the universe by means of technology. For them and for others however, the spell of the machine was soon to be broken, by the absurdity and destruction resulting from the first World War.

As a student at The Slade in those years, the young Spencer was aware of the prevalent artistic trends but he never actively participated in any movements. He profited from the exposure to the European schools being shown in London, as is evident in his simplified forms and his use of distortion. He had definitely absorbed the contemporary lessons concerning the power of abstract form and line. But his early paintings suffused with intimacy and mystery had nothing in common with the Vorticist vision.

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!
Bring me my charriot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake, 1757 - 1827

Chapter III. Early Paintings

1909 - 1927

While at The Slade, Spencer had become aware of the art of the early Italian Renaissance. He studied Giotto, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, and Piero della Francesca. Always in a hurry to leave London for Cookham, he preferred to look at them in reproduction rather than to see them at the National Gallery in London. So he carried around with him the cheap edition of Renaissance masters from the Gowan's Grey series, which were popular at the time. He primarily admired the religious mural painters, undoubtedly in preparation for his own enormous Resurrections.

While in service in Macedonia, Spencer also carried around these cheap pocket editions and, according to his brother Gilbert, the painters who were particularly meaningful to him at the time were Duccio, Ghiberti, Donatello, Pisanello, Sassetta, Botticelli, Giorgione, Raphael, Tintoretto, and Claude Lorrain.

At The Slade, Spencer was learning to draw from the cast and the model. He claims not to have painted more than three hours during the period of three years study at the school. However, at home, where he was still sharing a room with his brother Gilbert he painted regularly. His very first paintings Two Girls in a Beehive, and the Fairy on a Water-Lily Leaf both of 1910, and Paradise of 1911, were pen and ink washes, and have the delicacy and linear qualities of some of the Pre-Raphaelite paintings, for instance Rosetti's Ecce Ancilla Domini,

Plate II. Ecce Ancilla Domini

oil, 25 5/8" by 16 1/2"

the Tate Gallery, London

Plate III. ZACHARIAS AND ELISABETH, 1912

oil, 60" by 60"

collection Mrs. Mary Bone

plate II page 23 with which he was undoubtedly familiar if only from reproduction.

In 1911 he painted John Donne Arriving in Heaven, the painting spotted by Fry in 1912 and inserted as the only student work in the Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition with the works of such masters as Cezanne, Matisse, Picasso, Bonnard, Marchand and others. This painting in oils has a thick impasto and the figures in it are simplified into geometric shapes reminiscent of cubist work. He was to repeat the simplification of forms in some of his later work such as in the Saint Veronica Unmasking Christ of 1921. Spencer, however, was no admirer of Cezanne. Tonks, his drawing master, taught that form should be rendered by means of light and shade, and disapproved of the admiration for Cezanne so prevalent at the time in the art school. Spencer dissociated himself from Clive Bell's statement concerning Cezanne's strong influence on all the painters exhibiting in the Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition.

Spencer was particularly prolific during his last year at The Slade. He continued to paint at home after school hours but he brought these paintings to The Slade for appraisal. He received serious recognition and won two prizes. He thus felt encouraged in his personal religious vision which was the subject of his paintings. He produced some of his most beautiful work that year. Among them were Zacharias and Elisabeth, plate III page 23, the Nativity, which won a Slade prize, Joachim and the Shepherds, and Apple Gatherers, plate IV page 26, which in turn won him the fourth year Slade prize. The drawing master, Tonks, was to say of Spencer;

> He has shown signs of having the most original mind of anyone we have had at the Slade, and he combines this with great powers of draughtsmanship.[8]

Both the Zacharias and Elisabeth and the Nativity have a haunting quality which suggest visions or dreams. They have clarity and unity of emotion. The same is true of many of Spencer's other paintings of that period. His childhood vision was still at its strongest. The beautiful sense of space, the mood of the landscapes, the faces which stare into eternity, combined to create comtemplative poems of great force. The stillness in the paintings is awesome. Sir John Rothenstein compares the Spencer of that period with Giotto. The paintings seem to me to be more reminiscent of Gauguin. As in Gauguin, some of the simplicity verges on the primitive. Through form, line, and colour, Spencer, like Gauguin, is able to express powerful mood and emotion.

Spencer left The Slade in 1912. It is in this year that he painted the previously mentioned Apple Gatherers. This is not a religious painting, although one can perhaps discern Paradise or the Garden of Eden. Even though not a large painting it presages Stanley's potential as a mural painter because of its monumental quality. The two main figures in the center of the painting are much larger than the surrounding male and female youths. The archetypal Adam and Eve have intertwined hands, the main axis around which the picture is organised. The scene takes place in an orchard, in fact it represents apple picking in Cookham. There are baskets of fruit suggesting abundance. The interesting disproportion between the two main figures and the others as well as the repetition of the youth figures standing one behind the other like the chorus of a Greek tragedy gives the impression of some momentous ritual taking place. Unlike the previous more esoteric

Plate IV. Apple Gatherers, 1912

oil, 28" by 36"

the Tate Gallery, London

Plate V. The Visitation, 1913

oil, 23½" by 23½"

Collection James Wood Esq.

paintings, Apple Gatherers has an earthy, realistic quality to it. Its dominating couple with entwined hands, the apple orchard which brings to mind paradise, and the rich impasto with which it is painted, suggest a celebration of sexual love. But like all symbolic paintings it leaves us with a host of other associations. We can clearly see the influence of Gauguin both in the colour and the composition. Spencer like Gauguin, focuses on his main figures at close range. Gauguin often uses this device to lead us into the mysterious universe he is portraying.

Spencer continued to live at home, but because he found that there was not enough room for him to paint in the bedroom where he slept with Gilbert his younger brother, he moved his canvasses to the barn at Ovey's Farm across the road from his parents' house. Now he could remain undisturbed all day, and he could at last paint on a large scale. In 1912, the same year, he also sketched a self-portrait of extraordinary power, which he was to make into a painting the next year. It is a portrait of great painterly accomplishment, reminding us of the work of seventeenth century Dutch masters. Unlike the religious symbolic work that he had done previously, this portrait inaugurates another category of Spencer's work, that of realism. Spencer painted in two manners throughout his life. On the one hand he produced symbolic, often religious paintings, on the other, he looked closely at nature, and reproduced what he saw with amazing fidelity to detail. John Bratby, the English painter who studied at The Slade when Spencer was at the height of his fame, talks about Spencer, the realist:

> Spencer's non-imaginative work springs from some of the same ambitions in painting that motivated the 16th and 17th century Dutch still-life and

> genre painters. He either saw and was impressed by those painters, or encountered the work of the 18th century or 19th century painters deriving from them. He was no Post-Impressionist or Expressionist. His non-imaginative works were enthusiastic statements of realism, and celebrations of intricated detail. Like the Dutch, he observed them with intimacy and he seemed to study the details of his visual material with a magnifying glass. To relate him to Holbein is revealing. He said that when he painted or drew a face, he liked to feel he was a fly crawling all over it... Spencer's self-portrait of 1913 could have been done centuries ago.[9]

This period of intense work was interrupted by the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. Stanley was deeply disturbed by the advent of the war, and felt that he had to volunteer. He served first as an orderly in a Bristol Hospital and later was transferred at his own request as a private to the front in Macedonia. He was deeply affected by the war and changed by it. However this did not register in his paintings for quite a while. When the war was over, he returned home and continued the unfinished work he had left behind, as though nothing had occurred. He finished Swan Upping which he had begun in 1914, and went on to further religious themes based in Cookham as before. Travoys, plate VI page 31 was the only direct picture of the war which he did at the time, because it was commissioned by the War Artists Scheme. It represents the wounded being driven on horse-drawn carts to a dressing Station in Macedonia.

In the twenties, Spencer was doing squared up sketches of scenes that had struck him during the war, but he had to get the Cookham visions out of his system before he was ready to get on with them. His religious paintings became progressively more crowded and busy. Spencer feared that he had lost the intensity of his vision. About 1923 he wrote;

> When I left the Slade and went back to Cookham I entered a kind of earthly paradise. Everything seemed fresh and to belong to the morning. My ideas were beginning to unfold in fine order when along came the war and smashed everything. When I came home the divine sequence had gone. I just opened a shutter in my side and out rushed my pictures anyhow. Nothing was ever the same again.[10]

Spencer finally moved away from home where he was constantly being disturbed and could not work consistently. He lived in London with friends and patrons. His group of friends had widened. In the twenties he met the family of his wife to be. He courted her and became engaged. He broke the engagement several times. He finally married Hilda Carline in 1925. In the same year his daughter Shirin was born. His relationship with Hilda was to remain one of the most powerful influences in Stanley's life. It lasted beyond his divorce, beyond Hilda's mental illness and death, and later took the form of a one-way correspondence until his own death in 1959.

His first love had been Cookham. He had had to exorcise it before he was ready to move on to express his war experiences, and open himself to adult relationships. Resurrection Cookham plate VII, page 40 done in 1927 shortly after his marriage to Hilda, presaged a whole new period for Stanley. This enormous canvas portraying the Resurrection of the dead in the cemetery of the Anglican Church that Stanley attended as a child, was to be the apotheosis of his early mystical vision, but it was also like Apple Gatherers, a celebration of sexual love. His marriage to Hilda at the age of 34, marked the end of Spencer the primitive. He would now move to a new stage, both in the mastery of his medium, and in the subject of his preoccupations. He wrote of this period;

Plate VI. Travoys, Bringing in Wounded to a Nursing Station in Salonika, 1918,

oil, 72" by 86"

Imperial War Museum London.

> To me there are two joys, the joy of innocence and religiousness, and the joys of change and sexual experience and while these selves seem unrelated and irreconcilable, still I am convinced of their ultimate union.[11]

Spencer was to struggle to achieve integration between his religious and his sexual self for many years. He never gave up on this struggle and achieved some form of integration in his later years.

Many hold that Spencer's best work was done before the war. Sir John Rothenstein among others has a very high opinion of Spencer's early work:

> The time between departure from The Slade in 1912, and his enlistment three years later in the Royal Army medical corps, was beyond comparison the most intensely creative period of his life. During those three years, he made a number of paintings and drawings which, although of varying quality, manifest an exalted spirituality rarely found outside the great periods of religious art.[12]

Some of Spencer's post-war paintings had the same simplicity as the ones done in the early period and the same intensity of mystical vision. Even though Spencer feared that he was losing his mystical powers he continued to produce such masterpieces as the Last Supper (Plate XXXI, page 86) of 1920, Veronica Unmasking Christ of 1921, and others which ranked with Zacharias and Elisabeth (Plate III, page 23) of the pre-war period. In fact I have chosen to close this period of so-called Early Paintings not with the war but with his mural Resurrection Cookham done in 1927 which seems to have been a water-shed in Spencer's life.

We can trace all kinds of influence in Spencer's early work. Some

of the paintings bear the mark of a primitive painter. The upper landscape of Swan Upping, for instance, strangely resembles the one in the painting War by the Douanier Rousseau. The cubist simplifications visible in Vorticist figure painting, occur in John Donne Arriving in Heaven, as well as in other Spencer paintings of that period. As previously mentioned, some of the work could be classed as Symbolist. None of these labels really encapsulate the whole of Spencer. Though not unaware of the tendencies of his day, he remained true to his own personal vision which was more powerful than the impact of the schools and movements prevalent at the time.

When I left the Slade and went back to Cookham, I entered a kind of earthly paradise.[12]

Christian faith stands or falls with the evidence of Jesus' resurrection, without which there is no content to Christian preaching or even to faith. Thus Easter appears...not only as the basic unit, but also as the permanent constitutive core of the Christian creed

Hans Kung[13]

Chapter IV. AN EARTHLY PARADISE

Four times in his life, Spencer took up the theme of Resurrection. In 1914 just before leaving for the army, Spencer painted the Resurrection of Good and Bad, a diptych of rather small dimensions, which is now lost. Between 1923 and 1927 he painted the enormous Resurrection Cookham, a 9' by 18' mural, now at the Tate gallery. Between 1928 and 1932 he painted Resurrection Burghclere, representing scenes from the first World War. The final Resurrection painted between 1945 and 1950 was painted right after the Second World War and was called the Resurrection Port Glasgow, after the place where it had been painted.

Except in the case of the first Resurrection, the paintings are done on an enormous scale, indicating the importance of this theme in Spencer's scheme of things. He came back to the resurrection theme in moments of strain or anguish in his life, as though the idea of Resurrection would reassure him. He would plan a Resurrection when loneliness was too unbearable, when all was shifting around him, when he was not sure he could cope with his own life. He said of the Burghclere Resurrection:

> There is a wish in me, as I remember the composing of this, to draw near and to love those things which in this life may have seemed awesome...like Bunyan looking back at all the fearsome objects after he had passed through the valley of the Shadow of Death. And so love casts out fear and stakes its claims on things previously dreaded.[14]

I. The Resurrection of Good and Bad.

All experience for Spencer seemed related to the religious. When faced with war and with leaving home and England for the first time in his life, he painted his first Resurrection. He was 24 and just newly out of The Slade. He was struggling with the idea of joining the army, which he considered his duty, but which he feared. He also feared leaving home, and the soldier's life with its rigours and dangers. He had been complaining to his brother that he could no longer work at his painting on account of the strain, and yet he set about painting a small diptych representing the Resurrection of Good and Bad. The shape of the two canvasses was suggested by the shape of the chancel arch in the Anglican Church in Cookham that Spencer had attended as a boy. He wrote his brother while painting them;

> I am giving the bad ones a nasty time. I made the earth on their backs a lot thicker today. As to the one down in the bottom right-hand corner, he can't budge; I have got him absolutely set. I feel like God, when I look at him peeping out of a nasty gash in the ground. In the Good ones coming out, there is an oldish man with a purple cape. His hands are feebly placed on either side of the split-open grave, out of which he has come half-way. He has kind of mutton-chops but looks all the better for it.[15]

Spencer sounds like a child rearranging his toys. The paintings are also childish, strange and awkward, as in a dream or vision. In his self-portrait, done three years before, Spencer clearly demonstrated his excellent draughtsmanship and painterly capacity; the distortion present in his imaginary work, is part and parcel of the powerful composition which expresses the vision. In this particular case, a diagonal cuts the painting in half, and adds to the ominous effect

suggested by the fixed stare of the human beings who are rising out of gashes from the ground. The figures lack anatomical precision. Their shapes are determined rather by a certain cohesiveness required by the composition. The gashes in the ground resemble lips or vaginas. Was Spencer aware of the sexual connotations in this painting? The symbolism here is complex and not immediately comprehensible. It englobes both religious experience as well as other aspects of life.

Resurrection for Spencer was related to a renewal of life, and this idea was to become more clearly expressed in his later murals. This first resurrection is naive. It does not have the monumentality of the later ones. Spencer deals here, with the idea of the Final Judgement, and as in traditional Christian iconography, he makes a distinction between the Good and the Bad. In fact he did not like to consider Evil or Punishment. He was later to avoid the distinction between Good and Evil altogether. As he matured in his faith, this avoidance was not a running from an uncomfortable idea, but rather a deep understanding of the Christian idea of foregiveness. In his later paintings of the Resurrection, Spencer also avoids the distinction between the Living and the Dead, and another central idea of Spencer's theology comes to the fore, that of the unity of all creation.

II. Resurrection Cookham

The second time that Spencer began thinking about painting a Resurrection was at another moment of indecision for him. He was contemplating marriage to Hilda Carline, but could not make up his mind definitively one way or another.

> When I decided not to marry her, I was immediately tortured with longings to marry her, and...when I had decided to marry her, I began wondering whether I loved her.[16]

At the time Spencer had started making plans for a Memorial Chapel which would contain his paintings commemorating the war he had witnessed in Macedonia. He had done many drawings of his memories and he had a vision of a Church built along the lines of Giotto's Padua chapel. Friends of Spencer, the Behrends became enthusiastic patrons after having seen the mocked-up sketches he had done, but there were still many difficulties with finding a piece of land and finally with the building itself. The delay in the building and the indecision concerning his marriage, caused Spencer considerable tension. It was at that moment that he began painting Resurrection Cookham, an enormous canvas which he set up in a studio, loaned to him by his friend Henry Lamb. Friends had to slip through a crack in the door, as the canvas stretched beyond the door frame. Spencer had to climb onto a box placed on a table to paint the upper reaches of the canvas. The size was of great importance to Stanley. At the Slade he had admired the Early Renaissance masters. He now wanted to give his resurrection an epic dimension. In the upper left hand corner of the enormous canvas is a small landscape. It is the portrayal of the river Thames, which Stanley remembered flowing beside the Cookham Anglican Church of his childhood. In that particular spot, the Thames is just a small stream, and the landscape in question has a feeling of childlike intimacy, but it also evokes other landscapes. Is it by any chance the Styx, from Dante's Inferno? Is the boat on it carrying the dead across the river of life?

At the time of painting Resurrection Cookham, Spencer was thirty-three years of age. This canvas was for him an attempt at resurrecting the visionary intensity which he had before the first World War and which he felt he was losing. It also heralded a belated maturity, a joyful anticipation of sexual love as he was contemplating marriage to

Hilda. One aspect of this sensual love was the celebration of the sense of touch about which he writes in a letter to Hilda;

> ...as I talked with Sydney, I began to realise much more the idea about touching. I realised that the touching of each other must be done in the same way as leaves are touched or pieces of rock. After they had gone, I did fairly elaborate drawings of the touching idea. On the 'tables' of earth, so to speak, in between each slit, there are different objects. The first is touching a big plant and also an arm of the person in the slit opposite. The next person is feeling something soft and feathery; it may be a bird or an animal. In the middle slit the nearest person is pressing his hand into a piece of clay and his other hand on the next table is running sand onto a conical pile of sandy earth that another person in the right hand slit has made for the purpose of making and enjoying a hole in the earth;[17]

Resurrection Cookham was a celebration of life, of love and of sexual love in particular. The catalyst had been the religious idea of the Resurrection, but it carried other wider meanings such as renewal, the fulness of life, and references to an earthly paradise.

In Resurrection Cookham Spencer is not yet master of the enormous surface. The beautiful details do not fit well together. The sizes of the tombs and figures are not consistent. The figures are poor. But the individual scenes are arresting. The river scene mentioned above or the extraordinary ivy-covered tomb with the sunlit brick wall, or the three Blake-like figures in another tomb held by their long hair by another figure in the background, are unique Spencerian images. In this mural we also glimpse his extraordinary sensitivity to nature. Landscape and flowers, bushes and grass are touchingly and painstakingly painted. It is indeed an earthly paradise that Spencer is commemorating.

Plate VII. Resurrection Cookham, (1927-28)

oil, 108" by 216"

Tate Gallery London

Plate VIII. Tea in Hospital Ward

oil

South wall, Burghclere Memorial Chapel

At the exhibition in 1927, at which Resurrection Cookham was being shown Spencer attracted much attention, and this painting was purchased by the director of the Tate gallery, John Rothenstein.

III. Burghclere Memorial Chapel

Even before this exhibition, Spencer had set about his first canvas for the Chapel which would become the Burghclere series. It was called 'scrubbing floors', and was a memory from the Bristol Hospital in England where he had been an orderly. Spencer had made sketches for the chapel paintings for many years now. As soon as he had painted 'scrubbing floors', a new flow of creativity related to his war experiences was released.

Spencer had planned the proportions and lay-out of the Chapel himself. He would only be satisfied with very definite specifications which were based on Giotto's Arena Chapel. Before patrons for it were found, Spencer called it his 'chapel in the air'. Later the Chapel was actually built according to Stanley's specifications under the enthusiastic patronage of the Behrends his friends, later his enthusiastic patrons. It was located in Newbury, Berkshire, and was to be dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Behrend's brother who had died in Salonika during the war, while on active service.

The Burghclere Chapel is a small one. Its East wall which frames the altar, and faces the viewer upon entrance, is 21' by 17½'. Here Spencer combines memories from the Beaufort Hospital in Bristol, where he was orderly at the beginning of the war, and scenes from Macedonia. Ablutions (soldiers washing themselves near some sinks) reminds us of Renaissance fresco painting. The Great Flood figures from the Sistine Chapel ceiling by Michelangelo come to mind. The subtlety of the

fleshtones and the relationship between the figures is reminiscent of Michelangelo, but the painting is unmistakeably modern, naive, simple. It lacks the grace and idealisation of Renaissance art.

The outdoor scenes depicting life at camp which span the length of the two side walls are infinitely more successful compositions than Resurrection Cookham. The landscape recedes into the distance in both cases as in traditional fresco painting, and the scene is layed out before us in full splendour. The painting is enormous but the detail is well subordinated to the whole. Spencer has created a specific somber mood which evokes the Middle Eastern landscape to perfection.

Below the upper large murals spanning the whole length of the side walls, there are smaller panels. The range between the best and the poorest of these is astounding. Burghclere took six years to complete, and in those six years Spencer had taken great steps in mural painting. In such panels as Scrubbing Floors, or Kit-Bags, the composition and subtlety of colour is striking but the anatomical drawing is weak, the bodies often baglike, the hands and feet clumsy. In Ablutions, on the other hand, the composition of superimposed bodies is superb, and the anatomical detail faultless.

However the masterpiece in Burghclere Chapel is without doubt the Resurrection of Soldiers, which spreads over the whole East wall. The colour is sombre brown, black, and sepia, as though it was dusk and a storm was threatening. We see the distant hills of Macedonia at the very top of the painting, silhouetted against the sky. The picture though sombre is meditative and peaceful in mood. The Macedonian landscape which stretches out before us, is strewn with white crosses which diminish in size as they recede into the distance. The soldiers are involved in every-day activities such as rolling their leg bandages,

extricating themselves from barbed wire, or shaking hands with their comrades in sign of peace. The activity is not feverish, it gives the impression of slow motion, and this is achieved by the meditative colour, and the white crosses which though often at a diagonal, pin down the composition and make it static. There are enormous white and black mules in the very centre of the mural, which play an important part in the composition because they focus our eye on the Christ above. Though tiny, we can hardly distinguish his features. He is the very centre, the very lynch-pin of the mural. The white crosses which dominate the otherwise dark composition bear a similar role to the lances in Ucello's Battle of San Romano. They are elements which define distance, and play a decorative role in the total design.

Spencer had seen Kalinova Valley, of which this is a representation, in Macedonia during the war in 1917. He was so struck by its mysterious quality that he engineered a transfer to another regiment so as to have another occasion to see the place. This is no Cookham landscape. Spencer renders the Mediterranean quality of the mountanous landscape exquisitely.

The soldiers in the foreground of the mural encircle the real Burghclere Chapel Altar. Spencer gives them serious expressions since they will be the closest witnesses to the service at the altar. As the eye travels upwards on the mural, the soldiers diminish in size, and become progressively more and more aware that their awakening is a resurrection from the dead. They are holding their crosses which they plan to hand into Christ. Some meditate on the cross and as the meaning of Christ's Resurrection dawns on them, they embrace their crosses. The concept behind the mural might seem contrived. In fact, it is rather through the receding composition and the alternating

Plate IX. Ablutions, 1927

oil, 7' by 6',

North wall, Burghclere Memorial Chapel

Plate X. Kit-Inspection,

oil,

North wall of Burghclere Memorial Chapel.

patches of white and dark, than by means of narrative, that Spencer achieves the impact which is undeniable in this mural. But it is only in the later Port Glasgow Resurrection that narrative is totally abandoned. Gesture has now become symbol.

The Burghclere Resurrection is the most highly praised of the Spencer paintings. Elisabeth Rothenstein a friend and sympathetic critic of Spencer's has this to say of the Resurrection:

> ...the central theme is sufficiently dominating and the design closely enough knit to make it one of the finest religious paintings of the present century.[18]

Eric Newton was also to write of Burghclere with great admiration;

> Burghclere is not Spencer's most perfect creation but it is his completest. Had he never painted it he would be an imaginative artist of unusual but uncomfortable intensity. Burghclere puts him into a new category. It puts him into the category of the fresco painters of 15th century Florence. True, at Burghclere, their native Italian Classic grace has been exchanged for a North European whimsy...[19]

And finally John Rothenstein, another sympathetic friend and critic of Spencer's, who was instrumental in the acquisition by the Tate of an important collection of Spencer's work, has this to say about the Burghclere Resurrection;

> In the Resurrection of 1928-29, perhaps the greatest religious wall painting made in England since the Reformation - scores of Soldiers contemplate their crosses and in the growing realisation that they share in the Crucifixion of Christ, welcome and embrace them.[20]

These magnificent tributes paid to Spencer in the middle of his career were not to be repeated on the completion of his final Port Glasgow

Plate XI. Resurrection of Soldiers, 1928-29

oil, 21' by 17½'

East Wall, Burghclere Memorial Chapel.

Plate XII. Mules in Pairs, (detail) from Resurrection of Soldiers

Plate XIII. Clasped hands, (detail)

from Resurrection of Soldiers.

Plate XIV. Spotted Mules (detail)

from Resurrection of Soldiers

Resurrection. Before dealing with this final Resurrection one further point is worth noting with regard to Spencer's work about war. It never contained any hostility, any aggressive feelings, or representations of fear. We know from his correspondence that he was often filled with dread, that he had seen both wounded and dead during his service, and that it affected him deeply. He was horrified one day when a soldier in his regiment unnecessarily shot a dog as it was limping by the side of the road. Spencer's sensitive nature shrunk from violence. The answer to violence was again a religious one.

> It was possible even in War, to establish...a peaceful atmosphere of hope, and some sort of constructive life was sustained in this way. I was impressed with the calm way the wounded men spoke to each other - about some cabbages they had been trying to grow for instance...A homely atmosphere was being preserved in spite of what was happening. The picture was not a scene of horror but a scene of redemption from it, and I was right in making it a happy picture as the early painters were right in making the Crucifixion a happy painting.[21]

IV. Resurrection Port Glasgow

In 1945 Spencer had just about completed the Ship Building on the Clyde commission, with which I will be dealing in the chapter concerning his realistic paintings. He had been very enthusiastic about the commission at first, but after five years of work on them, he was losing interest. Spencer was at his best when inspired. The industrial and documentary nature of this commission limited his inspiration. He was getting restless. He began to search for a deeper meaning behind the lives of the workers he was portraying.

Spencer's unsuccessful marriages had accentuated and transformed the hunger for personal relationships into a desire for a mystical union

with the surrounding world. People thought him eccentric as he walked the factory floors and the shipyards while executing his government commission. He presented a small, excited figure sketching nervously, often on rolls of long toilet paper which he carried around with him. His oddity did not prevent a good contact with the workers. He wrote about the Resurrection Port Glasgow series;

> These pictures ...came into my mind and feeling when I was working at Port Glasgow during the second war. My work was to paint shipbuilding panels commissioned by the Ministry of Information. But I soon found that the shipyard in Port Glasgow is only one aspect of the life there. There were rows of men and women hurrying in the streets, and high sunlit factory walls with men sitting or standing or leaning back against them, and early shoppers going to and fro; one day through the crack of a factory door I glimpsed a cascade of brass taps; in a roadway...I saw children lying on the ground using the road as their drawing board and making drawings in coloured chalk... all this and much more there, seemed to me full of some inward surging meaning a kind of joy, that I longed to get closer to and understand and in some way fulfill.[22]

One night when he couldn't sleep on account of a jazz band playing too loud in the same house as his, he wandered out into the evening streets of Port Glasgow and spotted a cemetery in the sunset. He was illuminated. The old visionary powers had come alive again. Under the influence of this inspiration he painted the first of the series of the Port Glasgow Resurrection paintings, the Hill of Sion. It differs from the other paintings in that series, because it is a more traditional rendition of Christ, the Apostles, the Angels and the Prophets. They wear white robes unlike the contemporary clothing so characteristic of the Spencer figures in the series. The painting however has a mysterious quality created by the light within it. It is about the

Plate XV. La Baignade, by Seurat, 1883 - 1884

Plate XVI. La Grande Jatte by Seurat 1883 - 1885

sunset and the cemetery which had so inspired Spencer.

The other paintings in the series were Reunion, Rejoicing, Waking Up, and the Raising of Jairus's Daughter. For reasons of space in this study of Spencer I will only deal with the Resurrection Port Glasgow mural.

The Resurrection Port Glasgow took five years to complete. Spencer commenced it in Port Glasgow but when he realised he would not be able to paint such a large canvas in his tiny lodgings, he continued to work on it in Cookham, where he had partially moved. Even there Spencer was obligated to work on half the mural at a time, while the rest of the canvas was rolled up, because his room was too small. He never saw the whole painting until it was hung at the Royal Academy for exhibition. He had carried the whole composition in his head.

The Resurrection Port Glasgow, plates XVII and XVIII, pages 58 and 59, is dominated by a middle-aged couple in the center of the painting. They are larger than life-size, and larger than the other figures. They face each other on all fours, as they emerge from their respective tombs. They are undergoing a moment of recognition. Their relationship dominates the whole painting. Spencer has talked of them as husband and wife, and as grandparents. There is a child leaning on the large bulky back of the female figure. It is not clear what Spencer was trying to say by placing the central couple on all fours. Was he suggesting that man is both spiritual and earth-bound? There is no Christ in this Resurrection, no God and no Angels. It portrays only the ordinary folk, the kind of people that Spencer felt at ease with. We see a housewife, a sailor and his girl-friend, small-town husbands and wives, young mothers, teenagers and children. It is all extremely parochial. The coiffures, the textured clothing, the large vests, and

wooden buttons painted in great detail, the ribbed socks, are modelled on English working class life. The figures are solid and very ordinary. And yet their monumental quality is arresting. We think of Leger figures. But in fact the mural is more reminiscent of Seurat. The two figures lying back on the grass in the left-hand corner of the painting, remind us of the figures on the left-hand side of La Baignade, plate XV page 54. In La Grande Jatte, plate XVI page 55, there are also similar reclining figures but they are in a reverse position in relation to the painting. The Spencer figures have the same Seurat immobility, as though the painter had been able to capture a moment of time and pin it on canvas for eternity.

Another striking group in the mural (plate XVIII page 59) is what Wilenski calls, the Indo-Javanese group of worshippers. Spencer had been looking at some reproductions of Buddhist sculptures from the Borabadun Temple, and had thought them at the time to be the most magnificent carvings the world had ever seen. The worshippers in the paintings have such distinctly oriental features, may be under the influence of these Buddhist sculptures. They are looking up at the sky, with their large upturned hands, their simplified faces as though hewn out by the light which illuminates them. The repetition of the large hands raised to heaven, carved out by the light, harks back to the beautiful use of hands in the Resurrection of Soldiers, plate XI page 48 where the soldiers' hands intertwined in a handshake of peace form a beautiful arabesque of line. We also think back to the enormous veined hands in the very foreground of Apple Gatherers, plate IV page 26, which form the central axis of this painting. Similarly, in the Last Supper, plate XXXV page 97, Spencer uses the repetition of feet down the very centre of the painting in order to lead the eye to the hands of Jesus. Here and in the other cases mentioned above,

Plate XVII. Resurrection Port Glasgow (detail of left part of mural)

1945-1950

oil, 7' by 22'

Tate Gallery London

Plate XVIII. Resurrection Port Glasgow

detail of right hand corner of mural (Oriental group of worshippers)

oil, 7' by 22'

Tate Gallery London

Spencer uses form rather than narrative to rouse our emotions. The distortion of proportions only strengthens the impact. The emotions communicated by means of the tilted foreshortened faces and hands raised to the sky are those of reverence even ecstasy. Spencer is suggesting contemplation. In fact it seems to me that contemplation is what this Resurrection is partly about.

Spencer uses extreme foreshortening in some of the figures in this painting. Note the recumbent figure of a woman, plate XVIII page 59 sandwiched in between the Javanese worshippers and the group to the right of them. In general murals must not disturb the flat surface of the wall by too dramatic a perspective or diagonal. The Baroque mural broke this law as did Orozco who permitted himself extreme foreshortenings in his figures which are often flying into the distance. The florid Hispanic architecture for which his murals were destined allowed for such disruption of the unity of the surface, and the revolutionary content of his murals was in accord with such baroque extravagance. Spencer on the contrary retains a low relief depth in his mural and subordinates his foreshortened figures by means of a very reduced range of tonal values. It is a painting in a low key. The impact is similar to that in pointillist paintings whose shimmering greyness is composed of tiny drops of pure colour. Spencer has been criticised for the 'uniform' lighting in his painting. He has also been accused of monotony. Besides the unifying purpose of the low key colour, one has the impression that Spencer purposely played his instrument in such a restrained key, that he reduced his palette within this subtle range of tones to achieve an underworld light, as though the scene was taking place somewhere where the light is filtered through water. Elisabeth Rothenstein was not enchanted by this quality:

> ...the light that he throws over these paintings falls in every detail with a uniform intensity, so that everything is illuminated and yet nothing is picked out... After the first World War, his own treatment of paint could, and increasingly was, often unfeeling and rather dry. Never for a moment, for all the talk about love, does one feel - as one does with many painters - that his brush had almost caressed the painted forms into being. In fact there is a sense in which, after about 1915, he was progressively uninterested in the act of painting.[23]

To me the light which bathes this scene is extraordinarily beautiful. It is a light which occurs in some other dimension where aging, death and time no longer exist. It is the 'temps fige dans l'espace' of Seurat. Spencer has transcended the anecdotal. He has entered into the realm of poetry where form and image merge. The ordinary attitudes and postures of the people in this painting call to us from outside of time. Shelley's words come to mind:

> Life like a dome of many coloured glass
> Stains the white radiance of eternity[24]

Much of the symbolism in the mural remains mysterious and unexplained. What is the strange fungus-like relief on the tombstone? plate XVIII page 59. Is it moss, or sculpted decoration? Spencer's personal, symbolic vocabulary mystifies, intrigues and attracts. The mushroom-shaped form with which the woman wipes the face of her rising husband in the left-hand corner of plate XVIII belongs to the same category of earth-bound, earth connected things. We cannot but think of the Ash-wednesday motif: 'From earth thou hast been fashioned, and to earth thou shalt return!'

The magnificent figure of the grave-digger on the right side of the mural, plate XVIII leaning on his spade, has the solidity and

presence of a Henry Moore figure. Other figures in the history of art imprint themselves on our visual memory with as much insistence. For example, some of the Piero della Francesca figures, or the personnages from the court of Justinian in the magnificent Ravenna mosaics. Spencer is indeed a great figure painter. He is moulded in the tradition of Giotto, Massaccio and other masters whom he admired. He is heir to the tradition that produced the static monumental figures of modern art, such as the previously mentioned Henry Moore, or Seurat. Time in his paintings seems to have been arrested. We have entered upon an earthly paradise. As in all great art, in Spencer's Port Glasgow Ressurection, the earthly and the heavenly merge, so we can no longer distinguish where one ends and the other begins.

Being called away to do some landscape, is so <u>not</u> what I intend, that it disturbs me in doing the work I <u>do</u> want and love to do.[25]

Chapter V. REALISM

No account of Spencer can be complete without reference to his "pot-boilers". Spencer painted from nature not because he wanted to, but because those paintings sold well. He complained bitterly about having to do them, but he needed the money, particularly in the period when he was courting his second wife-to-be, Patricia Preece. His agent Dudley Tooth took over complete control of Stanley's financial affairs. He could only allow him two pounds pocket money a week at first, which slowly rose to four pounds and only grew to ten pounds a week in the fifties.

> Always the pressure was on him to produce pictures of a quick saleable kind, and I remember seeing him on Paddington Station when he was at the height of his fame, holding out one of his 'pot-boilers' at arms length because it was still wet, saying 'Dudley wants it in a hurry'.[26]

Spencer would set out in all weather with a pram filled with his equipment, as well as a sack to be stood in and tied under the arms which contained a hot water bottle for really cold days. In case of rain he brought along a fisherman's umbrella. In spite of the terrible contempt with which Spencer endowed these realistic paintings, some of them are of exceptional quality. Maybe he took more pleasure in them than he allowed his friends to suspect. But the canvases were not all good. Some were overcrowded with detail. In other landscapes such as <u>Cedar Tree, Cookham</u> of 1935, <u>Pickett's Farm</u> of 1938, <u>Cacti in Green</u>

House also of 1938 (plate XX page 67), Spencer was at the height of his powers. Sometimes he would focus on a subject in the foreground like he did in the Jubilee Tree of 1936, while retaining the sharpness of vision in the background, giving his paintings a distinctly modern look. The beauty of the brick walls metal gates and fences, or the front gardens of Cookham, attracted his attention. Cookham has still not changed since Spencer lived in it. Walking through its streets we see it through his eyes. Spencer was as garrulous in his paintings as he was in his life. They are filled with a wealth of detail which he is able to subordinate to the whole in the best of his work. Texture is another preoccupation of Spencer's. He can exquisitely render the subtle differences between the surface of a red and green begonia leaf against the background of a mouldy red brick wall. The clarity of the landscapes done in the period of 1936-38, when Spencer was at his most distraught, has often a painful quality about it. We are reminded of the later Van Gogh landscapes, not on account of their agitation but on account of the intensity of emotion which they contain.

Spencer was also a great portraitist, although the number of portraits that he did is not as great as the number of landscapes. I cannot pin down any male portraits done by Spencer, apart from his own self-portraits which he did consistently throughout his life. The portrait Hilda and Daughter Unity with Dolls, plate XIX page 66 was done in 1937 after Spencer's marriage with Hilda had ended. The extreme intensity of that portrait is heart-breaking. Its harsh realism and clear-cut contours accentuate the intensity of painful emotion.

There is another group of Spencer's paintings which does not really fit into any of the classifications that I have suggested for the sake

Plate XIX. Hilda and Daughter Unity with Dolls, 1937

oil

Leeds City Art Gallery

Plate XX. Cacti in the Greenhouse, Cookham Dean, 1938

oil, 30" by 20",

Mrs. Hugh Neame

of convenience in this study. They are the paintings done on commission for the War Artists Advisory Committee. When Spencer was approached by the Committee in 1940 at the instigation of his agent, Dudley Tooth, he outlined a project which he would have liked to carry out. It was to be similar to the Brughclere Chapel, although it would be a Crucifixion this time, with a predella containing scenes from the overrunning of Poland by the Nazis. The War Committee however, had a policy of commissioning only eye witness reports. It was then suggested that Spencer might document the work of the Ship Builders on the Clyde. Spencer enthusiastically travelled to Lithgow's shipyard in Port Glasgow. He was 59. He had been doing paintings that were unacceptable to the public and to the galleries. He was now to be immersed in a small closely knit community of ordinary unsophisticated workers and their families. He was lodged and fed in canteens and paid as an ordinary seaman. Spencer was never much concerned with comfort or style. He set to work planning as usual more than he could accomplish before he would lose interest in the project. He planned 13 panels of 70 feet each. In fact he completed only 8 smaller ones that ranged from 7 to 19 feet in length.

The shipyards at the time were working under great pressure to achieve the increased norm required by the war effort. The clothes of the men were often tattered and the shipyards themselves were ill-equipped. Women were employed in the place of men who had been called to arms. Riveting rather than the more modern methods of welding were used. All heating of metal was done with coke. The men wore very little eye protection and no gloves while handling hot tools. The working space was limited and the ceilings were low. Spencer's compositions reflect the specific conditions, but any social commentary

Plate XXI. Gardens in the Pound, Cookham, 1936

oil, 36" by 30"

The City Art Gallery Leeds

or criticism is lacking. Instead of agitation or suffering, the compositions reflect a spirit of childlike games. Spencer revells in the piles of tubing, the blue electric lighting cast by the torches, the groups of workers struggling with the enormous sheets of metal. We are reminded of social realist art prevalent in Russia in the thirties, and later. The strange shape of the panels, which are very wide, 19 feet and extremely narrow in height, 5 feet, indicates that Spencer was again thinking in terms of a chapel, an industrial chapel this time. He completed seven panels, one for each different trade, i.e., the Burners, the Welders, the Riveters, the Riggers, the Plumbers, the Template and the Bending of the Keel Plate, plates XXII and XXIII, pages 71 and 72. The Furnaces was the only rectangular painting which did not have the extraordinary wide and low dimensions of the other panels and it was to go in the centre of the planned Chapel.

But Spencer was beginning to lose interest. He began to feel that men at work, did not represent the whole of reality. He longed to be involved again in evoking a spiritual dimension, which these canvases lacked. He was also suffering from loneliness, hence his long letters to Hilda at the time. When not actually working in the shipyards he would live in Gloucestershire with his friends the Charlstons who had adopted him. But his existence without roots, in between two communities was wearing him down. He began to have paranoiac delusions and accused his second wife and finally also Mrs. Charlston, his benefactress, of plotting against him. He wanted to remarry his first wife Hilda, but she would not hear of it. In 1942, Spencer moved from the Charlston home in Gloucestershire back to Cookham as his cousin's tenant. He continued to commute to Port Glasgow where with little enthusiasm he was completing the last panels commissioned by the War

Plate XXII. Bending the Keel Plate, (left panel), 1945-1950

oil, 20" by 76"

Shipbuilders on the Clyde Series,

Imperial War Museum, London

Plate XXIII. Bending the Keel Plate, (middle panel), 1945-1950

oil, 20" by 76"

Imperial War Museum, London

Committee.

Spencer's work was completed in 1946. It lacks the depth of his religious work. The preparatory drawings which Spencer executed for the panels, and which he often transposed without change onto the canvas, by far surpass the paintings. They are done with the sure hand and unwavering eye of a master. They convey a wealth of visual information by extraordinarily simple means. Spencer utilises cross-hatching, and barely accentuates the darkness of the line. He is able to suggest texture, volume, light, atmosphere and movement with a bare touch of the pencil. Many of these drawings of the shipyard, as well as other drawings of the period, i.e. Hilda Spencer, plate XXV page 75 are individual works of art, quite capable of standing on their own, even though some of them were executed on the spur of the moment and on quite unsuitable material, such as toilet paper, scrapbook paper, or anything that Spencer had on hand at the moment. It is not within the scope of this study to deal with them at great length, though they may well belong to some of his best work.

Plate XXIV. Hilda and I Walking in Hampstead, 1945

drawing 10" by 15"

Viscount Astor Collection

(The Astor Collection of Stanley Spencer drawings after 1939)

Thomas Gibson 1976, Introduction by Carolyn Leder.

Plate XXV. Hilda Spencer, 1947-48

drawing, 19¼" by 13½"

collection Dr. Eric Wilkes

We may distinguish these superficial characteristics as Cubist or Classical, Realist or Surrealist, but then we are faced with Classical drawings that are Surrealist in intention, or with Surrealist compositions of Classical serenity. Style and significance continually overlap and contradict each other.[27]

But thou, who art thou that art become so foul?
Thou seest, I am the one that weeps.[28]

Chapter VI. EROTIC PAINTINGS 1933 - 1955

Whereas there is a clear distinction of style between Spencer's 'realistic' and his 'religious' paintings, this distinction becomes confused when it comes to the category 'erotic'. The 'erotic' label was applied by Spencer critics to designate paintings of a particular period and dealing with themes of sexuality, universal love or marriage. In questions of style, the 'erotic' paintings often differ from each other.. Whereas the Temptation of St. Anthony, plate XXXIII, page 92, is clearly erotic in its methods of handling paint, as well as in its swirling, agitated forms, Love on the Moor, plate XXXII, page 87, lacks a truly erotic character in spite of its embracing couples and nude statue of Venus. In its childlike figures there is an absence of sensuality so evident in such early painting of Spencer's as Apple Gatherers, plate IV page 26.

So even in some of Spencer's early work there is a strong pervading sensuousness, for instance in Resurrection Cookham, plate VII page 40. Throughout his life, Spencer tried to integrate the physical and the spiritual, the sensual and the religious within himself. He attempted to see the 'wholeness of things'. He said that liberated passion was...

> the spiritual goal of humanity, for physical desire exists in human nature in order to aid understanding and add to the joy when it is reached.[29]

But after the breakdown of his second marriage in 1937 Spencer was not just preoccupied with sexuality, but obsessed by it. A whole series of

Plate XXVI: Knowing, 1938

oil

26" by 22"

R.A.B. Mynors, Esq.

work ensued, which attracted much public attention. But to understand the motivation behind this work we must look at the events in Spencer's life which led up to this period.

In 1925, after a long and indecisive courtship Spencer married Hilda Carline. He had started on the enormous Resurrection Cookham before his marriage, but did not finish it until 1927. In 1926 his eldest daughter Shirin was born, and soon after, Hilda gave birth to their second daughter Unity. The family moved close to Burghclere because Spencer was to paint the chapel especially built for his murals, by his patrons and friends, the Behrends. This work took him six intense years, and it was a very demanding task, both physically and psychologically. He would leave early in the morning to start work in the chapel. He was propped up on a scaffolding to paint the higher parts of the walls, which he had previously sketched on squared up paper of smaller format. These early years of marriage were extremely exhausting for Spencer. Hilda was an inept housewife. Spencer often had to do the chores or feed the babies. He liked company and talked incessantly. He could keep his friends and Hilda up all night and then get up early to start work on his mural. Hilda herself was talented. She had also been a student at The Slade, though at a later period. Her life-size portrait of their maid Elsie, as well as her own self-portrait and drawings of Spencer, have great intensity. They compare quite favourably with Spencer's work at the time. But socially Hilda was awkward and she found life with Spencer exhausting. She began to absent herself more and more from Burghclere to stay with her mother who lived in Hampstead, London. Spencer was left to fend for himself. He was extremely attached to her but irritated by her inability to provide him with satisfactory conditions for working. He met Patricia

Plate XXVII. Self-Portrait with Patricia, 1937

oil

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Plate XXVIII. Hilda and I at Pond Street, 1954

oil 20" by 30"

Private collection, U.S.A.

Preece, another recent art student from The Slade, and found her attractive. She was sophisticated and had many friends in the art world in London, among them some of the Bloomsbury circle. Spencer was flattered by her attentions, though later he would find her Bloomsbury friends irksome company. He was too much of a self-taught man to fit in well with the sophisticated London milieu. Hilda did not seem to oppose the constant presence of Patricia. Stanley was actively courting Patricia, and bought her expensive presents of clothing and jewellery which he could ill afford. He had to support his children and Hilda as well as Elsie the maid who was the only stable presence during Hilda's more and more frequent absences.

Finally Hilda granted a divorce in 1936 about which Stanley felt very ambivalent. In 1937 however he married Patricia, and as, she went ahead of him to prepare the house for their honeymoon in the country, he enticed Hilda to come and stay with him and seduced her. As a result, Patricia refused to move in with him, and Spencer who had hoped to have two wives, was left with no wife at all. Patricia lived not too far from him in a house in Cookham with her lifelong friend Dorothy Hepworth. She managed his financial affairs for a while but Stanley continued to live alone.

It was then that he conceived grand schemes concerning a first cycle of paintings to be called the Pentecost Series. Though bearing a name relating the New Testament, these paintings were to be about a religion of Universal Love. Love Among the Nations, and the Dustman belong to this period, as well as Adoration of Old Men and Girls, and Village in Heaven. Spencer in these paintings fantasised on love, elaborating a religion of his own on this theme. Some of these paintings are scatological in nature. Spencer took pleasure in shocking

his public. He was in an arrogant, iconoclastic mood, but he was also lonely, and unhappy. He was clear minded enough about himself to say:

> My desire to paint pictures is caused by my being unable or incapable of fulfilling my desires in life itself.[30]

Next, he started on a cycle of paintings called the Marriage at Cana. The first paintings in that cycle were done in 1935, the last in 1953. The last paintings represented his symbolic remarriage to Hilda, who was by then dead three years. The schemes and plans that Spencer conceived in his feverish imagination were often uncompleted. There were no patrons willing to finance the erotic chapels of his imagination, and Spencer would move onto another idea.

The next scheme was called Last Day Series. The theme of the Last Day is not the Last Judgement, but the coming of the Apostles, who would bless and redeem the activities of the village by taking part in them. To this group belongs Villagers and Saints of 1934. Then came the idea of the Beatitudes. These were done between 1935 and 1938. They were paintings of old or deformed couples to which Spencer gave such titles as Passion, Worship or Husband and Wife. Spencer was partly combining his religious ideas with a newly elaborated religion of sexual licence. He was undergoing a period of revolt against society and traditional religious norms. While painting the Beatitude Series he said of Christ;

> In spite of trying to appear a condemner of authority, he is always trying to uphold it and is one of the principal champions against individual intelligence and judgement.[31]

Elisabeth Rothenstein describes the Spencer whom she knew quite well at the time.

Plate XXIX. Patricia, Stanley and Best-man, After Marriage in 1937

Plate XXX. Bride and Groom, Marriage at Cana series, 1953

oil

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery and Museum, England

Plate XXXI. Saint Francis and the Birds, 1935

oil, 28" by 24"

Collection Miss L. Grier, C.B.C.

...is it necessary to insist again on how much literature (art) can help us to understand the Jesus event? Are not the writers often more alert, perceptive and sensitive than the theologians? Literature reveals areas of language and image which translate afresh and transpose, render intelligible the Jesus event. It opens up new possibilities of confronting and reconciling our human experience with the message of this Jesus Christ. It enables us, so to speak, to take an outsider's view, to highlight the strangeness of what seemed familiar, to bring out the inexplicable in the commonplace.[34]

Chapter VII. IN SEARCH OF THE MAN JESUS

If we examine the output of Spencer's fifty or so years as a painter, we are struck with Spencer's continued, unrelenting portrayal of Christ. The choice of scenes from Jesus' life corresponds to Spencer's personal history at the time. So the Betrayal of Christ done in 1922, together with other paintings representing the Passion of Christ, were painted after Spencer had witnessed the destruction of the first World War. Significantly, it also coincided with a strong feeling on his part that he was being abandoned by his visionary powers which had stimulated his early mystical paintings.

The Christ in the Wilderness series of 1939-42, correspond with his own retirement from the world, after the breakdown of his second marriage. The Crucifixion of 1958, was the only Crucifixion ever painted by Spencer, and it coincided with his final illness, a year before his death. Many more examples of this parallelism lead us to believe that there was a deep feeling of identification with the person of Christ on Spencer's part. This identification did not mean that Spencer saw himself as a messiah. It rather meant that having undergone certain profound experiences, he felt he understood how Christ must have felt. The knowledge of himself fed the understanding of Christ, and vice-versa.

Spencer's simple relationship to Christ seemed based on familiarity renewed by constant Bible reading. This relationship underwent changes and fluctuations. While ill with malaria in Salonika during the first World War, he write his sister Florence;

Plate XXXIV. The Baptism of Christ, 1952

oil, 30" by 50"

Collection W.A. Evill Esq.,

Plate XXXV. The Last Supper, 1920

oil, 36" by 49½"

Anglican Church, Cookham

> In some of the awful moments I have felt the need for greater faith and afterwards found myself asking the question; 'Christ has been adequate to me in all things, but is he in this?'. It is an awful shock to find how little my faith stood in my stead to help me.[35]

Later when his marriages failed him, he was angry with Christ and accused him of authoritatianism. (see quote page 83). Christ then was a permanent presence in Spencer's life. Time and time again he appears in his paintings as one of the Cookham villagers, or surprisingly as Hilda holding two babies in her lap while God the Father is stroking her head in Resurrection Cookham, plate VII page 40, or in the Raising of Jairus's Daughter, or in Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta.

I would like to examine three of Spencer's paintings of Christ done at different periods in his life in order to see to what extent Spencer is part of the Christian tradition. Is Spencer's Christ both Man and God, or is Spencer only proposing another human hero under the guise of Christ?

I. In the Last Supper, plate XXXV page 97, one of Spencer's early paintings done in 1922, the setting is the Malt Houses in Cookham, a place that Stanley knew in his childhood and which is still standing in the village today. Christ, though smaller than some of the apostles who surround Him, dominates the scene because of His central position in the painting. The composition is focused on Christ's hands, which hold the bread. The breaking of the bread prefigures the breaking of Christ's body, and in the painting the apostles have their gaze on the loaf which is split open. The straight line of the apostles' lined up feet, down the very centre of the painting, leads our eye back to the hands again. We feel the solemnity of the occasion. This is partly achieved by the repetition of the profiled heads and bodies, as well as the

Plate XXXVI. The Scorpion, (Christ in the Wilderness series), 1939

oil, 22" by 22"

collection W.A. Evill Esq.,

Plate XXXVII. The Eagles, (Christ in the Wilderness series), 1942

oil, 22" by 22"

collection W.A. Evill Esq.,

repetition of the feet and robes of the apostles who surround Christ. Those elements remind us of a Greek chorus in attendance at an event of great magnitude. Spencer has achieved similar effects in Apple Gatherers plate IV page 26.

The light comes in from a right hand corner window and casts an extraordinary clarity on the scene accentuating the three dimensional quality of the figures. The contrast between the brick wall in the background which is rendered with great detail and delicacy, and the roughly-hewn figures of the apostles, adds to the drama of the scene. There is violence in the gesture with which the favourite apostle leans over Christ's bosom. His black curly hair seems to writhe with energy, or is it apprehension. There is an absolute stillness. It is a painting of contrasts. We are aware of the tenderness of the Gospel scene, but also aware of the Crucifixion to come. We would be hard put to remove one element without destroying the powerful whole. The rendition of the scene is new, surprising, unorthodox. We feel that Spencer portrays a genuine experience, a very personal authentic vision. And we are moved by it.

II. Spencer's later paintings of Christ also concern themselves with specific Gospel events, but whereas in the earlier paintings Christ is just one of the small though central elements, after 1939, Spencer tends to focus primarily on Christ or Christ's face. One such painting is Scorpion of 1939, plate XXXVI page 99. Shortly after painting the Beatitude series Spencer isolated himself in a Hampstead flat and started on the Christ in the Wilderness series. His plan was to paint one picture for each day of Lent. In fact he only completed eight preparatory drawings and three paintings. Spencer chose to evoke Lent, a

time set aside traditionally by the Church for repentance. He had locked himself away from the world, and was commemorating Christ's sojourn in the desert, and His confrontation with evil. There is suffering in the face of Christ but it is a peaceful picture. Its predominant colour is that of the desert, that of sand. Christ's robe is also sand-coloured, and its simple folds echo the dried up hills in the background. The figure is very much part of the landscape. In fact the figure takes up so much of the painting that it is the landscape. The barren rocky earth in the foreground suggests barreness of the soul. The scorpion sitting in the large outstretched palm, has its tail raised ready to bite. Christ is looking intently at it. The darkened stormy face is full of past suffering, and yet paradoxically it is the expression of a reconciled man. The simplicity of the seated pose and the scarcity of detail bring to mind the asceticism of some of the early desert hermits. Christ is at peace with the nature which surrounds him, and even with the enemy in his hand the scorpion. Does it symbolise death, evil, man's own inner devils and passions?

III The third painting of Christ that I would like to briefly look at, is the Crucifixion, done by Spencer when he had undergone several operations and was dying of cancer. Spencer conceived it in a most unusual way, because he is to show us the Crucifixion from the back. We see the back of a large unhewn wooden cross, partly obscuring the body of Christ, which is facing away from us. The arms of the cross span the painting from left to right. Christ's face tilted up to heaven is at the very centre of the centrifugal composition. The thief on the right hand side of Christ is facing us, and he seems propelled by some great force as he hurls himself forward in spite of being tied to his cross. His face is in agony and he seems to be shouting insults at Christ from

Plate XXXVIII. The Crucifixion, 1958

oil, 86½" by 16½"

collection Aldenham School, Elstree

his open mouth. Two workers are nailing Christ's hands to the Cross. Spencer portrays them as the blacksmiths from his childhood, with red smithy caps and mouths full of handily available nails. One of them smiles with satisfaction at his well done job. The scene takes place on a high stony hill, overlooking Cookham. Every detail is painted with the minutest care and clarity. On the roofs of the houses beyond, stands a curious, gaping crowd. A prostrate Magdalen lies with arms outstretched, at Christ's feet echoing the thrust of the arms of the cross above her. The whole painting has a dealthly-pale, porcelain-like quality, except for the sky which is gathering clouds. The black pointed nails and the hammers raised by the workmen, punctuate this pale scene, like bursts of sudden piercing pain. At first we can barely distinguish the large upturned face of Christ in the medley of all the activity. But it is there, full of an internal peace. He is looking up to heaven, as though beseeching His father. There is no anguish in him. He has transcended his suffering and is strangely at peace. This is a painting of contrast again. On the one hand the commotion and struggle introduced by the thief which is facing us contrasts with the extraordinary peace in the countenance of Christ. The uncaring of the gaping crowd contrasts with the distraught love of the Magdalen. The black nails and the pale scene. The unruly crowded composition which comes to a peaceful resolution at its very centre where we must strain to recognize Christ's face. And finally the traditional details portrayed in such an untraditional manner.

These three paintings, like the other Spencer paintings of Christ, are all surprising. They deal with well known Gospel scenes but in a very unique manner, very personal but at the same time convincing. They strike us with their authenticity.

In the Last Supper, Spencer expresses the very quintessence of the Christian message of 'love unto death'. He does this with his own peculiar magic of subtle repetitions and accents. In Scorpion Spencer has faced evil and his own limitations and loneliness. He has been able to portray an infinitely human Christ who is reconciled with the enemy. He has come to understand this Christ by searching within himself. Thomas Merton the Trappist monk and writer stresses the importance of knowing oneself as a prerequisite to knowing God:

> Unless we discover this deep self, which is hidden with Christ in God, we will never really know ourselves as persons. Nor will we know God. For it is by the door of this deep self that we enter into the spiritual knowledge of God. (And indeed, if we seek our true selves it is not in order to contemplate ourselves but to pass beyond ourselves and find him.[36]

In the Crucifixion, Spencer is coming to terms with suffering and with his own death. In the painting Crucifixion, it is clear that Spencer's belief in the resurrection does not do away with the drama of death. The dying Spencer is well aware of death. But in his painting Christ miraculously transcends it.

So, if in Spencer's painting the divinity of Christ is never stated, it is also never denied. Spencer as seen from the analysis above, is clearly within the Christian tradition. We in fact know that at least towards the end of his life, Spencer did believe in the divinity of Christ. In his long conversations with Rachel Westropp, who took him into her home before his death, he expressed this belief along with many other less orthodox ones. However we are not concerned in this study with the accuracy of Spencer's theology. We are more concerned with the spirit that comes through in his work. The Christs in his painting are

clearly not comparable to the purely human heroes portrayed under the guise of the Gospel figure, in such films as the Gospel According to St. Mathew, or in the musical Jesus Christ Super Star. If we look at the history of art, the divinity of Christ is perhaps best portrayed in the period of Byzantine icons. There He is truly Master, glorious and awesome. But in the XXth century we are perhaps more concerned with re-discovering His humanity. Hans Kung in the introductory quote to this chapter encourages us to trust in the vision of artists. In another passage he asks the question, how modern man can best apprehend this person Christ;

> ...does Christ become really intelligible for man today if we simply start out dogmatically from established teaching on the Trinity?... Can modern man understand if we emphasize the title of the Son of God and suppress as much as possible the humanity of Jesus, denying him existence as a human person? Will he understand if Jesus is more adored as divinity than imitated as earthly and human? Would it not perhaps correspond more to the New Testament evidence and to modern man's historical way of thinking if we start off like the first disciples from the real human being Jesus, his historical reality and historical activity, and then ask about the relationship of this human being Jesus to God, about his unity with the Father?[37]

Spencer presents us with a fully human Christ without sacrificing any of the power of the Gospel figure. For him, Christ is fully man both in his carnal and spiritual nature. Karl Barth, in his admirable passage about Christ, expresses theologically this indivisibility of the spiritual and the material in Christ and therefore man:

> The Jesus in the New Testament is supremely true man...far from existing as the union of two parts or two "substances". He is one; whole man, embodied soul and besouled body; the one in the other, never merely beside it: the one never

> without the other but only with it, and in it present, active and significant; the one with all its attributes always to be taken seriously as the other... Everything is the revelation of an inner, invisible, spiritual plane of life. But it is almost more striking and characteristic that everything has an outer, visible bodily form.[38]

Spencer was undoubtedly isolated as a religious artist. He had on the one hand admirers and friends who thought highly of his art but who did not necessarily share his religious beliefs. On the other hand, the community of the Church which inspired his religious visions did not really understand his artistic concerns. His faith was not nourished by membership in any church, community or group of believers. We can only speculate on what Spencer's work would have been had he lived in an age of religious revival.

In our compartmentalised existence, religion is often cut off from other concerns. The result is the pious, disembodied religious art of so many of our churches. Spencer's vision of Christ brings back a much needed vitality to contemporary religious art. He surprises and shocks because the vision he portrays is authentic, and therefore new. We are again confronted with the ever surprising belief in the full humanity of God.

The Christian professes in his faith that all things, heaven and earth, the realm of the material and the spiritual, are the creation of one and the same God. But if everything which exists, exists only having its origin in God, then this means not only that all things in their variety - proceed from One cause which, because it is all powerful, can create the most varied things. It also means that this variety; manifests an inner similarity and commonality, and that this variety or differentiation forms a unity in its origin, its self-realisation and its determination - that is, it forms a single world. It follows from this that it would be unchristian to understand matter and spirit as merely existing alongside each other in fact, and as being basically and absolutely disparate realities in relationship to each other. For Christian theology and philosophy it is to be taken for granted that spirit and matter have more in common that they have differentiating them.[39]

Chapter VIII. SPENCER AND THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION

As pointed out previously, Spencer's portrayal of the bodily Resurrection of his close ones, was a recurring preoccupation. He had a very literal interpretation of this resurrection. It was indeed a very bodily resurrection that Spencer portrayed in his three great murals which have been dealt with elsewhere. The Apostle's Creed which represents the minimum of Christian doctrine, plainly states in its last statement: "I believe in the Resurrection of the body..." In the Christian context then, Spencer's belief in the Resurrection of the body is not surprising. However in the context of XXth century art, his Resurrections are exceptional, one might also say anomalous. The Cookham and the Burghclere Resurrections were painted in the aftermath of the first World War, while the Port Glasgow Resurrection was begun after the surrender of Germany in 1945. The Western art that followed both these wars, was an art of bitter irony, disenchantment or else an art of escape into the dream world of surrealism.

In XXth century art God has been dead many years. But there is nevertheless a longing for the sacred. In literature, Beckett and Genet come to mind, and in the plastic arts, Beckmann, Corinth, Picasso, Francis Bacon, Barnett Newman, and Rothko, to name but a few. In the contemporary art which deals with religious symbols, the Crucifixion is the most often recurring theme. However, it is a Crucifixion which has often lost its original redemptive meaning, and has become the symbol of man's meaningless suffering and death. For artists like Bacon, violent

death enhances 'life'. When there is no God, then death is the only absolute certainty. Ironically, violent death with its blood and gore is reminiscent of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. In fact Bacon utilises the symbols of chalice, cross, and eagle in his painting. But they are on a par with the camera, the toilet bowl and the monkey. The religious symbolism has lost its sacred meaning while retaining the weight of tradition. It thus can be used partly as sign of emptiness and partly for its sacrilegious effect.

Picasso's Guernica, Rothko's tomblike interiors, Newman's way of the Cross, Beckett's solitary search, all represent the sense of abandonment and alienation characteristic of contemporary man. Even Rouault, a believer, preferred to depict the suffering, rather than the victorious Christ.

Spencer's Resurrections then, stand out in the art history of our century, as a surprising testimony of hope and even joy. They emphasize man's vocation for fellowship, worship and immortality. If one were to deal with ideas alone while discussing art, one would be justified in wondering if Spencer in his optimism was supremely insensitive to his own epoch. But form is as expressive of the artist's state of mind, as subject matter. Spencer's figures representing the common man, have a modern resonance in our mass age. The three dimensional full-blooded figures in the Port Glasgow Resurrection, plates XVII and XVIII pages 58 and 59, particularly the crouching pair of grandparents in the centre of that mural, lay a stress on man's ordinariness and remind us of our animal origins. Spencer's figures are reminiscent of the modern idiom of a Leger, or a Seurat. But whereas the Leger paintings deal with the impersonal paradise of industrial man, both Spencer and Seurat portray a paradise which hints at eternity. In fact, in Spencer's Resurrections

we witness a very earthly paradise. The very physicality of Spencer's figures seem to be a grarantor of their resurrection, of their entering upon eternal time. Thus the modern theological concept of our ordinary time being already in some way a part of eternity for the believer is expressed in Spencer. To hark back to his Methodist antecedents, we can express this intuition yet another way. Those that have experienced Christ's redeeming love, are already in their earthly lives entered upon the paths of eternity.

In the Resurrection Port Glasgow, man is in the process of rising, but he is still part of the earth. He is crouching, but he is capable of fellowship, worship and even immortality. Man is a sexual, sensuous being -- he represents a volume in space -- he is material -- but his nature aspires to the transcendent. The vulnerable, the childlike, the physical, the mortal and the transcendent inhabit the same figures in Spencer. For Spencer as a child, Christ and Mary and other saints had been embodied within ordinary Cookham villagers. He saw no dichotomy between the ordinary and the holy, the material and the spiritual. He said;

> There are many things in this life that I love and that I feel are forever loved, and these things are a key to the Resurrection. A sort of reciprocity begins. This life being a key to the next, tells me something of the next life and causes the resurrected life to tell me more of what the resurrection in this life is like. This intercourse brings out the meaning I see in this world.[40]

Spencer's views are fully corroborated in modern theological thought as is shown in the quote from Karl Rahner which precedes this chapter.

But Spencer's Resurrections are not only witnesses to man's

immortality. They acknowledge an invisible God who if not portrayed in the Port Glasgow Resurrection, is still a powerful presence in that mural. The magnificent groups of worshippers are addressing themselves to Him. Spencer had once said: "I think the one and only perfect joy is the joy of giving praise."[41] Worship or prayer as part of the vocation of man, was an essential part of Spencer's belief. This leads us to the idea of 'fellowship', which was another essential part of Spencer's theology. His work is permeated with the feeling of the brotherhood of man. Eric Newton refers specifically to the Burghclere Resurrection when he speaks of the 'universal human sympathy' which pervades Spencer's work. It is also true of his other Resurrections. 'Fellowship' was the term used by the first Methodists in the time of Wesley. Catholic theology has another name for the same idea. In Catholic terms it is called the Communion of Saints. Spencer does not differentiate between the dead and the alive in his Resurrections. In one of his Port Glasgow Resurrections, Reunion of 1945, he has the living in one area and the dead in another area of the painting, but they are communicating and rejoicing and meeting with each other. The living and the dead are in a close relationship of love with each other.

To recapitulate, Spencer's attachment to the person of Christ, his belief in the Resurrection of the Body, and his belief in the vocation of man to worship his God, and to have fellowship with his brother, represent the content of Spencer's painting. He chose to avoid the traditional Christian symbolism. His iconography was modern as was his idiom. He introduced a private mysterious symbolism, fresh and unadulterated, reminiscent of the surrealist use of dream images. (See page 61 of this study, dealing with the symbolism in the Port Glasgow Resurrection).

To what extent does Spencer fit into a specific Christian spirituality? Certainly his popular simple faith, his mystical predisposition, and his joyful optimism, echo the characteristics of his mother's Methodist religion. This is confirmed by the following quote concerning the Wesleyan beliefs and attitudes:

> The Wesleyans saw man as having sufficient righteousness within themselves to attain (with God's help) by their individual efforts...a state of sinless perfection. Although it would more frequently be achieved at the moment of death, for an increasing number of people, thanks in good part to the mutual efforts of the societies of regenerated men. Christian Perfection was possible in this life, (though of course Wesleyans never doubted the indispensability of God's grace to the process). Methodism moreover stressed experience and saw itself as an "experimental" religion. By a profound emotional and mystical experience achieved by methods not requiring learning or analysis, by an experience more accessible to the humble and unsophisticated than to their better situated or better educated fellows, large numbers of men might attain the certainty - the Assurance that though they had been sinners, their sins had been forgiven and they had been accepted by God and could by their own efforts, reinforced by the fraternal efforts of their societies, find ultimate sanctification, that is salvation.[42]

In spite of Spencer's basic Christian beliefs, he had as previously mentioned many unorthodox views and he led a style of life which did not correspond to the traditionally 'good' Christian life. Apart from his marital complications, he did not impress the religious authorities which might have given him commissions. The Jesuit Fathers had hoped to get him to paint an Assumption for their Chapel. He lost the commission by talk of using his mistress as his model for the Virgin. Nor did he obtain the commission for Coventry cathedral when it was being rebuilt after the war in a great spirit of renewal of faith. Spencer travelled up to Coventry but for one reason or another was ignored while his

contemporary Jacob Epstein, and other young painters and sculptors were employed. Spencer's paintings hang in museums, and he has a great deal of recognition from art critics and the English public. But he has had little or no recognition as a religious painter. Two of his paintings hang in Churches, the Last Supper hangs in the Anglican Church of his childhood, and the Crucifixion hangs in the chapel of a boys school in Hertfordshire, but for the rest he has been ignored and neglected by Christians. Time alone will show whether one day he will be recognised as a painter with religious insights relevant to our century.

Plate XXXIX. Self-Portrait, 1959

oil, 20" by 16"

Collection Mrs. Denis Smith.

...but when I try to imagine a faultless love, or the life to come, what I hear is the murmur of underground streams, what I see is a limestone landscape.

W.H. Auden[43]

We are like the chrysallis asleep,
and dreaming of its wings.

Samuel Palmer[44]

CONCLUSION

Spencer was a product of the Victorian era. The prime inspiration of his life was a Christian faith grounded in the Bible, which he absorbed within his family via the Victorian tradition. He was to reject, however, the Victorian moral code, and replace it with a more libertarian attitude to life and love. Like Lawrence his contemporary, he believed sexuality to be holy and an integral part of religious experience.

He had a nostalgia for the early Italian Renaissance, a period during which a religious view of the world was unquestioned, and when the art of the religious mural was at its height. He seems to have been familiar with the realism of the Pre-Raphaelites. Though his realistic work exhibited some of the same attention to detail, his religious work was never tinged with Pre-Raphaelite sentimentality, so foreign to Spencer's rural mentality.

Spencer was indirectly affected by Cubism. His three-dimensional figures simplified to cone and cylinder, were certainly inspired by the cubists who exhibited in the London of his youth. His early works also show the influence of such symbolists as Gauguin, while his erotic works have been compared to the Neue Sachlichkeit school of pre-Nazi Germany. But whereas Dix and Grosz were critics of their society, Spencer was never much concerned with immediate social issues. The totality of his work is closer to the Expressionist mentality, a movement which antedated the Neue Sachlichkeit by a few years, and overlapped with it

considerably. By distortion of form and exaggeration of colour, they expressed intensity of emotion. They painted a world couched in personal symbolism which turned out to be more prophetic than the vision of the satirists.

However it is not enough to link Spencer with this artist or that movement. To situate him in the first half of the XXth century, I would like to distinguish between two attitudes which weave their way through the art history of western industrial man. They represent two different approaches to the universe. The first is based on the premise that the world is to be shaped by man to his own design, in fact that man aided by technology can create a totally controllable environment, and that he himself is the final arbitrer of the fate of the world. To this stream of thought could be linked such artistic movements as Futurism in Italy, Vorticism in England, Constructivism in Russia. These movements varied, but they all implied an arrogant Promethean faith in man's powers to rebuild a new world from a tabula rasa. Even though Spencer borrowed from the visual vocabulary of some of these schools, their way of thinking was totally foreign to him.

The second approach sees the universe not as a plaything at the service of man's whims, but a mystery whose patterns hint at deeper spiritual realities. German Expressionists, such as Beckmann or Marck could be cited as examples. It is in this stream of thought that Spencer rightfully belongs. It must be made clear that this very schematic distinction between a materialistic and a more spiritual view of the world, does not necessarily coincide with the distinction between abstract and figurative art. In fact while socialist-realist art, and pop-art, both figurative, can be classed with the materialistic view of the world, Cezanne, Malevitch and Klee, to mention just a few

artists, can be said to belong to the second one. The distinction however is particularly relevant in connection with Spencer's work.

He was moved by a vision of reality which was a profoundly religious one. Parallels to his work might be made with William Blake (1757-1827) and Samuel Palmer (1805-1881), both lone prophets, unattached to any school of their day, and both profoundly religious. Spencer always derived the stimulation for his art from the specific community within which he was living at the time, and with which he passionately identified. There were three such communities in his life, the village of Cookham, his regiment stationed in Salonika during the first World War, and the workers and their families in Port Glasgow during the second World War.

Spencer's mysticism was coloured by his Methodist antecedents. He identified with God's creation. His works were celebrations of life, which to him hinted at the eternal dimension. His critics felt that Spencer's later work was too prosaic to include a spiritual reality. In fact Spencer's preoccupations with the ordinary in which he discovered an inherent holiness is very much in the spirit of the Gospels. Spencer's life was by no means that of an orthodox Christian nor were his views and beliefs necessarily orthodox. But his devotion to the person of Christ, and his belief in the Resurrection and redemption of man place him within the Christian tradition. His religious insights are unquestionably based on genuine Christian sources, and express a modern emphasis on the embodied humanity of God made man. His work is also preoccupied with the relationship between ordinary time and Eternity. Testimony to this preoccupation is the recurring Resurrection theme.

In his later works, Spencer did not deal with unseen entities. He

limited himself to what he saw in his immediate surroundings. The patterns that he perceived in nature, and in human relationships, were hints as to the life after death. Spencer clearly belonged to the second stream of thought outlined above.

We must not seek to define too closely the theological implications of his work, for fear of destroying the magic of his poetry. I hope that in this study where I have tried to examine his beliefs as expressed in his work, in relation to Christian tradition, I have not fallen prey to this mistake.

Spencer's greatest contribution to the art of the XXth century is that of a mural painter. The Burghclere Resurrection and in particular the Port Glasgow Resurrection are great XXth century religious murals. They cannot be defined in purely formal terms, although the composition, colour, use of light and distortion, form organic wholes of great power As Spencer himself would have agreed, their strength derives from the Christian faith which inspired them.

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IMPORTANT DATES

1891	Born 30th June at Cookham-on-Thames, Berkshire
1907	Entered Maidenhead Technical Institute
1908-1912	Studied at The Slade School under Tonks
1911	Awarded the Melville Nettleship Prize
1912	Awarded the Composition Prize at The Slade
1912	Exhibited John Donne Arriving in Heaven, in Roger Fry's Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition at Grafton Hall
1915	Joined the Royal Army Medical Corps
1915	Posted to Beaufort War Hospital, Bristol
1916	Sent to Macedonia with the 66th, 68th, 143rd Field Ambulances
Aug. 1917	Volunteered and joined 7th Battalion of the Royal Berkshires. Commissioned to paint an official picture.
1919	Lived and worked in Cookham. Member of the British Art Club until 1927
1920-21	Went to live with the Slessers at Bourne End near Cookham. Stayed at Durweston, Dorset with Henry Lamb during the summer of 1920. Accepted an invitation from Muirhead Bone to stay near Petersfield in the summer of 1921. Later took lodgings there
1922	Visited Yugoslavia with the Carlines in the summer. Moved to Hampstead in December
1923-1924	Stayed with Henry Lamb at Pooke where Behrends saw drawings for future Burghclere, followed by their decision to build the Memorial Chapel.
1923	Returned to Hampstead in October. Used Henry Lamb's studio on top of Vale Hotel in the Vale of Heath.
1925	Married Hilda Carline; daughter Shirin born.
1926-1927	Completed Resurrection Cookham and exhibited in one man show at Goupil Gallery 1927. Resurrection Cookham

purchased by Tate Gallery. Moved to Burghclere to paint Chapel.

1930 Second daughter Unity born

1932 Completed the memorial Chapel. Moved to Lindworth, Cookham. Elected ARA. Paintings and Drawings shown at Venice Biennale. In October, Dudley Tooth becomes sole agent.

1933 Invited to Switzerland by Edward Beddington and Behrens to paint landscapes. Sara Tubb exhibited at the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh

1935 Resigned from the Academy after rejection of Lovers and St. Francis and the Birds by hanging Committee

1936 Visited Switzerland second time with the Beddington Behrens. Divorced Hilda Carline

1937 Married Patricia Preece. Spent a month at St. Ives and also visited and painted at Southwold

1938 22 paintings shown at the Venice Biennale. Stayed with the Rothensteins and Malcolm MacDonald until December when he moved to a room in Constance Oliver's house at 188 Adelaide Road, London. Began to paint Christ in the Wilderness series

1939 Exhibited at Leger and Son in March-April. Moved to the White Hart Inn, Gloucestershire with George and Daphne Charlton

1940 Commissioned to paint pictures of shipyards by the War Artists Advisory Committee and made the first of several visits to Lithgow's Yard, Port Glasgow.

1941 Stayed with Mrs. Harter, Sydney Carline's mother-in-law, at Epsom, and continued to work on shipbuilding series.

1942-1944 Returned to Cookham in January as the tenant of cousin Bernard Smithers, with whom he stayed until May 1944. His visits to Port Glasgow continued where he put up at Glencairn boarding house. Work continued on Shipbuilders. Began the Port Glasgow Resurrection series. Often visited the Carlines and Hilda at Barnstead Hospital

1945 September returned to Cookham to Cliveden View

1947 Retrospective Exhibition at Temple Newsam House, Leeds; The Burghclere Chapel presented by the Behrends to the National Trust.

1950 Awarded the C.B.E. Rejoined the Royal Academy and

	elected R.A. Hilda Spencer died in November
1952	Began preliminary drawings for Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta
1954	Visited China as a member of a cultural delegation
1955	November-December, Retrospective Exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London
1958	Knighted. Hon.D.Lit., Southampton. Associate at the Royal College of Art. Exhibited at Cookham Church
1959	14th December, died at the Canadian War Memorial Hospital, Cliveden

APPENDIX I

LIST OF RESURRECTION PAINTINGS

	Year	Title	Size	Collection
I	1914	Resurrection of Good and Bad		whereabouts unknown
II	1923-27	Resurrection Cookham	9' by 18'	Tate Gallery, London
III	1928-29	Resurrection Macedonia	21' by 17½'	All Souls Oratory, Burghclere
	1926-32	North Wall, left side (large semi-circular arched panels)		
	1927	1) Convoy arriving with wounded	7' by 6'	
		2) Ablutions	7' by 6'	
	1932	3) Kit Inspection	7' by 6'	
		4) The Dug-Out	7' by 6'	
		(small square panels under the arched ones)		
	1926	5) Scrubbing the floor	3' by 6'	
	1926	6) Moving Kit Bags	3' by 6'	
	'27-28	7) Sorting the Laundry	3' by 6'	
		8) Tea-Urns	3' by 6'	
		(Large panel spanning the whole upper North Wall)		
		9) Kamp at Kalinova	10' by 28'	
		South Wall, right side (Large semi-circular arched panels)		
	1929	10) Reveille	7' by 6'	
	1931	11) Filling Water Bottles	7' by 6'	
	1931	12) Map Reading	7' by 6'	
	1932	13) Firebelt	7' by 6'	
		(small square panels underneath the arched ones)		
		14) Frost Bite	3' by 6'	
		15) Tea in a Hospital Ward	3' by 6'	
		16) Bedmaking	3' by 6'	
	1932	17) Washing Lockers	3' by 6'	

	Year	Title	Size	Collection
		(Large panel spanning the whole upper South Wall)		
		18) Riverbed at Todorova	10' by 28'	
IV	1945-50	Resurrection Port Glasgow	7' by 22'	Tate Gallery
	1946	Hill of Sion	3' by 6¼'	Preston Art Gallery
	1945	Reunion Triptych each panel	30" by 20"	Aberdeen Art Gallery
	1945	Rejoicing " " "	30" by 20"	
	1945	Waking Up " central panel	30" by 20"	Mrs. Corble
		side panels	30" by 20"	" "
	1947	Raising up Jairus' Daughter Triptych central panels	30" by 34"	Southampton Art Gallery
		side panels	30" by 20"	" "

APPENDIX II

SHIP-BUILDING ON THE CLYDE 1940-1946

Year	Title	Panel	Size	Collection
1941	Burners	left panel	20" by 80"	Imperial War Museum London
		center panel	42" by 60"	" " "
		right panel	20" by 80"	" " "
	Welders	left panel	20" by 80"	" " "
		center panel	42" by 60"	
		right panel	20" by 80"	
1941	Riveters		30" by 228"	" " "
	The Template (3 panels)		20" by 228"	" " "
1941	Bending the Keel Plate (3 panels)		20" by 228"	" " "
	The Riggers	main panel	20" by 194"	" " "
		small central upper panel	12" by 32½"	
	The Plumbers	main panel	20" by 194"	" " "
		small central upper panel	12" by 35"	
1946	The Furnaces		61½" by 44 3/4"	" "

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