BRIAN BRADSHAW

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for the degree of
Master of Fine Art

By

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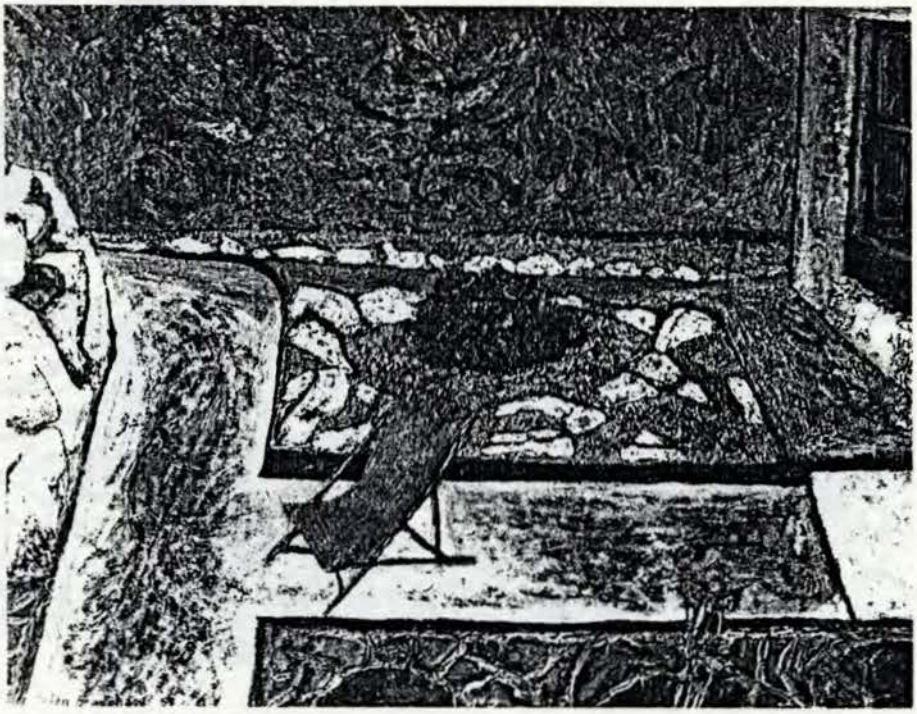
One assumes that Brian Bradshaw's career in art had been decided upon at an early age, but in fact it was not so. After he had attended the Canon Slade Grammar School in Bolton, his father suggested various options, some of them interesting, like becoming a veterinary surgeon, but that was rejected because although the boy liked 'putting things right' he didn't savour 'cutting things up'. For the same reason he couldn't follow the family tradition on his mother's side and become a doctor. Nor was his wish to become a sea-captain treated with any seriousness, although he thinks with nostalgia of life at sea; and he is pleased he didn't take up forestry because, although he loves the land and admires the art of designing the great gardens and parks which surrounded the Georgian and Regency houses of the 18th Century, he is appalled by the artificial mess they're making of the land now. So in that interim period before being conscripted, they suggested at home that he spend a few months at the Bolton Municipal School of Art under the guidance of Mr. John R. Gauld, and so his course was set for the future.

He studied there for three years and was successful in obtaining the "drawing" and "pictorial design" certificates of the Ministry of Education, before joining His Majesty's Forces in 1942.

He found that he could perceive the structure of things from the moment he could see. He later had this to say of his family home, Haulgh Hall, which now stands near the Bridgeman Street - Bradford Street bridge over the Croal and the old canal, and which hides its more romantic side in the trees on the edge of the valley.

> 'A linear world of black line on white wall. The tudor timbers plot their structure in a decorative skeleton on the stone slabbed roof, and above, sandstone walls. This rambling mansion rebuilt and modernised in 1602, grounds encroached upon by the industrial age, bounded by road and canal. Massive door of studded oak and iron; porch in cobbled courtyard; linenfold panels line the private chapel; carved oak beams grip the ceilings and pillar the walls. In this oasis, I was born and bred. The green garden paths are marked with large white limestones.' 1



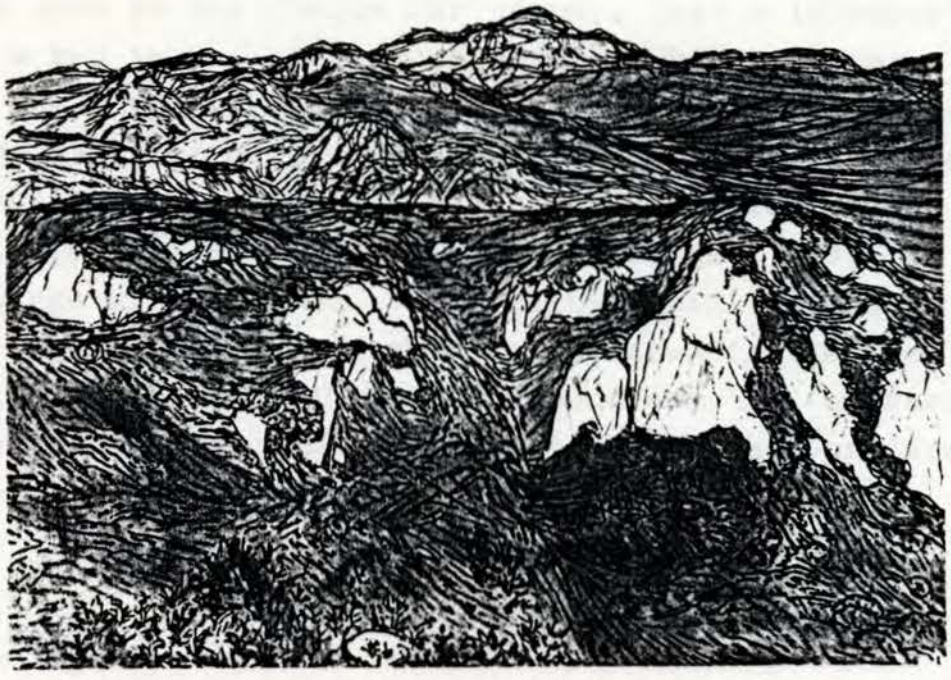
1. 'The Garden, Bolton'

'Inside the rooms the seasons change. A chorus of Swiss bells announce the visitors at the door. The music of Swiss bells gives place to orchestral rehearsals - oboe, cello, violin, piano, double bass - symphonies and songs. The artists come and go. Archie Camden, Stephanie Baker. Who was the one I thought was Father Christmas? Was it Beecham?

2. 'The River Croal, Bolton'

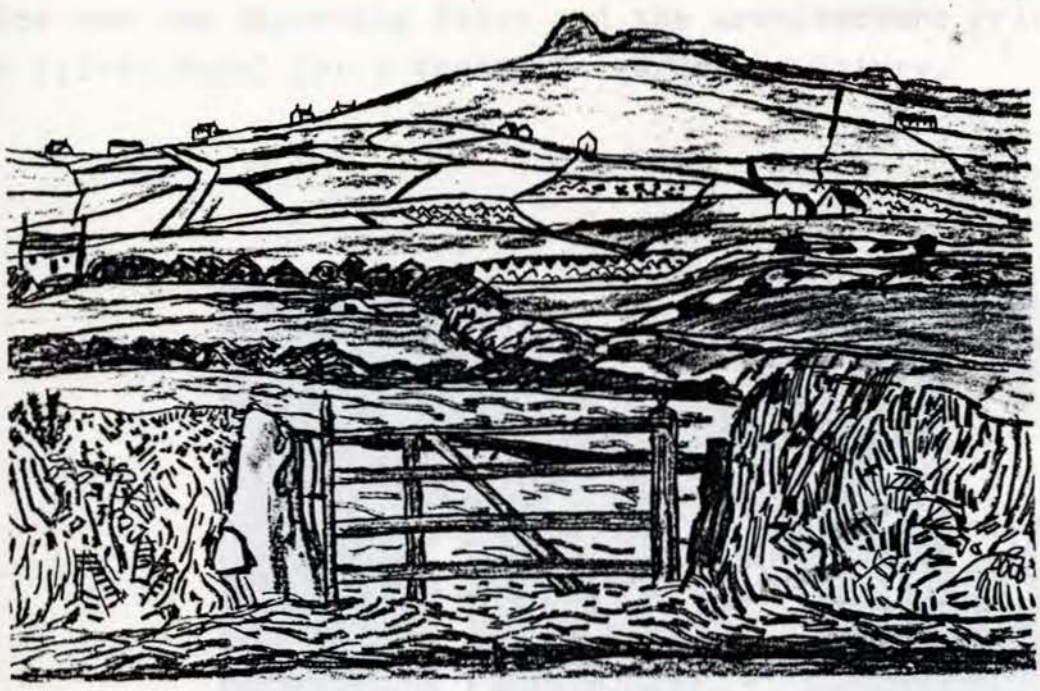
3. 'The Moor'

Because Bradshaw was born and brought up in Bolton he was profoundly aware of the moors which surrounded it. The canal brought the country into the town and one could easily see the wild swans and hedgehogs and other river life from the bank. The boy was familiar with every aspect of the moors, spending most of his leisure hours exploring them.



4. 'The Moor'

This innate love of nature explains his compulsion to spend a few weeks as a farmer's labourer before accepting the King's shilling. With the minimum of possessions in a bag on his back, he took a train to Knutsford in Cheshire and then walked into the country through Delamere Forest and eventually ended up somewhere near Beeston Hills.



5. 'Coastal Farmlands'

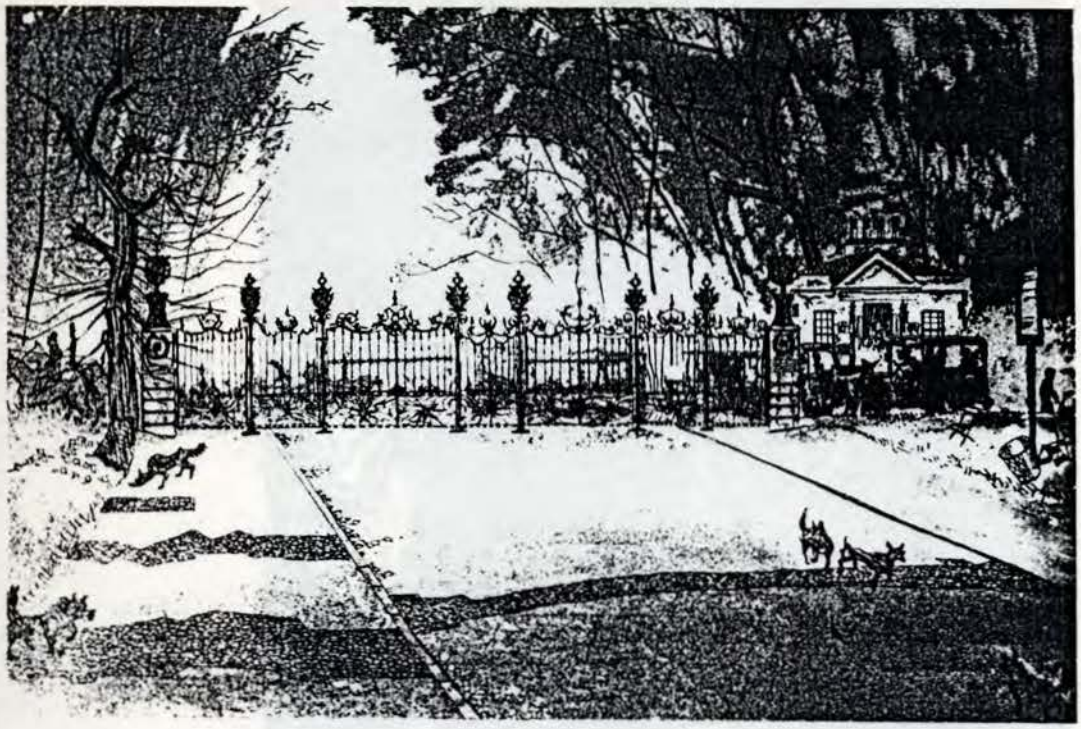
After being turned away as a saboteur on occasions (as he could hardly be taken seriously when he insisted that he wished to work in the fields for no pay, just a labourer's diet and a bed in the hay) at nightfall a kindly farmer took him in, but brushed aside his romantic ideals and put him in the best bedroom, paid him union rates and annoyed him intensely by not waking him up in the morning. The family did go into Knutsford the first weekend, leaving him in charge of the farm. This allowed him the freedom to sweat in the fields, and then to lie down in the lush grass, with the cows munching all around and the throssel in the hedgerow. He was also able to follow his private pursuits of writing, and reading Belloc.

After serving in North Africa, Sicily, France, Holland and Germany, he returned to Bolton Art School and later took a pedagogic course at Manchester. In the meantime Bradshaw applied for entrance to the Engraving School of the Royal College of Art, London, and was successful in gaining a Royal Scholarship tenable for three years, under Robert Austin R.A. He proceeded there in 1948, and was awarded a First Class Associateship at the end. He also won the Engraving Prize and the Architecture Prize and a Silver Medal for a thesis on garden sculpture.

6. 'The Wooden Hercules'

In addition Bradshaw took an Oxford Teacher's Certificate. He was also elected an Associate of the Royal Etchers Society and later gained the coveted Prix de Rome Scholarship. This was worth £400 per annum, tenable at the British School at Rome and is awarded so as "to give a few students of distinction and exceptional promise the opportunity to devote their whole time for a period of two years to the furtherance of their studies in the fine arts."

7. 'Bandstand, Kensington Gardens'



8. 'Gateway, Hyde Park'

In fact he found the academic environment in Rome stultifying, so spent the two years travelling in various European countries. This brought him more in touch with other forms of art and led to a greater interest in painting than he had shown previously. What he was able to follow up in Rome was his great love of architectural drawing. He spent much time drawing the classical architecture of Rome. During the years immediately prior to his European stay he had received a thorough grounding in the discipline of structural drawing and was familiar with 'Palladian' architecture through spending a great many happy hours working at Chiswick House, and at Crowther's home, Syon Lodge on the bank of the River Thames near Isleworth which Robert Adam remodelled in the 18th century. He was working on 'The Retreat' in the garden when King George VI and the Queen walked in on him. They were both extremely interested in the subject matter and techniques and bombarded him with knowledgeable questions.

9. 'The Retreat'

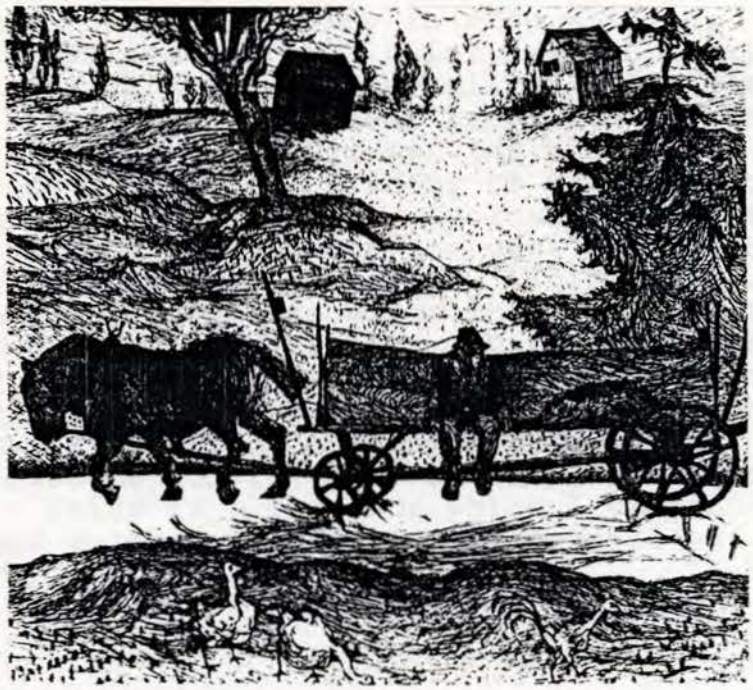
Bradshaw admired the way Augustan architecture lays great stress on classical perfection of proportion, based on rules and standards worked out from observations and measurements of Roman buildings and on the carefully balanced distribution of windows and doors, and on the use of classical decoration such as columns and entablatures, such as the style of William Kent. He loved the Georgian and Regency architecture and interior decoration because of the wonderful artistry and skill of the designers and craftsmen evident in houses such as Syon House. The work of men like William Kent in the early 18th century intrigued Bradshaw greatly. He admired the way in which they not only built or altered houses but were responsible for the structure

within, the decoration, the panels and ceilings, the furniture, as well as the landscaped gardens, waterways and marvellous sculpture such as the urns, busts and sphinxes. Kent even designed a ceremonial barge, which Bradshaw drew, and part of which remains in one of the storerooms of the Victoria and Albert Museum. They were men of many parts, which, according to Bradshaw are the essence of an artist. "An artist, if one has to use the word 'artist', is not just a fellow who paints."

10. 'The Wreck'

Before leaving for Europe, Bradshaw was elected a Member of the Manchester Academy in 1951. He sketched, made pen and wash drawings and painted watercolours of the architecture and of the workers in the fields wherever he

travelled, and was particularly at home with the street scenes in Madrid, and labourers in the country surrounding Salzburg. He used etching facilities at Vienna Academy.



11. 'Horsecart, Salzburg'

Bradshaw lived with gipsies in Spain and shared their food and hospitality and drew their rock dwellings; and he hiked through Greece with a bag on his back, as he had in Cheshire. Here he was able to study at first hand the sculpture and architecture he loved, and he added to his large collection of archaeological remains, and revelled in the Greek fantasies of myth and rite. He had this to say of his approach to Greece:

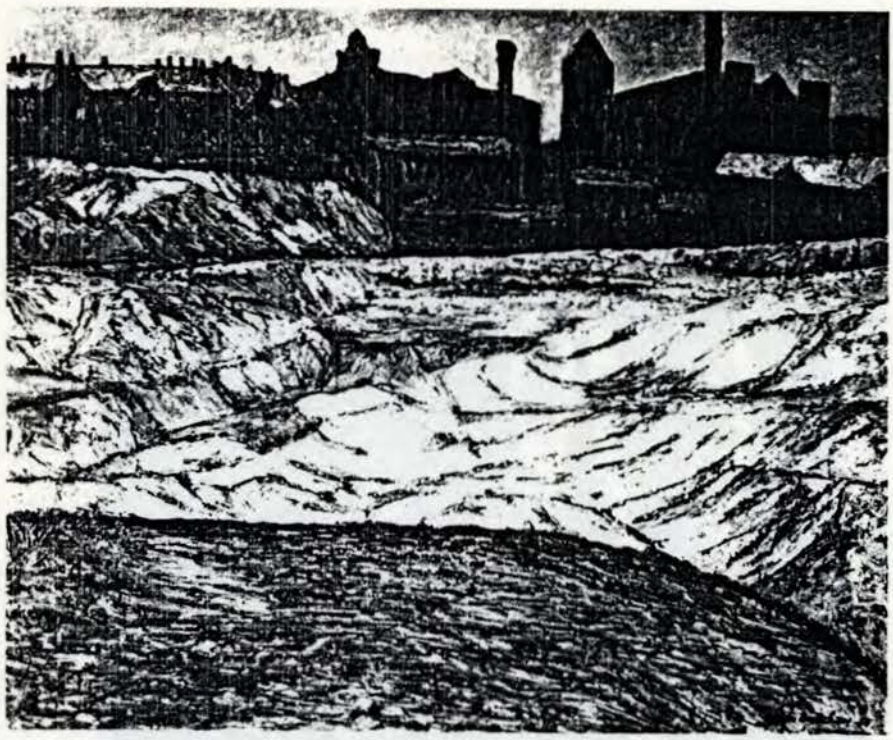
> 'A sea journey. The night has closed in, veiling a rough Adriatic, but not calming the motions of the ship which lunges a persistent path towards the islands and shores of Greece. The decks are crowded with peasants - blue, red, white costumes that are different to mine. Boats and poultry. Noises. Some strangely musical. Colours vibrate and change their moving patterns in rhythm to the lurching iron. A timber world which separates us from the violent sea. The dry air is hostile and hot, unbearable because imprisoned. I escape to the upper deck whose unstable darkness is lashed by stinging wind, and climb into a swinging lifeboat for

some private security. A ship within a ship, but one which sails beneath the sky. Like a bird I am perched aloft. The cage is below. The black sky is riddled with the lights of stars swinging their lanterns from one horizon to the other. This is Homer's world in which beauty and the furies intermix. I grip the boards on which I lie and try to get some sleep. I am not alone. A dead sparrow is also with me. The dawn that comes brings quiet, and an array of mountains through which we glide. Distant details are etched with clear precision in the Olympic atmosphere. This was the place to journey and I found the meaning of travel among the crags of Mycenae and the Cyclopian fortresses of that archaic land, where the past has entrenched itself into an eternal present. This place where memories refuse to allow themselves to be replaced by time and thought; where they persist in being a prevailing presence, is the same to me as Wales; and Wales I cannot remember, because it wraps itself around me like a skin, which never leaves me sufficiently in time to become a memory. Wales is a presence which I cannot escape and which I therefore have no need to remember." [1]

12. 'In the Beginning and Always' (Greece)

The following report on his return to England belies the fact that his head was filled with ideas and his experiences were to motivate him to extraordinary heights in the following decade.

"An artist returning to England after two years of travel through nearly every European country would, you might think be raving about the art treasures of Florence, the wonders of Rome, or the beauties of the Isles of Greece. Not so Brian Bradshaw, 32-year-old Bolton-born artist. His verdict on his Scholarship wanderings: "I saw nothing so beautiful as the road from Salford Bus Station to Bolton as seen from the No. 8 bus." And what he saw on the Continent seems to have had little influence on the pictures he is showing at his one-man exhibition opened at the Crane Gallery, Manchester. The streets of his home town and the Welsh countryside are his favourite subjects."

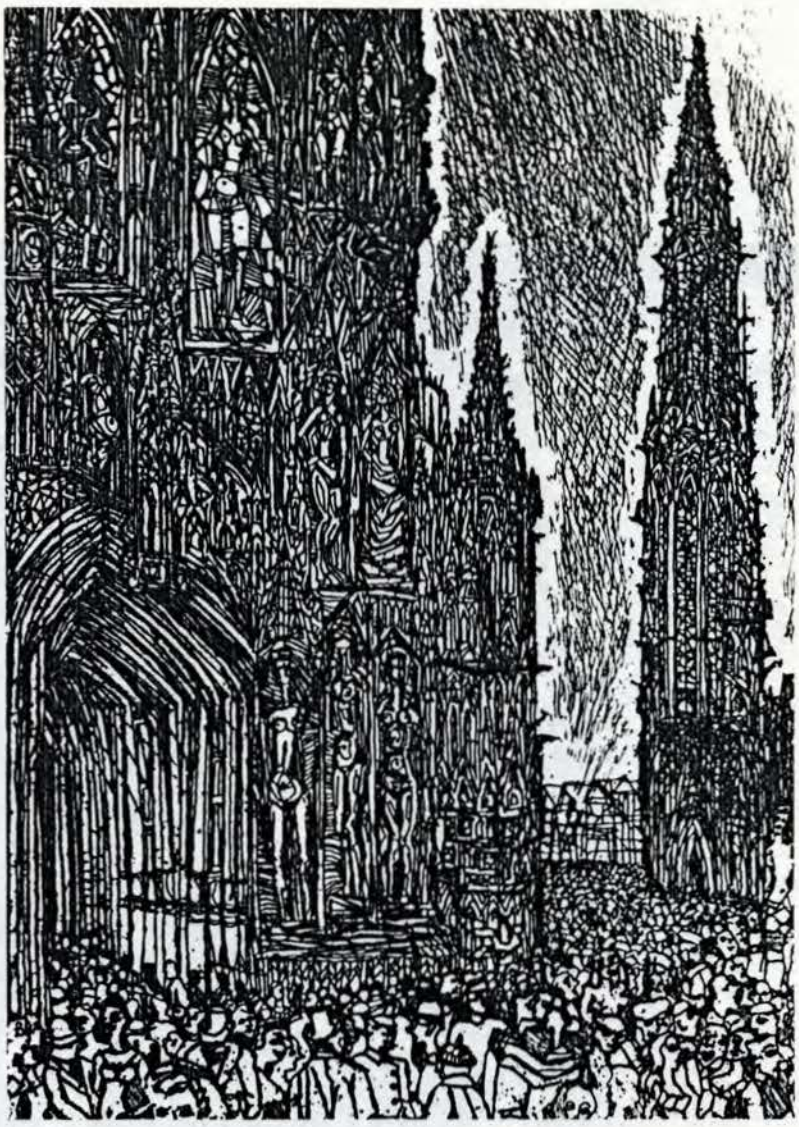


13. 'Moses Gate'

Bradshaw plunged straight in to drawing and painting what interested him in his immediate surroundings. He had married Maureen Keating in 1952 and they went to live in a remote cottage in Wales in 1953.

Years later, in 1956 in fact, on the occasion of introducing Bradshaw at his exhibition at the Crane Gallery, Manchester, Derrick Greaves had this to say:

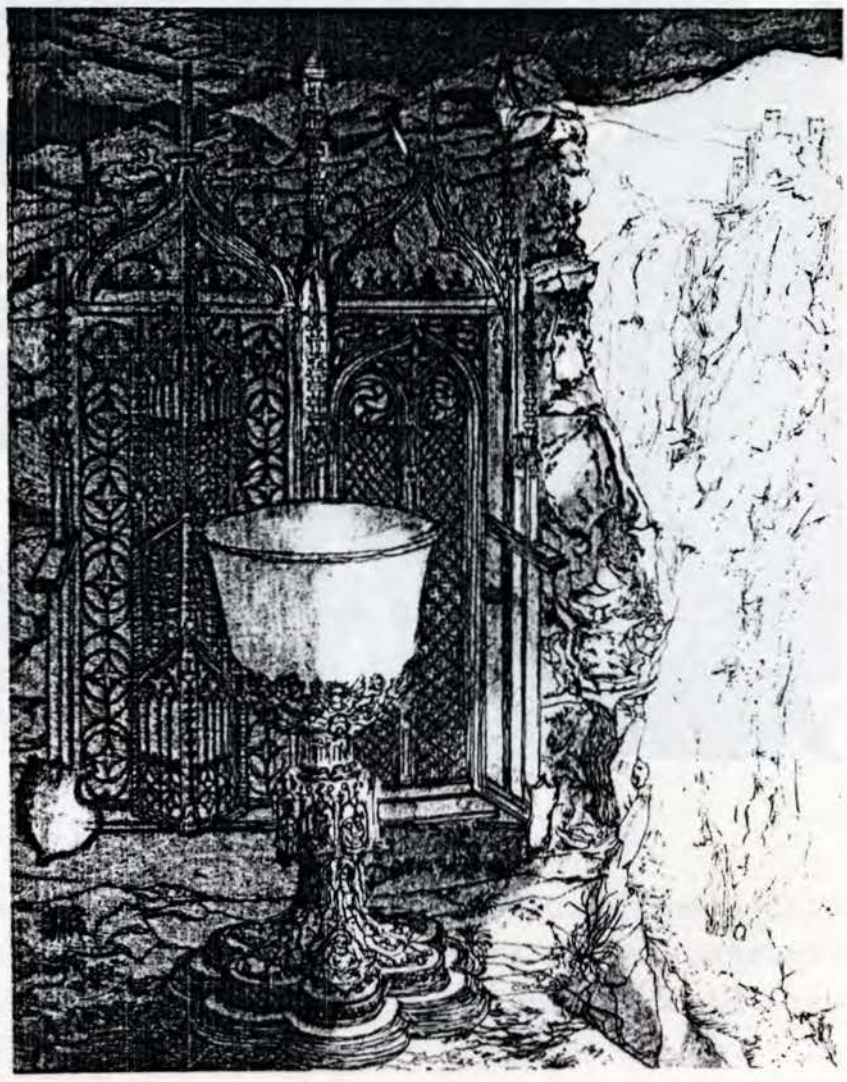
'I have in my possession a small and curious etching made by Brian Bradshaw at the end of his extensive period of travel and study in Europe. It is rich and well wrought technically and its title, if it had one, might be 'A Tribute to the Gothic'. It represents a narrow street, Germanic and Medieval, flanked by buttressed and crocketed cathedrals, soaring and dense with sculpture and pierced pinnacles. Flooding down the street towards the spectator is a crowd of hundreds of people. Fine. On closer examination, however, the packed crowd show themselves to be engaged in an extreme of Rabelaisian conduct. Looking still closer, since the scale is small, even the niche-statues on the churches are found to be sporting bikinis.'



14. 'Cathedral and Crowd'

Derrick Greaves went on, 'For as long as I have known Bradshaw his constant love in Art has been the Gothic Spirit. Yet at the end of this period of seeing and admiring painting, sculpture and perhaps three or four dozen cathedrals and churches, his comment as made in this particular etching is oblique. He, as it were, cocks a snook at his own enthusiasm; but since his enthusiasm in the first place is sincere and deep enough to take the dig of such sly testing, the experiment here is entirely successful. I mention this because it reveals the kind of cautious self-examination which was typical of himself and his work as an engraver, and which preluded his decision to become a painter and to settle in the North of England. A wise decision as one can tell from his rapid progression since he began painting in 1953.'

Bradshaw's deep interest in the Welsh landscape, Welsh literature and legend occupied him for much of the time, whether he was at the cottage 'Waen Hir' near Capel Curig in North Wales, or later 'Cae Canol' near Llanberis, or in Lancashire or even much later still - in South Africa.



15. 'The Holy Grail'

His etching 'The Holy Grail' was inspired by the fact that before he was hanged the last Abbot of Glastonbury just had time to send the Holy Grail into hiding in the Welsh Mountains. A copy of the etching was bought by a benefactor of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, the late Mr. Arthur Mitchell, at the annual exhibition of the Royal Society of Printer-Etchers in 1956.

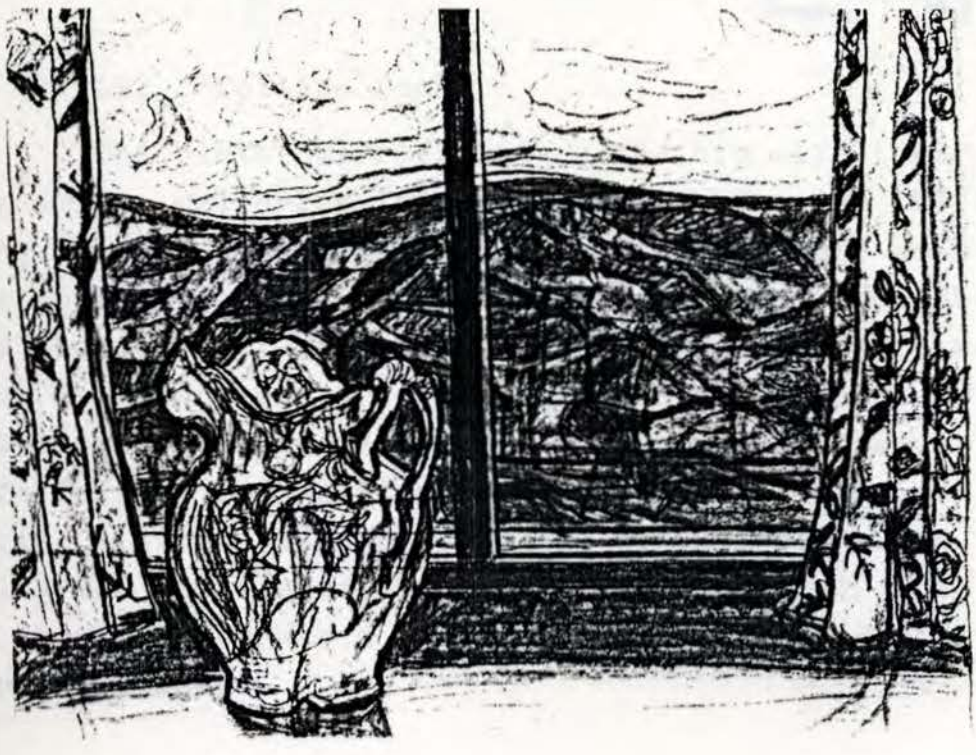
Bradshaw had explored thoroughly the graphic mediums of engraving and etching, and the prospect of painting in oils appealed to him more. The couple of oil paintings he had done in Rome were artificial and very pictorial and were merely executed in order to exploit the medium, and he had no wish to say anything in them.

16. 'Italy, 1951'

He thought the training he had had in etching and design was a good skeletal base for painting and as he was untaught he wanted to live in isolation in Wales where he could work it all out.

17. 'Waen Hir'

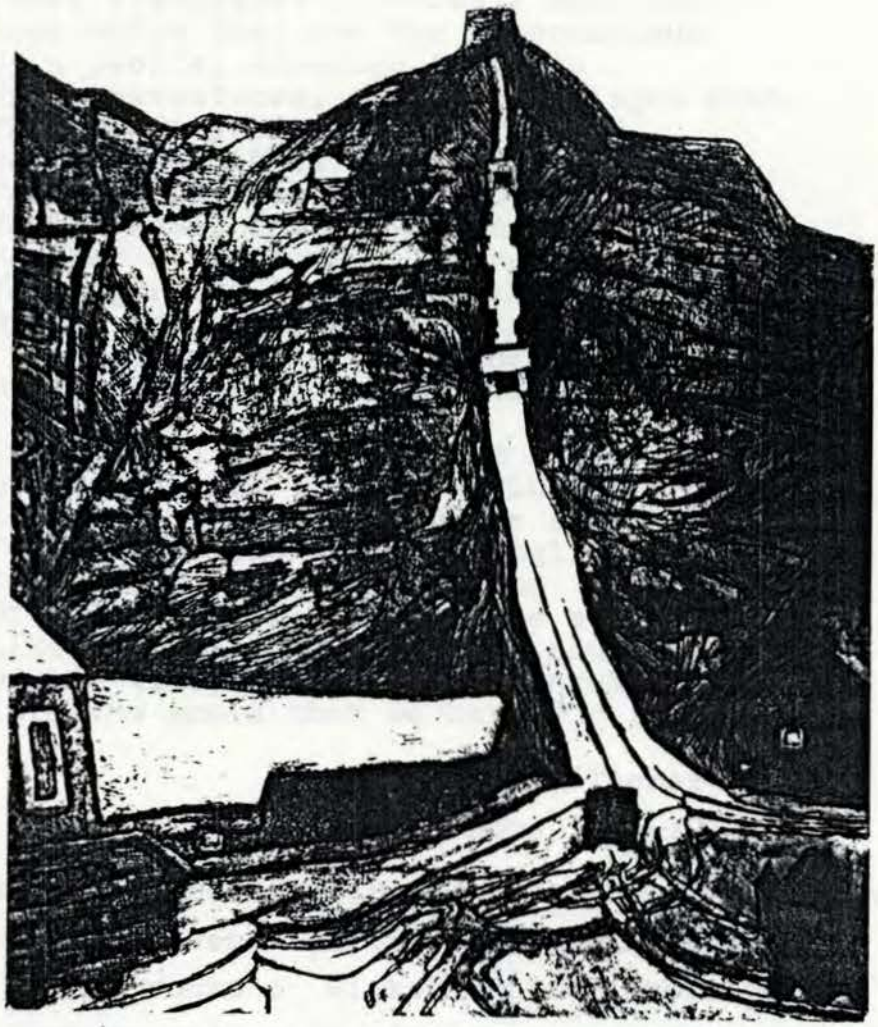
If he wasn't painting things in the cottage, or from the cottage, or through the window, or in the window or immediately outside, then he would do drawings in the surrounding countryside and either paint from them in the cottage or back in the studio at Haulgh Hall.



18. 'Glass Jug'

19. 'Cottage Door'

The slate quarries interested him with their slating sheds, galleries leading up the shafts and the trucks bringing the slate down to the sheds. He is more at home drawing active people such as miners, shepherds and labourers such as the men that worked here, than the posed nude model. Bradshaw was awarded a prize in the Industrial Wales Arts Council Show. The award was made by the De Haviland Aircraft Company for an etching of slate quarrying in Llanberis, a Welsh slate mine in Snowdonia, which when operating was the biggest and oldest in the world. It was closed shortly afterwards and has now been converted into a geographical museum.



20. 'Dinorwic Slate Quarry'

Bradshaw felt as strongly about Wales, the land of his family on the maternal side, as he did about Lancashire, and the sentiments of R. S. Thomas, poet/priest, who has a coastal parish on the Llyn peninsula in North Wales, are shared by Bradshaw. Besides being a collector of 17th and 18th century books, Bradshaw accepts that much of what he has absorbed through voracious reading has influenced his outlook on life. Whilst at 'Waen Hir' he also read Jonathan Swift - satirist, journalist and frustrated clergyman. Bradshaw had antiquarian leanings from an early age. Whilst at school he made inventories and drawings of ancient Elizabethan buildings in the Lancashire area around Bolton. He also built up a large collection of Staffordshire figures.

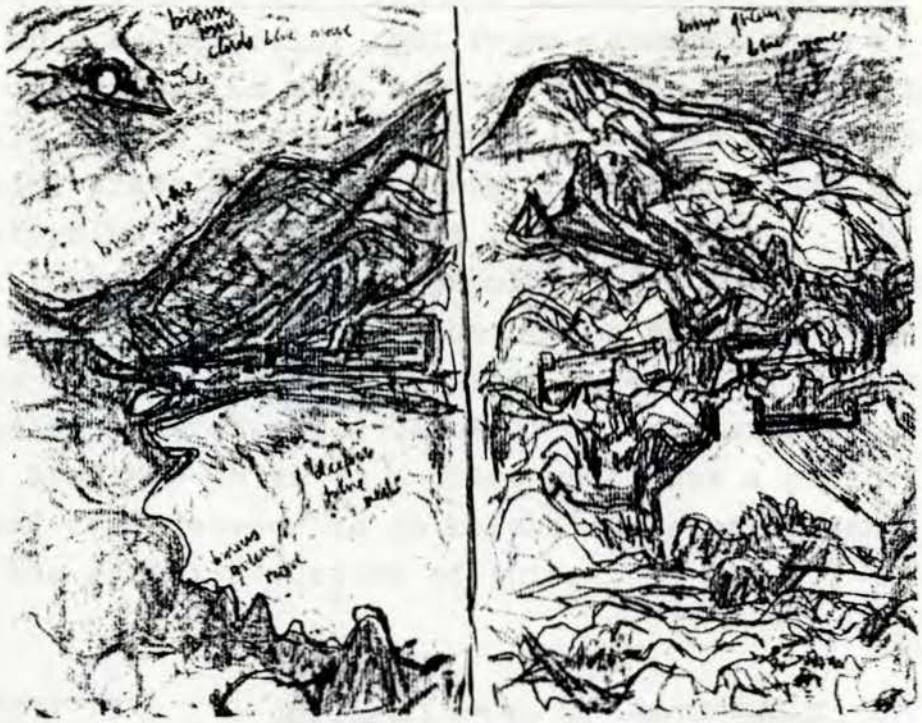
Reservoirs

There are places in Wales I don't go:
Reservoirs that are the subconscious
Of a people, troubled far down
With gravestones, chapels, villages even;
The serenity of their expression
Revolts me, it is a pose
For strangers, a watercolour's appeal
To the mass, instead of the poem's
Harsher conditions. There are the hills,
Too; gardens gone under the scum
Of the forests; and the smashed faces
Of the farms with the stone trickle
Of their tears down the hills' side.

Where can I go, then, from the smell
Of decay, from the putrefying of a dead
Nation? I have walked the shore
For an hour and seen the English
Scavenging among the remains
Of our culture, covering the sand
Like the tide and, with the roughness
Of the tide, elbowing our language
Into the grave that we have dug for it.

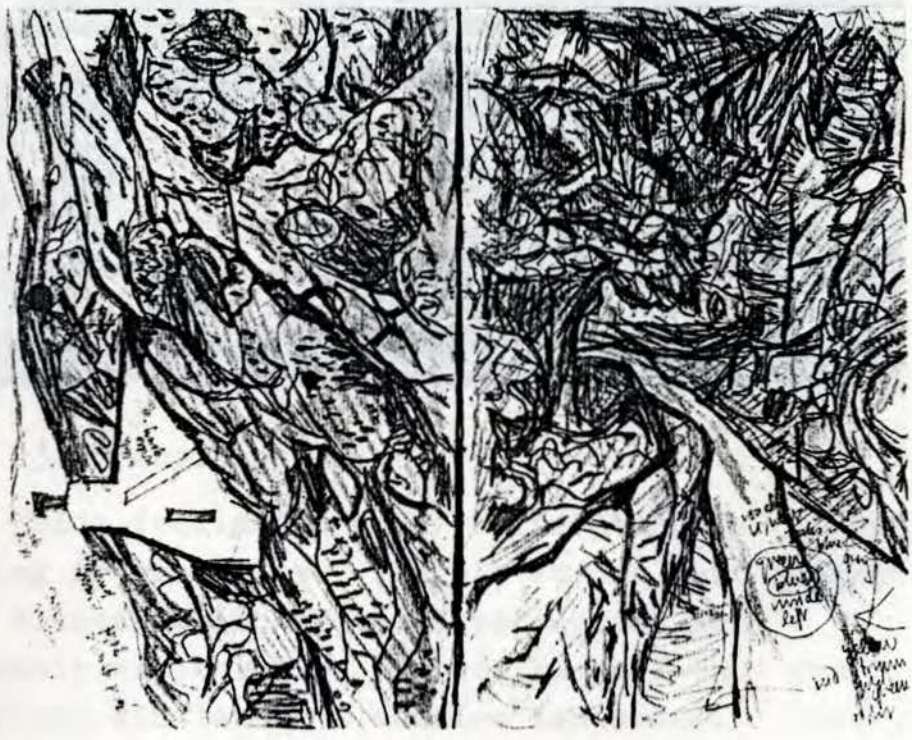
R. S. Thomas
(Selected Poems 1946-1968)

Bradshaw drew the sparrows on the wall, the old apple tree in the garden, and the sheep outside 'that looked like moving rocks'; wicker chairs, labradors in Bolton, his Burmese cats with starlings and sparrows; and then more seriously, the countryside surrounding Snowdon with which he had become so familiar. He enjoyed the way cottages and churches fitted snugly into their environment, and the way natural vegetation grew and was part of the great scheme of things. He was fascinated by the life in miniature clinging to the ancient rocks. He believed the rock was a growing thing coming out of a growing substance. 'It is not a dead thing, it is not even cooled off because there's all kind of life living on it - lichen, gorse, heather - a whole garden. Everything is a duplication of events. It's a world within a world. Even thorns grow in the crevices as though they belonged and were part of it all.'



21. 'Always the same hills
Crowd the horizon,
Remote witnesses
Of the still scene.'

from Pietà by R. S. Thomas (Selected Poems 1946-1968)



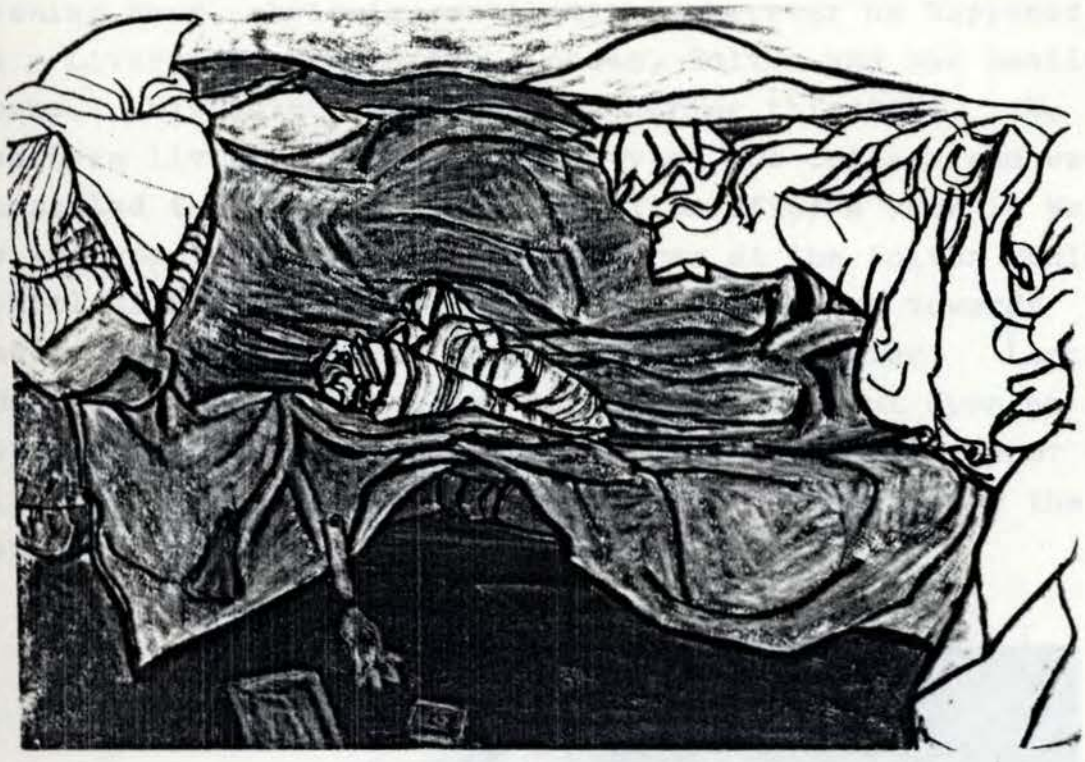
22. Cottages fit into the landscape (Sketchbook)

If Bradshaw were drawing something close at hand to the cottage he used pen and watercolour, or pen and wash, or straight oils; but found charcoal a more suitable, direct medium when he went further afield. He Occasionally used a pencil but found it not as definitive. 'The charcoal draws in a direct way which means that you have to determine what you select more carefully.' He carried sketchbooks only large enough to fit into a pocket, as it left his hands free. If he had no sketchbook on the spot he worked on scraps of paper which he stuck together in the studio. Wales was a haunt of artists and it interested Bradshaw to go to a place which was a pictorial paradise and to endeavour to go beyond its surface and penetrate the actual structure of things.

23. 'Anglesey Farm'

Folds fascinated him, whether those of a rumpled bed, clothing or mountains. To him it was just another structural element which required perception in draughtsmanship and which he enjoyed because they are complicated and similar to a massive landscape. 'Everything small is actually massive if one takes the care to explore

it and experience it. There's a reason why things fold in cloth and it's the same as those of mountains. The whole natural system is the same.'



24. 'The Bed'

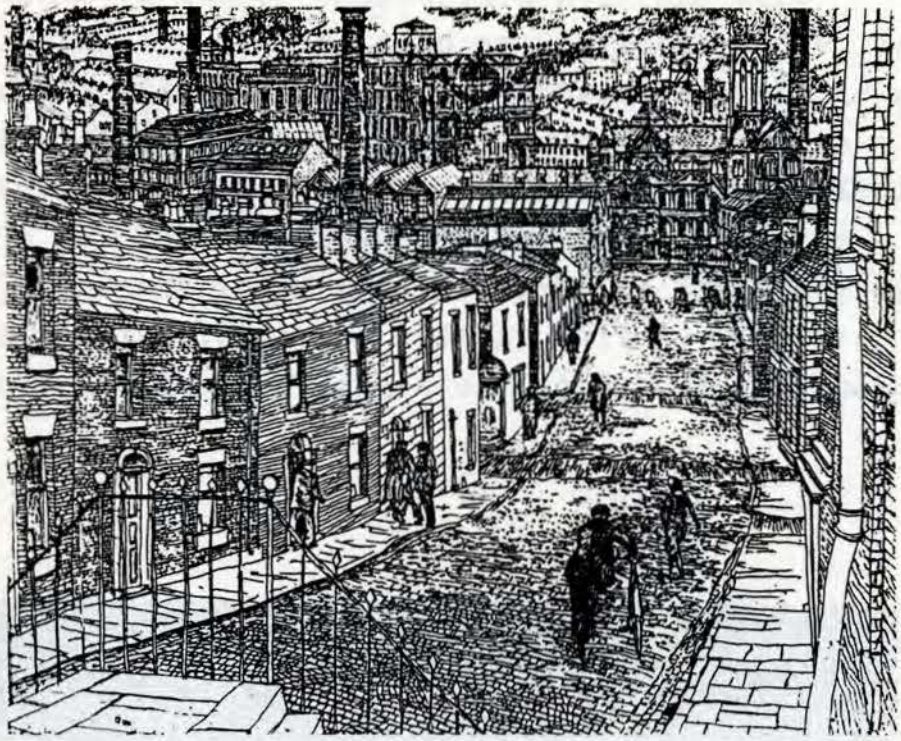
'One should be able to enter the folds in a world. There is no space in between forms - all is included in a form. One is engaged in the world as it is, which is reality. Samuel Palmer had the right idea. One must walk in it, breathing and sensing it.'

Chapter II

Life was active, as besides drawing and painting, Bradshaw travelled between Bolton, the cottage in Wales, and London as he had become the art critic for the Bolton Evening News, reviewing exhibitions wherever he happened to be - Liverpool, Manchester, London, Bolton and the smaller towns. His output was enormous during this time. He had been living off a war gratuity at the cottage and was compelled to return to work in Bolton after a year in Wales. He was appointed a part-time lecturer at the Bolton Municipal School of Art but still had the energy to work towards amassing enough material for an exhibition later. Lancashire and Wales were in his blood and he couldn't put down on paper, board or canvas quickly enough all he felt about it. 'I wouldn't suddenly go to Norfolk and do ducks over the Fens or something.'

25. 'Cae Canol' near Llanberis

'A street in Lancashire. A Lancashire street. The square cobblestones are white and warm and comforting, both by physical contact and visual delight. The stones are built in a delicate, architectural curve, such as that which would strengthen and make an archway in a wall. The square cobblestones slope gently to the courses set below the cornered sidesteps of the pavements. Here at intervals are the grilled gates of Victorian gutters. The heavy ironwork fits into the grit and granite patterns and makes windows to the regions below.' 1

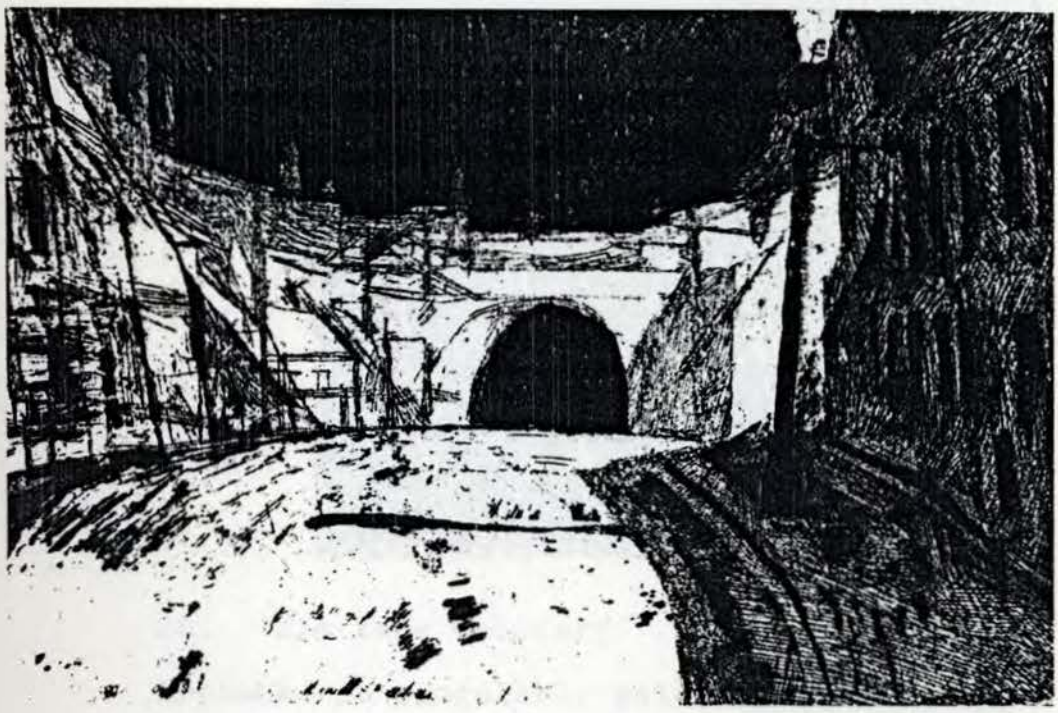


26. 'Darwin, Lancashire'

His students at Bolton were mainly studying 'book illustration', mostly because the school was not recognised as a painting school by the Ministry of Education. His reputation preceeded him, that is his war service, his outstanding record at the Royal College of Art and his Prix de Rome award, and he was immensely popular with a small group of illustrators, which included Walter Chamberlain, who were possibly frustrated painters, but rather less so with 'design' students. He had an extremely direct, 'no nonsense' approach, backed by a considerable knowledge of painting - theoretical and

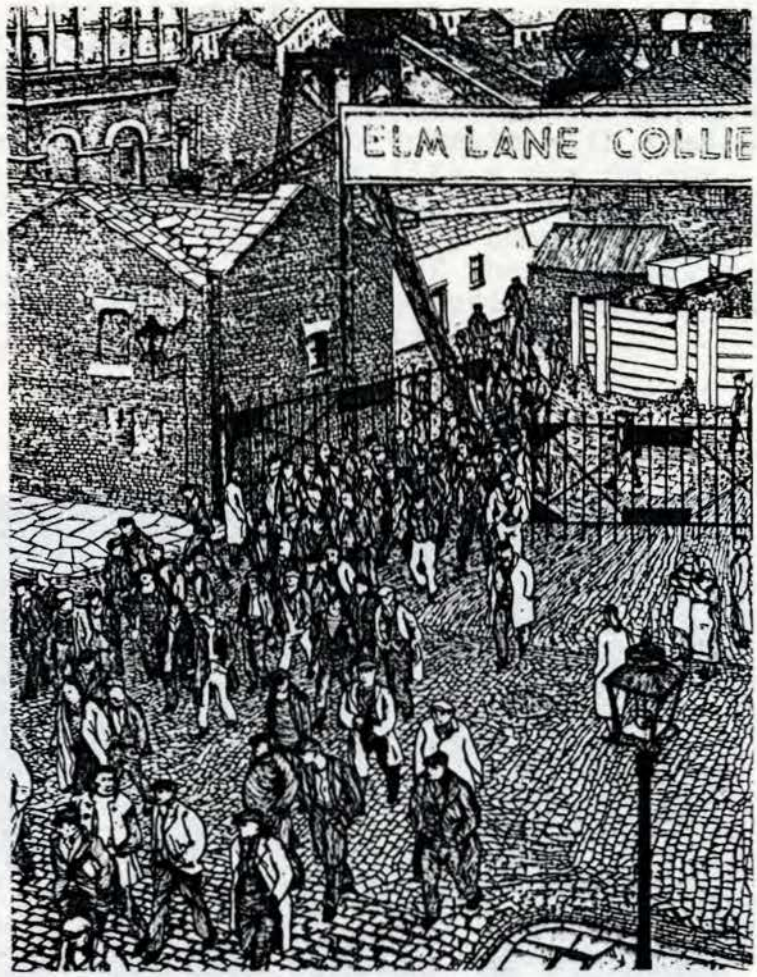
practical. He tended to hand out projects in the form of short texts chosen from the sort of novels an illustrator might dream of, but never actually get, like Zola or Gautier. The students responded by handing in enormous drawings - on which they had lavished considerable time and effort - with the hopeful instructions 'to be reduced' (by some graphic process) written on the back. He talked to his students a great deal about books. He was interested in a very wide range of authors, but especially in Wyndham Lewis at that time. Students in Walter Chamberlain's circle were interested in English artists such as Ravilions and P. Nash. Bradshaw thought little of these and introduced them to a larger, more exalted world inhabited by beings such as Giotto and Duccio, artists whose work he had seen in Italy.

To supplement his income Bradshaw taught in Manchester in the evenings, and was lucky to have part of his day free to experience the life in Bolton, and this moved him to reproduce the images so dear to the Northerner.



27. 'Dorset Street, Bolton'

'In the corners below the sidesteps of pavement is a collection of drift, blown by the breeze, a spring breeze or an early summer breeze. Oats from a horse's feedbag. The horse fed in the street while the waggoner went into the park. Pieces of cotton waste from warehouse bales, seeds carried from the moors, pollen from gardens, private blossoms swept from the hedge. Everything is warmed by the sun. Everything which is on the street and which comes into contact with the street architecture. Everything is seen, and felt, and smelt - all at the same time.' 1



28. 'Elm Lane Colliery'

Bradshaw is singularly patriotic about the tenacity of the Lancastrian not only to survive, but also to thrive below the aquaducts and railway bridges and next to the canals of industrial Lancashire, because it is their

instinct and capacity to do so. The villages have never been and never will be really industrialized, even though their people may be concerned with the businesses of industrialization and engineering; they have the capacity to endure. He champions the individuals who not only survive but thrive, and grow blackberries, and who in spite of their blackberries, are butchers or bakers or coalmerchants and have their pubs by the side of the aquaducts or railway bridges.

> 'The elements of the sky are united with those of the street. The sky moves along the street, washing the stone structure with air. There is a fragrant scent of warm fresh air and gritstone. It is as pungent as a newmown field. The air sweeps the stone and moves over the grit channels like a stream of moorland water. Sky and stone mix their dimensions in a union of substantial form, shape, colour and smell. The child knows the excitement of this dimension, because his world of flesh is able to commute with that of the ground. He may trot like a dog on the sensitive line of the horizon. He may rest his back on the warm stone, but so does the miner, squatting down by the side of the traffic, his back comfortably against the brick wall of the public house, between shifts.' 1

29. 'Miners'

'In this street I actually smell black cast-iron, bubbles of tar, new-baked bread, plant pots of geraniums, drifts of seed and oats and cotton, soft water, reeds in the canal, a brewery breeze, warm granite, horizontal architectures.' 1

It was reported at the time that "life in the 'dark satanic mills' had not crushed the individualism which characterised 17th century Bolton. But we must not be too complacent. A good deal of the glowing warmth which Brian Bradshaw finds in the Bolton scene probably comes from his knowledge of the warmth and kindness of those who live in the streets he paints."

'I hear the sound of trains, shunting waggons, of wooden wheels ironbound, breaking heavily down a stone-laid gradient. Ironcast wheels, in iron rails. Trams, trucks, waggons, trains. There are birds. The sound of them, like the sound of everything else, is taken for granted. So also is the sight of their patterns in the sky. Throssel, thrush, sparrow, curlew, blackbird, starling, swallow.' 1

Lancashire had been painted by many people including L. S. Lowry, but what he painted wasn't Bradshaw's experience of Lancashire. Lowry's milk white streets and skies, and his 'pipe cleaner' figures were too repetitive for Bradshaw who preferred to make a different problem out of each subject. The following notice appeared in an issue of The Bolton Evening News in 1959, under the heading 'L. S. Lowry Exhibition'.

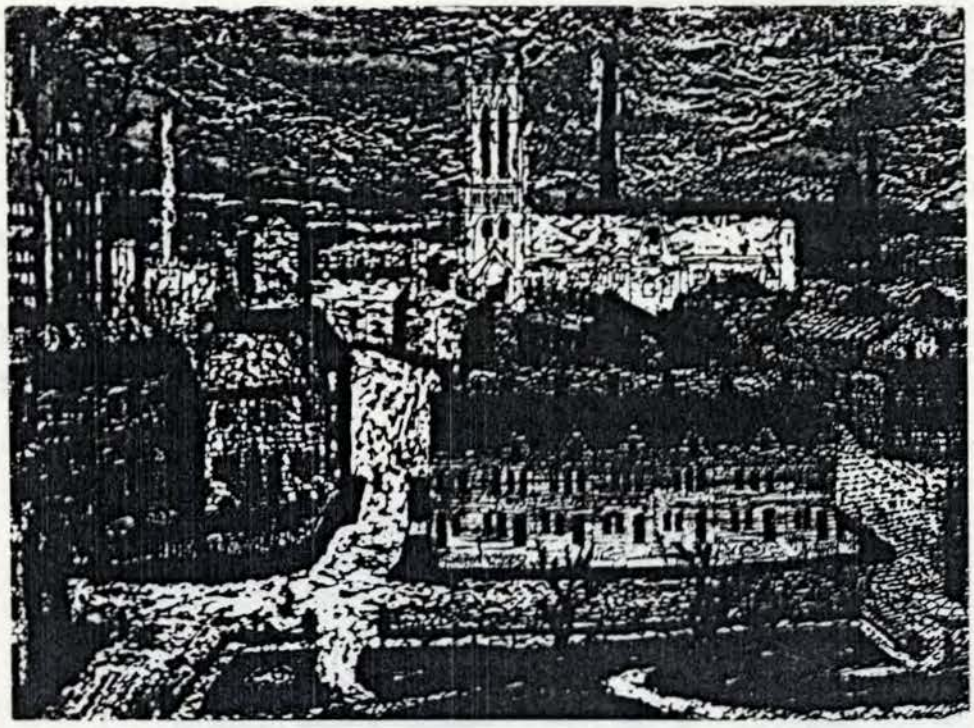
'L. S. Lowry is not just a Lancashire artist. He is the Lancashire artist. Now that he is 71 years old and a nation-known personality, Manchester City Art Gallery has arranged an exhibition of his work. In its catalogue the Gallery over-emphasizes the fact that it discovered Lowry prior to London. After all it was in a better position to do so!

First-hand experience, a sensitive perception, a local sense of humour and powers of design and paint combine to make Lowry master of the Lancashire industrial scene. The romantic element has always asserted itself in the representation of industry. Fortunately Lowry confines his romanticism to the visual field. He does not slop political sentiment into the images of his crowded people. This fact is often condemned by those who gaze with dreamy

> eyes up at the North and look for signs of Marxian melodrama - to decorate and substantiate their fashionable principles; but Lowry is an artist not an agitator.
>
> He is a quiet man who looks for beauty in his native soil. Like Edwin Waugh, John Collier and Sam Lacock he has found a great deal - and for this we are much obliged.
>
> Lowry's poetic documentation is such, however, that it now lingers on the boundaries of the past. The black monumental silhouettes of church towers are being replaced by more utilitarian shapes - or re-converted by commerce into sanctified warehouses. Large mills stand derelict and are no longer the focal points of industry. The light stone architecture of the streets is disappearing under a dark flood of tarmac. The glass cages of decorative gas lamps are being changed for uncompromising masts of concrete.
>
> Altogether, this exhibition of over 100 drawings and paintings might be considered retrospective in more senses than one.
>
> B.B.'

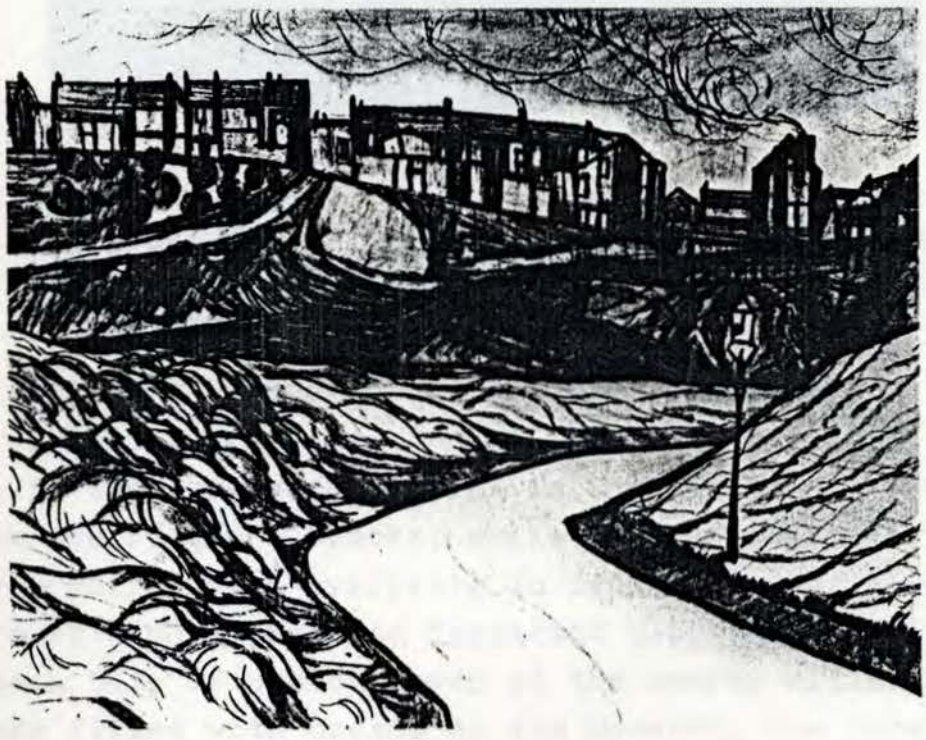
Bradshaw's interpretation of Lancastrians is that they are men born and bred in a country which has not been industrialized but which has lent its powers to an industrial age mainly because of the presence of the natural waters which flow through the moors - the soft waters which flowed over the ancient rocks and heather - and which were dammed into lodges alongside the mills.

> 'Black tree stems, black building silhouettes. Tall chimneys waving pennants of swirling smoke. White pumice-stoned sills and doorsteps. Polished handles. Waving chalklines on walls and pavements. Follow this, implies the child who has drawn them. Under bridges, dripping water from canals, or smoke clouds from rushing trains.' 1



30. 'Cotton Town'

In 1953 'Cotton Town' was chosen to illustrate 'Etching and Engraving - Techniques and the Modern Trend' by John Buckland-Wright, instructor in engraving at the Slade.



31. 'Northern Town'

'The architecture flows in all directions. Upward and along and across in a maze and network of line. Powerful line. Stamped into the black earth and along the towpaths which escort the countryside into the town.' 1

'Northern Town' was purchased at the Manchester Institute of Contemporary Art Exhibition in 1960 by the Friends of the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. This charcoal drawing is of Smith's Road leading into Moses Gate, the last station before Bolton.

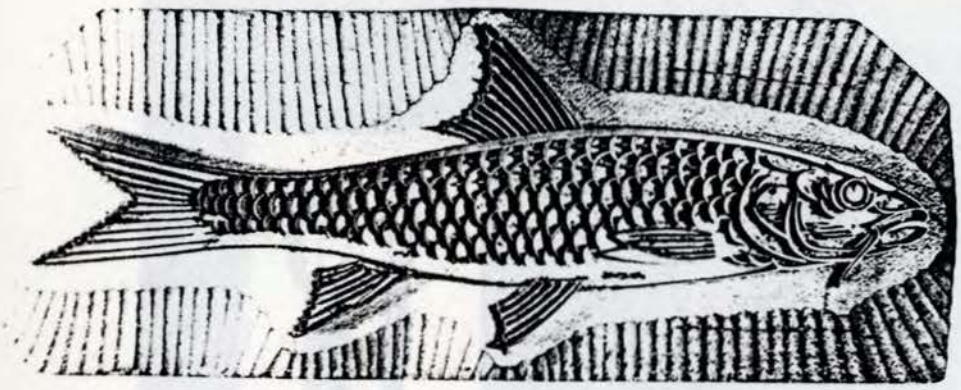
32. 'Smoke Stream'

'Mills rise like glassred palaces, above lodge-lake waters, their fingers point to the clouds. Everything pins itself to the sky.' 1

This pre-occupation with linear design and arabesque was planted in the mind of the young lad as he stood next to the workbench playing in the mounds of sawdust gouged from the sycamore blocks, while the men and their apprentices - coiled wire available in front of each, pliers and hammers at hand - prepared fantastic blocks with which to stamp each bale of cotton woven at the nearby mills. His head was filled with dreams as old Howarth, the foreman,

related his experiences at Gallipoli, and Mr. Tasker, the artist, explained his latest design to be stamped on the cloth for India.

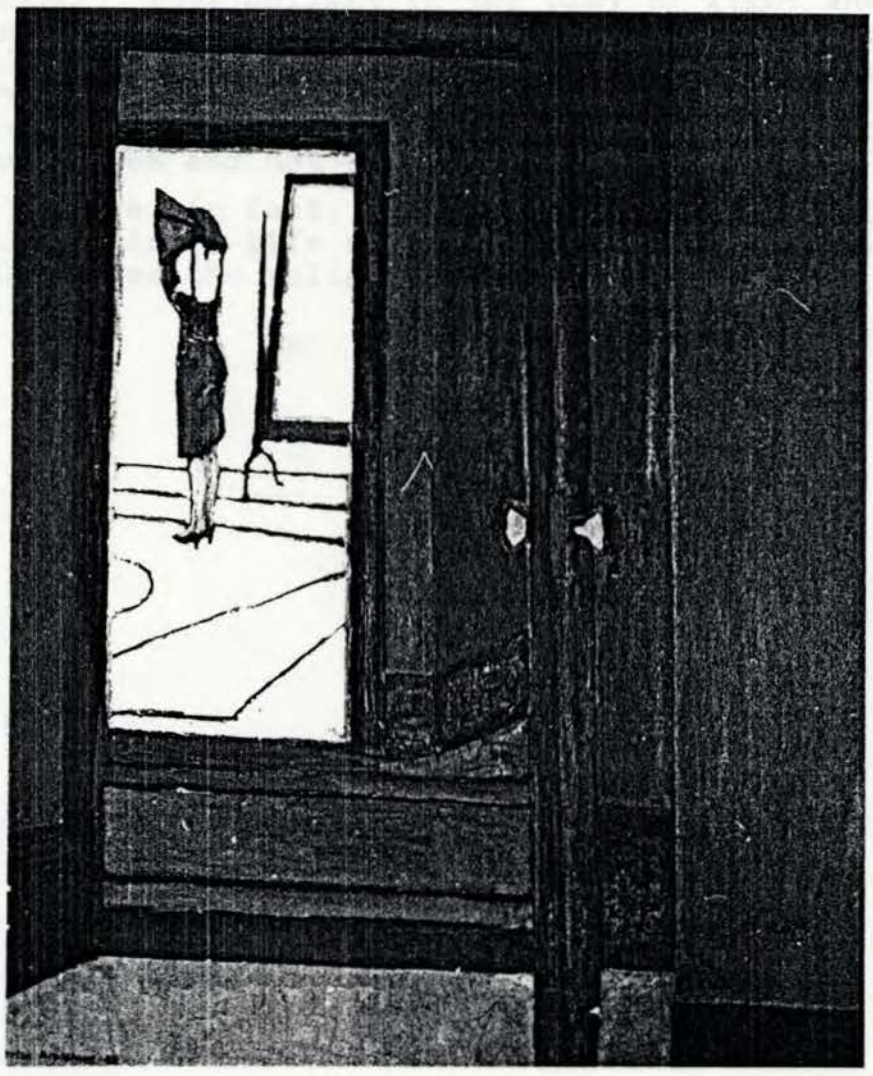
> 'A linear world engraved in woodblocks. From rolls of copper wire, designs hammered into the sycamore, and rubbed on blue felt pad, taking lions and tigers and Edwardian roses, to all the corners of the great cotton empire, my father's unique industry.' 1



33. An apprentice's stamp in the form of a fish.

From an early age Bradshaw was familiar with the rhythmic arabesques and intertwining forms of ancient Celtic art which reaffirmed his proclivity for linear design. At his art schools he studied in particular the drawings and paintings of Turner, Sutherland and Piper; the landscapes of Gericault and Richard Wilson, and the work of Max Beckmann. Samuel Palmer was perhaps his favourite as he saw the cosmological world and was a visionary.

In 1957 Bradshaw was elected a Member of the Liverpool Academy. In the same year Jack Beddington C.B.E. published a book entitled 'Young Artists of Promise'. In this book he has illustrated 150 works by 120 different artists, selected from an enormous collection submitted to him in response to his invitation. Two of those chosen were 'Llanfaelrhys Church' and 'Corridors and Rooms' by Brian Bradshaw.



34. 'Corridors and Rooms'

Jack Beddington's opinion of the artists represented accompanies their work.

> 'There is little or no propaganda influence to be found in their works. It is impossible to tell what any of these artists' political views

are, and it seems to me more than likely that they have none. It does not detract in any way from the passion with which they paint. There is a large number of young artists and it is admirable that they spend many years of their lives studying a way of life and expression which even the most hopeful of them cannot expect to find very financially rewarding. If 20% of them can earn a living by painting or sculpting only, that would surprise me. If, in a hundred years time, ten of them are famous, I should be dumbfounded. On the other hand, their lives are to a certain extent dedicated to that frightening word Beauty. They do not go about the world inciting people to oppress others; they do not foment wars nor covet other peoples goods. They delight in the play of light and shade and the skill of hands. They study their fellow men, usually with sympathy and insight. True that what they see sometimes causes them great misery, but this they usually take out on themselves and not on others.

I believe, in fact, that the aesthetic emotion can inspire a life as pure and spiritual and blessed as the religious.'

Chapter III.

Brian Bradshaw secured the post of art critic for the Bolton Evening News by writing to Frank Singleton, who was Editor at the time, and saying in effect, "You know you've got a good paper but your art reviews are bloody awful. So he came to see me, in his car with his chaffeur. He was a flamboyant fellow - a bit like Orson Wells - and he came into the studio and asked why I thought the reviews were so poor. So I told him and he said 'Right - if you want the job, you've got it'."

Mr. Marcus Tillotson, Chairman of the Company in those days, commissioned Bradshaw to paint two paintings, one of which records an impression of Victoria Square, Bolton, in 1956, as it was before it was extensively altered by the projected Bolton Evening News Building. This painting hangs in their boardroom.

35. 'Town Hall Square, Bolton'

Bradshaw's long association with Frank Singleton led to his being asked to become a member of a club called the Pleiades which met from time to time in a pub called The Blundell Arms situated on the moors near Bolton. Poets,

writers and artists were invited to address the regular members and it was in this way that Bradshaw and Bill Naughton became close friends. The latter used 'Darwin, Lancashire', 'Elm Lane Colliery' and 'Cotton Town' in his programme for 'All in Good Time' which opened at the Mermaid Theatre in March, 1963, and which was based on life in Bolton. On recent being requested to comment on paintings by Bradshaw in his possession, Bill Naughton professed that he is not really equipped to do so, and is 'hushed to quiet by an aesthetic experience I may enjoy' and in answering the questions poised he might 'easily geld the lily by that sort of carryon'!

His students at the time were much impressed with Bradshaw's writings. 'His reviews were of a far higher standard than we had been used to. He would tackle major issues, and major artists in a way that few provincial critics would have dared - even if they had been able'.

In November, 1955, the Bolton Evening News published the following under the title 'Painters Looking at Nature' by Brian Bradshaw.

> 'In the heritage of our countryside easels are regularly pitched in front of ready-made subjects with the intention of producing something more personal than a snap-shot. However, the business of the true artist is more ambitious, for he has to create and contain his passions within the confines of paint, and although he follows the accumulated knowledge of his especial predecessors, he always adds something unique.
>
> Penguin books have recently published two illustrated surveys on the work of Ivon Hitchins and Graham Sutherland. Both artists are concerned with the world of nature.
>
> Hitchins creates his sensations "on the spot", occupying himself with climate and place. Sutherland prefers to walk about storing images in his mind and collecting units of organic matter.
>
> Any painting has to be entered on its own terms, for all speak a language of their own. If we enter a Hitchins we are "figures in a landscape"" brushing through bracken and treading sandy soil, but in a Sutherland we are on equal terms with other living entities. Hitchins organizes the chaos of reality into a unified abstract world, sacrificing details to the whole, and as in Nature, colour and form are one. The drawing is paint and there is no colour which is not operative.'

'Spontaneous brushstrokes create a fluid design evoking the woods, streams, pools, misty green blue foliage and atmosphere of Sussex.

Sutherland, who started as an etcher, makes much of the line to describe portraits of rock, pebble and thorn imbued with a life not so remote from our own. There is nothing outrageously new in his approximation of minute matter to larger elements of landscape. In the 14th century Cennino Cennini recommends the selection of "stones, sharp-edged and not smooth" with which to produce mountains.

Hitchins's oblong canvases display a scenic outdoors with washes of spatial colour. There is not the usual central opening of a view seen by the static eye, but a swivelling "cinemascope" incorporating several themes. A dual theme such as "Two Ways Through Bracken", or a treble theme on a vertical canvas like "Balcony View, Ipping Church", in which the eye is introduced to a verandah with furniture, then to a landscape and finally to a church at the top. Like Constable he is concerned with climate, such as a "Blue Grey" or a "Wet Evening".

For many, the best work of Sutherland belongs to his Pembrokeshire period, 1936 - 40. Here symbols of line and colour, executed in various media, represent a wild, rugged mountain region. Since then he has developed in a series of jerks in which it is hard to find relationship. In the blitz series of devastated architecture, drama overpowers the paint. Then come isolated spiky forms rendered in a dry, heightened colour which has latterly been subdued to describe statuesque organisms of nature. There is often an incongruous relationship between the symbols used. The portraits of celebrities are masks of likeness, landscapes of wrinkles and features but possess none of the inner warmth and life which is evident in the nudes of Hitchins. Here bodies are voluptuously naked and yet at ease, and vibrant flesh absorbs the light and atmosphere.'

In the same month a notice appeared under his name reviewing 83 paintings and 53 drawings by Vincent Van Gogh on view at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Others covered the Lancashire Group of Artists' fourth exhibition; a selection of French and British artists including Renoir, Vuillard, Cavailles, Marquet, Vernet, Minaux and Bernard Buffet; Ruskin Spear, Ivon Hitchins and Sickerts; the 97th annual exhibition of the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts for which he was also invited to exhibit.

Bradshaw covered an exhibition of works by John Constable at the Manchester City Art Gallery; paintings by Rohlfs at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; Spanish painting at the Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield; an exhibition of selected contents from 18 English Country Houses which included the portrait of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire by Reynolds, from Chatsworth, and Henry VIII by Holbein, from Castle Howard, portraits by Reynolds, Lawrence, Gainsborough, Romney, Lely, Joseph Wright, Hoppner, Marc Gheerarrts. Also on view at this exhibition were such choice specimens as a boxwood rosary of Henry VIII's designed by Holbein, a 15th century Burgundian illuminated manuscript, a virginal by Thos. White, historic manuscripts, letters and books; needlework panels, porcelain and jewel caskets were displayed with the furniture of William Kent, Adam, Hepplewhite and Chippendale, and Bradshaw hoped that this exhibition would foster the interest in the contents of the great country houses which 'are not stuffy museums of indexed relics of a bygone age, but are essentially homes ambient with the atmosphere of the imaginative men who not only played a foremost part in our history but were great patrons of art and arbiters of taste.'

> He wrote of a one-man show 'of mostly blue "abstract" paintings which have much in common with each other, they are mostly the same size and shape; have the same vertical compartments theme and are enclosed by the same type of frame. Such exhibitions display no mean average. Derivative mannerisms are made into pleasing designs with nice colours or into snapshot views looking like tourist agency windows.
>
> The artist, however, developed out of this primary stage at an early age. His brush was loaded with "technique" and his yet unseeing eye had trained a masterly hand in stylistic "likeness" before he matriculated. (Hence the early Gaugin out-Barbizoned Daubigny and the early dowry polished off life studies better than Poynter).
>
> The student of style emerges as an artist, if artist he is to be, when his personal eye probes into the appearance of things beneath cosmetic covering invented by other eyes and seeks the rhythmic beauty of truth which exists everywhere and in everything and which is no easier to find in the Swallow Falls than in the River Croal. Its discovery in either case is equally exciting

'and brings about an aesthetic experience which enlarges the mind and dignity of man.

Joseph Herman recently came North to criticize a small local art group. His name is not so familiar in the artistic field as Diana Dors or Annigoni. Never-the-less he is one of the best painters in this country. He sees what he paints and paints what he understands, and the methods he uses are simply the clearest means of clarifying and expressing things as they exist.

If the standards by which all art groups were judged were similarly raised, remaining members might be more worthy of their name and the public would not necessarily think everyone an artist who blobs away until he gets a "recognizable" image.'

An exhibition of paintings by Graham Sutherland at the Crane Gallery, Manchester was reviewed by Bradshaw as follows:

'The subject matter consists mainly of microcosmic and other units of vegetable nature which are constructed into isolated architectonic forms, the potential force of which is duly, if somewhat melodramatically explained. Sutherland was the first English painter of his generation to gain international repute. That he continues to uphold his popularity is probably due to the Romantic element in all phases of his work, in which the poetic influence of form is consciously applied.

Although poetry should be the result and not the aim of the painter, it must be granted that in Britain there is a strong tradition of Romanticism, in which such artists as Paul Nash may be said to have reached the summit.

It would seem that Sutherland, early in his career, approached this summit but he is now entangling his limitations with "Baconism" supplemented by excursions into fashionable portraiture (resulting in the usual masks of likeness).

Sutherland's art is essentially graphic, and colour is applied additionally by touches of crayon and areas of guache, or in oils which imitate the latter it is rarely used synonymously in the analysis of form. This fact is blatantly evident in such schematic variants as "Tree Forms". The design in each is identical, yet one has a blue scheme, the other a yellow. Again in "St. Jean" and "Mantis" brown and red papers are used respectively to supply the colour note to drawings. Such experimentation is more akin to fabric design than to the painting of illusory realities.

'The exhibited works belong to the period 1938-1954. "La Petite Afrique" and "Monkey in Landscape" illustrate diversions into "Baconism", while the later "Pink Landscape, 1954", with yellow and green markings, is less Freudian but more sugary. There are many small works which might be termed Romantic Minutiae. They have a certain poetic attraction and might easily provide, in the austerity of the small modern room, the right kind of decorative element for the "contemporary furnishing" enthusiast.

B.B.'

Watercolours and drawings by Alexander and John Robert Cozens were on view at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. 'The diversity of Alexander's work both in content and application, is seen in this exhibition to be the product of an inquiring mind continually involved in expansion. Hence from small delicate drawings in pen or fine brush, and stencil-like chinoiserie of black-blot pattern (9. Landscape Composition) he goes to powerful and vigorous brush work delineating form out of the fewest possible strokes (3. A Wide Landscape; 4. Tigers; 19. Landscape with Hills and Trees).

Throughout his work he makes use of natural components to establish complex elements of non-figurative construction. Thus while the clouds of John Robert are simply romantic abstractions, Alexander's, which initially resemble pieces of scattered jigsaw are probings in aerial tension (33. The Harbour, Weymouth).

John Robert had been to Italy with Richard Payne Knight, critic and literary apostle of the Picturesque. He knew all about selecting and composing grandiose scenery. Yet he had more than the meagre artfulness of the romantic picture maker. He observed and constructed with his own eye, creating a certain character of place as in the paintings of Lago Albano. It was, however, his pre-occupation with atmospheric changes which impressed Constable.

The numerous variants on a theme of mountain, lake or temple alter little in composition but the mood entirely changes with the varied weather conditions. In this respect it is amusing to compare his work with Monet's cathedral series (though the modern eye will not find John Robert so boring). Here, then is the work of a notable artist and his accomplished son.

B.B.'

'Realist Paintings at Manchester' was reported thus:

'"Looking Forward" an exhibition of Realist pictures selected by John Berger, is at the Manchester City Art Gallery until August 25th. The Realist tries to discover things as they are, yet Truth of vision is not easily determined. First, the painter has to "un-learn" his education in fashionable selection and deception, and substitute for sophisticated vanities a profound sense of ignorance with which he can wonder at the things he sees in life. Then he exploits the sensitive eye of imagination (which is not the capacity to indulge in day-dreams and fanciful inventions) to enable himself to see the truth more vividly.

The size in which he paints is conditioned by the scale most fitted to the particular problem in which he is engaged. He does not think of a painting as a prospective piece of furniture but as a means of communication which "gives people the liberty to see and understand the world which surrounds them, but from which their eyes are averted as a result of habit and commercially encouraged sentimentality".

He is not concerned with the amusements of syntactic picture-making, but with the realization and distinct assertion of his findings in life. In this exhibition there is a small, unpretentious painting of green fields and a clear sky which commands attention because of its forthright clarity. There is nothing superfluous to the potency of its selection - no "filling-in" with mere drudgery. The painter was excited, and is therefore exciting, to the four corners of the canvas.

There is a painting of a child, held up as children are, a helpless, happy bundle of life, groping the air with fists full of thumps; and another painting where it lies on a lap contentedly sucking a meal, legs and arms perfectly still in the complete grasp of satisfaction. The power of these painted images is complete. There are no second-rate or second-hand intrusions to weaken their message for there is no paint which is not operative. Also we see the dead weight of a carcass hung from a butcher's-shop hook. No morals are mixed with the paint, yet we see the whole implications of butcher instead of a palatable side of bacon. Again we see the living weight of a voluptuous body sinking and twisting into comfortable patterns on a bed. Then there is a portrait, a real portrait, of a person standing (not posing) in a room which is not just a space - but somebody's space.

These paintings lift the veil of familiarity and enable us to extract a fuller, exciting meaning and a deeper understanding of life as we live it. It is an art not of "private fantasies" but an attempt by man to examine himself and his world.'

An exhibition described as realist and entitled "Looking at People" was held at Bury Art Gallery. It consisted of work by a painter, a sculptor and a draughtsman.

'Certainly each of the artists is engaged successfully at times, in aspects of realism. There are three small paintings by Carel Weight of figures in a landscape. The figures are not the modern equivalent of Salvator's bandits, they are people 'out for a walk' in a place which is not their usual habitat; they are intruders for a 'nice afternoon' only, and so are their dogs which run about madly smelling their holiday.

The larger paintings contain whimsicalities which space does not permit to discuss; yet they are good paintings of an individual, though not entirely realist nature. Betty Rea finds sculpturesque form in women doing ordinary household tasks - brushing their hair, pulling on stockings, scrubbing the floor, wringing out a cloth, etc. - in a way which is both exciting and revealing. 'Yawning Baby' recreates the moving form of a child in which the legs - not yet walking things - feel about in their own particular and peculiar way. Sometimes the original significance of subject looses itself in an abstraction of empty gestures (e.g. 'Hanging Out Washing')

The drawings and lithographs of Paul Hogarth delineate character, especially in portraits of Chinese peasants and industrial workers, in which the eye is not just an eye-like shape but becomes the window to personality. Sometimes, however, the eye-shapes revert to common-place cliches in order to describe a sentimental approach to political propaganda, and here the association with realism ends.

In the same way Betty Rea produces two seated symbols of the proletariat, travelling home from work dressed in caps and macs. Symbolism has been achieved by adding classical physique to the pose of an Egyptian Pharaoh!

These two artists have reduced the meaning of their art to Marxist propaganda, and have deliberately lowered its standard in order to advertise.

It is evident that the so-called Social Realist has a blind spot in his eye; he is incapable of examining the whole truth of the human comedy as were Goya and William Hogarth, and he hasn't even the primitive sentiment of a Millet. In fact he isn't a Realist at all but a type of Romantic who might possibly be termed a Social Idealist or Ideal Materialist.

The Realist searches for truth as it exists, not as he would have it, and it exists both on the trivial and the cosmic planes. Indeed, as Baudelaire once said, "There is no sharper point than that of infinity." B.B.'

More general exhibitions were reviewed including a selection of Victorian paintings in Manchester; ornithological illustrations by John James Audubon; an exhibition of the work of August John; exhibitions by amateur groups; an exhibition entitled 'Wyndham Lewis and Vorticism' which opened at the Tate Gallery, London, and moved to the Manchester City Art Gallery was reviewed by Bradshaw:

> 'Wyndham Lewis is well known as a dynamic personality by his novels, pamphlets, criticisms and political polemics. Above all, he was a born painter; "was", because he is now blind.
>
> He founded the Vorticist Movement in 1914, and organized the first and only group show the following year, which consisted of Gaudier-Breska, William Roberts, Wadsworth, Etchells, Dismor and Saunders. Others, such as Nevinson, were invited to show. Ezra Pound and T. E. Hulme were also associated with the movement. "The idea was to build up a visual language as abstract as music", which was active, as opposed to passive, significant as opposed to dull or anecdotal, and possessed essential movement as opposed to imitative cinematography. Although derived in part from cubism and futurism, it repudiated both these forms and was anti-real, anti-romantic, and, above all, anti-impressionist. This highly intellectual and individual movement behaved almost politically in its aggressive and explosive manner - fully explained by the title of the veriticist review, "Blast".
>
> Although all members are represented in this exhibition, Lewis overshadows all, not only as the originator and in the sheer number of his works, but in the power and perfection of his painting. Most of his works are built around a vertical axis and display a totemic quality; all have a cubistic strength in structure in addition to being fluid in atmosphere, and all are enclosed within a precise framework. There is an astonishing success in their creation of movement, which, somehow, is completely stabilized without looking frozen.
>
> In the large "Inferno", writhing forms are congealed into a solid mass upon which is pouring a red maelstrom of other bodies. This creates a perfect billowing Baroque illusion - yet there is not the slightest degree of instability, all movement being perfectly controlled and fixed securely within the structure of the picture. Other examples of "static breathing" and wedges of form within form are seen in "The Inca with Birds", "The Mud Clinic" and "The Surrender of Barcelona".'

'Lewis was also one of the best portrait painters of this century. As he said, one of the reasons the Renaissance produced so many good portraits was that the sitters were more robust and realistic personalities than they are to-day. "They did not expect to look like Santa Claus". There is, thus, reason to believe he had full co-operation with Mrs. Schiff, Edith Sitwell, T. S. Eliot and Naomi Mitchison, for the results are powerful and pictorial. ("T. S. Eliot" was rejected by the Royal Academy in 1938, causing Augustus John to resign in protest). The portraits of Lewis's wife are particularly good.

In all his work the paint quality is superb, and the surface glows as freshly to-day as when it was painted. His technique is as precise as his structure, while the prophetic nature of his work shows at least one well-known contemporary painter to be but a tawdry imitator.

B.B.'

The Manchester University Arts Festival brought an exhibition of "Recent Abstract Paintings" to the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. 'Those invited to the opening were pre-armed with a sense of responsibility by Mr. Eric Newton, who explained that we should not condemn paintings simply because we do not understand them.

The paintings, which are a good and representative selection, were viewed quietly and there was no public hysteria. However, much as the organizers would have it, this is not an outrageous, rebellious bang of an exhibition. It is not a challenge, it may be recent work but it is not entirely new. There is much that is easy to admire - the excitement of paint surfaces and the juxtaposing of form and colour. Like sound the impact is spontaneous but the initial stimulation is not often sustained.

However non-figurative these works are supposed to be their origins - for something cannot be created from nothing - refuse to be forgotten. There are moisture clad Hitchins-like landscapes (Lanyon), pelvic growths (Hull), illustrative fantasy (Davie), vegetation and atmosphere (Hamilton Fraser), microscopic noodle shapes (Wynter), futurist-type movement (Le Brocquy) and even an ordinary village and mountains landscape (Kinley).

All painting is abstraction - content and form being abstracted from life. There is nothing unique about this particular branch of abstraction - and it is just as capable of indulging in the sentimental, trivial and commercial.

B.B.'

In a review of a craft exhibition by the Red Rose Guild Bradshaw stresses that the genuine craftsman keeps his mind on his job instead of the market. 'He respects his tools and his material whose potentialities he probes with hand and mind to make the best form suited for a particular use, He also realizes that function is not just efficiency but includes sensibility of vision and touch. He respects and takes account of true tradition in that he is an innovator of useable form to-day and not an imitator of the past. He is too busy and too concerned with the job he appreciates to involve himself with the trinket gadgets and souvenir trade. He is not a relic or a side-show and the influence of his efforts should one day be felt and may even put the machine to better use.'.

Paintings by contemporary British painters, Yugoslav painters, Polish painters, Russian, American and Israeli painters were reviewed amongst the numerous exhibitions covered by Bradshaw. Subscribers leapt to his defense in print when such headlines as 'Your Critic a Destructive, Angry Young Man' appeared on the Arts page. An exhibition of paintings, drawings and facsimiles of William Blake was held at the Whitworth to commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of the poet, artist and mystic; exhibitions from the Victoria and Albert were reviewed from time to time; and pictures by Salford School Children brought interesting comment.

> 'What has been misnamed child art is actually much nearer the artistic manifestation than the Burlington House, Paris Salon potted variety of applied techniques and sunny afternooners which is also misnamed art.
>
> The reason is that the unsophisticated child eye sees what it looks at; its vision is fresh, exciting and instinctive. It has not yet been taught how to see - what to look for; its vision has not yet become sophisticated, reasoned, habitual, dull, normal and adult. In such pictures as "Puffing Billy" and "The bread van going on its way", the six-year-old proves that design, colour and composition are natural impulses. Objects are placed in exactly the right places, and the eye's experience of the moving vehicles is passionately formed into

'coloured images entirely suggestive of this motion - the smoke puffing out of them as they travel along.

Later, with the help of adults, picture papers, science weeklies, to say nothing of art lessons, the child will have all his natural, instinctive, paganistic art punched out of him and will learn to substitute scientific aids and elementary laws to make his efforts as dull and meaningless as everyone else's. He will learn to impose his little acquired knowledge of the mind on to the true vision of his eye until he actually believes in the superiority of this civilized paranoia. This deterioration is easily noticed in the 10-year-old.

At the secondary school, the whole magic of humanistic art turns into story-telling illustrations of Hollywood - romantic scenes borrowed direct and indistinct from magazine illustrations, art-club and art-museum specimens; everything in fact from Meissonier to Munnings.

The children who withstand the blast of all this art-school nonsense and retain their sense of individuality and vision are those capable of pursuing the right studies which may eventually lead to art. Of these, a 13-year-old paints a calm and colourful "winter scene" and a 14-year-old a "waterfall" whose rushing waters, ice-age boulders and breeze-blown foliage make the same ingredients of that thing in the art gallery look like petrified jelly. Another 14-year-old draws "students of ornithology" shuffling around the boxed-up specimens of a museum with a more than usual sense of observation and humour.

The most ambitious and entirely successful painting is a long frieze done by a six-year-old of a circus arriving in town in which the animals - pedestrian and cage-carried - join with a cavalcade of excited humanity and crowded buses all moving down a street of gaily-coloured semi-detached.

How exciting all this should be to eyes grown dim by interminable prints of ballet-dancers!'

B.B.'

He said of another Hitchins collection that 'no one can record the sensory impact of a walk through the English countryside as well as can Hitchins. The spectator no longer looks AT a landscape - through the window of a framed ego, or via the closure of a "Claude glass" - he is drawn INTO it. His flower pieces are consumed with the same type of outdoor life. They are imprisoned by pot and by room but are not domesticated and could never be confused with the everlasting variety made by and painted by Sunday-afternooners.'

Of a collection of Picasso ceramics Bradshaw says:

'Sometimes he decorates to fit a shape, sometimes to change it. Sometimes he is sophisticated, sometimes comic. He combines incised design with relief design. Often he stylizes his own inventive forms; other times he makes fun of them! He stabilizes some pots with a classic beauty, others he animates with favourite themes of birds, fishes, faces and hands, animals, girls, mythological creatures and still lifes. It is a riot of imaginative energy which takes a wink at the spectator.

It was originally hoped that the models could be reproduced in large numbers to reach the mass of people, but they have ended up as show pieces and luxury-culture-goods. This suits a lot of people, but not Picasso. No doubt he hopes that this exhibition will brighten things up a bit here and make us remember the healthy paganism which must still exist deep inside our socially-fuddled minds. Whether you like this artistic hydrogen-bomb or not does not really matter, and Picasso would be the last to care (for he at least has found the joy of living and of making). The fact remains that he keeps setting off his explosions and there is no stopping either him or the impacts that he has made and is still making on the course of art.'

One man shows, members of the Arts Council, and various Academies and Art Clubs all came within the scope of Bradshaw's observation and he chastised them as and where necessary:'Work by Sir Matthew Smith, Victor Pasmore and Francis Bacon in an exhibition entitled "Three Masters of English Painting" is to be seen at Manchester City Art Gallery.

Matthew Smith is a masterly painter who uses the Language of paint to describe his exciting experience of colour and form. A dark blue sky, a green carpet of grass, thick foliage of trees growing in a sun-baked windless world, exotic blooms of flowers, naked fleshy women resting languidly in the warm comfort of their beds.

All forms of life in this sun-lit world are exhilarated by an atmosphere warmed by the sun's rays; they absorb the sunshine and emanate its spirit in passages of brilliant colour. This vision discovers and sets down in frenzied enthusiasm a cosmic poetry which is art. Sir Matthew Smith is a master which critical orthodoxy does not dispute.

In examining the other two "masters", I deviate from the party line of critics incorporated.'

'Victor Pasmore displays an English Puritanism. He is greatly concerned about HOW he paints, but is careful not to express any emotion about WHAT he paints. These works are made by deliberate scientific-aesthetic notions which are completely divorced from life's experience.

Nature is first imposed upon by phases of English (fog) impressionism (still life and Whistler's river subjects). Then dots and mechanical lines take the place of trees, and a Euston Road nude which is frigid enough to have been drawn with a plumbline is "gone over" with "technique".

Everywhere there is artful consciousness of posing and planning and the abstract stick-ons are a natural outcome.

There is an exception in No. 30, a patchwork of little squares and triangles, in that it looks as if Pasmore has actually enjoyed painting it - for once the Puritanism dissolves and we are entertained.

Francis Bacon uses a paint vocabulary, but only to put over a literal idea, and his ideas are not ones which I can take seriously. They are Freudian. Secondly his work bears resemblance to the Victorian G. F. Watts. Both display a morbid high temperatured romanticism, and there appears to lurk behind the nightmare facade of many a Bacon composition the foetus of a Watts painting.

The most interesting of Bacon's works here on show is a pastiche of Van Gogh by Van Gogh. Since the original is far superior I cannot imagine why Bacon has painted it somewhat differently.

Master is a word which should not be used lightly. It is an insult to the achievements of Sir Matthew Smith to involve him in this indigestible mixture.'

At Bolton Art Gallery The Royal Society of Portrait Painters displayed 'a collection of anaemic, artless representations of certain visages. They are not portraits - they do not search into and discover elements of character.' 'Five Northern Abstract painters' got off less lightly with:

'We presume that art to the newly-formed Manchester Institute of Contemporary Arts, who fostered the exhibition, means gesticulating upon surface with an awareness for material in order to compose charming designs. Technically these abstract painters look like first year students, but artistically they are the same.

Both make commercial products to suit a particular brand of customer or critic - they are slave to

'exterior conditions. Both are concerned with manner - not content. Both aim at the seductions of style and rely upon technical tricks to produce pretty "representational" or "non-representational" pictures.

Neither group realises that technique in art is a language of purpose which is not uttered or stuttered for its own sake but works independent of the conscious mind (like walking) to establish the aims, ideas and expressions of thoughts and experiences which are artistic and therefore important - and not merely entertaining.'

Despite his penchant for making barbed comments when these were justified, he could also see the humour created by people's imbecilities:

'PRUDE STARTED ART GALLERY RUMPUS

Water colours by Charles Oakley are on view at the Crane Gallery, Manchester, until October 26th. They are mostly romantic views of slag heaps, ship breakers' yards, tar boilers, grab buckets etc., which are treated with the same kind of nostalgia most people confer upon decaying mansions and moonlit rotten tree-trunks.

Unfortunately for Charles Oakley and the Crane Gallery, a peculiarly-minded onlooker saw something in one of Mr. Oakley's 'nudes and interiors' which he deemed unfit for others to see. Consequently there was a bit of a rumpus. Since this time the gallery has been besieged by lecherous crowds looking for an obscenity which does not exist - they have been led up the garden path by a misguided moralist. Not even the artist or the gallery will thank him for this cheap bit of publicity which will only attract the least desirable audience.

The attitude of Mrs. Grundy makes an interesting historical curiosity and is the very thing for anecdotage.

Once upon a time a cast of the Venus de Milo at the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts was kept in a cupboard and shown only to those brazen individuals who especially desired to see it (there was a ladies' day, once a week).

Another cast of the same Venus once gave offence much nearer home; a mayor, stating that he 'would fight to the last drop of blood to have it removed' from the Town Hall. Whether he succeeded in removing or bleeding, I am unable to say.

Then there was a Pope who ordered metal skirts for the Vatican statues - and the genius who invented detachable figleaves for plaster-casts.

Many famous paintings have been destroyed or 'restored' by prudish patrons (including a large

'number of Turner drawings by Ruskin). Manet's 'Dejeuner sur l'herbe' was described by Napoleon III as 'an affront to morality'. His wife, following the respectable pattern for prudes in picture galleries, pretended not to see it.

Usually it is the serious painter who is accused. I cannot recall anyone attacking Fragonard or Boucher for painting aphrodisiac ceilings in the bedrooms of the French nobility; and the Royal Academy has long been a showcase for pictures of the Folies Bergere type; Edwin Long's 'Babylonian Marriage Market' for instance, which was about as bold and as big as Couture's 'Decadence of the Romans' sold easily for 7,000 guineas.

The Victorians, of course, were little devils for provocative paintings. A young lady in a diaphanous nightgown or less was bound to receive welcome criticism PROVIDED she represented ancient Egypt, Babylon or Greece. The heavens would descend if one spoke the truth and called her Nelly, Martha or Mrs. So and So.

To return to the gentleman who wished to protect us from Charles Oakley's painting. There is not the slightest use our getting agitated in the D. H. Lawrence manner. He belongs to a definite human type who achieves the opposite of what he hopes to do. The troublesome thought is: how can such a mind become a city councillor, can it be possible?

I would not advise readers to go to Charles Oakley's Exhibition expecting to see anything the least bit erotic. They would be disappointed.

B.B.'

'As I was looking at Rutherford's paintings a group of people was ushered in by an attendant who informed them, in a voice which registered both respect and excitement, that these pictures were done by "that chap on TV".

Immediately, dull eyes became alive and deadened features began to show interest. It was like describing "War and Peace" as "the book of the film", an inverted way of getting art to register.

Harry Rutherford paints like Harry Rutherford and the result is very good indeed, and far, far better than either his commercial or cultural reputations allow.

The Salford Art Gallery is extremely fortunate to have this exhibition and at least one of the paintings should not be allowed to depart.

Slabs of painted forms, bristling with the energy of functional colour wedge their way over closely-knit surfaces to form sensitive but powerful painting.'

'"Old Compton Street" is a little masterpiece. Potency is packed by the inch on to the small "Park Place, Ashton," and the Galician and Derbyshire landscapes.

"Shudehill", "Oxford Street, Manchester" and "Rain in Hyde" will bring not only a recognizable stimulant to the general public, but a sense of surprise and delight to the serious student as he realizes the incredible truth that there is actually some important and original painting being done in Manchester.

B.B.'

Tib-lane exhibited 25 drawings, six oil paintings and three pastels by L. S. Lowry of which Bradshaw wrote:

'L. S. Lowry is now accepted by the public as a serious painter. He has been televised and championed to the extent that he no longer requires explanation - or protection. In fact the only protection that Lowry might need is from himself. The possibility that he has fallen victim to his own formulae (so beloved of students and his numerous followers) grows more apparent as he shuffles the images of his past experience into constructions of a less reliable nature - or is it that the sensitivity of his 1920-30 painting has been superseded by qualities less obvious to an old-fashioned eye?

Whatever it is that the course of his painting invokes, there is no question about the validity of his drawings, which persist as powerful and personal images but which increase their spontaneous expression in an economic range of either jotted or stylized hieroglyphics. Such are the drawings in this exhibition of Newlyn, Cornwall, 1956, and "The Steps" and "The Crescent", both of 1957.

A pastel, "Barges on a Canal", shows that Lowry's success is not restricted to subjects of factory chimneys. It also shows that he employs a deal of intellect in his art - not least of which is his naiveté! The cloth cap does not fool us, Mr. L. S. Lowry decidedly knows what he is about.'

A part of the Arts Council collection of paintings and drawings, called "Since the War" were shown at Bolton Art Gallery.

'There are examples from the "Screaming Cardinal" and "Van Gogh taking a walk" series, painted for some reason by Francis Bacon. There are two Bratby paintings - a girl in bed reading a book, and two frightened looking people having a

'conversation. There is a mongrel dog in a miserable back garden painted by Derrick Greaves; a political-peasant disguised as a coal miner by Joseph Herman; two putrified looking heads by Lucien Freud. There is a scrub-dotted Umbrian landscape by Henry Innlander; a scrubbed pink sort of a nude by Peter Kinley and a Sidney Nolan fantasy of Australian Kelly.

The paintings which look most capable of joining a national collection are a large white Victor Pasmore composed of spiral (Da Vinci) energy forms, an early Jack Smith interior, a green landscape by William Scott, a crowded beach scene by Lowry and a large and excellent painting of cow parsley on a windowsill by Edward Middleditch.

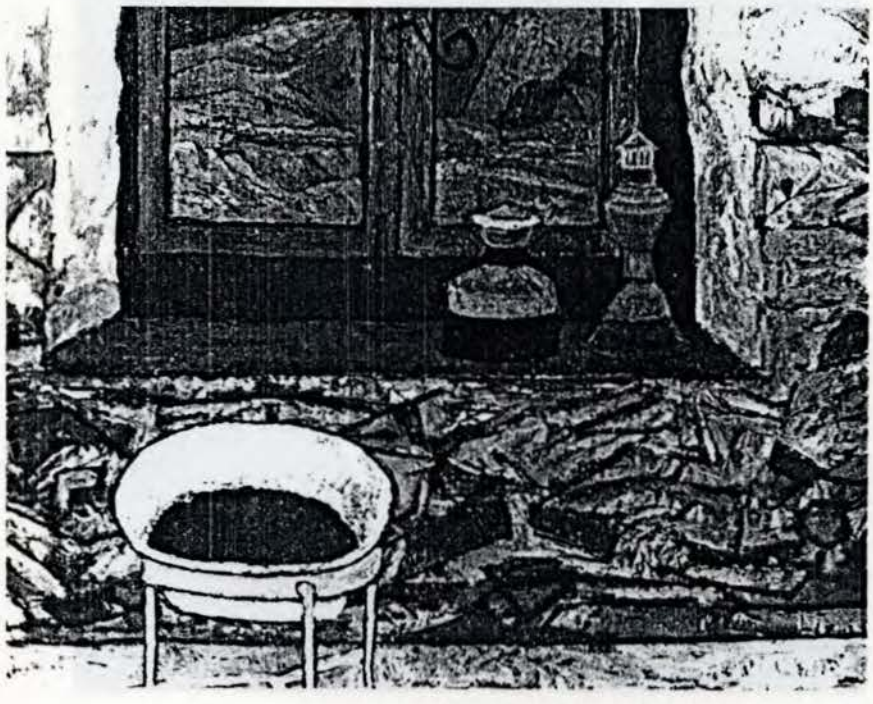
Many of the remaining works have dated rapidly since their West End showing.

B.B.'

Chapter IV.

In turn, Bradshaw's work was reviewed by art critics in the cities in which they were exhibited.

'It is only a little over a year since Brian Bradshaw held his first one-man show, and only three years since he turned from the medium of his training - engraving - to devote himself to painting. His progress and achievement are already remarkable. As compared with the first exhibition, this present one at the Crane Gallery, Manchester, shows a greater variety of subject-matter, a bolder use of colour, and an increasing ease in the handling of paint. In addition to the industrial town-scapes and the Welsh chapels, hills, and lanes, to which he first gave his attention, we now find still-lifes, interiors, garden scenes, even a nude or two. The compositions are well knit, organised, indeed, with a thoroughness tending even to rigidity; and a certain seriousness of mood, a stolid matter-of-factness, is conveyed by the best of them. There can be no question of his considerable gifts.'



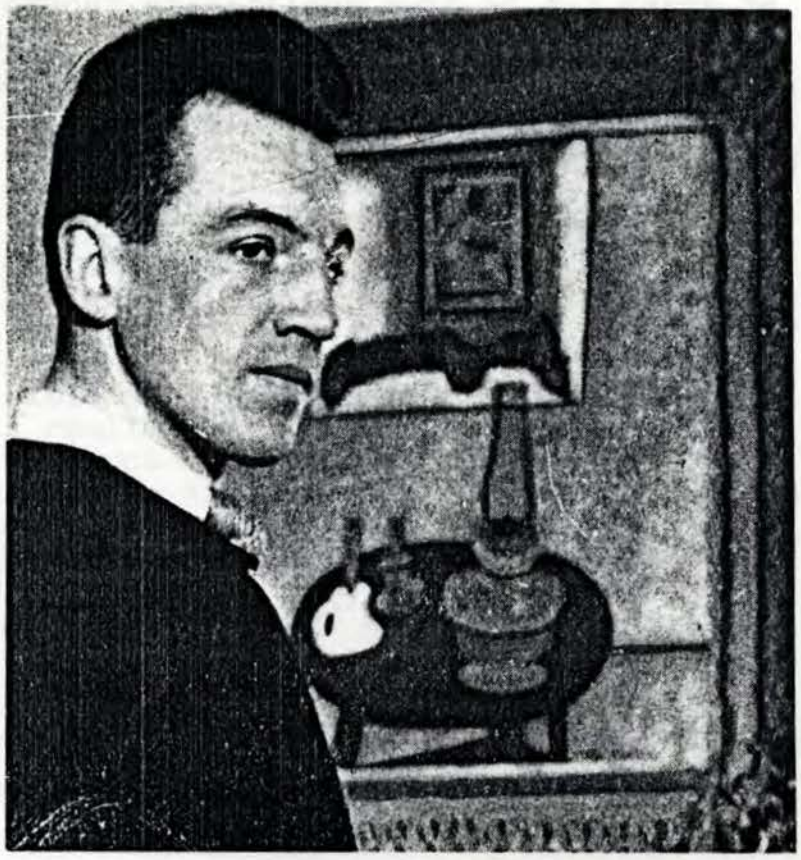
36. 'Window and Washbasin, Waen Hir'

'There are still signs, however, that Bradshaw has not yet fully found himself. The handling of the medium tends to be solid and heavy; the

'design is usually worked out in terms of line, the draughtsman's medium rather than the painter's; the colour relations are sometimes harsh and unpleasing; and his black chalk drawings, of which there are a number in this show, are often both more completely integrated and more expressive than the paintings based upon them. It seems reasonable to expect, however, that with growing experience of oil paint most of these signs will before long disappear from his work.

The "Window and washbasin, Waen Hir", the "Interior with tubes of paint", and "Little room, round table, little window" are in any case pictures satisfying and complete in their own character. The painter sees his subjects from a viewpoint so closely identified with this quiet domestic cottage life that no trace of self-consciousness or of deliberately sought charm or picturesqueness disturbs his relationship with them. There is a hardy North Country bluntness and sincerity in him which is worth double the quantity of charm and elegance, because it is so much more rare.

A. C. Sewter'



37. 'Little Room, Round Table, Little Window'

A. C. Sewter reported on the works exhibited in Bolton as follows:

'Now that he has made a reputation in Manchester and elsewhere, the Art Gallery of his own town

'of Bolton has decided to give to Brian Bradshaw the honour of a showing. Everal years' work is represented in this exhibition of some eighty paintings, watercolours, drawings, and prints.

Brian Bradshaw is a realist. His development so far reveals a gradual but steady discovery of what that term implies. Among the earliest works shown is an aquatint called "Miners", in which the realism consists mostly of the choice of subject, while the treatment in terms of style, though it shows an impressive mastery of the medium and its rich sooty effects, has a suggestion of conscious artifice and sophistication which the artist, it seems later came to repudiate. It implied a separation of himself from the life which he represented which contradicted his conception of what realism should be. In the first important group of oils he chose for subject matter the grim aspect of his native town and of Stockport, painting with a simple and perhaps deliberately crude directness and harshness, feeling, no doubt, that the themes required this approach. Later, among the mountains and bare rocks of North Wales, he found subjects equally stern and gaunt, but permitting at least greater variety of colour and tone, greater intricacy of rhythm and pattern. But the medium was still treated as something to be subdued, a material whose sensuous attractions must at all costs be resisted.

In the most recent canvases, which include cottage interiors, figure-studies, and still-lifes, the texture of the paint occasionally relaxes, though the designs are still tightly strung, for the most part, on their severe linear framework.

When the artist commands, as he soon will, a technical skill in oil paint to equal his mastery in print-making, it is possible that his pictures may acquire a more seductive surface; but it is also possible that the sense of striving to encompass reality, to become identical with it, which gives such dramatic vitality to what he now does, may be endangered. All of which means that, though his pictures may be at present not very superficially pleasing, they are certainly uncommonly honest, and they possess certain very positive merits which are anything but superficial.'

John R. Gauld, Bradshaw's first art lecturer covered the exhibition at the Crane Gallery, Manchester, and his comments were published in the Bolton Evening News in November, 1954.

'The exhibition of paintings by Mr. Brian Bradshaw at the Crane Gallery is of particular interest inasmuch as he is a native of Bolton. Now 31 years of age, he entered Bolton School of Art

'at 16 and had a remarkably successful student career.

As a student Bradshaw developed into a draughtsman of exceptional merit, highly imaginative, sensitive and with a strong poetic feeling - qualities which one expects will play an increasingly important part in his paintings - and he has mastered the technique to make the best use of them. That he is, innately, an artist was evident from his earlier drawings and compositions and is now to be observed in the bold design and handling of large masses of dark rich colour and tone which often distinguish his oil paintings.

In some of his Lancashire industrial subjects there is an almost Gothic-like formalism, but in others this quality - it is a quality - is tempered by more freedom and his own sensitiveness and poetry. He sees his local subjects not so much as squalid industrial mill buildings, lodges, streets and smoke, but as things of austere beauty in colour and tone.

In the Welsh paintings he successfully seeks to depict mainly the rugged solitude of the great bare hills and gaunt walls of the countryside of his experience.

With his background of training and knowledge it is not surprising that Bradshaw's first year of serious painting in oils has led to this one-man show which augers well for further success in his, as yet, early career.'

Notices concerning his one-man shows and exhibitions shared with other artists appeared in various newspapers in Bolton, Manchester and London. The London Press reported in 1950 'A fellow Chelsean, Brian Bradshaw, of Walton Street Gallery, has caught something even more elusive, In his etching, "Rotton Row", one can almost see the trees moving in the breeze'.

and in another publication -

'Brian Bradshaw, of Walton Street, S.W. 3, achieves simplicity and beauty in his etching "Rotten Row." His other two exhibits are "The Monument" a clever work in pen and wash and "Fragments of a Demolished World" in pen and chalk. This is a symbolic fantasy where upturned trees, gravestones and sphynxes blend into a picture of strong design and composition.'

It was in the years 1956 and 1957 that he was acknowledged as a painter of some merit.

Under the heading 'A Bolton Artist of Exceptional calibre' Nicholas Horsfield covered an exhibition at the Bolton Art Gallery for the Bolton Evening News.

> 'The paintings and drawings by Brian Bradshaw are, save for a few, the product of the last three years' work. The exhibition, which fills to a crush the larger room, is an achievement of which the artist may be proud and which brings credit to the Gallery.
>
> Among the few engravings, the large print of "Miners" is outstanding; the drawings show a strong grasp of the structure of landscape both in the 1953 watercolours such as "Red Mountain" and "Dry Stone Walls" and in the charcoal drawings of last year. These - "Mountain and Herd", "Conway Valley", "Mountain Moor and Forest" and others bind together the separate elements of landscape into a clear and convincing unity; they are, perhaps, the most completely satisfying works that Bradshaw has done.
>
> The paintings, though not hung in this order, clearly divide themselves into three groups: those of 1953, from 1954 to mid '55 and from that summer on. The first paintings ("Red Mountain", "Red Gate", "Capel Curig Rock") are more in the nature of coloured drawings. There is a curious contrast between the trained and accurate drawing and the almost naive and unaccustomed handling of the new medium. "Sheepdog" painted early in 1954, wherein the action of the dog penning the sheep has grown naturally from the free movement of the brush, shows the first step forward. The progress then, from this painting through a whole series of industrial landscapes to "Smoke Streams", is very marked and rapid. At this stage the artist adopted a sombre tonality set off by occasional sharp contrasts with light skies or water.
>
> A further advance was made when he began to realize the subtleties of tone between the extremes of light and dark which bring out a warm and glowing light. "Smoke Streams" is a fine painting, and others to be noticed on the way are "Moses Gate", "The Croal", "Churchgate", "Town Park", and an interesting contrast in the two versions of "Parish Church". These subjects will all be familiar in Bolton.
>
> In 1955 Bradshaw went again to Wales, with his powers much increased. These paintings and others up to the present are larger in feeling as well as in size, more varied in subject and painted with richer and more positive colour. "Priestholm", and "Rhiw Headlands and Corn", are statements of experience clearly felt and set down with conviction; the large interiors

'often showing a view through a window to a landscape outside (a theme first touched on in 1953) are complex pictures containing rich and subtle motifs of decoration.'

38. 'The Croal'

'"Darcy Lever Terrace" is a monumental painting of great dignity and though the latest picture "Bed", a reclining figure, is not completely wrought and shows signs even of a forcing of the pace, yet it has much sculptural feeling and might be a pointer to the artist's future development; as another artist pointed out on an earlier occasion Bradshaw has much love the the Gothic tradition in sculpture.

A retrospective exhibition usually marks the completion of a career, but Bradshaw is still at the beginning. It is hard to guess in what way he might next develop; it might be that after this rapid grogress he will prefer to rest and consider his position. Whatever he might do, one looks forward to his future paintings, and hopes that Bolton will support the present show, for it cannot be often that the town has produced an artist of this calibre.

N.H.'

Art News and Review also covered an exhibition at this time:

'The paintings and drawings by Brian Bradshaw at the Crane Gallery, Manchester, show a poetic

'feeling for grey lights and dank atmosphere, for skeletal forms which he found in the Welsh hills (the walls are made of bones and sodden sheep the only life) and for the stark pattern of factory chimneys, and black churches of industrial Lancashire.

These are his first paintings, the product of eighteen month's work after he returned home from travel abroad under the aegis of the Rome Prize scholarship that was awarded to him for Engraving in 1951.

The earlier paintings, the versions of "Window, Waen Hir", Approach to the Forest" and "Welsh Sheep Farm" are fairly literal transcriptions not fully realised in terms of space and tone: not yet very happy in the handling of the medium. But Bradshaw, with a draughtsman's hard training behind him, has developed rapidly. A painting of a sheepdog penning a flock has a feeling of movement which has grown directly out of the movement of his handling. The Welsh motif could still yield much if the artist chose to take it up again with the experience he has now gained; "Sheep around Waen Hir" is a splendid wash drawing, full of promise for development.

Paintings from the back ends of Bolton are more complex. At first very dark, opposing black to white, Bradshaw has soon perceived variations in tone which give luminosity and added richness. Not all are completely successful, in some, even the most deeply felt, there are occasional lapses which the artist has been unable to resolve. But these are fine solid paintings; "Church Gate, Bolton" and "Smoke Streams" are particularly satisfying; the "Pool" (lying across the landscape like a deflated balloon), offends against every canon yet comes off splendidly.

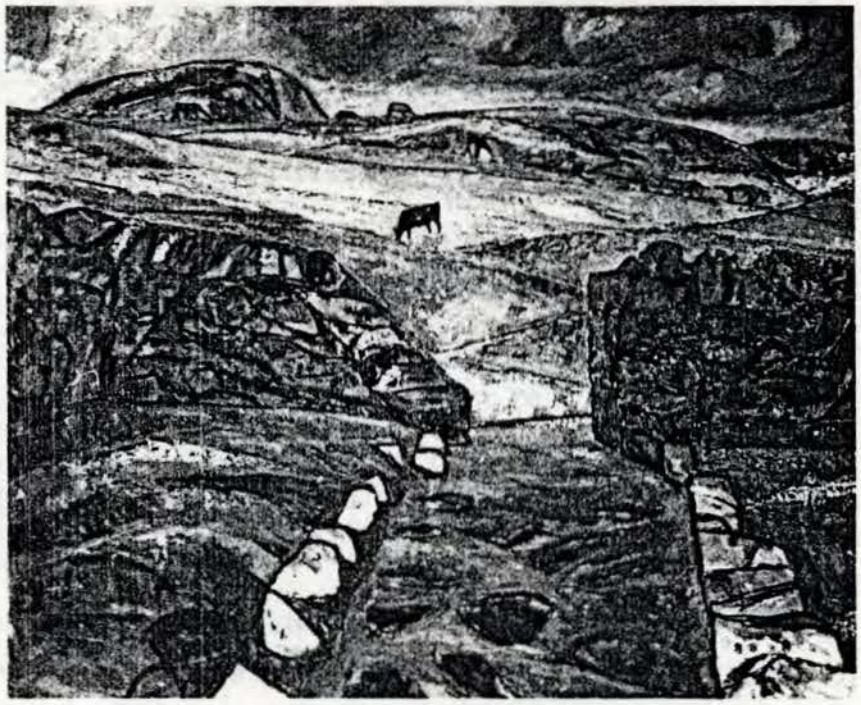
Bradshaw is an artist who will develop in his own way. Perhaps, for the time being, he has played out the industrial scene - and some recent unworthy sketches seem to show this. But he has a clear mind and will know the next, best step to take.

Northern artists of real ability, particularly any who choose to stay in the north, are rare. The Crane Gallery are to be congratulated on giving encouragement to this powerful and individual young artist.

Nicholas Horsfield'

"Stockport Viaduct" was used in Art News and Review to illustrate this review.

Another report mentioned his 'deep regard for the industrial scene, but he also emerges as an interpreter of the austere Welsh landscape, and as a painter of small interiors. "Dolwyddelan" and "Front Path, Waen Hir" have a fine sense of open-air and spirit of place.'



39. 'Front Path, Waen Hir'

In the Manchester Guardian of 26th January, 1957, A. C. Sewter covered the ninety-eighth annual exhibition of the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts which opened at the City Art Gallery and which consisted of 267 exhibits.

> 'Here, as in most academies, the suspicion grows in a visitor's mind that the selection jury entertains that dangerous fallacy that technique can be judged quite independently of the direction or character of an artist's creative intention. In opposition to such a notion it is necessary to insist that technique, in all its aspects - drawing, texture, colour, tone, composition, rhythm, and everything else - is only the instrument, not the end. It is precisely the separation of technique from the creative urges which should properly shape and control it that leads to what we all recognise as "art school art", and eventually to "academic art". This exhibition provides some impressive examples of the latter category, contributed especially by Stanley Reed, Robert Tuson, and Frederick Deane. Of their skill in descriptive drawing there can be little doubt, but it is totally divorced from creative vision.
>
> Among the few painters who seem to possess distinctively personal gifts the one who makes the strongest impression is Brian Bradshaw. In spite of a certain harshness of surface, a rigour

'and tautness in his linear patterns, and a deliberate avoidance of all charm in colour. Bradshaw's picture of a tumbled and unmade bed, his "Llynnau Mymbyr", "Trwyn y Gwyddel", and "Aberffraw" are by no means without a deeply felt poetic quality. Indeed they have the effect of making most of the other oils look trivial and superficial. Neither L. S. Lowry's two paintings nor James Fitton's "Self-Portrait" measure up to Bradshaw. The Lowry looked forced, laboured, and uncomposed; the Fitton curiously uncertain and afraid of itself. Austin Davies, one of the most gifted of Northern painters, has abandoned his previous exclusive devotion to dark and sombre colours, but his recent work, in its hesitation between surface and spatial qualities, is less convincing than the gouaches he was doing about three years ago. Perhaps he is passing through a phase of transition to a freer style.'

A photograph of Bradshaw's painting 'The Bed' accompanied the review. The painting itself was bought in 1957 from the artist through the Manchester Academy by the City of Manchester Art Galleries and is part of the Rutherston Collection.

40. 'The Bed'

The Bolton Evening News invited Nicholas Horsfield formerly Arts Council representative in the North-West, to write a notice of the exhibition held at the Crane Gallery, Manchester by Brain Bradshaw.

'The second exhibition of paintings and drawings by Brian Bradshaw confirms the promise of the first and gains in feeling for space and luminous colour.

His paintings are developed on a sure basis of strong linear draughtsmanship. He has no need to intellectualize his vision into a multitude of facets (which in weaker hands has been the legacy of Cezanne), but can embrace a whole complex of form within a single broad shape. His vision is direct and its exposition clear and simple.

A poet may express the reality of his image more vividly by analogy than by direct statement, so may a painter: clouds, usually thought of as soft and billowy, may, under certain conditions (against an olive sky in "Llanfaelrhys Church"), appear sharp and brittle and be interpreted and painted as flints or broken eggshells. It may be frivolous to compare the islet in "Priestholm" to an elephant half-submerged, but such translation by the artist was necessary to bring out just that quality of lumpishness that was his sensation. Certainly in some such way Bradshaw is able to make clear the reality of his own world for anyone to share who still has eyes to see.

Each artist will have his own catalogue of forms to which he responds with most delight. With Bradshaw these forms are elemental; the rock that underlies all landscape and comes to the surface in small mountains, breaking through their sparse soil; the walls of bleached stones, like bones, that divide the fields in Wales; water that rushes from the rock whether naturally or through man-made ducts; or the stone inner walls of a Welsh cottage with landscape seen beyond through a tiny window. In Wales, as in Bolton, these are Bradshaw's subjects and personal to him; they might, had he been born elsewhere and brought up in a different environment, be any other choice. The important thing is that he makes them and his delight in them clear for us to share.

These are fine spacious pictures by a serious and very intelligent artist who is still only at the beginning of his career.'

Three paintings by Boltonians were on display in an exhibition of industrial art at the Cheril Gallery, Chelsea.

> 'Two of them are by Mr. Brian Bradshaw, of Haulgh Hall, Haulgh, and depict Church Bank, Bolton, and the River Erwell, as seen from Kearsley.
>
> In the 'Looking Forward' art exhibition in London, he has two exhibits, one of Darcy Lever and the other of North Wales and in the near future, he is to hold an exhibition of about fifty of his own paintings, in the Crane Gallery, Manchester.'

The Saturday, 9th November, 1957, edition of Art News and Review covered two exhibitions at Walker's Galleries, London.

> 'The Regent Street Group are all ex-students of the Regent Street Polytechnic. Not all of them have as yet found their own mode of expression, so that the show is rather uneven. There is a tendency to echo the fashionable uglies of a few years ago, especially in some of the figures. One too often feels that this one has been seen before. But all are technically sound people, and all have a very cheerful and rich sense of colour. Jennifer Rope has some very individual drawing and watercolour which is pleasant and expresses a mood very well.....
>
> Brian Bradshaw is a contrast to the Group. His colours are of the industrial north. He comes from Bolton. He sees delicate colour in a stone wall, and in the soft sadness of Welsh landscape. He finds a quiet comfort in grey lights and shows the intimate things of a room, the wash-basin and the intricacies of tumbled sheets. All these in soft media which belong to the chosen theme. Then suddenly we find a group of ink drawings of the industrial world. This is strong stuff; the rows of houses, the chimneys, the gasworks, and among them a park, or a pool in an abandoned working; the River Erwell cutting silver white in a smoke-grimed landscape of grassy hillocks. His work is not escapist. He sees the world with a quiet appreciation and helps us to see that the ugly is not always evil, but he also shows that those strangely soft colours of Lancashire and North Wales have a quality of peace and restfulness which the world so sadly lacks today.
>
> Cottie A. Burland'

Stephen Bone reported to the Manchester Guardian on the one-man show by Bradshaw at Walker's Gallery.

> 'His black chalk traces with loving care the complications of tumbled bed-clothes, shattered

'rock faces, and huge deserts of Manchester rooftops, whereas his heavily loaded paintbrush is used mainly to depict Welsh hillsides. He is an intelligent painter and a good designer; the personality which emerges is one that is painstaking and very capable, with few flights of fancy or any great originality of outlook, but with a response to the sad picturesqueness of industrial cities and to the more obvious (and so perhaps more difficult) beauties of Wales'.

Charles Morris covered the same exhibition under the headline 'Drawings of Clarity and Confidence' for the London Daily Worker.

'If you brave the respectable Edwardian doors of the Walker Galleries, in London's New Bond Street (a cat may look at a king), you will find two exhibitions.

The larger one is mixed - the work of the Regent Street Art Group - and contains a little of everything.

After you have looked at the world through all the varied conventions, which perhaps show more technical skill than passionate vision, you will find in the last room the much more rewarding work of Brian Bradshaw - a young painter whose development is going to be worth following.

This is his first one-man show, at least in London, and it consists almost entirely of drawings.

The inclusion of three paintings was a mistake; the exhibition remains one of drawings, whose clarity of vision and sureness of handling underline, by contrast, the weaknesses of the paintings.

In the single-minded medium of drawing an artist may, with confidence, make developments which in the more complex medium of paint may pose problems taking longer even to realise, let alone solve.

This is, of course, particularly true of an artist who comes to painting through any of the graphic media, and I suspect that Bradshaw is in the process of making some major step forward.

His Northern moorlands and milltowns, sometimes touched with colour, but mostly in simple black chalk, are full of authentic character - their own, not one invented for them. There is no crude, fake-folksy "Oop for t' coop" about them, which breaks down the minute it leaves the granite setts and sooty chimneys.'

'This is intelligent, deeply felt drawing which is as valid in one place as another, and can create as living a pattern from the creases of last night's unmade bed as from the twisted strata of the seashore rocks, from a leaping cat or a dead sheep.'

41. 'Bed with figure'

Bradshaw had two one-man shows of his work running concurrently in London. His oil paintings were on view in Knightsbridge.

John Carpenter of The Evening News suggested that his paintings of women dressing certainly bore anit-romantic titles. 'One is called tersely "Female Fastened Up", and another of a girl drying her hair is entitled "Feminine Gender With Bathroom Towels".'

The Times in its edition of 21st November, 1957, reported that 'Mr. Brian Bradshaw is the second artist from the north of England to be introduced to London by the Crane Kalman Gallery, 178, Brompton Road, but in all respects he is a very different sort of regional painter from his predecessor in this gallery, Mr. Alan Lowndes.

Not only is his work stamped with the energetic efficiency of a training at the Royal College of Art but he has none of that feeling of close personal attachment to a place and an environment which shapes the whole expression of a regional artist of Mr. Lowndes's type. For that reason his paintings seem, in one sense, more conventional but they are also freer to experiment and to pick and choose their subjects. In this exhibition Mr. Bradshaw ranges from a picture of a cat watching pigeons to landscape essays in plunging perspective, compositions of Welsh cottages set in rocking patterns of hills and stone-walls, and (some of his best paintings) seascapes in which a reliable sense of colour and an ability to change his compositions with tossing linear rhythms produce a powerful effect of the pounding and surging of waves.'

42. 'The Sea Swirling In'

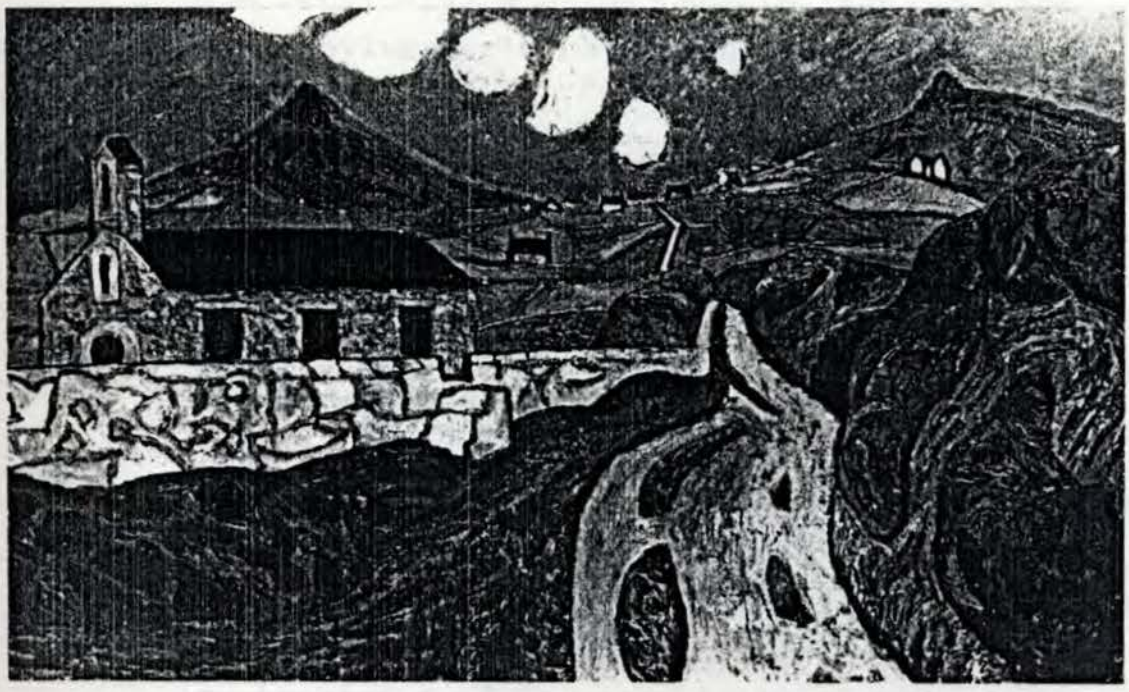
43. 'Cat liking the Walk on Carpet'

Ray Watkinson reviewed the exhibition for Art News and Review in its edition of 23rd November, 1957. under the headline 'From Realism'.

> 'Brian Bradshaw's exhibition of drawings at Walker's made a natural introduction to the paintings he is now showing at the Crane Kalman Gallery in Brompton Road. These are largely landscapes, with some still-lifes, some interiors; one or two figures, one or two animals - including a Siamese cat on a red and blue ground of quite heraldic strength and more than heraldic depth.
>
> There are others of these pictures which have this quality penetrating and sometimes over-mastering an approach which must three years ago have been easily described as realist.

'But all realist painting which does not degenerate into naturalism or copybook platitude is driven through the barrier of appearances to remake itself as expressionism. There is a good deal of defference between this contained passion for the physical being of things, and the high pitch drive of a Munch or Kokoschka: the one must battle continually against the domination of the thing seen, the other against incoherence; but there is a large area of common territory.

This territory is where Bradshaw is now walking, and laying a pretty firm hand on what he finds. No. 39, for example - a twin-peaked landscape with bell-turreted chapel and heavy puffs of cloud, painted in hot greens and sandy reds, has tremendous overtones; so, of a kindlier order, has the swinging green hillside of No. 15, shouldering its limestone outcrops toward the sky. Three or four paintings wrestle with the scarped and pebbled layers of sea-bitten coast with varying success. The hammered geometry that orders the patterns of rock, stone walls, and fields, is over-hard for the waves, freezes their landward movement and makes opaque what should be at least translucent.'



44. 'Llanfaelrhys Church'

'The conflict between geometry the painters wishes to impose on his material, and the native geometry of that material, is a familiar one. In one painting in the lower gallery the figure of a woman dressing, seen through doorways and across a carpeted passage, provides

> 'too nearly a ready-made solution - but its harsh colour and the starkness of the figure prevent the slackness which can as well underlie rigid forms as those more diffuse. ('Corridors and Rooms')
>
> If you have seen the drawings, you will recognise some of the same material here. One of the finest of them was of a rumpled, rolled-back bed. Here it is in paint, curiously vibrant and luminous; a bed that has been slept in'.

Llanfaelrhys is one of the churches in the care of R. S. Thomas and its weekly service is still in Welsh. In a letter to Bradshaw he wrote 'the geologists date the rocks at Aberdaron at about 600 million years. They help to give balance.'

The exhibition drew comment from Stephen Bone for the Manchester Guardian. 'The few paintings at the Walker Galleries are rather warmer and richer in tone than the sternly designed paintings, clear and simple, at the Crane Kalman Gallery. "Cornfield" is good, and so is "Clothes-horse and Other Forms" - the other forms being chiefly a well-drawn female nude.'

'The Provincial and the Cosmopolitan' was the headline for David Sylvester's notice in the New Statesman of 23rd November, 1957.

> 'Last week I suggested that the lack of fluency in contemporary British art was something of an asset, considering the emptiness of most contemporary Continental art, which is nothing if not fluid. Two current one-man shows illustrate the point. André Minaux and Brian Bradshaw are both young realists, more or less, and both are in their early thirties. In technique, Bradshaw is a first-year student by comparison with Minaux; in innate ability, Bradshaw seems utterly outclassed by Minaux. But Bradshaw is the one who paints the more interesting pictures. Minaux, in the directness and amplitude of his forms and the simple grandeur of his silhouettes, is an authentic descendant of Millet - an ancestry which he appears, judging from his iconography, to appreciate. Only, an art akin to Millet's is, by virtue of the simplicity of its means, middlebrow journalism when it does not convey, or even imply involuntarily, an attitude to life and man and society, or when it does not convince that the subject was one which the painter <u>had</u> to paint. There is only one painting in the present Minaux exhibition in which the subject seems to have been more than a pretext for a picture: "L'Eglise".'

'Bradshaw is so obsessed with his subject, though this doesn't mean he always makes us see why. His domestic animals (cats, dogs, and women) are bores, for all that we can see with what pleasure and curiosity he has looked at them. The aspects of his world that he makes real for us are his seas - all the massive weight of the waves - and his birds flying above the moors. There is a tender love of things (as you might have guessed) behind the air of hard-boiled provincialism, the titles that are schoolboyish in their anxiety not to be soft, the way of painting that is like the way some confirmed provincials talk: using a Lancashire accent as an instrument of aggression. Bradshaw appears to realise the absurdity of being an English painter.

I suppose that no English artist of our time has tried harder to forget he is English and immerse himself in the cosmopolitan mainstream than S. W. Hayter .....'

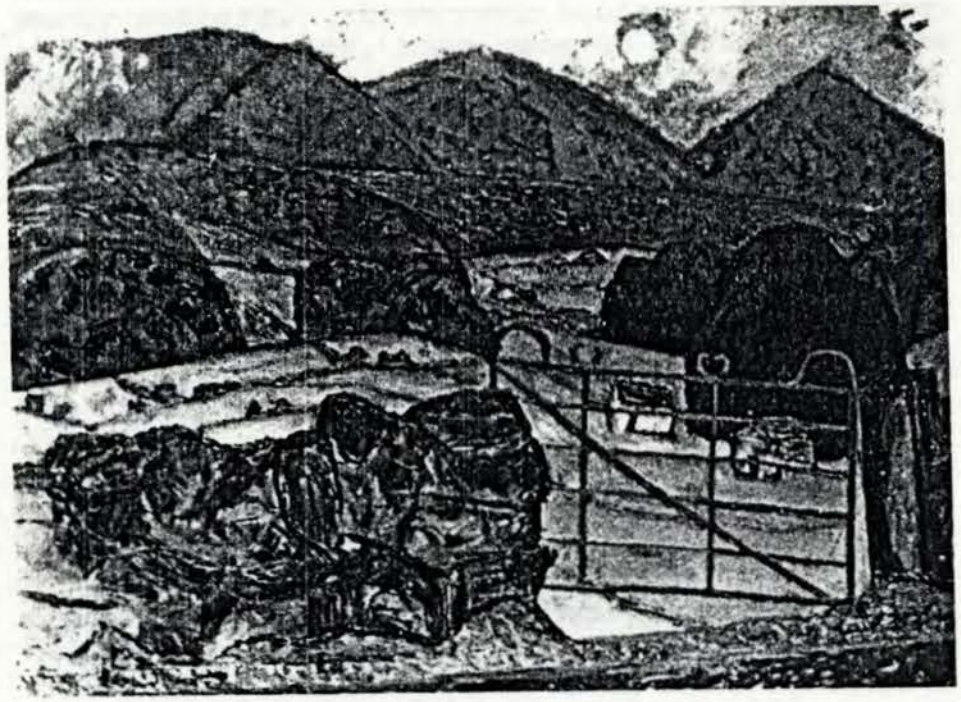
45. 'Sea, Sky and Bird'

'Sea, Sky and Bird' was purchased by the City of Liverpool for its Walker Art Gallery in 1958.

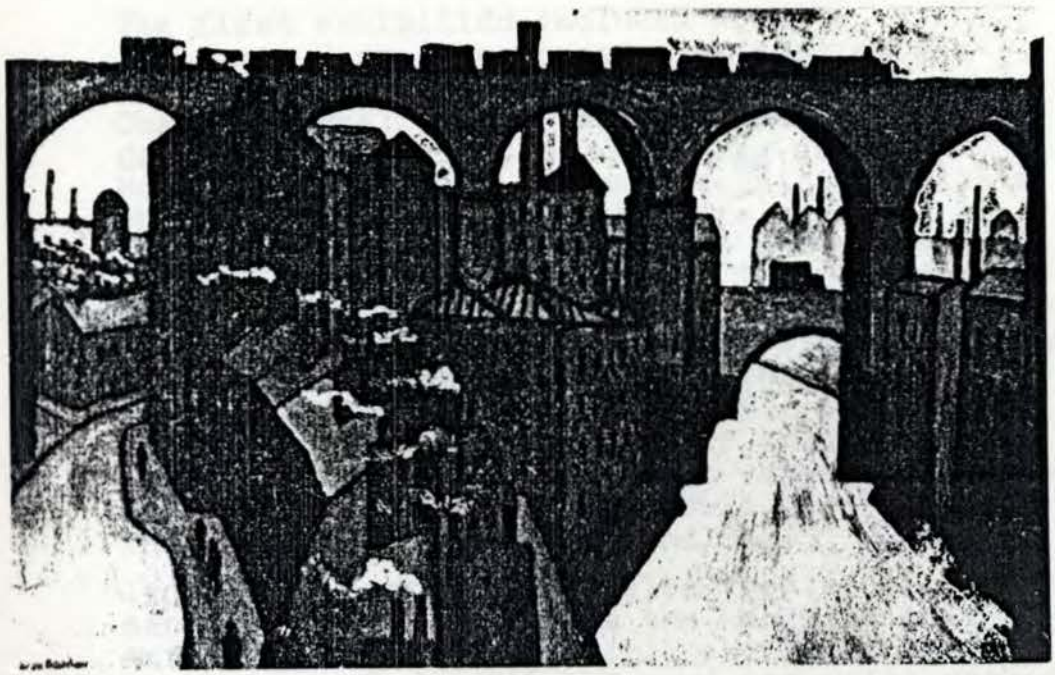
46. 'Cornfield'

The Editor of the Bolton Evening News commented at the time that 'it has been a great pleasure to note the attention given in London in recent weeks to the work of Mr. Brian Bradshaw, a painter who is already familiar to our readers as our art critic. Fellow critics have greatly appreciated the content of his two one-man exhibitions, which showing an unusual productivity, he has been able to run simultaneously in London. Mr. Bradshaw has that inexhaustible and enviable gift which Constable expressed for his own part when he said, "I have never seen an ugly thing". It is encouraging to see an artist as original and outspoken as Mr. Bradshaw still taking major steps forward. He is for instance, among the 120 artists and sculptors whose work has been selected from 3,000 entries to appear in the current John Moor exhibition in Liverpool, which aims to present "the best and most vital work being done to-day in this country". It is also encouraging in another way to see how his work is appreciated. There have been many buyers at the London exhibitions. Mr. Richard Attenborough, who has

commissioned a drawing of his Richmond home from Mr. Bradshaw, Sir Edward Beddington Behrens and an Oxford college were among them.'



47. 'Dolwyddelan'



48. 'Stockport Viaduct' (used to illustrate the review on Bradshaw by Nicholas Horsfield in Art News and Review.)

'Liverpool's old avant-garde' headed an article by Anthony Tucker on the 150th anniversary of the Liverpool Academy.

'A couple of years ago Manchester Academy reached its centenary and supported its annual exhibition with a retrospective showing of the work of early members. Liverpool Academy of Arts, not wholly in rivalry, have gone 48 better, and the annual exhibition which opens at the Walker Art Gallery to-day celebrates the 150th anniversary with an additional retrospective showing which fills two galleries. To make the gesture complete, and perhaps to silence would-be rivals for good, the foreword to the catalogue (a most rich and thorough-going affair) tells us quietly but emphatically that the first provincial art exhibition in this country was held at 30 John Street, Liverpool, in August, 1774. Are there any challengers?

To be sure, this was not by the Academy but by the Society of Artists, which foundered only twelve months later, and it was not until 1810 that the Academy emerged under the patronage of Henry Blundell of Ince. Appropriately enough a bust portrait of Henry Blundell by George Bullock, the first president of the academy, stands at the entrance to the retrospective show like an austere (and repolished) Caesar guarding home territory. His collection (recently acquired by Liverpool) and Ince Blundell itself are monuments to his enlightenment, and there is enough here to convince us that the academy went off with a resounding bang.

The first exhibition included work by Benjamin West (the second president of the Royal Academy), Etty, Turner, James Ward, and Charles Towne: later there was Fuseli, David Cox and Frith, Augustus Egg and Holman Hunt and the supreme technician Millais whose avant-garde pre-Raphaelite painting of 1857, "The Blind Girl," won the £50 prize and created a tumultuous schism. The corporation withdrew its support and the Academy languished into intermittance for forty years. "The Blind Girl" is not here to remind us this event, but another Millais painting is: "Sir Isumbras at the Ford" - shown the same year and second in the prize voting - and I doubt very much whether there is a painter now who could even approach the quality of its paint handling.

Ignore the content, the false theatrical sentimentality, for it is the handling that matters now; the incredible skill with glazes. the extraordinary precision of wet paint worked into wet. Pick the right square inch and

'magnify it a hundred times and you would qualify for the abstract-expressionist band-wagon. And what about John Martin's "The Last Man" of 1849, singularly apt for to-day in its broodingly gloomy content, where what appears at first to be a scumbled river bed turns out to be a mass of human bones? Is it more, or less, meaningful? And how many will turn away from Ford Madox Brown's "Pretty Baa Lambs" simply because of the title, without noticing the luminosity of the sky, an impressionist's aim, by other means, before impressionism?

Above all the quaint titles and moralising gestures, these painters were masters of their craft, and to walk from them into the galleries containing this year's open show is to move from a world of professional certainty into one of sensual - and all too often amateur - doubt. And yet by current standards this is a very good provincial academy show, lively, forward looking and supported by a number of the best painters in the area. Some of them, like Arthur Ballard, John Hart, Nicholas Horsfield, Brian Bradshaw, are serious artists who can stand in any company. But with few exceptions the work turns on the innate emotive resonances of colour and texture.

This is territory which strictly falls within the limiting boundaries of technique, of part of the means. Segregated it is capable of achieving the most delicious confectionery requiring little true discipline, a lot of natural taste; a formal reversal of the position a century and a half ago. But a century and a half ago painters, less aware of means, were dealing in terms of interpretation, of the reaction of one man to another, to a situation. Henry Blundell would have assumed this to be a permanence, and in surveying the artist's territory shrunken to within the walls of the canvas, one is tempted to regret that he was not right.'

Charles Morris again reviewed work by Bradshaw for the Daily Worker in September, 1959. The Tib Lane Gallery in Manchester held a showing of his paintings.

'Settled now in his native Bolton, he divides his time between his home there and North Wales. The streets and crofts of Bolton and the nearby moorland; the bare slopes and wooded valleys of Snowdonia, have given him material for the dozen excellent paintings now on show until the end of the month.

'Previous shows (in London) included a wider range of material - portraits, interiors, still life; and there was more evidence of a long process of drawing behind each picture. The landscapes now showing are both more immediate, in that they are painted directly, often on the spot, and more contemplative.

The handling and colour are bold and, on the face of them, simple. But these are paintings as subtle as they are strong, and the colour rises above the accidents of the undigested scene to a level of powerful expression.

They are the fruit of intimate study of the same mountains, woods and houses through the changing seasons. With his back to the fashionable market, this painter is creating a far more personal and permanent idiom than those who spend their energies seeking a smart gimmick.'

The Manchester Guardian reported on the same exhibition:

'Brian Bradshaw has shifted his approach to painting several times since the cool, consciously designed, almost bleak counterpane and chair works of two or three years ago, which, in themselves, seemed to mark a peak and a compressed synthesis of earlier approaches, and on the strength of his present show of work this month at the Tib Lane Gallery, Manchester, it seems likely that he will shortly arrive at a new peak producing paintings which are far less aloof, more rich, no less serious, and consciously considered.

For there is, in these recent landscapes, more fluency in the use of paint than he has ever shown before, and if one doubts the value of the occasional use of emphatic dominant contour or feels something to be false in the dark-toned mood of some of the smaller paintings, there is no denying the gain in pictorial intensity, or the more subtle spatial use of areas of texture. There is the expected integrity and a new richness: the lack is of sparkle, and, almost, of light. But in one notable painting a large "Rock Landscape" there is an almost ceramic-like internal glow; this might well light the next and higher peak.

(No. 49 'Rock Landscape')

The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post of 17th September, 1959, reviewed the same exhibition:

'It was as a painter of the streets and mills of his native Bolton that Brian Bradshaw appeared at his first one-man show in Manchester five

'years ago. Now, at his third one-man exhibition (of paintings and drawings) in the city at the Tib Lane Gallery, he reveals a new interest in richer colour, finely confident brushwork and a greater command of mountain landscape.

He has discarded the coloured greys of three years ago and has further lightened his palette. Yet his early interest in the pattern of streets and buildings remains evident. "Croal Valley" with its spindly chimneys and its rugged foreground, for instance displays a fresh assurance in this type of work and "Hedgerow Shapes", for all its difference of subject, could only have been painted by an artist with Bradshaw's regard for pattern. "Trees" is in a similar category.

Most notable among his landscapes are "Rock Landscape", "Fachwen", "Cottages" and "Water Falling Through Greenwood", lovely in its colour. "Sunlight on Lawn" and "The Path from the Lake" best demonstrate his departure from the sombre colour of his early days. Among the drawings is "The Moor" which finely expresses spirit of place.

F. W. F.'

A further development in Bradshaw's paintings was evident in 1960 when he exhibited with Norman Adams, Bobbie Beswick and George Mayer-Marton.

'Bolton-born artist Brian Bradshaw is one of four exhibitors at Manchester Art Gallery Athenaeum annexe from now until May, 23rd, in an exhibition entitled "Four Northern Figurative Painters."

Sharing the exhibition with him are N. Adams, Bobbie Beswick and George Mayer-Marton.

Figurative paintings, unlike the purely abstract or the tachist, start from a recognisable visible point and work towards abstraction.

The result therefore always contains some element of communication which can be appreciated even by those who are professedly puzzled by pure abstraction and to whom action painting is a meaningless gimmick.

This exhibition shows four widely different points of view, from the almost representational conceptions of Bobbie Beswick, to the perhaps rather clever abstractions of George Mayer-Marton.

Brian Bradshaw might be placed midway between these two extremes, since his pre-occupation with abstract shapes is disciplined in accordance with the significance of the visible point of departure. He never lets his obvious delight

'in linear design and in the grouping of masses compel him to surrender his original conception. This means that while he thinks in terms of paint, as in "The Road to Fachwen" the strong design of rocks in warm earth colours and olive greens remains a design of recognisable rocks, and gains strength thereby.

Obviously the most popular picture will be 'Cae Canol,' low in key in greens and purples, but with a strong line and a general feeling of softness which cannot fail to catch the imagination, but I found "Garden" a study in greens and yellows postulating sunshine and peace the most fascinating.

There is a strong but not too obvious rhythmic quality about this work which is very pleasing, and "Green Wood," a rather sombre painting in dark greens, is one in which this aspect is most evident.

Quality of paint is perhaps most clearly seen in "Pathway", in which a rather mysterious doorway serves as an opportunity to express a physical awareness of the substance and solidity of the medium.

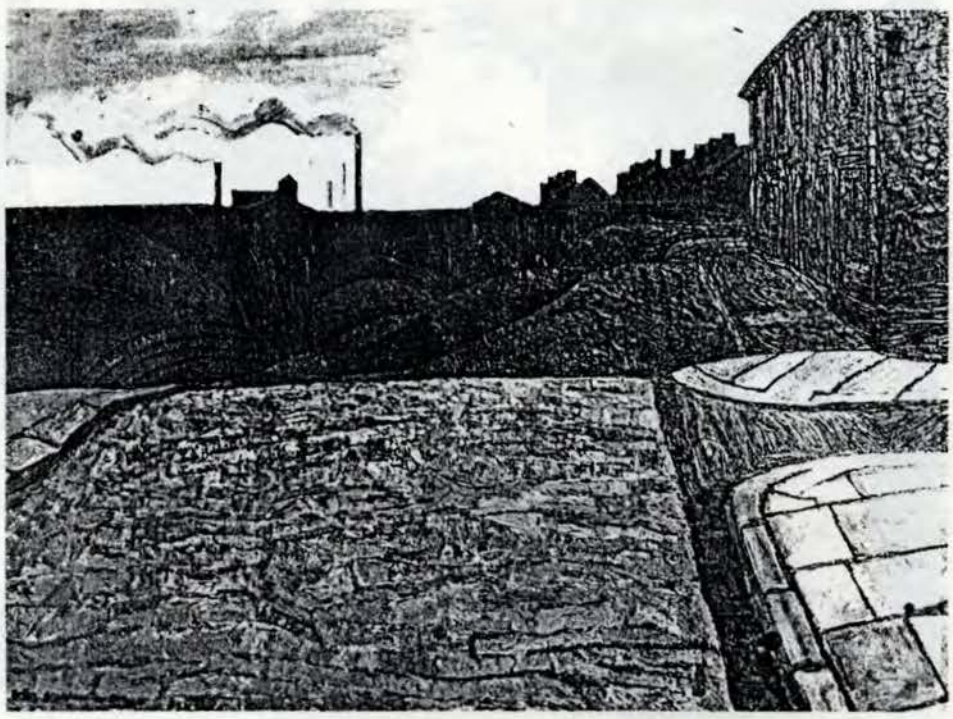
C.P.'

The Guardian, Tuesday May 24, 1960, reported

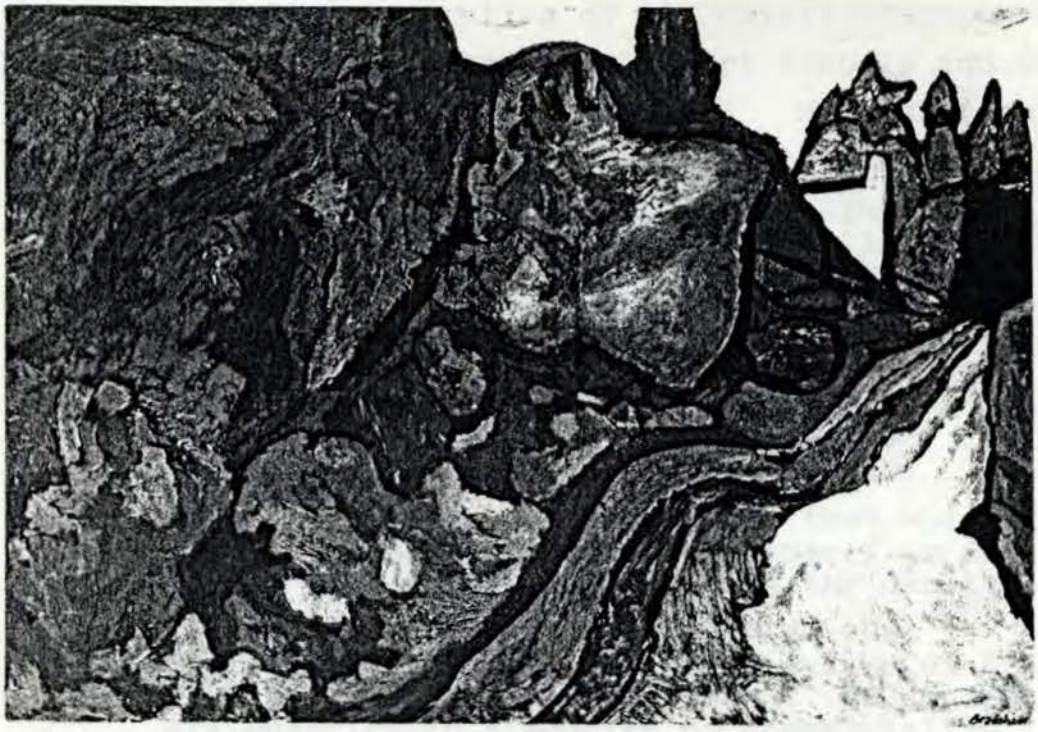
'Brian Bradshaw designs seriously and thoughtfully, and creates space with extraordinary control; like Bobbie Beswick he designs to retain a visual starting point, but unlike Beswick, who seems as yet satisfied with things only a little more than picturesque, Bradshaw starts from a visual situation rich with mood or symbolic purpose and aims at a more disturbing end.

But the point about this show is that although it deals with serious paintings its content is approachable by those whose business is not with painting. Everything in it possesses specific points of reference for communication: at the present moment it might seem gluttonous to ask for more.'

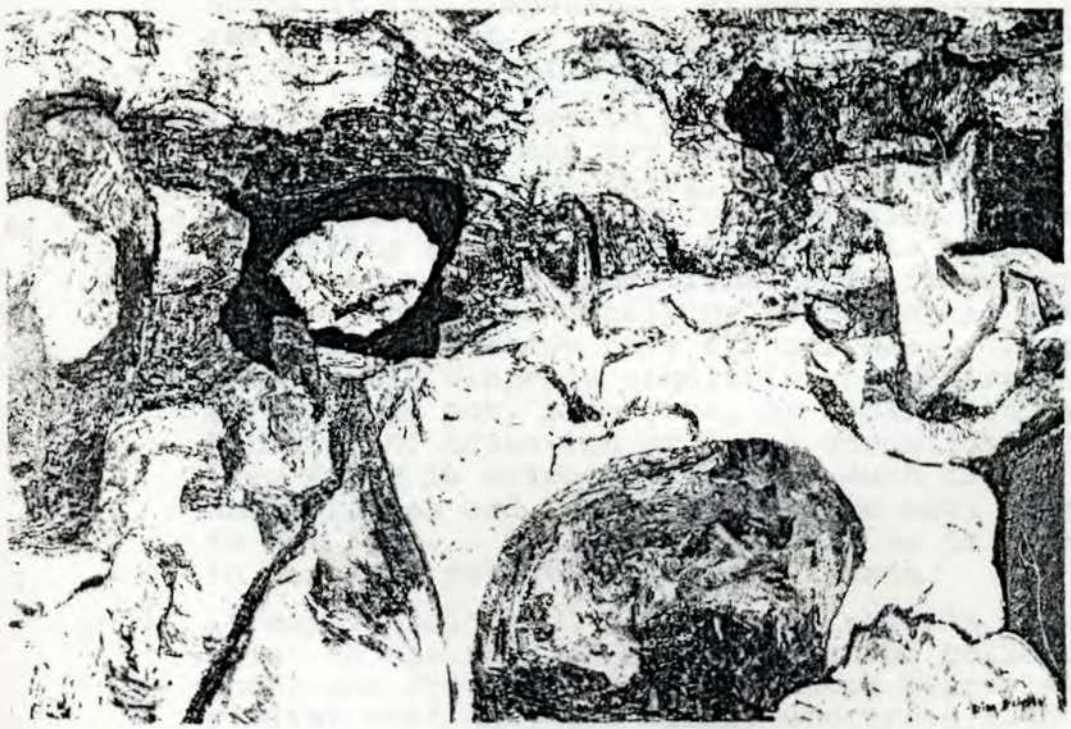
49. 'Rock Landscape'



50. 'Darcy Lever Terrace'



51. 'Road to Fachwen'



52. 'Garden Path'

An article by Bradshaw in the Bolton Evening News early in 1959 is indicative of his dissatisfaction with the Ministry of Education and Heads of Art Schools and the establishment of 'petty professionalism'. His was a constant battle against conformity in this field.

> 'In our mass-system of living, thought and belief are mere subscriptions to politically approved and efficiently advertised ideas. Man has changed a great deal since the time Protagoras proclaimed him to be "the measure of all things." His prophets, Rousseau, Marx, Malraux and Sartre, Have made their mark. Those who seek a material Olympus are able to deify themselves. God has become man-produced and mass-produced.
>
> It is not difficult to discover that under these conditions man has liberated himself to such an extent that culturally he is on the decline.
>
> Education becomes a major problem when it degenerates into an elementary system of brain-washing which is intended to fit the student to his vocation in communism or commercialism. Mass-education sponsored and controlled by the State has become a mere shaping of square pegs of mediocrity.
>
> It is obvious that Youth desires and deserves more opportunity than that of being State-subsidized. It would prefer something to think about, something to enrich the increasing leisure hours at its disposal. It must be possible to restore the art of living, if only to give ethics to the Science which handles our existence.
>
> The counter-balance to Science is Art (or Religion and Art - but these may be described as different aspects of the same thing, since both are concerned with striving for something instead of possessing something). In order to become truly civilized we need educational facilities, which are as capable of supplying education in the arts as those we already have for science. Places which would dispense scholarly aesthetics - which would not, therefore, be controlled by the Ministry of Education or local education authoritie They would be autonomous bodies such as our universities and they would not be easy places to get into. Their object would be to invest in our best potential artistic minds.
>
> It may be said that such establishments already exist in the form of art schools and colleges, but those who are acquainted with such places will realize that they are mostly concerned with offering to the general public a popular-potted edition of art with the object of gaining financial returns both for themselves and their students.

'A system of how-to-pass State-examinations, which bears no relationship to aesthetics nullifies the efforts of such of the State-trained teachers who possess more than a fractional knowledge of their subject. Such schools are the servants of forces which Art should help to control.

It will not be easy to re-establish order and direction in the growing chaos of our commercialized democracy. The jungle of professionalism is not likely to give any help.

The barrier to cultural education is not only erected by professional amateurs in the form of Ministerial officials and their teaching representatives but by professional hangers-on who profit by the practical political situation.

If one examines the camp-followers of the Arts one can sympathize with the public confusion regarding the artistic issue. Apart from the fashion pedlars, with their dubious business methods, there are the duffle-coaters who daub paint on themselves instead of palettes and the city-slickers who balance their metropolitan esoterics on the end of cocktail sticks. These Jeans and Jumpers and Edwardian-style Pansies are as phoney as Puccini's Bohemians.

The situation is noticed by two types of people. Those sceptics and pessimists who accept it; who acknowledge the suicidal tendencies of the human intellect; who are too much pacifists to take an active part in reconstruction; who satisfy their intellectual pride by taking mild excursions into journalistic anarchism; who act their part in "The Great Human Tragedy" like the political peasants of Millet and Zola by poking their inkstained fingers into the soil, they suddenly feel dignified!

The other onlookers are less plentiful. They see the situation but refuse to accept it. They are not content to drift along in Freudian eddies of dream-security.

An American said that "a great civilization is a great convention." The individualist knows that no convention is final. Obstacles should not be put in the way of those who are capable of rising above them, but they should resist firmly those who would sink beneath them.

Art is not a commercial entity whose sole object is to be geared to industrial projects. Neither can it be popularized in the way that domestic soap is popularized.

Education should supply Democracy with a general mixture of physical healthiness and medium intelligence; it should also produce a properly Educated Class from which Democracy can profitably recruit its leaders. Otherwise, Democracy will prove itself a hopeless and a helpless cause.'

In late 1959 the Bolton Evening News reported:

'Mr. Brian Bradshaw, the artist, recently became secretary to a Parliamentary Committe on Art Education, whose members - leading painters, art critics, writers and educationists, under the chairmanship of a Member of Parliament on the Opposition Front Bench - are to investigate the whole system of art-teaching in this country. The setting-up of this committee is directly due to Mr. Bradshaw's industry, persistence and avowed aim to change for the better the state of art teaching in Great Britain. After months of writing and talking to people at all levels, a meeting was held at the House of Commons in June. The occasion of the meeting was itself a triumph and messages of congratulation came from artists, designers and critics resident in America, France, Italy, Sweden and Ireland.

Mr. Bradshaw, whose views had already won wide support in authoritative art circles addressed the meeting, which included representatives of associations, societies and interested bodies together with Members of Parliament of all parties and both Houses. He spoke about the conditions, trends and influences of the present manner and methods of teaching in art schools and suggested how prevailing conditions and methods might be changed to the general advantage of the public and the particular advantage of the serious student of art. The findings of the Committee will shortly be made public.'

'The findings' were enough to induce Bradshaw to seek wider horizons and he accepted the post of Professor of Fine Arts at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa, in 1960, rather than be part of the drive to inflate the numbers in art schools in the country. In fact new courses were tried out to bait the local public: 'basketry, dress-glove-handbag-making, television technique, cake decoration, how to use cosmetics, spray varnishing for cars, jazz appreciation, retouching and tinting; how to take snapshots on holiday etc. A Lancashire college with a full-time staff of eight, advertised not only for a 'greater number of house-wives and retired people', but also declared that if <u>fully</u> catered for '39 artistic trades'. Sometimes these special courses do well enough to grow into departments. Thus the Leicester College of Art now includes a School of Corsetry. The broadening of concepts has materialised!' 2

Between his painting and drawing, art teaching and work as Honorary Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee on Art Education, Bradshaw turned his hand to writing a satirical novel in his spare time. He wrote poetry too.

Live the Living

Life let me grasp by the short hairs
Let me live the Living
Symptomatically feeding the senses
Grateful gulps
Slabs of sensitivity to chew by the mouthful
So much So much
And yet we sit knit on the point of an anchor
Making a prison of security
To which security
Secured
And the only little sense splashes on steel shutters
Like seagulls droppings
From the white sky
Providing a little acid to rot rust the fabric
And so let a little air inside
To breathe
These domesticated pastures
Are a pasteurised mind dump for creep characters
By artificial aid they have drawn their puny derelicts
Into heroic erections
They spatter the weed of their seed
Into every worthless cranny
I must climb the hills and shake off the dirt
Which lines these cesspools
And reach out to the area where humanity is possible
Let me live the living.

In October, 1976, the Welsh painter Kyffin Williams of Pwllfanogl, Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Gwynedd, commented on his association with Bradshaw: 'I am only too happy to write

> about Professor Bradshaw since I have always considered him to be a most admirable character whose honesty was reflected in his work. When I knew him his work was realist with the promise of the expressionist keeping in the background until such time as he had assimilated such knowledge and craft that his paintings could really flourish in the way he wanted. For Brian Bradshaw there was no easy way, there were no tricks and no artistic cliche's. I always felt him to be a slow and hardworking starter and knew that this perceptive apprenticeship would pay dividends.
>
> I knew Brian Bradshaw because of his Welsh connections and these led him to Wales and to his love of the Welsh landscape. If I painted with a tinge of melancholy, Brian's pictures were warmer and optimistic. Brian Bradshaw's deep conviction that the art world was being eroded by ambitious charlatans caused him to create a Parliamentary subcommittee to oppose the official line. It has been proved that he was right, by the tragic state of art in the world today.'

Chapter V.

Bradshaw's students at Rhodes University School of Art regard him in much the same way as those in Walter Chamberlain's day in Bolton, the difference being that they now discuss Levi-Strauss, Ezra Pound, Plotinus and Pignon. Rhodes Art School is essentially a painting school, although graphics, sculpture and photography are seriously studied.

53. Brian Bradshaw in his study at Waterloo Farm.

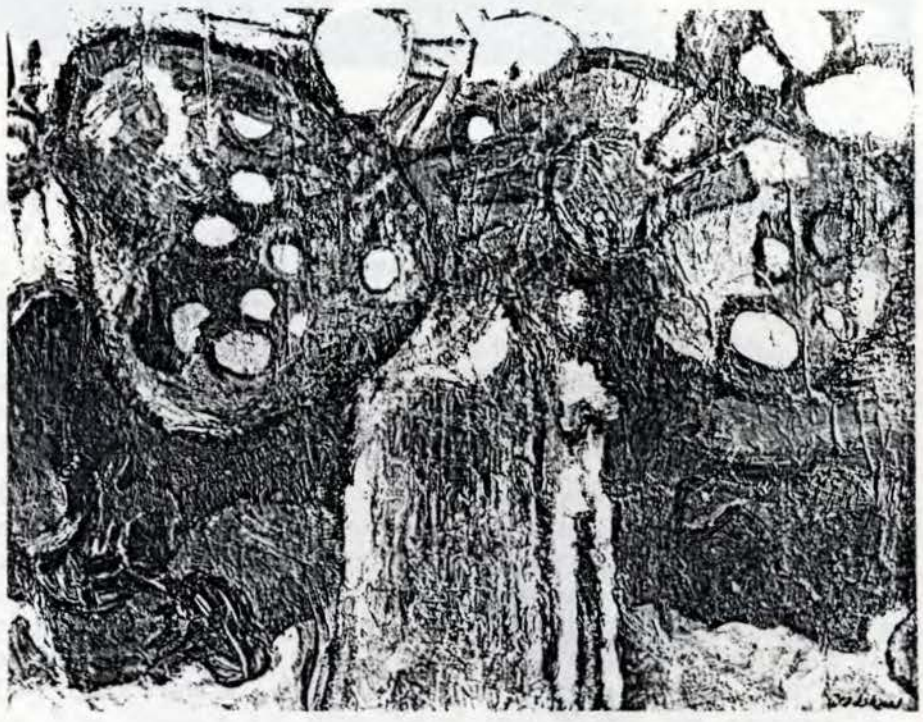
His wife, Maureen, and their two sons, Rhys and Sarn, live with him on their smallholding outside Grahamstown, where they run a few sheep, cows, horses and goats.

Much of his advice to students is evident in Bradshaw's work.

> 'An artist is the type of man who carries the whole world within his head. A man who, in consequence of this state of attitude, allows passions to flood his mind, but, by groping his way determinedly through them, forms a concrete symbol of their presence, a symbol which is relevant and yet semi-mythical in its power because it is a symbol which is subservient to nature and to life. He does not drown in a chaos of ideas, but devises and designs a reflective and expressive meaning from them.'

54. 'Magical Welsh Landscape'

'I would, however, emphasize that the order which he produces is cosmological and sensible rather than intellectual; intelligible since it establishes a meaning; mysterious since it bridges the gap between the finite and the infinite, and magical because it indulges in total and totemical systems!



55. 'World - Wald'

'Here, then, is the artist, the man who in his unique attitude and action forms a timeless link between the prehistoric painters of Altimira, the landscape painters of ancient China, Eskimo ivory carvers, the churinga of the Australian Aborigine, and painters in the Western tradition like the German, Caspar David Friederich, and the modern Dane, Karl Henning Pederson.'

Pederson and Friederich have been definite influences on Bradshaw's outlook. 'Pederson incorporates an element of mystery with magic which is part of reality. It's a natural thing'; and he agrees that Friederich has 'a feeling for the haunted silence of the woods' which appeals to Bradshaw.

56. 'Mountain Path'

'A path is an act. It is more than a from here to there. It must be trodden on and experienced. A path walks with the treader. There is no mere following and re-treading.

Samuel Palmer was a visionary. He saw the cosmological world. He understood the weight, mass and form of landscape and had the vision to experience it.

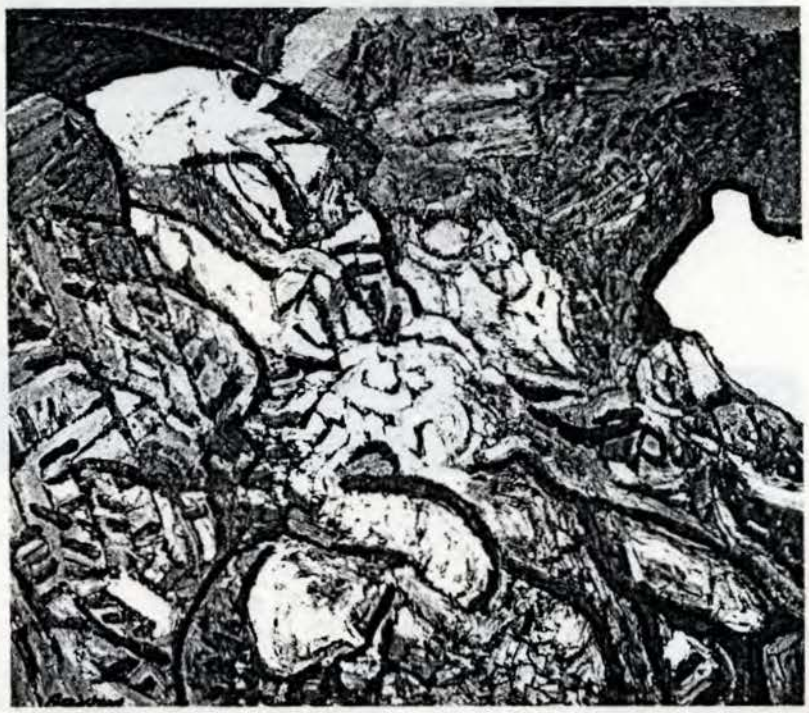
G. K. Chesterton went onto the Downs and he clambered up their power. Should the earth quake it shows one element of its power. He sat down on tons of chalk to draw. But he drew demons, angels and spirits - he didn't draw white. He was involved with the chalk. It spoke to him and influenced him. It has the power. No-one who knows the power of the land would be an academic painter.

Up there things happen. Powys found out on Glastonbury Tower. From atop a mound one may reach and

'grasp the sun. It is the bond which makes the meaning. The power of things is real.

Mounds are worlds of tremendous life force. It is believed by primitive people still that mounds are inhabited by spirits. The dead were put inside for generations. So it was a force, a source of power. All mountains are a source of power. The The people know it. In the mounds are caves. A mound is a place on a high level and at a central point - a wholeness of external and internal lucidity and interpenetrating development. As Ezra Pound said 'The 8-ply of the heavens are all folded into one darkness'.

As a boy Bradshaw spent much time on Rivington Pike, accessible from Bolton via Chorley Old Road and George's Lane. 'They all have an alive quality about them.. Pendle Hill and Priestholm are both whale backed.'



57. 'Red Abafon'

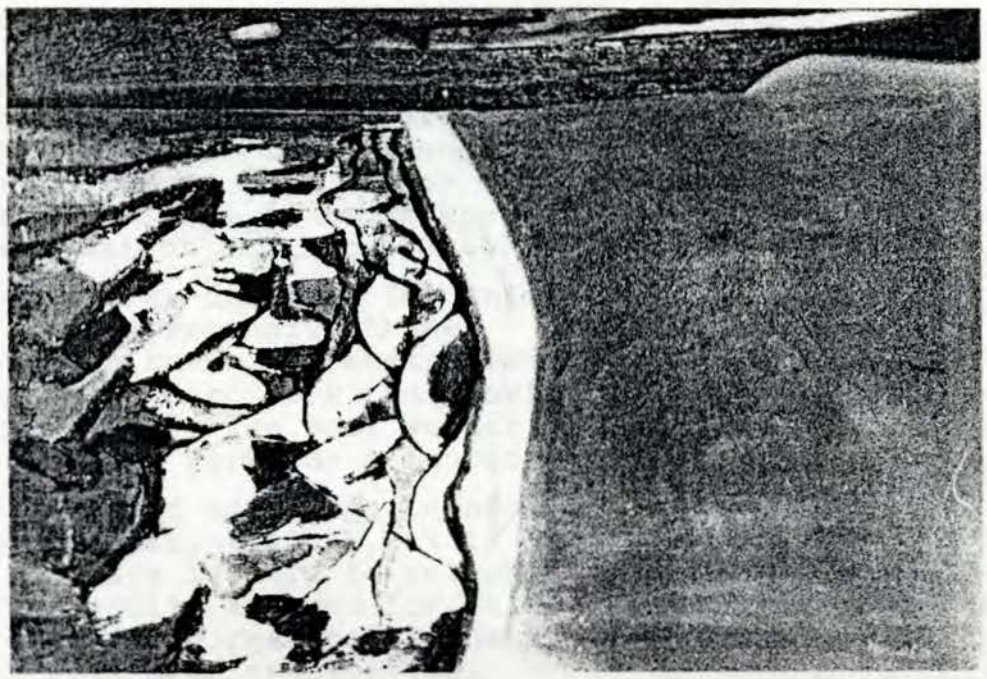
'What is a horizon? A line which is just a theory - it's not a straight line. You'll see whatever you want to see. But if you just look and watch the waves you'll see its a moving thing - it's not a straight line at all. It's an edge - vibrating, tense - it's alive - it's not a line. It should be a probe. It's not the edge like the edge of a table, it doesn't fall. Same as the other side of a mountain - it changes all the time. But you only see it from where you happen to be. It's as large as a heavy land or sea mass - a tremendous weight. The knowledge of landscape is in its weight. Discover what is the structure of the other side and its roots.

58. 'Tree Woman and Sun'

'This is a tree. I see it and I sense it. One can sense it and not see it and vice versa. There is something more acute or sensory than are termed the senses. There is another sense which is not so easily defined and yet is more sensory. It is not extra-sensory perception, it is definitely sensory, and is relative to particular senses and description and hence is the most important to art. It is the most expansive. One may shake hundreds of hands and yet with one, one can sense more than the mere touch. One may smell something - the sea, cut grass but one may sense something more. It applies with sight too. So there can be involved an extra sense.

In seeking such a sense one may start from a usual connecting base. To draw a tree one can start from sight. But one prefers to reach further and one experiences more, otherwise only individual optics are involved. Various means can be used

'to train the optics - things expected and what one wishes to see. One must attempt to see more than what one is trained to see. Outline, mass, base, branches, then one selects certain aspects to describe the whole. In other words a tree is not the bark, some branches or a selection of these things, but an insight into the form, mass, and the weight. The more one sights, the more one puts in. The more one senses the more one discovers and precludes. Explore instead. Each tree form is distinct and distinctive to its own particular character. An oak is like that, a willow like that, and so on. They have merely characteristics of a species in common. Man is a man is a man. A mountain is a mountain is a mountain. Most people who attempt work from these items are drawn to a picture sight because it is something acceptable to art school academics. Chosen, then drawn on the site, but it could all have been done elsewhere. It's a sort of map drawing. It is nothing to do with art. These people didn't expose their theme to the sky and nature. Their minds are already clicking away on the willow tree.

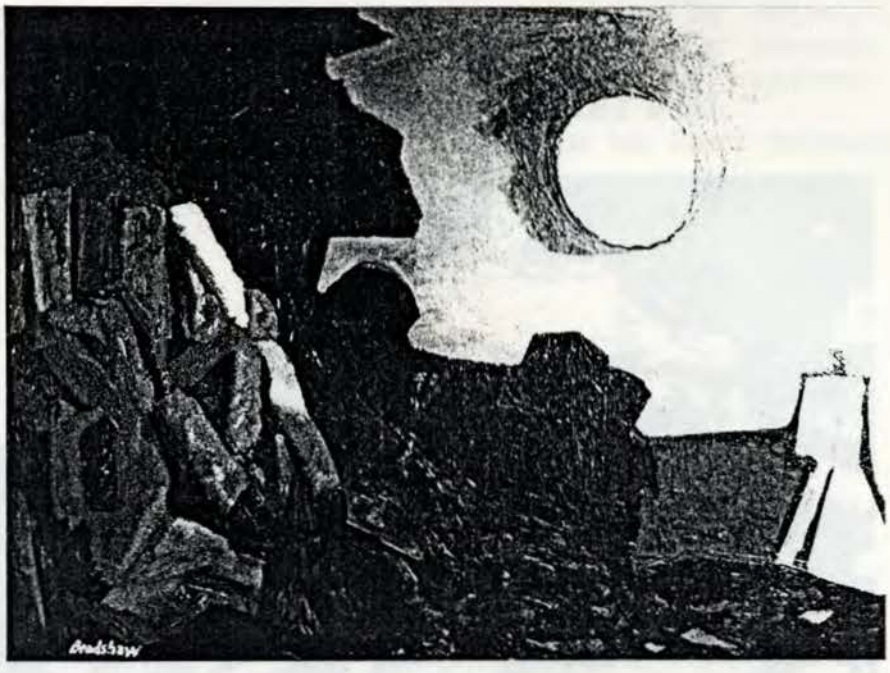


59. 'Sea and Red Beach Shelf'

The sands of Aberffraw, Anglesey.

'Then there's the sea. One must know the weight and force which rules the rest of the earth. It has enormous form.

A wave carries behind it the force of the sea - and the moon.



60. 'Once Upon a Time There Is'

'The horizon has nothing to do with sky. It is the edge of an enormous sea or landform. It is an extremity rather than an edge. The sky is not supported by land. One misses the whole experience and knowledge of landscape this way. Landscape is heavyweight and structural.

Don't draw drawings for information. Imagination is a comprehensive thing. Every hair and wrinkle must be known. Penetration further can only be known by hard work and knowing. Thought and art are work. The best worker gets the best results and sweat works as a lubricant.

First hand knowledge is necessary. Secondhand is scholastic, that is, it is easily assembled. Real knowledge is hard to get which makes it worthwhile. The results are not for sale. One pursues knowledge for private reasons. Inspiration which fails is through poor application.

Elliot said poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion. It is necessary to escape because emotions control one too much. Get objective about things in order to create. Don't become too involved, so that one can see and observe.

Lawrence Stern looks casual in his prose. He refuses a narrow exclusive way. It is an implicit and unrehearsed attitude. It is moving. It is travelling movement. It is unconcerned with a pre-ordained order. An artist cannot rise above or fall below himself.

'Art is free. Hence the unexpectations of creation. Experience is never limited and is never complete. Stern was 47 before he began to write.

A bird makes a mark in the sand. A mark which is different to date stamping. A mark can be understood, can instruct, can educate. To be specific demands some evasiveness. Nothing that is can be pointed at precisely unless it can be invested with something. In all honesty, one can be less precise.'

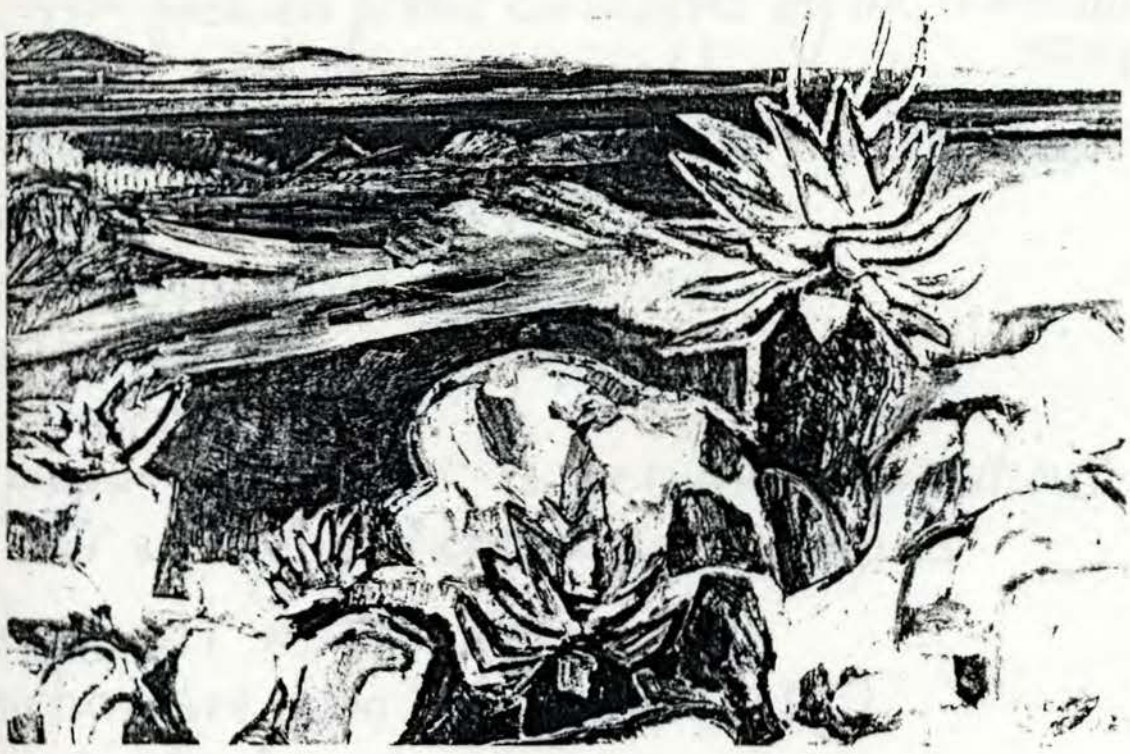
61. 'Welsh Cottage Land'

'The artist painter still remains a rarity and is the only person who does not conform.

The artist carries a small audience. He is different because his life consists of a finding out for himself. The resistance of society to the artist helps him because it creates energy and keeps him bubbling. It is necessary that art should carry positive ideas. A painter is always contributing to change. He re-analyses the world because the world is always something to discover and re-discover. It is always changing.'

On his arrival in South Africa in 1960 Bradshaw plunged into the business of getting the 'feel' of the country. From drawings made in the arid bushveld surrounding Grahamstown he produced paintings which he exhibited over the following four years. He held exhibitions at the 101 Gallery in Johannesburg in 1962, 1963 and 1964; at the South African

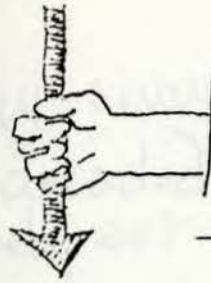
Association of Arts Gallery in Pretoria in November, 1967; at the Silberberg Galleries in Cape Town; and at various exhibitions in East London, Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown. He received good notices from the newspapers in the large cities but through the colossal ignorance of South Africans and the ill-informed criticism of local journalists masquerading as art critics, his true stature as an artist has not been recognised in this country.



62. 'Pluto's Vale from Governor's Kop'

Bradshaw and his Staff at Rhodes University School of Art exhibited with his students at their annual exhibitions, but Bradshaw has held no one-man shows in the cities since the sixties, although he has accumulated a large collection of his paintings produced over the last few years.

A significant achievement of the art school has been the formation by Bradshaw of The Grahamstown Group, whose members are staff and students adhering to a Manifesto composed by Bradshaw. The group was started in 1964 and is described in the Dictionary of South African Art and Artists as "the first evidence of a concerted artistic movement in South Africa."



Manifesto

15 May 1964
Grahamstown
South Africa.

The artist is the Shaman
NOT the sham man
We reject fashion forms circulated by the intellectual-HERD
(delivered with the groceries!)
The technics of de Stijl & Suprematism are dead
(they were never alive!)
The Bauhaus was born dead
(and buried 40 years ago).
Art is action
The purpose of its action is permanent revolution
It is not a display of charming-technologies.
Machine art is for machines
(Cosmetics are also sold in tubes!)
The individual makes art.
The individual avoids the levelling blade - & grows
The artists work is to unify - not atomise
Art is unitive vision - & power
Art totalises experience
The artist is no fragment
But a complete and whole person
Therefore he is at war with the CROWD
Therefore he is hostile with life
Therefore he justifies life
Therefore his actions are permanent revolution.

Stay away from the stagnant mulch
of decaded decades —
and art cuets
Attack us and give us energy
Ignore us and give us room to work
We know. We are.
We act in union with 400000 years of MAN
We react against 1964 years of fragmented man
And 47 years of non man
We belong to the future — not the shops.
To build it is necessary to destroy.
And transvaluate values.
To hell with non-being, non-sense, non-art.
We thrive in Being
The past; the future is ours.
The present damns itself —
impressed into the canning factories of civilisation
Stewing in its own juice.
We are used to its smell
It is the stink of death - & everlasting peace!
We live outside the cemetry
where air is clean - brushed by
the revolution of life
Let us war with modern weapons -
they are more destructive.
As we rebuild the world
According to its NATURE

In 1976 painters, graphic artists and sculptors were encouraged to submit entries to be judged by five authoritative men and women from other regions of the country, for an exhibition organised by the South African Association of Arts under the patronage of the Department of National Education (Advancement of Culture). On this occasion participating artists were from the Eastern Cape and Border Regions of the country. The Eastern Province Herald of 13th August, 1976, reported "The work of Rhodes University Fine Art Department staff and students came in for considerable praise from adjudicators who selected work for inclusion in the prestige RSA '76 exhibition. The RSA '76 exhibiton is Government sponsored, held every two years, with entries selected from artists in different regions of the country. This year Eastern Cape and Border artists contributed more than 500 works. Prominent art personalities were flown to East London to judge the work, and 105 paintings and seven sculptures were selected for the exhibition. From East London, it moves to Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown and finally to Pretoria. The greatest number of successful entries come from the Grahamstown Group, all staff, present or former students of Professor Bradshaw's School of Fine Art at Rhodes University. Professor Bradshaw had two paintings accepted. The judges made special mention of the high standard of work produced by the Rhodes entrants ....."

Dr. Thomas Matthews reviewed the exhibiton briefly for the University's Oppidan magazine dated 6th October, 1976.

> 'The judges at the RSA 76 exhibition were particularly impressed by the standard of work produced by the School of Art at Rhodes University. The school made by far the largest single contribution to the show, even though it is by no means the largest in the region. Although it provided only 17 of the 82 exhibitors, their works comprised almost a quarter of the total number accepted.....'
>
> 'The achievements of the school are based on a belief in the need for a sound technical foundation. But once this has been attained, then the student is forced to make technical considerations subservient to more important aims - to bend, extend, ignore, or even abuse traditionally delimited techniques in the interests of an intensified expression of life experience.
>
> The school produces artists who rely on indigenous sources, who are not specialist in terms of subjects or techniques.'

'They believe that a fully-rounded oeuvre can only be produced by one who refuses to follow the whimsies and superficialities of imported fashions; who paints or sculpts not as a specialised technician but as a human being.

The range of works on exhibition comprise and contain a wide range of subjects - from the most detailed, particularised still-lives to evocative lyrical works capable of interpretation on several levels of experience, visual or otherwise.

What seems to be developing at Rhodes is a school of indigenous lyrical expressionism.'

The last few lines of the poem 'Genealogy' by R. S. Thomas seems singularly apt in describing Bradshaw as a detribalized Welshman. 'I stand now

In the hard light of the brief day

Without roots, but with many branches.'

Bradshaw did not neglect his writing and in 1961 'The Culture Plan' was published; described as World Techniques in Uniformity and delivered at Rhodes University as his inaugural lecture. 'Art and Totality' was published in 1969 and contains four talks, originally compiled for and broadcast by the English Service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation in 1968 in the series "University of the Air".

In 1965 Bradshaw was appointed to the South African Broadcasting Corporation Board of Governors and became vice-chairman in 1971.

He was appointed Director of the National Gallery of Rhodesia in Salisbury in 1974.

'Rooted Thorn'

'Rooted Thorn' was one of two submitted for selection on the RSA 1976 Exhibition.

Chapter VI.

These conversations between Brian Bradshaw and Rosemary Hogge are from a series selected and condensed from recordings made in September, 1976.

R.H. You seem to have developed a certain way of drawing landscapes which is in facets.

B.B. A drawing is the description of structure in depth and in form by a line, so that the line is not just an arabesque but a something that penetrates things in various dimensions, and doesn't separate the sky from the earth. The whole thing is formulated together, and the drawing is a process of finding out, not really experience, but not expression. Because if you express things then you're hammering something onto something. But if you experience something you absorb what the subject has to offer.

R.H. Do you mean one selects what to use according to what one recognises as having been recorded by one's unconscious?

B.B. Yes, it's never anything to do with walking around looking for a subject - it's drawing something which you have experience of and to which you relate because of that experience.

R.H. Are there any subjects which appeal to you more than others?

B.B. A subject chooses me. I don't choose a subject. It means that I don't go about wondering what I'm going to do next and 'let's walk down here and see something'. It means that I don't waste time looking for things. Subjects become obvious for all kinds of reasons, and maybe their pictorial appeal is the last reason - it is an experience which is embodied in the subject and with which I become affiliated.

R.H. I see from your sketchbooks that the bones of many of your paintings are all carefully recorded. Did you work out the layout and also possibly the colour schemes in your sketchbooks?

B.B. Yes, I made noted because I saw things primarily in line, which I still think is the essence of everything, and not something separate from it. But there is the

'fact that it was a natural thing I was doing, and whilst engaged in the business of drawing in natural circumstances I used to jot down the colours which played the most important part in what I was observing and which explained the subject.

R.H. So, in other words you don't have any predilection for certain colours, although you seem to be particularly interested in the colours and forms created by the ancients whether from the Celts, Greece or the Lascaux caves in the Dordogne region.

B.B. The only colours I have been most interested in have been natural colours, earth colours, as they emanate from the earth itself. Artificial colours don't interest me and I only use them to get more of the stamp of earth colours when it's not always possible any other way. I also absorbed the colours on the mummy cases of the ancient Egyptians. I find Greek pottery dynamic with its powerful design and amazing colour. Their pigments come from the earth and describe the earth. I still think that the real colour is what the ancients used like in the caves or on pots - which is much more colourful than, say, this business of light coming from the rainbow structures. They're not structures, they're just 'eye' things.

63. 'Poseidon'

'Poseidon' was devised after seeing the carved fish of Abri Poisson, in the Gorge d'Enfer, Les Eyzies, France.

R.H. You don't seem to use sketches or preliminary drawings for your paintings these days. Why is that?

B.B. The painter of 20 is different from the one of 30, and that of 30 is different from the painter of 50. One changes, not basically, but in many ways.

R.H. Do you consider that the painter of 50 has absorbed so much through experience that sketches become unnecessary?

B.B. Yes. I've gone through that mill, so that time gets more and more limited as one advances. So one has less time ahead of one, and less time to do things because one becomes more and more impatient. One has to discover different ways of going about it, hesitate less, and establish statements quickly. As Ezra Pound said 'The days are not full enough and life slips by like a fieldmouse, not shaking the grass'.

R.H. And yet the paintings themselves are obviously carefully worked out and what may seem random is, in fact, precise.

B.B. A painting is the accumulation of slow, intensive work. Sometimes there comes a time, if it is honest and true, when the door opens slightly and what is being sought, or not even sought, is found. So it has to be grabbed as it were. In its completion there is a hasty seizing and grasping which stabilizes the whole and puts the seal and essence onto the whole thing. All painstaking work must be dealt with rapidly at the final stage. Work requires a maturing, and a growth and a plod slowly. It has to develop into something. After this growth, one may find affirmation but forms need to be nourished and work requires the involvement of knowledge. You can't find a clue, or method in technique. Technique is how to stuff a vision. It cannot be reckoned or explained that way. It's a living presence of that one thing made by a living person that explains it. It is the result of knowledge that makes it. The idea, the essence, the living total thing.

R.H. What about 'happy accidents'.

B.B. There are accidents, but if an accident occurs one can use it for a time as a connecting link between two points, but having reached the other point, one discards the accident. It's never accidentally on purpose as it were.

R.H. So you have really selected it, haven't you. It's something your subconscious has registered previously and which is dragged up through association with something which you've seen, say, on your walk where the subject grabs you.

B.B. Yes, but it not only grabs you because you're walking through this place. It's in your blood too.

Brian Bradshaw in the country surrounding Waterloo Farm, Grahamstown.

R.H. You obviously feel extremely nostalgic at times for Lancashire and Wales. The countryside immediately surrounding Grahamstown is obviously 'not in your blood' as you tend to paint more and more Welsh landscapes and no South African based paintings at all.

B.B. Yes. I suppose those lines from R.S. Thomas' poem 'Taliesin 1952' could apply here - 'I have known exile and a wild passion of longing changing to a cold ache'.

64. 'Fachwen'

R.H. 'Magical Welsh Landscape' makes more tangible your interest in the cosmological world.

B.B. Yes, the cosmological rock in the lower left would probably be one of those mentioned by R. S. Thomas to have been dated by the geologists at about 600 million years. And as he says 'they help to give balance'!

Welsh Landscape

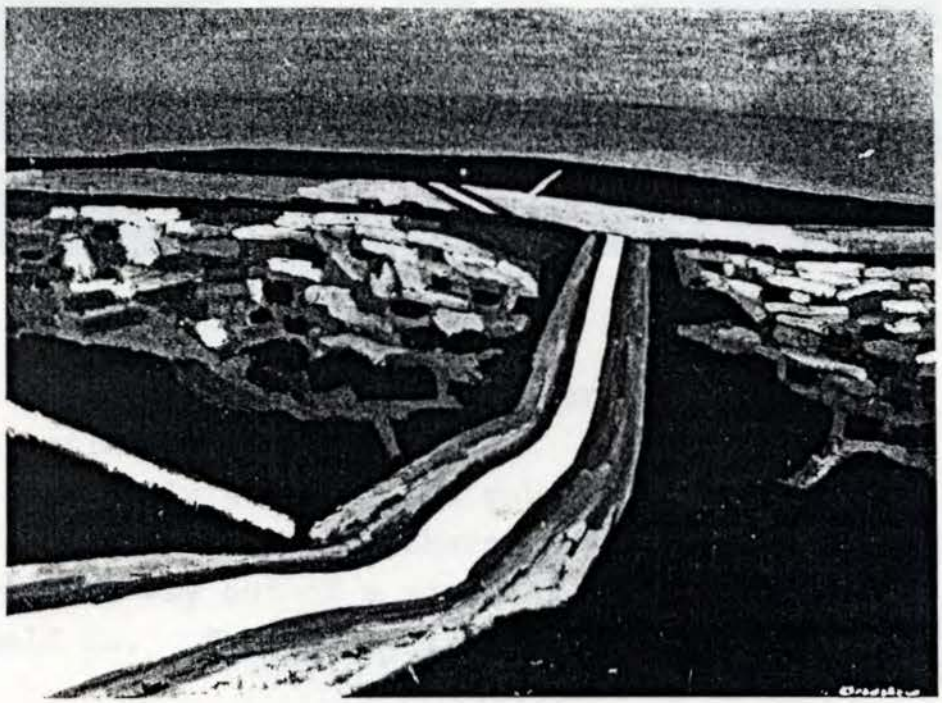
To live in Wales is to be conscious
At dusk of the spilled blood
That went to the making of the wild sky,
Dyeing the immaculate rivers
In all their courses.
It is to be aware,
Above the noisy tractor
And hum of the machine
Of strife in the strung woods,
Vibrant with sped arrows.
You cannot live in the present,
At least not in Wales.
There is the language for instance,
The soft consonants
Strange to the ear.
There are cries in the dark at night
As owls answer the moon,
And thick ambush of shadows,
Hushed at the fields' corners
There is no present in Wales,
And no future;
There is only the past,
Brittle with relics,
Wind-bitten towers and castles
With sham ghosts;
Mouldering quarries and mines;
And an impotent people,
Sick with inbreeding,
Worrying the carcase of an old song.

R. S. Thomas (Selected Poems 1946-1968)

65. 'Celtic Country'

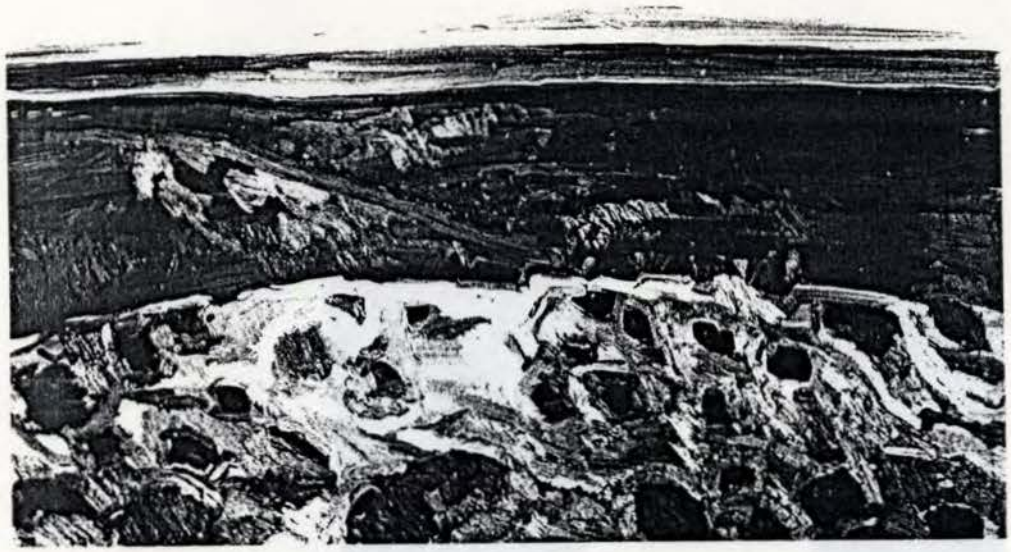
R.H. These sketches were made in this country when you first arrived, and appear to be of the Karoo.

B.B. An art student invited me to stay on a farm in the Little Karoo near Cradock. So I thought 'allright, I'll have a go'. So I went off and did a lot of work. I went out every day. I tried to do things. It was a sheep farm, but I just couldn't get the feeling of the place. You know what it's like. But I did make paintings of other places.



66. 'Long Road Through the Little Karoo'

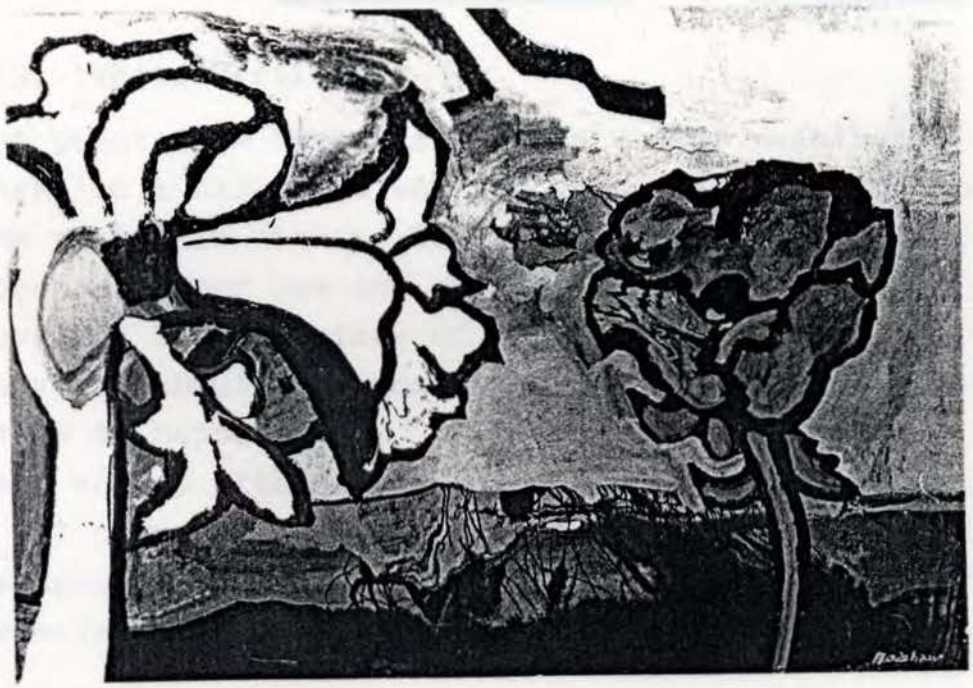
B.B. These sketches are things I did here. In other words I was rather short of ideas as far as working something out was concerned. So they're rather artificial. I was trying to work out something intellectually. I was pushing it. It's not me. South Africa is a different land altogether. It seems to have growth on the desert to me, and hasn't got the experience of man. It hasn't been trodden on much. And then this other sketch - I was trying to work out the elements of the bush, and its all a bit repetitive, but then the bush is repetitive and I'm not really interested in repetitive things, so I was wasting my time. Parts of the country of course are rugged and vast.



67. 'Sky above Hells Poort'

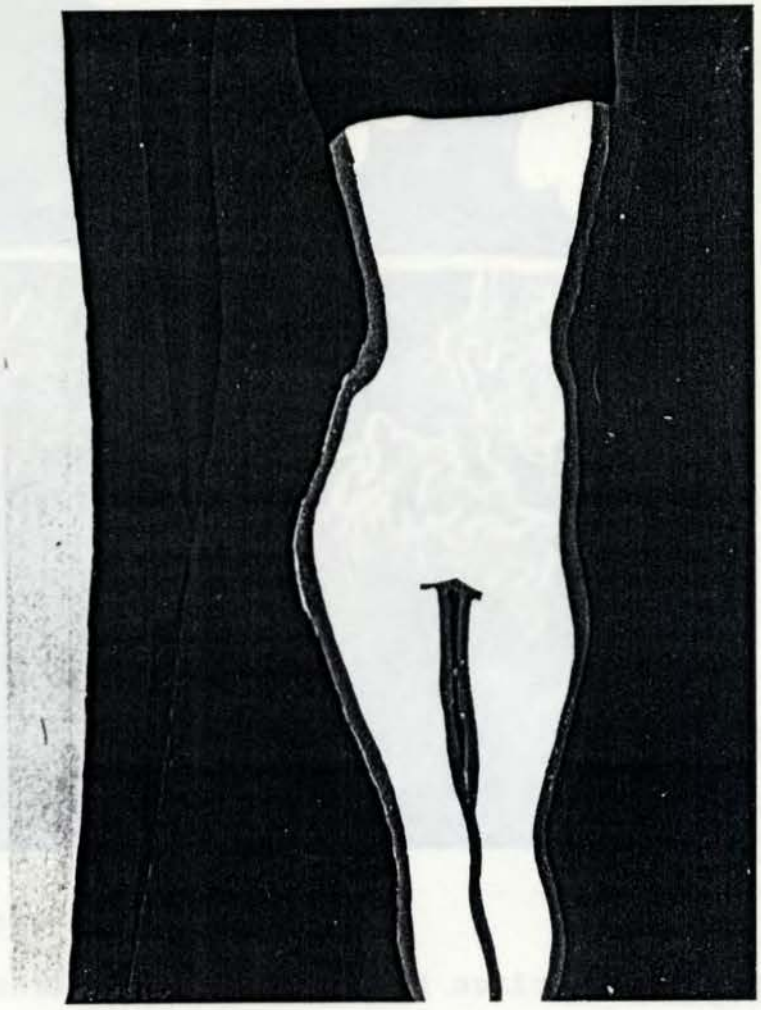
R.H. You went through a period of Pop art in 1965. Can you explain why?

B.B. Well, basically pop art is a subjective kick-in-the-teeth to subjective abstract charm, but in my case I had to scream my way out of a state of inertia which I found myself in. This phase lasted less than a year.



68. 'Flowers of Moon and Sun'

B.B. I used enamel paint for the first time in 'Flowers of Moon and Sun'.

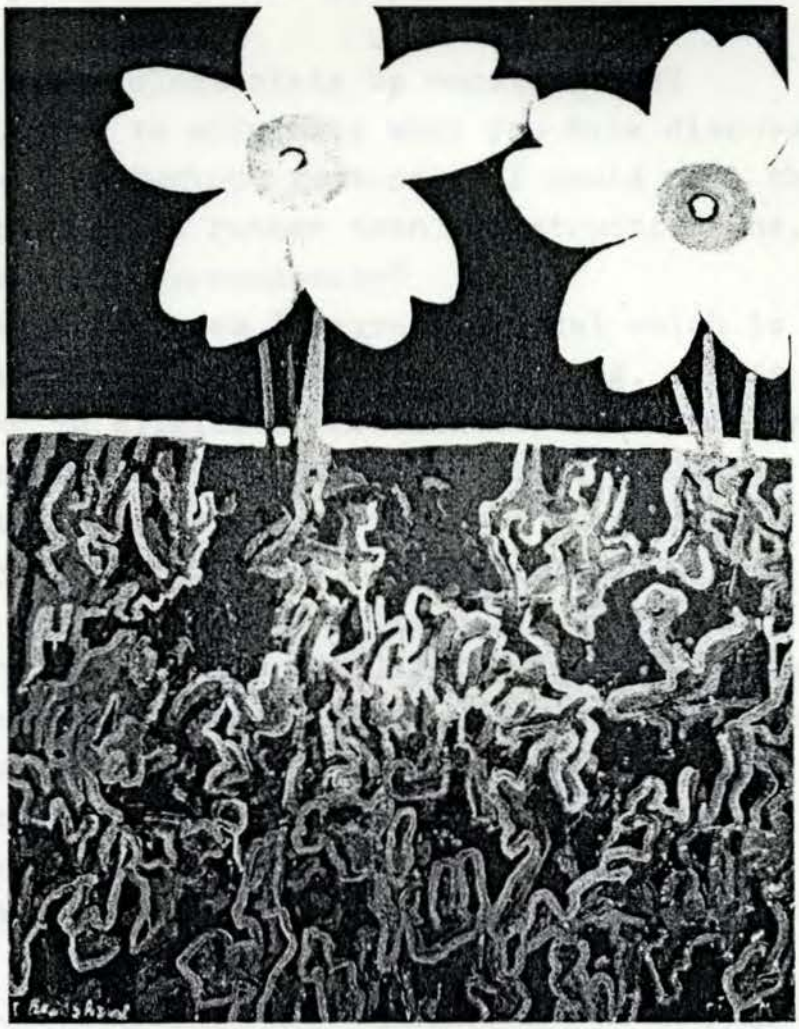


69. 'White Vertical'

B.B. About painting - there is never a way of painting. There is a different way for each painting, and how one starts is nothing like how one finishes, and it doesn't matter how one starts, you've just got to get involved in this piece of work to begin with, and then shove it about and knock it about before things really begin to happen.

R.H. Do you end up with what you intended at the beginning?

B.B. No. I never end up with what I have in the beginning because what I start with is invariably wrong, and especially if it is intended to be right. You have



70. a)'Prophets of the Meadow'

B.B. to allow elasticity of motion and action and thought in order to allow it to develop. If you start off with too much of a fixation about something you never get beyond that.

R.H. Do you use your drawings as structural things on which to hang other ideas?

B.B. The original sketches were interpreted in a drawing way, a line way, which then had to be interpreted into paint. The drawing is a key which one can develop into a painting, but it is never something to stick up and imitate.

But there is also this point. One might start with an enthusiasm which is rather violent, which is in other

words, an expression. Expression goes up like a bang. So you have to work through that in order to calm yourself down and work that fever out until you're in a mood where you become more sympathetic with what you're doing.

R.H. Can working in a violent state be constructive?

B.B. It is constructive to eliminate what you have discovered to be wrong by a furious gesture. I would call that a constructive state rather than a destructive one.

R.H. Why do you degrade expressionism?

B.B. The type of expressionism I degrade is that which is merely a personal imposition on everything. It's a sham thing to eliminate the elements of nature in order to impose what you think is its personality. A very brash, oversimplified thing is the result. Some watercolourists go out and they clock away at a landscape, distorting and deforming it. They are merely using it, and oversimplifying it, and making it into something which it isn't, just for the sake of making a pretty picture. Expressionism is just another word for a pretty picture. Except it is deformed from what other people call traditional pretty pictures. So they paint the sky red instead of blue. I suspect they imagine it's the mark of genius.

That's another thing. You can't tackle a painting thinking 'I am an artist'. The whole thing is getting to grips with nature. It's a matter of getting into it, and in order to do that you have to become part of it, but not because you have to, but because you want to be part of it.

R.H. Do you ever abandon a painting because you've gone too far and it's become too polished?

B.B. I very rarely abandon a painting because that means you've lost, and if you start with a problem you've got to solve it. It might be that the problem that you started with is the wrong one; you were led up the wrong path. But I think one has to work at it until it comes right. It might be in a different direction, and probably would be, but there's less than any kind of satisfaction in abandoning something.

R.H. In 1970 you painted a series of paintings based on Greek mythology. I know that you have enjoyed a long association with Greece and that that country is always included in the tours on which you take your students every couple of years, but what prompted you to feel so strongly about it at that particular time?

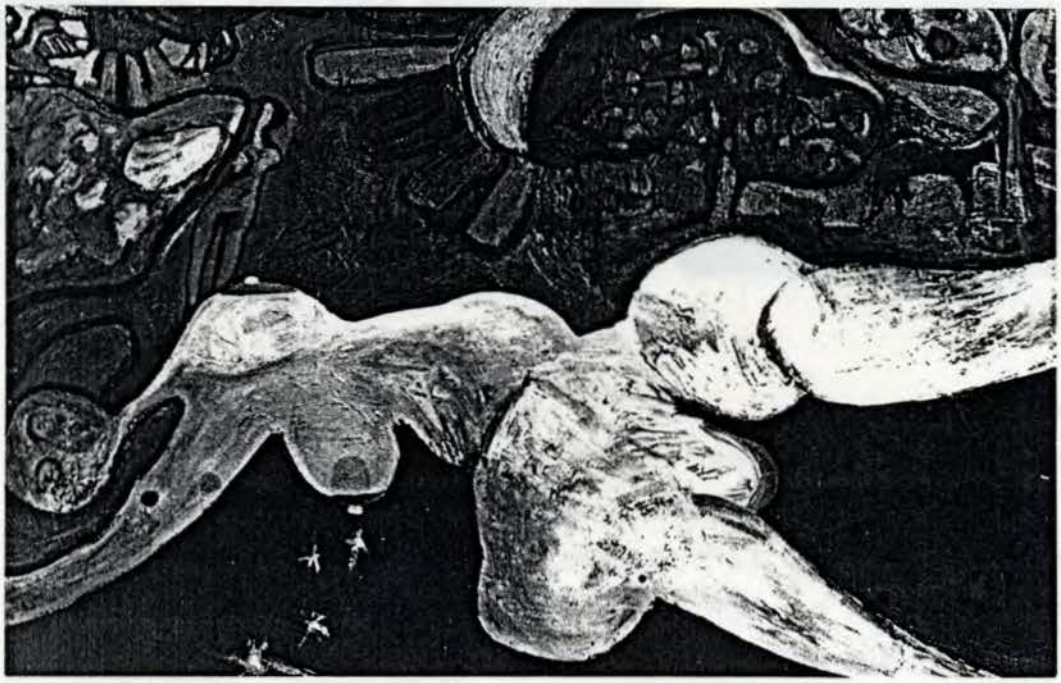
B.B. Who can say? I painted them before I had ever visited Delphi. Inexplicable things are part of our existence. I accept that many feelings one has are prophetic.

70.b)'Python and Apollo'

R.H. Do you agree with Francis Bacon when he says that art has become completely a game by which man distracts himself? And that in older generations artists have been conditioned by certain types of religious possibilities.

B.B. I don't believe in that. That's not an artistic statement. Perhaps Bacon is a product of a herd and a time. He appears to be a result of something, if he believes that. People know they're alive through pain and belief and just walking around. It's not a question of optimism. It's doing the things you like best. Of course one can't always do this but luckily

artists are individualistic and they have a solitary side to their beings. One must not get lost or merged in the crowd of those who have emptied and crucified their souls. Art is not a game; it's not something to be possessed. It is a form of being, not having. The artistic life is not a problem or game to be solved or played, but a reality to be experienced.



71. 'Earth Mother'

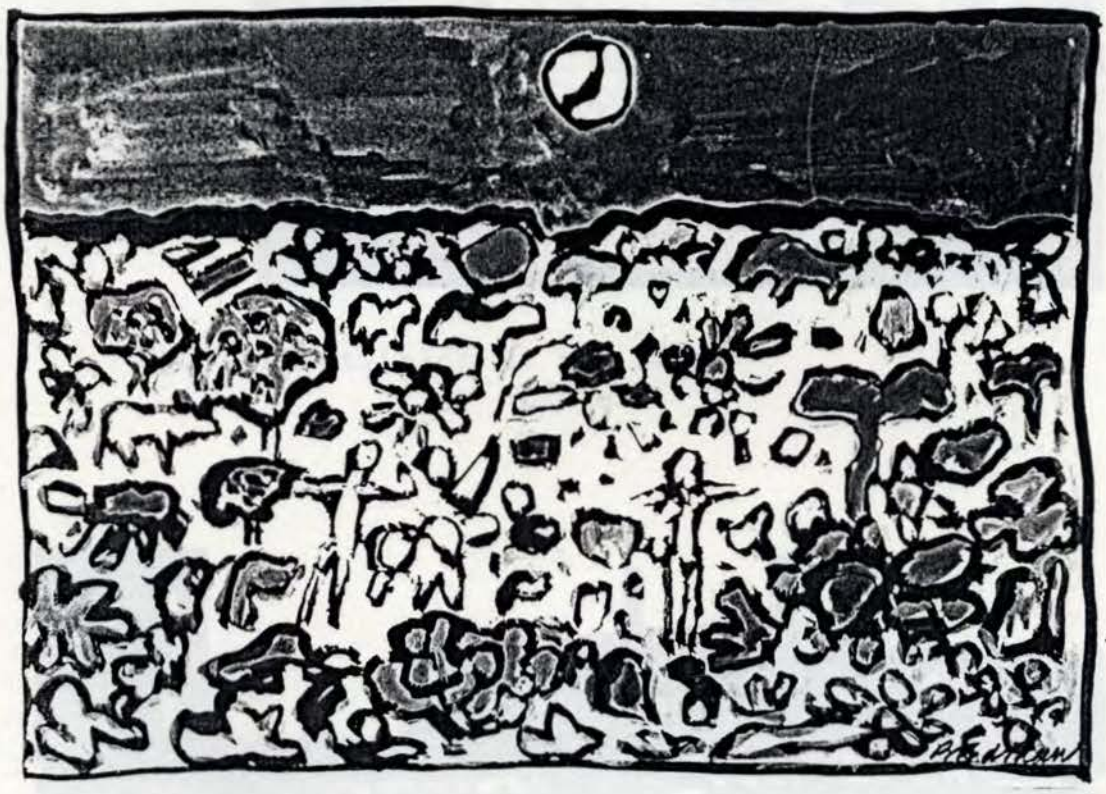
B.B. What I believe in is something outside man; something bigger than man. Whatever that thing is is what I call Nature. This is what influences my painting. This is what it's all about - nature. The world is a natural thing. The seasons follow each other and people are born and people die and in the middle they do something, and that's natural. There's nothing else in the world which is not basically natural. The creative person realises that there's nothing else but to be natural. If you attempt to be what you aren't then you're only part of an artificial scheme. If you're only interested in yourself you end up like Bacon wrapped up in a lavatory seat somewhere. I mean who the hell wants to find out about oneself. One should know about oneself if one is honest.

72. 'Minoan'

B.B. Reality, which is the quest of art, to the artist is always a sensitive thing. It requires to be approached with an open mind. If one approaches it with preconceived conceptions it will give nothing and the painter gains nothing. It is not what is known as taste. On the contrary, the quest for interpretation of reality will never submit to taste. In order to live, art cannot accept frontiers. Truths may be discovered if you are responsive to them. Each work is also a dialogue between the painter and his time. Art is a communal subject for all men. Reality offers a field so vast in the imagination that when one reaches for the horizon it expands. All art which can be so really called cannot be reached by theories or imitation of nature, but by a new plunge into nature each time - an immersion and involvement.

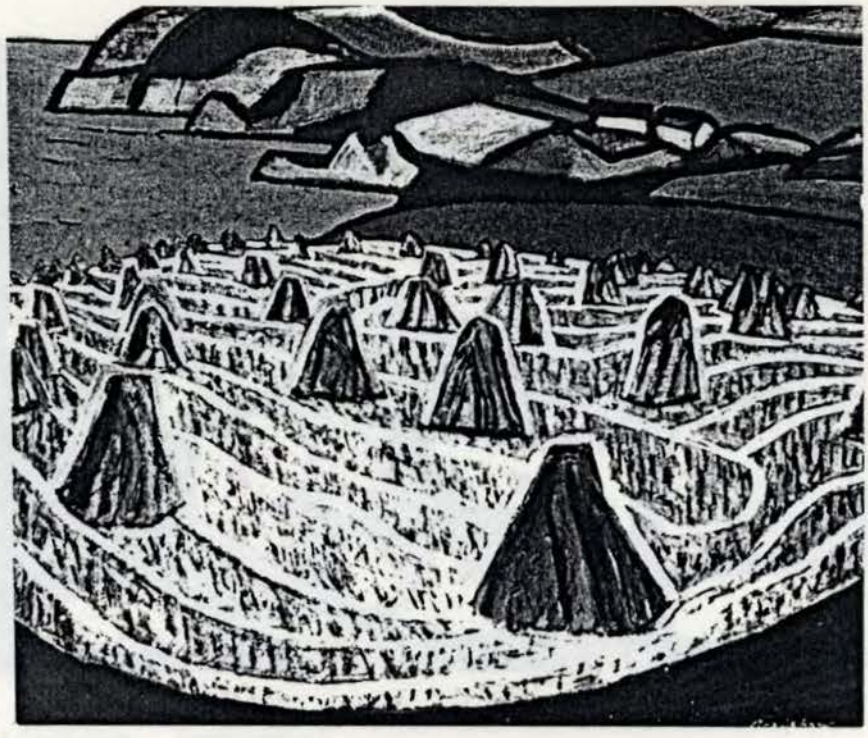
R.H. You haven't bound yourself to a system of life in order to paint for commissions. Wouldn't you like to paint full-time, in fact?

B.B. There are better means of making money. And I believe that a painter must be a man of many parts. If you lived in a society which recognised your capacity to do things, and what they wanted was what you were able to produce, then perhaps you could. But in this society you are only queueing up with a whole lot of people who are endeavouring to sell other things like motorcars, or cigarettes. For me it's far more satisfying to make a living some other way, and to paint what I want.



73. 'Garden of Eden'

B.B. Art, thankfully, has nothing to do with that kind of success. The artist is not concerned with succeeding that way, but in searching and working and the last work is no more final than the first. Finality is death, and art is the contrary to death. There is no death in art.



74. 'Wheatfields at the Sea'

75. 'Bolton North'

76. 'Cadfan Returns'

'Those hills behind the fox are the Red Mountains, Waen Hir'.

I end with these words of Samuel Palmer which provide for us an invitation: "Now do you think I am mad, all of you? If I am, come and be bitten, for the vaccination of artistic madness is a good specific against the smallpox of worldly vanities".

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   1968, in the series "University of the Air" and
   published by kind permission of the S.A.B.C.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. 'The Garden' Bolton, 1952
   Size: 56 cm x 73 cm
   Medium: Oil on board

2. 'The River Croal', Bolton, 1941
   Size: 27 cm x 38 cm
   Medium: Pen and ink, and watercolour

3. 'The Moor', 1955
   Size: 37 cm x 53 cm
   Medium: charcoal on paper

4. 'The Moor', 1955
   Size: 39 cm x 51 cm
   Medium: Pen and ink wash

5. 'Coastal Farmlands' (Rhiw Mountain) , 1955
   Size: 38 cm x 56 cm
   Medium: Charcoal on paper

6. 'The Wooden Hercules', 1950
   Size: 69 cm x 56 cm
   Medium: Pen and ink and watercolour
   In the possession of the Bolton Civic Art Gallery.

7. 'Bandstand, Kensington Gardens', 1950
   Size: 26 cm x 20 cm
   Medium: Etching and aquatint

8. 'Gateway, Hyde Park', 1950
   Size: 18 cm x 25 cm
   Medium: Etching and aquatint

9. 'The Retreat', 1951
   Size: 68 cm x 54 cm
   Medium: Ink and watercolour

10. 'The Wreck', 1950
    Size: 12 cm x 13 cm
    Medium: Etching

11. 'Horsecart, Salzburg', 1952
Size: 24 cm x 27 cm
Medium: Etching

12. 'In the Beginning and Always', 1975
Size: 79 cm x 121 cm
Medium: Oil on board

13. 'Moses Gate', 1955, (snow)
Size: 63 cm x 75 cm
Medium: Oil on board

14. 'Cathedral and Crowd', 1953
Size: 18 cm x 13 cm
Medium: etching

15. 'The Holy Grail', 1950
Size: 21 cm x 16 cm
Medium: Etching and aquatint
A print in the possession of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

16. 'Italy' 1951
Size: 51 cm x 68 cm
Medium: Oil on Card

17. 'Waen Hir', 1955
Size: 40 cm x 52 cm
Medium: Pen and ink and watercolour

18. 'Glass Jug', 1953
Size: 71 cm X 57 cm
Medium: Charcoal and white chalk on paper

19. 'Cottage Door', 1953
Size: 56 cm x 38 cm
Medium: Pastels on paper

20. 'Dinorwic Slate Quarry' 1957
Size: 30 cm x 25 cm
Medium: Etching and aquatint

21. Two pages from Bradshaw's sketchbook
Size of each page: 21 cm x 13 cm
Medium: Pencil

22. Two pages from Bradshaw's sketchbook
Size of each page: 21 cm x 13 cm
Medium: Pencil

23. 'Anglesey Farm', 1955
Size: 38 cm x 56 cm
Medium: Charcoal on paper

24. 'The Bed', 1960
Size: 55 cm X 37 cm
Medium: Pastel on paper

25. 'Cae Canol', 1956
Size: 23 cm x 15 cm
Medium: Etching and aquatint

26. 'Darwin, Lancashire', 1950
Size: 16 cm x 18 cm
Medium: Etching

27. 'Dorset Street, Bolton', 1957
Size: 15 cm x 23 cm
Medium: Etching

28. 'Elm Lane Colliery', 1950
Size: 20 cm x 15 cm
Medium: Etching

29. 'Miners', 1950
Size: 34 cm x 49 cm
Medium: Etching and aquatint
A print in the possession of the Bolton Civic Art Gallery

30. 'Cotton Town', 1950
Size: 11 cm x 15 cm
Medium: Etching, aquatint, mixed media

31. 'Northern Town', 1958
Size: 48 cm x 61 cm
Medium: Charcoal on paper
In the possession of the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

32. 'Smoke Stream'
Size:
Medium: Oil on board

33. An apprentice's stamp in the form of a fish
Size: 8 cm x 15 cm x 8 cm
Medium: Copper wire on a sycamore block

34. 'Corridors and Rooms', 1955
Size: 89 cm x 71 cm
Medium: Oil on Canvas

35. 'Town Hall Square, Bolton'
Size:
Medium: Oil on Canvas
In the possession of Regis Newspapers Limited, Bolton

36. "Window and Washbasin, Waen Hir", 1955
Size: 48 cm x 76 cm
Medium: Oil on board

37. 'Little Room, Round Table, Little Window' with Brian Bradshaw in foreground, 1955
Size: 61 cm x 51 cm
Medium: Oil on Board
Alternative title : 'Still Life with Lamp on Table' in the possession of the Crane Kalman Gallery, Brompton Road, London

38. 'The Croal', 1959
Size: 77 cm x 111 cm
Medium: Oil on Board

39. 'Front Path, Waen Hir', 1954
Size: 72 cm x 89 cm
Medium: Oil on Board

40. 'The Bed', 1956
Size: 112 cm X 76.4 cm
Medium: Oil on Board
In the possession of The City of Manchester Art Galleries and in their Rutherston Collection

41. 'Bed and Figure', 1953
Size: 48 cm x 32 cm
Medium: Charcoal on paper

42. 'The Sea Swirling in', 1956
Size:
Medium: Oil on Board

43. 'Cat Liking the Walk on Carpet,'1956
Size:
Medium: Oil on board

44. 'Llanfaelrhys Church', 1956
Size: 73 cm x 122 cm
Medium: Oil on board

45. 'Sea, Sky and Bird', 1956
Size: 111 cm X 76.2 cm
Medium: Oil on board
In the possession of the Walker Art Gallery, City of Liverpool

46. 'Cornfield', 1956
Size: 72 cm x 90 cm
Medium: Oil on board

47. 'Dolwyddelan', 1956
Size: 72 cm x 100 cm
Medium: Oil on board

48. 'Stockport Viaduct', 1957
Size:
Medium: Oil on board

49. 'Rock Landscape, 1958
Size: 76 cm x 112 cm
Medium: Oil

50. 'Darcy Lever Terrace', 1958
Size: 77 cm x 102 cm
Medium: Oil on board

51. 'Road to Fachwen,' 1959
Size: 89 cm x 125 cm
Medium: Oil on board

52. 'Garden Path', 1958
Size: 75 cm x 111 cm
Medium: Oil on board

53. Bradshaw in his study, Waterloo Farm, Grahamstown. 1976

54. 'Magical Welsh Landscape', 1972
Size: 42 cm x 68 cm
Medium: Oil on board

55. 'World-Wald', 1973
Size: 62 cm x 81 cm
Medium: Oil on board

56. 'Mountain Path', 1960
Size: 74 cm x 100 cm
Medium: Oil on board

57. 'Red Abafon', 1972
Size: 83 cm x 94 cm
Medium: Oil on board

58. 'Tree Woman and Sun', 1975
Size: 69 cm x 60 cm
Medium: Oil on board.

59. 'Sea and Red Beach Shelf', 1971, Aberffraw
Size: 63 cm x 91 cm
Medium: Oil on canvas

60. 'Once Upon a Time There Is', 1960
Size: 89 cm x 104 cm
Medium: Oil on board

61. 'Welsh Cottage Land', 1972
Size: 57 cm x 65 cm
Medium: Oil on board

62. 'Pluto's Vale from Governor's Kop', 1962
Size:
Medium: Oil
In the possession of the Silberberg Collection, Tulbagh

63. 'Poseidon', 1970
Size: 75 cm x 110 cm
Medium: Oil on board

Brian Bradshaw in the country surrounding Waterloo Farm, Grahamstown

64. 'Fachwen', 1972
Size: 101 cm x 73 cm
Medium: Oil on canvas

65. 'Celtic Country', 1975
Size: 76 cm x 120 cm
Medium: Oil on board

66. 'Long Road through the Little Karoo', 1962
Size:
Medium: Oil

67. 'Sky above Hell's Poort', 1962
Size:
Medium: Oil

68. 'Flowers of Moon and Sun', 1966
Size: 83 cm x 118 cm
Medium: Enamel on board

69. 'White Vertical', 1966
Size: 99 cm x 74 cm
Medium: Enamel on board

70.a) 'Prophets of the Meadow', 1969
Size: 89 cm x 70 cm
Medium: Enamel on board

70.b) 'Python and Apollo, 1970
Size: 72 x 103 cm
Medium: Oil on board

71. 'Earth Mother', 1970
Size: 71 cm x 111 cm
Medium: Oil on board

72. 'Minoan', 1970
Size: 73 cm x 121 cm
Medium: Oil on board

73. 'The Garden of Eden', 1975
Size: 16 cm x 23 cm
Medium: Ink, watercolour, mixed media on paper

74. 'Wheatfields at the Sea', 1957
Size:
Medium: Oil
Illustrated in Panorama, November, 1970

75. 'Bolton North', 1976
Size: 63 cm x 93 cm
Medium: Oil on board

76. 'Cadfan Returns', 1975
Size: 69 cm x 121 cm
Medium: Oil on board

Coloured photograph of 'Rooted Thorn' on page 97.