

Sample resources for researching a portrait by Dr Annette Peach

PDF download from the toolkit 'How to Research a Portrait or Portrait Collection' on the *Understanding British Portraits* website

www.britishportraits.org.uk

Online	In print	On site	Evidence associated with a portrait	Evidence within the portrait
<p>National Portrait Gallery http://www.npg.org.uk</p> <p>NPG Later Victorian Portraits Catalogue: http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/late-victorian-catalogue/later-victorian-portraits-search.php</p> <p>NPG Collection catalogues: http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/collection-catalogues.php</p>	<p>NPG catalogues;</p> <p>E. Kilmurray, ed. <i>Dictionary of British Portraiture</i>, 4 vols (1979-81)</p>	<p>NPG archive;</p> <p>George Scharf's notebooks on microfilm at NPG;</p> <p>Annotated printed catalogues (private and published)</p> <p>NPG Portrait Explorer on intranet;</p> <p>Extra-illustrated and indexed copies of the <i>DNB</i> and Granger's <i>Biographical History of England</i></p> <p>Engravings after a portrait, e.g. in NPG sitter and artist boxes, in the Print Room of the British Museum; the Hope Collection [of portrait engravings] at The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford</p>	<p>Relationship to geographical location and/or current owner</p>	<p>Number of sitters; arrangement of sitters as a group: does this convey family, institutional or business relationships?</p>
<p>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography http://www.oxforddnb.com/</p> <p>portrait images can be searched by location, e.g. Newcastle or Cornwall, and date range</p>	<p><i>Who Was Who</i>;</p> <p>Biographical dictionaries by occupation or location, e.g. <i>Crockford's Clerical Directory</i>; J. Foster, <i>Alumni Oxoniensis</i></p>	<p>GRO records: birth, marriage and death certificates (post-1857)</p>	<p>Status and location within a defined collection, including artists' versions and copies, photographs of of derivative portraits, and rejected copies.</p>	<p>Size: e.g. life-size, miniature. What does size convey about the portrait's intended purpose?</p>

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<p>National Archives http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk</p>	<p>Artists' monographs</p>	<p>Inventories and handlists</p>	<p>Position within a building/room/album</p>	<p>View: e.g. whole length, half-length, head and shoulders, profile. Why was this view chosen? Cost? Intended location? To fit with an existing series or companion portrait? Or something about the sitter's appearance? Or the artist's style? Or plans to exhibit the portrait?</p>
<p>Collecting and provenance research http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/provenance/index.html</p>	<p>Auction sales catalogues</p>	<p>Muniment Room, Christie's</p>	<p>Labels and inscriptions on the frame, stretcher, mount, casing, pedestal. [include digital images of examples of auction house labels]</p>	<p>Pose: does this relate to other well-known portraits, or to function, e.g. marriage, mourning or state portraiture?</p>
<p>The Art of the Picture Frame http://www.npg.org.uk/live/picframe.asp</p>	<p>J. Simon, <i>The Art of the Picture Frame</i> (1996)</p>	<p>Curatorial and conservation records</p>	<p>The portrait frame, and known framing history</p>	<p>Gesture: does this convey the sitter's mood or interiority? Is the sitter portrayed in a dramatic, institutional, clerical or occupational role?</p>

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<p>British Painters and Artists' Suppliers http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-suppliers.php</p>	<p>Trade directories; gazetteers</p>	<p>Conservation history</p>	<p>Attachments to the frame</p>	<p>Attributes: what do these convey? E.g. classical virtues, spiritual states, social or familial status, institutional affiliation, or professional occupation?</p>
<p>British Picture Restorers 1630-1750 http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-british-picture-restorers.php</p>	<p>Trade directories; gazetteers;</p>	<p>Archival records including account books, correspondence, committee minutes; conservation records in print and on institutional databases; university, college, library and other institutional accounts;</p>	<p>Attachments to the frame; conservation photographs and reports; correspondence</p>	<p>Conservation of the medium and/or support</p>
<p>Family history International Genealogical Index: http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/frameset_search.asp?PAGE=igi/search_IGI.asp&clear_form=true Reference to IGI records should be supported by parish records http://www.a2a.org.uk/ gateway to catalogues of local archives in England and Wales ancestry.co.uk</p>	<p>Local newspapers <i>Victoria County Histories</i></p>	<p>Deposited parish records: e.g. at the Guildhall Library; Local studies libraries; Local Records Offices; County Records Offices</p>	<p>Pendent portrait; companion portrait; portrait series or group</p>	<p>Background: interior, exterior, setting: room, identifiable furniture, books, scientific equipment, family property, landscape</p>

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<p>Artist's Papers Register http://www.apr.ac.uk/artists/home.htm</p>	<p>Artists' societies: national, regional, local: directories of membership.</p> <p>M. Hall, <i>The artists of Northumbria: a dictionary of Northumberland and Durham painters, draughtsmen and engravers, born 1647-1900</i> (1973).</p>	<p>Institutional records: accounts; minute books; daybooks; correspondence; insurance lists</p>	<p>Stamps on the frame eg. Christie's stock numbers [include digital images of examples and explanation of how these cross reference to sale catalogues]</p>	<p>Signatures and monograms possibly by artist, copyist, donor, sitter, sitter's family or later owner</p>
<p>British Library Manuscripts Catalogue http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?dscnt=1&dsmtp=1354212813906&vid=IAMS_VU2&fromLogin=true</p>	<p>S.C. Hutchison, 'The Royal Academy Schools, 1768–1830', <i>Walpole Society</i>, 38 (1960–62), 123–91 [Royal Academy registers include age of student on matriculation]</p>	<p>Accessions registers; registers of benefactions.</p>	<p>Donor letters or notes attached to the portrait or enclosed within the case, frame or mount</p>	<p>Inscriptions possibly by artist, copyist, donor, sitter, sitter's family, institutional owner, later owner</p>
<p>Burgon Society http://www.burgon.org.uk/ detailed information on academic dress</p>	<p>Histories of costume. e.g. <i>The Visual History of Costume</i> series published by Batsford</p>	<p>Witt Library photographic collection</p>	<p>Historical costume depicted in portraits e.g. Byron's Albanian Dress (Bowood House) seen in his portrait by Thomas Phillips, 1814 (Government Art Collection)</p>	<p>Costume: is this historicized or fancy? Does it signify a special occasion or occupation? Is it contemporary with the sitter? Is it everyday, institutional, ceremonial, political or state dress? If uniform, can this be identified?</p>

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<p>The Heraldry Society http://www.theheraldrysociety.com/index.htm</p>	<p>Histories of families and institutions; Burke's <i>Peerage</i>;</p>	<p>Armorial; escutcheons; glazing; stone and furniture carving</p>	<p>Heraldic devices [include digital images of examples]</p>	<p>Heraldic devices: can sometimes be added by institutions on reception of a portrait</p>
<p>Eighteenth Century Collections Online http://infotrac.galegroup.com/galenet?cause=http%3A%2F%2Fgalenet.galegroup.com%2Fservlet%2FProdList%3FfinalAuth%3Dtrue&cont=&sev=temp&type=session&serv=no</p> <p>British Newspaper Archive: http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/?ukwid=948603&sourceID=118&utm_source=Google+British+Newspaper+Archive+CPC&utm_medium=SEM_CPC&utm_campaign=archive&bsop_brand=BNA&ns_channel=SEM_CPC&ns_source=Google+UK&ns_linkname=times+digital+archive&utm_term=times+digital+archive&ns_fee=0.25&gclid=CNTOn8bk9LMCFerItAod6QcAJw</p>	<p>Regional exhibition catalogues;</p> <p>R. W. M. Wright, 'Index of Bath artists', Victoria Art Gallery, Bath;</p> <p>R. Wright, MS notes on Bath artists, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath;</p> <p>Records of the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers and Stationers' Company of Chester, Cheshire & Chester Archives and Local Studies Service</p>	<p>Street directories and gazetteers in local studies libraries (and online)</p>	<p>Relationship to other versions/copies: is it possible to make comparisons?</p>	<p>Emblems. Is there a literary allusion? Is the portrait a love token? Does the portrait refer to a poem, conceit, or courtly code of behaviour?</p>

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<p>Early history of mezzotint http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/early-history-of-mezzotint.php</p> <p><u>NPG Reference collection</u> http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/about/reference-collection.php</p>	<p>F. O'Donoghue and H.Hake, <i>Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits...in the British Museum</i>, 6 vols (1908-25);</p> <p>F.G. Stephens, <i>Catalogue of prints and drawings in the British Museum</i>, 1-4, and M.D.George, <i>Catalogue of political and personal satires preserved in the Dept. of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum</i>, 5-11 (1870-1954)</p>	<p>Photographs; transparencies; engravings; hanging plans; sketches; notebooks;</p> <p>Print Rooms: British Museum; V&A; Ashmolean; Fitzwilliam; Scottish NPG</p>	<p>Relationship to engravings after the portrait: is it possible to make comparisons?</p>	<p>Jewellery: does this signify an occasion e.g. marriage or mourning? Can the pieces be identified? Do they appear in other family/local portraits?</p>
<p>The Royal Collection http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/</p>	<p>O. Millar, <i>The Tudor, Stuart and early Georgian pictures in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen</i>, 2 vols (1963)</p>	<p>The <i>Country Life</i> photographic archive, among others, at the National Monuments Record, Swindon</p>	<p>Relationship to other portraits of sitter: is it possible to make comparisons? Compare portrait with an authenticated portrait of the sitter. Note similarities and differences as these constitute evidence for or against identification. (NB: portraits of the same person can look dissimilar!)</p>	<p>Insignia/ Orders Official records can help to identify the sitter</p>

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<p>Bibliography of the History of Art http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/bha/index.html</p>	<p>Thieme-Becker: <i>AKL</i></p>	<p>National Art Library; National Gallery of Ireland; Tate Archive</p>	<p>Relationship to artists' oeuvre: is it possible to make comparisons?</p>	<p>Armour: is this historicized or contemporary with the sitter?</p>
<p>Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum http://www.britishmuseum.org/the_museum/departments/coins_and_medals.aspx</p>	<p>L. Forrer, <i>The Biographical Dictionary of Medallists, Coin, Gem and Seal Engravers, etc., Ancient and Modern, with references to their Works, B.C.500-A.D.1900</i>, 8 vols (1902-1930)</p>	<p>Sitter's medals</p>	<p>Relationship to commissioner/donor</p>	<p>Medals Official records can help to identify the sitter</p>

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<p>Getty union list of artists' names http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/ulan/</p>	<p>Dictionaries of artists. e.g. D. Foskett, <i>A Dictionary of Miniature Painters</i>, 2 vols (1972); Graves, <i>The Royal Academy of Arts : a complete dictionary of contributors and their work from its foundation in 1769 to 1904</i>, 8 vols (1905-06); A Graves, <i>The Society of artists of Great Britain, 1760-1791; the Free society of artists, 1761-1783 : a complete dictionary of contributors and their work from the foundation of the societies to 1791</i> (1907); A. Graves, <i>The British Institution, 1806-1867 : a complete dictionary of contributors and their work from the foundation of the Institution</i> (1908)</p>	<p>Artist sitterbooks and letters; sitter diaries; donor correspondence</p>	<p>Exhibition history: provides a context for the portrait's reception within cultural and artistic milieus of the period</p>	<p>Style, quality and status of portrait: ad vivum artist's copy later copy variant version derivative copy</p>

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<p>Library of Congress Name Authority http://authorities.loc.gov/</p>	<p>e.g. G. E. Cokayne, <i>The complete peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom</i>, 8 vols (1887–98); new edn, ed. V. Gibbs and others, 14 vols in 15 (1910–98); microprint repr. (1982) and (1987); <i>The history of parliament: the House of Commons</i></p>	<p>PRO; Probate records (post-1837); Wills</p>	<p>Inscriptions on the frame/mount/back of support; cartouches and labels located above or below portrait</p>	<p>Inscriptions on letters, documents or books held by, or close, to the sitter(s); initials on objects or jewellery; heraldry, medals, insignia visible in the portrait.</p>
<p>World Biographical Information System http://db.saur.de/WBIS/welcome.jsf</p>	<p>National Trust guidebooks English Heritage guidebooks A. Laing, <i>In trust for the nation : paintings from National Trust Houses</i> (1995)</p>	<p>Family records, e.g. family bible recording births, marriages and deaths of family members</p>		
<p>The Clergy of the Church of England database http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk/index.html Proceedings of the Old Bailey: http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/</p>	<p>J. Ingamells, <i>The English episcopal portrait 1559-1835</i> (1981)</p>	<p>Cemetery records</p>	<p>Ecclesiastical attributes within or atop the frame: e.g. a bishop's mitre</p>	<p>Ecclesiastical heraldry and costume</p>

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<p>Census online http://www.1901censusonline.com/census.asp http://www.ukcensusonline.com/</p>	<p>J. Ingamells, <i>Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800</i> (1997); Fintan Cullen, <i>The Irish Face</i> (2004); J. Steegman, <i>A survey of portraits in Welsh Houses</i>, 2 vols (1957-62)</p>	<p>Sitter files at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery</p>		
<p>National Monuments Record (now called the English Heritage Archive): http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/archives-and-collections/nmr/?utm_source=archive&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect</p>	<p>A. Moore and C. Crawley, <i>Family and friends: a regional history of British portraiture</i> (1992); G. Waterfield and others, <i>Art treasures of England: the regional collections</i> (1998) [Royal Academy exhibition catalogue]</p>	<p>P. J. Quinn, 'Picturing locality: art and regional identity in the north-east of England, 1822–1900', PhD dissertation, University of Sunderland, 1997</p> <p>P. Caffrey, 'Irish portrait miniatures, c.1700–1830', PhD dissertation, Southampton Institute, 1995</p>		
<p>The Art Libraries Society: http://www.arlis.org.uk/</p> <p>The Art Historians Association: http://www.aah.org.uk/</p>	<p>Art journals, e.g. <i>Burlington Magazine</i>; <i>The Walpole Society</i>; <i>Connoisseur</i>; <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries</i></p>			

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<p>Index to theses http://www.theses.com/</p>		<p>H. Williams, 'The lives and work of Nottingham artists from 1750–1914, with special consideration of their association with the lace industry and society at large', PhD dissertation, University of Nottingham, 1981</p>		
<p>Portraits at the National Maritime Museum http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections.html#!cbrowse</p>				
<p>The Wellcome Institute Iconographic Collection http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/icon.html</p>	<p>H. Breun, 'A catalogue of engraved portraits of medical men, with additions and an index of painters and engravers', 1930, Royal College of Surgeons, London</p>			
<p>The Getty Research Institute Research Tools and Databases http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/</p> <p>This includes the Bibliography of the History of Art and Databases of archival documents, sales catalogs, and public collections.</p>				

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Visual Arts Data Service http://www.vads.ac.uk/				