

PREFACE

The drawings and prints in the Royal Collection have been gathered together over the last 350 years as part of the Royal Library, housed since the 1830s in Windsor Castle. The history of this collection is now relatively well known. Although King Charles I (reigned 1625–1649) was a passionate collector of paintings and sculpture, he appears to have had little interest in drawings. It was his son King Charles II (reigned 1660–1685) who laid the foundations of the royal collection of drawings, acquiring two volumes containing 600 drawings by Leonardo da Vinci and 80 by Hans Holbein the Younger respectively, as well as important drawings by other Renaissance artists, both Italian and northern. But Charles II's purchases were dwarfed, numerically, by those of George III (reigned 1760–1820), who in 1762 purchased two huge collections of drawings in Italy: those of Consul Joseph Smith in Venice and of Cardinal Alessandro Albani in Rome. George III's librarian continued to acquire drawings in Italy over the following decade and made occasional purchases in London or the Low Countries, but since 1800 very few additions have been made to the collection of old master drawings.

The first detailed inventory of the Royal Collection of drawings dates from the final decades of George III's reign. In that inventory, the album that is the subject of the present study is described much as it remains today, with its English title (TOMBS OF ILLUSTRIOUS ITALIANS AT ROME &c) transcribed from the spine label. It was listed on the shelves of the King's library alongside volumes of architectural designs by Muzio Oddi (1569–1639) and Carlo Fontana (1634–1714), and other volumes (containing both antiquarian and natural history drawings) now identifiable as having formed part of the Museo Cartaceo of Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588–1657). The Tombs album bears the engraved bookplate applied to books in the Royal Library during the reign of King George V (1910–1936), during which period a complete inventory of the Windsor drawings collection was compiled and the drawings were assigned individual numbers.

Most of the volumes acquired by George III from Consul Smith are described in summary form in his published library catalogue, the Bibliotheca Smithiana (1755). The contents of the Albani collection, which comprised 'betwixt drawings and prints, 200 volumes in folio', are much less securely known, as no inventory of that material appears to have survived. However we do know that it included a major part of Cassiano's Museo Cartaceo and the collection of Carlo Maratti, both purchased in 1703 by Alessandro Albani's uncle, Pope Clement XI (Gianfrancesco Albani, 1649–1720), and fourteen volumes of drawings by Carlo Fontana and his studio, mostly created for members of the Albani family. Like most of the drawings that had formed Cassiano's Museo Cartaceo, those in the Tombs volume are Roman, from the first half of the seventeenth century, and of interest not for their artistry but for their content – a record of the 'antiquities' of Rome. The natural assumption was therefore that the Tombs volume had formed part of the collection of Cassiano dal Pozzo.

Work on the present catalogue thus began as part of the Dal Pozzo Project, under whose auspices an international team of scholars is cataloguing the surviving elements of Cassiano's Museo Cartaceo, the only part of the collection of old master drawings at Windsor to have remained substantially unpublished. But the assumption that the Tombs volume had belonged to Cassiano was first questioned by Ingo Herklotz around twenty years ago, and the following study establishes that the volume was in fact compiled by Costantino Gigli (c. 1590–1666), whose handwriting is identifiable on many pages. That the Tombs volume, like the great majority of the thousands of Roman drawings now in the Royal Collection, did form part of the Albani purchase, is known from padre Casimiro's Memorie istoriche della chiesa e convento di Santa Maria in Araceli di Roma of 1736, a work in which several of the Tombs drawings are referred to as being in the Albani library; but its route from the library of Bernardo Capece, who inherited Gigli's manuscripts, into the Albani collection, is unknown.

Following the realisation that the Tombs volume had not formed part of Cassiano's collection, it was clearly inappropriate to publish these drawings as part of the Dal Pozzo series, and we were therefore delighted when Dott. Luciano Arcangeli agreed to publish this account of the drawings in the Bollettino d'Arte. The detailed catalogue prepared by Fabrizio Federici and Jörg Garms allows the reader to find details of more than 200 tombs, one fourth of which have not survived, while others have been altered or dismembered. With the exception of the tomb of St Elena,

who died in 336, the tombs commemorate people who died between 1266 and 1620. The majority of the 'illustrious' people commemorated were ecclesiastics (including eight popes), with a handful of government functionaries, lawyers, and soldiers, a few painters (Gentile da Fabriano, no. 141; Taddeo Zuccari, no. 190) and poets (Annibale Caro, no. 131; Torquato Tasso, no. 182). Ten of the tombs memorialise ladies rather than gentlemen; and alongside the Italians are a few other nationalities, including two Englishmen — Cardinal Adam Easton (died 1397) and the knight William Gold (died 1384) — and similar figures who had travelled to Rome from France, Spain, Poland, Germany or the Low Countries in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The drawings are far from being a homogeneous series. They vary greatly in appearance, and over 50 different watermarks have been identified on the sheets of paper (some of which are inlaid into the page, while others are sewn into the binding). The authors have identified a number of discrete groups of drawings; although in most cases no firm attribution can be suggested, three drawings can be identified as the work of Giovanni de' Vecchi (1536–1615), while another may be assigned to Agostino Ciampelli (c. 1577–1642). The material also includes an (unused) contract drawing by Nicolas d'Arras (no. 90), a few designs for furniture (nos. 208, 210 and 214), and a print (no. 142).

The drawings contained in the Tombs volume were made during the first part of the seventeenth century, a period during which many important collections of artists' drawings were being formed. They belong however to the history of a different activity — the antiquarian assemblage of visual records relating to particular individuals. Combined with their contemporary inscriptions and the scholarly text published here, the interest and value of these drawings will now be very greatly augmented. On behalf of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, I should like to express my thanks to the authors, and to the publisher, for the time and trouble that they have taken to produce this volume, on which future generations of scholars and curators will now be able to depend.

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