



Above Fig. 1 Sir William and Lady Hamilton standing beside an open tomb at Nola, admiring newly discovered vases. *Opposite* Fig. 2 Dimensions of bindings 498 × 385 mm



Hamilton, William, Sir

1730 – 1803

Collection of engravings from ancient vases mostly of pure Greek workmanship discovered in sepulchres in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, but chiefly in the neighbourhood of Naples during the course of the years MDCCLXXXIX and MDCCLXXX now in the possession of Sir Wm. Hamilton... with remarks on each vase by the collector.

Naples, Wilhelm Tischbein, 1791 [–1799?]

Four volumes, FOLIO (491 × 370 mm).

Text and plates, I: (81)ff. letterpress, signed (A)–Z² Aa–Rr² π1 (errata) and paginated 1–159 (3); plus five plates among preliminaries (frontispiece depicting William and Lady Hamilton witnessing the

opening of a tomb [pl. 1], engraved title-pages in English and French, and two plates numbered 2 and 3), and at end sixty numbered engraved plates.

Text and plates, II: (52)ff. letterpress, signed (A)–Z² Aa–Cc² and paginated 1–104; plus six engraved plates among preliminaries (twin title-pages and four unnumbered plates), and at end sixty-two plates on 61 leaves (the first 17 plates not numbered, several thereafter unnumbered; plates 61–62 on a single leaf).

Text and plates, III: (52)ff. letterpress, signed π^2 (A)–Z² Aa–Bb² (Bb2 inserted after $\pi 2$) and paginated (6) 1–97 (1); plus seven unnumbered plates among preliminaries (twin title pages and five plates, of which one bears three separate engravings),¹ and at end a sequence of sixty partly-numbered plates (numbers supplied in a later hand).

Plates, IV: 61 engraved plates, the first large and folding, numbered by hand.

BOUND uniformly in contemporary russia leather, decorated in gilt.

FINE COPY of the catalogue of Hamilton's second vase collection, gathered after selling the first to the British Museum in 1772, edited and illustrated by the German painter Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein (1751–1829), then director of the Naples Academy of Painting, assisted by the Russian ambassador at Naples, Andrei Yakovlevich Italinsky (1743–1827). This set includes the scarce 'fourth volume', a series of sixty-one plates without text, conceived before Hamilton's forced departure from Naples (December 1798),² but published afterwards, by Tischbein alone.

¹ In the Blackmer copy, the five plates after the twin engraved title-pages in volume III are lettered (A, B, C, D/E/F, G); here they are not so designated. See Leonora Navari, *Greece and the Levant: the catalogue of the Henry Myron Blackmer collection of books and manuscripts* (London 1989), pp.165–166 no. 778 (vols. I–III only); and the catalogue of the British Architectural Library (*op. cit.*), p.2111 (vols. I–III only): 'A later state has the letters A–G and the numbers 1–60 added top right (with plates D, E, and F being printed together on the same leaf).' Also reported are copies of volumes II–III with the plates in states before numbers.

² A summary list of the subjects represented by the sixty-one plates in the 'fourth volume' was among the Hamilton papers dispersed by Sotheby's, 'Catalogue of valuable printed books, illuminated and other manuscripts, autograph letters, historical relics, &c.', London, 25–27 May 1925, and is now BM Add Ms. 40,715 ff.67–74. Written on a paper with watermark '1795', it is the only known record of his identifications of the vases illustrated there; see Ian Jenkins, *Vases & volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and his collection* (London 1996), pp.57, 64 (note 153). Cf. Frank Brommer, *Konkordanzlisten zu alten Vasenliteratur* (Marburg 1979), pp.203–214.

Unlike the catalogue of Hamilton's first collection, compiled by Baron d'Hancarville, and published in four volumes from 1766 to c.1782, with highly-idealized, hand-coloured engraved illustrations of the vases, Tischbein's catalogue relied on outline engravings, which ignored the contrast between light and dark areas. This new, 'truthful' style transformed the graphic representation of ceramics. The catalogue gained in importance after the loss of eight crates of vases en-route to England in 1798.³

The work was projected in three volumes with sixty engravings in each, the first due in October 1791.⁴ Although the first volume is indeed dated '1791' on its title-page, it was not completed until 1793; the second volume, dated '1795', was delivered during the autumn of 1796.⁵ The third volume, also dated '1795', but dedicated to the Earl of Leicester by Hamilton, 1 January 1797, seems to have appeared just before Tischbein's own departure from Naples (January 1799).⁶ The 'fourth volume' has no title-page, and both the place and date of its publication are uncertain. Some infer from the absence of volume IV in the English collections supplied by Hamilton that it appeared after Hamilton's death (6 April 1803).⁷ The copies of volume IV examined by the writer, however, are printed on the same paper used for volume III,⁸ and this suggests that it too was issued at Naples.⁹

³ A group of vases was recovered from the wreck HMS Colossus in the 1970s and subsequently restored; see Valerie Smallwood and Susan Woodford, *Fragments from Sir William Hamilton's Second Collection of Vases Recovered from the Wreck of H.M.S. Colossus*, Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. Great Britain Fascicule 20, The British Museum Fascicule 10 (London 2003).

⁴ See Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.56 (citing a copy of the prospectus in The British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, M 21). The work was also advertised in *Novelle Letterarie pubblicate in Firenze*, no. 16, 22 April 1791, p.254.

⁵ Hamilton presented copies of volumes I–III to friends in London and Jenkins (*op. cit.*, p.56) relies on the dates of their receipt (recorded in the minutes of the Society of Antiquaries; also in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*) as the approximate dates of publication: I (3 April 1794), II (10 November 1796), III (18 December 1800); see also Rainer Vollkommer, 'Von der Farbtafel zum Umriss: die Publikation griechischer Vasen von Hamilton zu Tischbein' in *Mitteilungen der Winkelmann-Gesellschaft* 70 (2007), Beilage, pp.8–9, 12 (note 33).

Elsewhere, copies were obtainable at slightly earlier dates; see, for example, the review of volume I in *The British Critic* (December 1793), pp.468–469 Art. 61 (translated from an unspecified issue of *Novelle Letterarie pubblicate in Firenze*); and the review by 'A.D.' of volumes I–II in *La Décade Philosophique, Littéraire, et Politique*, 1 October 1796, pp.17–23.

⁶ Volume III is cited by J. G. Lipsius, *Beschreibung der Churfürstlichen Antiken-Galerie in Dresden* (Dresden 1798), p.360: 'Vol. III. gross Fol. (der vierte wird noch erwartet)'. Cf. (note 5 above) *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* 91 (1801), 'Presents received by the Royal Society, from November 1800 to July 1801, with the names of the Donors', p.452 (volume III, received on 18 December 1800).

⁷ See, for example, Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.56, dating the fourth volume 'probably after Hamilton's death'. Hamilton had presented copies of his work to Sir Joseph Banks, The Royal Society, and Society of

When Naples fell in 1799, Tischbein fled to Kassel, thence to Göttingen, Hannover, and Hamburg, where he remained until his appointment in 1808 as Hofmaler und Galerie-Inspektor of Herzog Peter Friedrich Ludwig von Oldenburg in Eutin. Tischbein had left Naples with the ‘materials’ of Hamilton’s catalogue, and for some years aspired to continue publication. In 1819, he abandoned the project, selling the materials to Alexander von Rennenkampff, who in turn sold them to the Stuttgart publishing house of J.F. Cotta, where they languished.¹⁰ Among these materials were many matrices which had never been published. Some sets of proof impressions taken from these plates circulated.¹¹ Often

Antiquaries; none received volume IV: see British Library, 459 f.15 (Banks copy); *Catalogue of the library of the Royal Society* (London 1825), p.258; *A catalogue of the printed books in the library of the Society of Antiquaries* (London 1816), p.102. The ‘fourth volume’ is lacking also in the sets in Hamilton’s own library; see Christie, ‘A catalogue of the very choice and extremely valuable library of books of antiquities, and prints... the property of the late Sir W. Hamilton, K.B.’, London, 8–9 June 1809, p.28 lots 137–139.

⁸ Volumes III and IV of this set are printed on the same laid paper; a similar copy was offered by B. Weinreb Ltd, ‘Catalogue 51: Classical Times to the Classical Revival’, London c.1985, item 51.

⁹ See the announcement of the ‘just published’ volume IV in *Der Neue Teutsche Merkur vom Jahre 1798*, edited by C.M. Wieland (Weimar 1798), III (10. Stück. October 1798), pp.179–180: ‘vi. Kunstnachrichten. I. Neapel, bis zum 30sten April 1798 [...] Das Tischbein-Italinskysche Werk der Hamiltonischen Vasen geht mit dem eben erschienen 4ten Bande zu Ende; es enthält zusam. 242 Vasen. Eine Art Fortsetzung aus Privat-Sammlungen hat Tischbein weiter unternommen und 4 Hefte davon geliefert, wozu indessen der Text noch mangelt.’ See also A.L. Millin, *Monuments antiques, inédits ou nouvellement expliqués* (Paris 1802), I, p.409, describing the work as ‘4 vol. in-fol.’ (and, I, p. 163 note 36: ‘Il y en a de très-beaux dans les nouvelles gravures de vases non encore publiées par M. Tischbein, et dont j’ai reçu un exemplaire’).

¹⁰ Otto Jahn, *Beschreibung der Vasensammlung König Ludwigs in der Pinakothek zu München* (Munich 1854), p.x note 5. In the meantime, Tischbein’s pupil, Antoine Cléner, had re-engraved the plates of all four volumes for *Pittura de’ vasi antichi posseduti da sua eccellenza il sig. cav. Hamilton* (title also in French), published at Florence in 1800–1803. Another edition, *Recueil de gravures d’après des vases antiques* was published at Paris, 1803–1809, possibly also with Cléner’s involvement; see British Architectural Library, *op. cit.*, IV, pp.2113–2114 no. 3320 (volume IV only). The prospects for a new edition were further depressed by the publication of K.A. Böttiger’s *Griechische Vasengemälde* (Weimar 1797–1800), which was based on Tischbein’s catalogue.

¹¹ Impressions were given to Karl August Böttiger; see his posthumous sale catalogue *Bibliotheca Böttigeriana* (Dresden 1836), Section C (Archäologie und Antiquitäten), lots 164–170: ‘Ein Carton, enth. 1.) 51. Bl. unedirte Tischbeinsche Vasengemälde, welche den 5ten Theil zu obigem Werke [lot 162: Hamilton’s *Collection of Engravings*, in four volumes] bilden sollten v. Tischbein selbst in Neapel 1796 geordnet, 2.) 98 Bl. andre unedirte Tischbeinsche Vasengem. in Heften. 3) 100 Feder-skizzen v. Tischbein mit handsch. Bem. 4.) Ein Nachdruck der Tischb. Vasen. Venedig [1]801. 5) Papiere zur Vasenkunde u. zu Tischbeins Vasenwerk ins besondere.’ It seems that other impressions (or drawings) were in Paris with Tischbein’s former associate, Antoine Cléner, who utilised them in

referred to as a ‘fifth volume’,¹² these sets contain varying numbers of plates: 40,¹³ 64,¹⁴ 81,¹⁵ 84,¹⁶ 97,¹⁷ 99,¹⁸ and 113 prints¹⁹ have been reported.

The frontispiece to the first volume, engraved by Cléner²⁰ after a drawing by Christoph Heinrich Kniep,²¹ depicts Sir William and Emma standing beside an open tomb, admiring

preparing A.L. Millin’s *Peintures de vases antiques, vulgairement appelés étrusques* (Paris 1808–1810); see British Architectural Library, *op. cit.*, p.2112 (also entry no. 2143).

¹² Heinrich Heydemann, ‘Excurs. Tischbein’s fünfter Band der “Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases”’ in *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 1 (1886), pp.308–313; Henri Cohen, *Guide de l’amateur de livres à gravures du XVIIIe siècle*, edited by Seymour de Ricci (Paris 1912), cols.993–994; Salomon Reinach, *Répertoire des vases peints grecs et étrusques* (second edition, Paris 1922–1924), II, p.334; British Architectural Library, *op. cit.*, p.2112; Caecilie Weissert, *Reproduktionsstichwerke: Vermittlung alter und neuer Kunst im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1999), pp.116–130, 164–165.

¹³ Forty plates in the possession of Michele Jatta in Ruvo (now in Museo Archeologico Nazionale Jatta?); see Cohen-De Ricci, *op. cit.*, cols. 993–994.

¹⁴ Sixty-four plates (in a set in supplied by Tischbein?); see Cohen-De Ricci, *op. cit.*, cols. 993–994.

¹⁵ Joseph Baer, ‘Otto Jahn’s Bibliothek, Archäologie’, Bonn, 7 February 1870, lot 2986; cf. Reinach, *op. cit.*, II, p.386 (‘O. Jahn connaissait 81 pl. gravées pour le tome V’).

¹⁶ Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, NK4624.5.G7 H22 1791. Apparently, the series of 84 prints in a set of the four volumes, obtained from Ars Libri, ‘Special Bulletin 47: Ancient Art and Archaeology’ (Boston c.1986), item 892; see local OPAC: ‘Library’s copy I has 339 leaves of plates in 4 v. Vol. 4 lacks t.p., is without text, and with 145 leaves of plates includes those ill. usually alluded to as “v. 5” or “supplement”. These latter leaves are interspersed with pairs of blank leaves.’

¹⁷ Heydemann, *op. cit.*, pp.308–313 (citing impressions in Vienna emanating from Tischbein; but see above, note 14, where sixty-four prints only are cited).

¹⁸ According to F.G. Welcker, ninety-nine prints were taken to London in 1843 by one ‘Steuart’; see Karl O. Müller, *Handbuch der Archäologie der Kunst*, edited by Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker (Breslau 1848), pp.457–458 (¶ 321, note 5). These presumably are the impressions now in the British Museum, Greece and Rome Library, XX (203931.1); see Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp.56–57 (translation of a note by Steuart tipped into volume I) and British Architectural Library, *op. cit.*, p.2112 (transcription of the French original).

¹⁹ Reinach, *op. cit.*, II, pp.334–365, allegedly reproducing the set of proofs belonging to Jatta at Ruvo; cf. II, pp.279–333 (vases in vols. I–IV).

²⁰ Antoine (variously Angelo) Cléner specialised in the reproduction of ceramics; now little-known, he is the focus of ongoing research by Salvatore Napolitano; see <http://www.inha.fr/spip.php?article3515>.

²¹ The drawing, formerly in Göttingen, Institute of Anatomy, was lost 1939–1945; for reproductions, see Adolf Greifenhagen, ‘Nachklänge Griechischer Vasenfunde im Klassizismus (1790–1840)’ in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 5 (1963), pp.85–87; 1768: *Europa à la grecque, Vases machen Mode*, edited by Martin Flashar (Munich 1999), p.31 Abb. 10.

newly discovered vases (**Fig. 1**). Hamilton explains the image in the introductory text ('To the Reader') as 'a representation of an ordinary sepulchre found lately at Nola'.²²

The work is usually encountered as three volumes; sets of all four volumes are rare, and those known to the writer include

- Bologna, Biblioteca comunale dell'Archiginnasio²³
- Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, NK4624.5.G7 H22 1791
- Oxford, University, Sackler Library, D.ii.677 [la. fol.] (3.1.5–3.1.6)
- Rome, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, P 3722 c gr. Fol (Arm) Rara (1–4)²⁴
- Unlocated (ex-Christie's, 23 November 1994, lot 168)

REFERENCES Ernest Vinet, *Bibliographie méthodique et raisonnée des beaux-arts* (Paris 1874–1877), p.188 no. 1529 (four volumes); Max Sander, *Die illustrierten französischen Bücher des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart 1926), no. 1918 (four volumes, 253 plates); Fabia Borroni, 'Il Cicognara': *Bibliografia dell'archeologia classica e dell'arte italiana* (Florence 1957), II/1, p. 263 no. 613 (four volumes); *Early printed books 1478–1840: catalogue of the British Architectural Library Early Imprints Collection* (London 1995), IV, pp.2111–2113 no. 3319 (three volumes); Ulrike Steiner, *Die Anfänge der Archäologie in Folio und Oktav: fremdsprachige Antikenpublikationen und Reiseberichte in deutschen Ausgaben* (Ruhpolding 2005), pp.143–145 no. 120 (four volumes)

²² Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p.144 no. 26.

²³ *L'immagine dell'antico fra settecento e ottocento. Libri di archeologia nella biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio*, catalogue of an exhibition (Bologna 1983), pp.142–144 no. 5 (copy from the Pelagio Pelagi donation, in four volumes, with 'Vol. IV, 1795, 60 tavv. [!] incise in rame, privo di testo').

²⁴ In Digital Library, Buch nos. 2372–2373, 2358–2359 (<http://arachne.uni-koeln.de>).