



CANALETTO



cover illustration: *Piazza S. Marco: looking North*  
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art,  
Kansas City, Missouri



# Canaletto



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# Canaletto

Master of Venice

An NZI Corporation exhibition  
Organized by the Auckland City Art Gallery

Auckland City Art Gallery 9 April to 1 June 1986  
National Art Gallery, Wellington 19 June to 31 July 1986  
Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch 14 August to 25 September 1986



## FOREWORD

“Canaletto: Master of Venice” is the newest exhibition in the Auckland City Art Gallery’s diverse international programme. Like most of its predecessors, it is an exhibition prepared specifically in accordance with the wants and needs of our own New Zealand public.

“Canaletto: Master of Venice” has been prepared by Auckland City Art Gallery staff. Dr Ruth Bromberg, of Colnaghi, London, has graciously provided a new essay on the artist for inclusion in this catalogue and advised on curatorial matters. We are indebted to her – one of the most eminent of Canaletto scholars – for her willingness to assist us in this way.



Paintings have been assembled from the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City; the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford; the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Drawings have been provided by the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; the Detroit Institute of Arts; the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; the Courtauld Institute Galleries of the University of London; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, while the Courtauld Institute Galleries, with remarkable generosity, have supplied all thirty-six etchings. We are profoundly indebted to these lenders.

Without the great world-wide trust and generosity which sees works of art travelling vast distances, our public would have difficulty in making the acquaintance of works of art such as these, so readily accessible to people in Europe and the United States.

Finally, we are also indebted to our sponsors, NZI Corporation who have joined us in a partnership which has now achieved three very different and very stimulating exhibitions. Without corporate support of this kind, a programme as ambitious as this would not be possible.

Canaletto is one of the most universally admired of painters. Dear to the hearts of travellers making the Grand Tour in eighteenth-century Europe, his work more recently, on occasions, has been dismissed as topographical, dry and illustrative. While there is sometimes truth in this observation, there is also much more to Canaletto than that. We hope that the beauty of Canaletto's painting evidenced in the handful of works included here will delight, and we look forward to the response of those who discover the exquisite etchings for the first time. Both Canaletto's reality – the *vedute* – and the pastiches of his imagination – the *capricci* and *vedute ideate* – are here to be discovered and delighted in.

T. L. Rodney Wilson  
Director



## PAINTINGS

Sizes are in millimetres, height before width.

### *A View of Dolo on the River Brenta c. 1728*

oil on canvas, 610 x 946

The Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Constable/Links 371

The view is along the Brenta canal which runs between Padua and Venice. Dolo is situated midway between the cities and was a favourite retreat of the rich. The scene has been identified as Dolo by comparison with the buildings in two etchings by Canaletto (Bromberg 4 and 5). Evidence for the question of dating is provided by the church of S. Rocco at Dolo, seen on the left in its original form with a circular campanile. It seems likely therefore that Canaletto painted this picture near the time of alterations to the church undertaken in 1729. Other versions of the same scene by Canaletto exist, and also by Francesco Guardi (Morassi 671) and Bellotto (Kozakiewicz 29).

C. L.







*Piazza S. Marco: looking North*

oil on canvas, 530 x 705

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri

Nelson Fund

Constable/Links 43

One of Canaletto's major successes from a period of considerable experimentation from about 1726 to 1730. The paint seems to have been applied effortlessly; the numerous figures populating the piazza are represented in natural poses, but with great economy; and the whole scene is enveloped in a cool, subdued luminosity.

It must have been painted before 1739 because it is one of a group of six paintings engraved by H. Fletcher and published by Baudin in 1739. Links (*Canaletto*, New York 1977 p.42) believes it may have been painted nearer to 1730 when Canaletto had reached his full powers and before a decline set in under an onslaught of commissions.

The lower east face of the Campanile is just visible at the top left corner of the painting. At its base is the Logetta. The façade of the Basilica di S. Marco is visible on the right and the background is dominated by the Torre dell Orologio (clocktower), without the third storey, which was added around 1755. Canaletto reduced the height of the clocktower in relation to the adjacent Procuratie Vecchie and modified the angle of their façades in relation to his viewpoint near the Markian Library.

The clocktower is surmounted by two statues in bronze, called The Moors which, controlled by a mechanism in the clock, periodically strike the great bell.

A. B.







*The Bucintoro at the Molo on Ascension Day 1745-46*

oil on canvas, 1100 x 1625

Philadelphia Museum of Art

William L. Elkins Collection

Constable/Links 344

The Doge's magnificent barge, rowed by some two hundred oarsmen, is about to embark for the Lido where the Doge will perform the symbolic marriage of the Republic of Venice to the sea by dropping a gold ring into the waters of the Adriatic.

The viewpoint is from a boat on the Bacino di S. Marco, directly opposite the Bridge of Sighs which can be seen linking the Ducal Palace to the New Prison.

The far edge of the Campanile is represented with the damage that resulted from a lightning strike which Canaletto recorded on a drawing, *The Campanile under repair* (Constable/Links 552), as having occurred on 23 April, 1745.

A. B.







*The Terrace* c. 1745

oil on canvas, 492 x 586

Art Institute of Chicago

gift of Mrs Clive Runnells

Constable/Links 469(b)

In the Staatliche Museum, Berlin, is a pen-and-wash drawing of this subject in reverse (Constable/Links 691), with the inscription "*Vista in Padoua esata*". However, as the inscription is not in Canaletto's hand, it is uncertain whether the drawing is based on something seen.

The painting closely resembles the etching Canaletto made of the subject (Bromberg 24) and both seem to be based on another drawing in a Venetian collection (Constable/Links 692), which would appear to derive from the former drawing.

The painting, which is a pendant to *Portico with a Lantern* (Constable/Links 492), resembles the etching closely but omits the leaning figure in the foreground and the second figure on the terrace.

Formerly this painting has been attributed to Bernardo Bellotto, Canaletto's nephew and pupil.

A. B.







*Portico with a Lantern* c. 1745

oil on canvas, 494 x 586

Art Institute of Chicago

gift of Mrs Clive Runnells

Constable/Links 492

The scene is a *capriccio*, with elements from classical antiquity and contemporary Padua or Venice. The coat-of-arms, an inverted chevron on a shield, above the doorway of the house with the roof-terrace, is that of the Canal family. The device of representing a scene viewed through an arch is one that Canaletto use frequently.

Canaletto also made an etching of this subject, in the same direction (Bromberg 10), on which the painting may have been based. Constable suggests that both the painting and the etching may derive from a drawing, no longer extant.

The painting, which is clearly a pendant to a painting of the same dimensions, *The Terrace*, differs from the etching most notably in the omission of several of the foreground figures, and in the greater prominence given to the triumphal arch.

A. B.







## CANALETTO: REALITY & IMAGINATION

Canaletto's contemporary Venetians held view painting in low esteem: none of his patrons was Venetian and he was not elected to the Venetian Academy until 1763, five years before his death – after a previous refusal. The increased interest in and appreciation of Canaletto, now one of the most popular old masters, resulted in two recent exhibitions devoted exclusively to his work: the exhibition at the Queen's Gallery, in 1980-81, of the Royal Collection at Windsor, and a second major exhibition which took place in 1982 at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice. The latter represented all phases of Canaletto's career, with paintings and drawings as well as the complete series of etchings on loan from the Courtauld Institute Galleries, London, the same set as those exhibited here. The present exhibition sets out to give tribute to Canaletto and to further our knowledge and understanding of his art.

Giovanni Antonio Canal, popularly known as Canaletto, was born in Venice on 28 October 1697. His entire life was dedicated to his work and no episodes of any particular interest are recorded. He seems never to have married and his private life remains mysterious and hidden within the walls of the city he so well portrayed. His career began in the studio of his father, Bernardo, a painter of theatrical scenery. Stage sets were at that time complicated exercises in perspective and highly fanciful. Canaletto's name appears for the first time together with that of his father as set designers, on *libretti* for operas performed in Venice during 1716-18, an activity which required a thorough knowledge of draughtsmanship and perspective. According to Anton Maria Zanetti,<sup>1</sup> a famous contemporary Venetian known as a great collector, publisher and amateur artist, Canaletto left Venice for Rome in 1719 with the intention of taking up view painting from nature, remarking before his departure that he solemnly disavowed the theatre. However, in 1720 his name was still listed, together with that of his father, as the designer for stage scenery for two operas by Alessandro Scarlatti, *Tito Sempronio Greco* and *Turno Arcino*, performed in Rome during the Carnival of 1720.<sup>2</sup>



His stay in Rome seems to have been brief, and Canaletto's name is inscribed for the first time in the *Libro della fraglia dei pittori Veneziani* (the Register of the Venetian Painters' Guild) in 1720, which marks the beginning of his career as a *pittor di vedute*, view painter. No city was more ideally suited as a subject than Venice with its famous squares, canals, churches and regattas.

Canaletto proved a formidable challenge to the older, well-established Luca Carlevarijs who is considered to be the father of Venetian view painting, and whose paintings seem monotonous by comparison with Canaletto's dramatic play of light and shade.

One of Canaletto's first known patrons was Owen McSwiney who acted in Venice as agent for London impresarios and a few aristocratic collectors: he was the first of a long list of foreign patrons, the majority being British. In 1722, McSwiney engaged Canaletto, together with Sebastiano and Marco Ricci as well as other contemporary artists, on a series of twenty-four allegorical tomb paintings commemorating distinguished English figures. McSwiney was indeed Canaletto's first link with English collectors. The Duke of Richmond received two of the four commissioned paintings on copper in 1727, not easily obtained, according to a letter McSwiney wrote to the Duke on 28 November, 1727:

The fellow is whimsical and varys his prices every day: and he that has a mind to have any of his work must not seem too fond of it for he'l be the worse treated for it, both in the price and the painting too. He has more work than he can doe, in any reasonable time, and well: but by the assistance of a particular friend, of his, I get once in two months a piece sketched out and a little time after finished, by force of bribery.<sup>3</sup>

Possibly McSwiney exaggerated his account, for the only recorded earlier paintings are four commissioned by Prince Liechtenstein, dated about 1723, and two pairs of Venetian views commissioned in 1725 and 1726 by Stefano Conti, a wealthy merchant of Lucca. It is again McSwiney, a former agent of the famous and wealthy English opera singer, Catherine Tofts who, after her retirement in



Venice, became Joseph Smith's first wife, who appears to have established the contact between Canaletto and Smith, destined to become Canaletto's chief patron.

Smith arrived in Venice in about 1700, apprenticed to the banker and merchant, Thomas Williams, British Consul in Venice, a position eventually also held by Smith. His interest in objects of art probably manifested itself soon after his arrival in Venice, stimulated by Thomas Williams, who at times also acted as agent for English collectors.<sup>4</sup> Already, in the years before his close relationship with Canaletto, Smith collected paintings and drawings by old and contemporary masters, while at the same time acting as dealer and agent. A letter of 1729 shows that Smith sold two paintings by Marco Ricci to Samuel Hill of Shenstone Park, the same man with whom he corresponded a year later regarding the delivery of two paintings by Canaletto. From the late 1720s, when Smith's patronage of Canaletto presumably began, his work was channelled to a chosen and restricted group that belonged to the British aristocracy. The rooms of Palazzo Balbi (now known as Palazzo Mangilli-Valmarana), Smith's residence bought by him in 1720, were a fitting setting for Canaletto's splendid views. Here they could be freely admired by British visitors to Venice: this concept, somewhat similar to that of a present-day gallery, indicates the unusual relationship for the period between the two men, which evolved in a chain of artist, intermediary/collector, and client. Documentary proof is missing as to the precise role played by Smith in the transactions with British clients, but the long collaboration would seem to indicate that Canaletto preferred to concentrate his efforts on painting and willingly permitted Smith to act as intermediary. A considerable number of Canaletto's paintings, drawings and rare etchings went to Smith's own collection. This amazing group, the most comprehensive single collection of Canaletto's work, comprising approximately 50 paintings, 143 drawings and 15 extremely rare etchings, was sold by Smith to George III in 1763, when it was despatched to its final destination, the British Royal Collection.

The outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1741 made



travel to Italy difficult and as a consequence the demand for Canaletto's work by British collectors declined considerably. A conspicuous number of paintings commissioned by Joseph Smith during the first half of the 1740s provide evidence of timely support by Canaletto's greatest patron. It is also the period when Canaletto's series of thirty-one etchings was completed. The etchings were published some time after Smith's appointment as British Consul in Venice on 16 June 1744. The series is dedicated to Smith and was probably commissioned and financed by him.

Print-making flourished in eighteenth-century Venice. Luca Carlevarijs had published an album, in 1703, consisting of 104 etched views of Venice, *Le Fabbriche e Vedute di Venezia*. This was followed by Domenico Lovisa's *Il Gran Teatro delle Pitture e Prospettive in Venezia* (1720), Antonio Visentini's *Prospectus Magni Canalis Venetiarum* (1735), and Michele Marieschi's *Magnificentiores Selectioresque Urbis Venetiarum Prospectus* (1741). Smith's patronage in the field of print-making was already of some standing when he commissioned Canaletto for the thirty-one views. He had had an active interest in the important publishing firm of Giambattista Pasquali and it was Pasquali who, in 1735, had published the first edition of the *Prospectus Magni Canalis Venetiarum*, comprising fourteen etchings by Antonio Visentini after the original paintings by Canaletto in Joseph Smith's collection. For this series, Visentini engraved, in addition to his own portrait, that of Canaletto, inscribed *Antonius Canale / Origine Civis / Venetus*, thereby confirming Canaletto's family origin as belonging to that part of Venetian society considered noble although not patrician and, therefore, entitled to the use of a coat-of-arms, an inverted chevron on a shield, engraved below the portrait. Canaletto used it frequently as a signature on paintings and drawings and it appears on four of his etchings: *Ale Porte del Dolo* (5), above the cabin door of the *burchiello*; *The Portico with the Lantern* (10), above the door of the house with the *altana* (roof-terrace); *View of a Town with a Bishop's Tomb* (16), on the sarcophagus of a bishop; *The Equestrian Monument* (23), above the canopied tomb in front of the tall house.

Not only were the etched views of Venice in great demand by the



many tourists who sought to obtain by this means a record of their visit, they also served to diffuse knowledge of the artists' works. The ready acceptance and success of Visentini's series most likely induced Canaletto to try also his hand at etching. Manifestly the laborious process captured his interest and from the first attempt, *Landscape with a Woman at a Well* (29), of about 1735, up to the publication of the etched *oeuvre*, some time after June 1744, Canaletto returned intermittently to etching.

Canaletto's only dated print, inscribed 1741, the *Imaginary View of Venice, Undivided Plate* (12), was divided by Canaletto into two equal parts and published as two etchings known as *The House with the Inscription* (13) and *The House with the Peristyle* (14). The reason for dividing it into two remains unexplained, but it is presumed that Canaletto did that in order to increase the number of etchings in the series. Only eight impressions are recorded before the division of the copper plate into two. The large undivided etching presents a panoramic view full of contrast as I have written elsewhere:

Light is interspersed with shadow and the sky with its thin clouds is masterfully etched. The sun shines brightly on the walls at the left, barely skimming the ruined wall on the right, of which the lower part remains deep in shadow. After the division of the plate, the effect of sunlight cutting across the panorama was lost by the reduction in size, and the left half of the composition, *The House with the Inscription* (13), seems to lack contrast. Canaletto proceeded to add lines to the roofs and massive stone walls directly below the domed church. Additional lines were also added to the cottage roof below and the sunlit garden wall was altogether eliminated by superimposed vertical lines which lengthened the façade of the cottage. This section of the plate, brightly sunlit on the *Imaginary View of Venice, Undivided Plate* (12) appears deep in shadow after the division and the new importance given to the partially visible cottage makes for a more intimate rendering of life within a city. More elaboration was done on the depiction of the house which carries the inscribed date. With the erasure and slight burnishing of some lines on the wall, the standing figure in front is more sharply



outlined. A few faint lines are also added on the wooden planks of the *altana* (roof-terrace). Undoubtedly, the divided plate achieves more contrast with these changes. Two states exist of the right half of the composition *The House with the Peristyle*. The first state is identical with the right half of the composition before the division, but changes took place on the second state (14). Additional details, such as the shadows next to the window-shutters and the strengthened outlines of the windows, show with what deliberation the artist was at work.<sup>5</sup>

Canaletto was to divide into two works two other compositions, but of these no example survived before the division. *View of a Town with a Bishop's Tomb* (16) was originally part of a larger composition which included on its left *The Bishop's Tomb* (15) and *Fragment of a Bishop's Tomb* (17). Possibly the reason for this division was not solely in order to generate two works out of one for selling reasons. On the original composition, the massive tomb, on the left, eclipsed the atmospheric landscape of a particularly luminous view which gained in intensity by the division. A different problem was posed by *The Bishop's Tomb* which now looks out of proportion: for aesthetic reasons this was shortened by a cut on the lower portion of the plate. The fragment, too insignificant a composition to be used commercially, was not included in the series, and the only example of the *Fragment of a Bishop's Tomb* (17) is conserved at the Royal Library at Windsor.

The last instance where a cut of the copper plate was effected involved *The Waggon Passing over a Bridge* (32) and *The Little Monument* (33). The composition as a whole would have been the size of the smaller etchings. Obviously, for aesthetic reasons, a portion of sky above *The Little Monument* was cut, but no example exists of the fragment and it is quite likely that Canaletto destroyed that part of the plate immediately. Imagining the two etchings as one composition one notes a certain difference in character between this and the other small-size etchings. The low horizon line spans the entire composition. In the distance, on hilly ground, appears the outline of an imaginary town. On the left, a waggon pulled by oxen is outlined against the sky while crossing a stone bridge over a river. In the foreground below,



three fishermen are depicted near the shore. In an isolated position at the right, on the far side of the river, stands *The Little Monument* towering into the sky, outlined by the branches of a tree. The spectator is far removed from the scene, but the division brings immediacy to the etchings, and *The Little Monument* is transformed into an etched miniature. The division is felicitous despite the boat now being split in two.

Of the utmost rarity is the first state of *The Portico with the Lantern* (10), an unpublished proof state of which only three examples are recorded. On the published state are visible the numerous additions and changes made by Canaletto in his constant search for perfection. Most notable is the change to the roof of the classical temple on the right which was considerably heightened. But there are minor changes as well with additions and strengthening of lines on numerous parts of the composition. A scrutiny of even the minutest details testifies to the infinite care Canaletto lavished on his etchings, and gives insight to the enthusiasm which he brought to this art.

The date 1741 etched on the *Imaginary View of Venice, Undivided Plate* (12) is of particular significance: this etching is a remarkable artistic achievement. The evolution of Canaletto's etching style suggests that the occasional etching executed before 1741 was followed by more continuous work in this medium. Apparently done in a free manner, the early group lacks the infinite variety of line of the later etchings, whose quality and luminosity mark them as the successful works of an artist who has discovered the full possibilities of the medium, culminating with *le Porte Del Dolo* (6). Here the development of a true etcher's style emerges with tightly woven lines, varied in intensity, to give heightened contrast of tone to the carefully controlled areas of light and shade characteristic of the later group. Cross-hatching, never mechanical on Canaletto's etchings, found its most liberal use on this print.

Canaletto etched with a painter's eye, and his final aim, the achievement of luminous etchings where light contrasted by shadow is so artfully achieved that the etchings seem to take on colour, was accomplished by 1741, the date inscribed on the *Imaginary View of*



Venice, *Undivided Plate* (12). Considering the date 1741 as a guideline for the evolution of Canaletto's etching technique, together with the choice of subject, tonal quality and similarity of line, sufficient elements emerge to arrive at a satisfactory chronology:

- 1 *Landscape with a Woman at a Well* (29); *Landscape with the Pilgrim at Prayer* (27); *Mountain Landscape with five Bridges* (22).
- 2 *Landscape with Ruined Monuments* (31); *Imaginary View of S. Giacomo di Rialto* (30); *S. Giustina in prà della Vale* (7); *Prà della Valle* (8); *View of a Town on a River Bank* (9).
- 3 *The Bishop's Tomb* (15); *View of a Town with a Bishop's Tomb* (16); *The Equestrian Monument* (23); *le Procuratie niove e S. Ziminian V.* (25); *la libreria. V.* (18); *la Piera del Bando. V.* (19); *The Market on the Molo* (20); *le Preson. V.* (21).
- 4 *Imaginary View of Venice, Undivided Plate* (12); *The Terrace* (24); *Imaginary View of Padua* (11); *The Portico with the Lantern* (10); *Title Plate* (1).
- 5 *Mestre* (3); *la Torre di Malghera* (2); *the Market at Dolo* (26); *The Waggon passing over a Bridge* (32); *The Little Monument* (33); *Landscape with Tower and two Ruined Pillars* (28); *Al Dolo* (4); *Ale Porte del Dolo* (5); *le Porte Del Dolo* (6).<sup>6</sup>

Although Canaletto's etchings form only a relatively small part of his artistic achievement, they represent an important activity in the life of the artist. In his paintings, the monumental views of Venice and the Grand Canal are prominently featured, but in the etchings the Grand Canal is excluded and Venice is portrayed in only four of the small-size etchings. It is the Venetian countryside, the Veneto, which takes the place of Venice and the Grand Canal. The humble buildings and everyday occupations of its inhabitants took on the same poetic significance as the palaces and monuments of Venice. His most immediate concern, to capture the atmosphere and particular illumination of the places portrayed, is the quality which makes Canaletto's etchings outstanding.<sup>7</sup> A freedom of spirit engulfs these poetic etched views, a freedom which is unique in Canaletto's work. Could it be that ever more pressed by his patrons to produce the



paintings which made him famous, the artist turned to the etched medium to find refreshment and inspiration?

Soon after the publication of the thirty-one etchings which Smith had probably financed, an important decision was made, possibly with Smith's encouragement. Canaletto, forty-nine years old, left for England in May 1746. His name and work were widely known there already, especially in aristocratic circles and, furnished with a letter from Smith to Owen McSwiney who had returned to London, Canaletto was introduced to the Duke of Richmond, one of his earliest patrons. This resulted in the commission of two of the finest paintings from the English period and probably the first paintings made by Canaletto in England, *The Thames and the City of London from Richmond House* and *Whitehall and the Privy Garden*,<sup>8</sup> both still in the possession of the present Duke. No absolutely precise dates have been established for Canaletto's stay in England. London newspaper advertisements of 1749 and 1751, and inscriptions and dates on paintings of 1754 and 1755, indicate a residence of almost ten years, during which time he apparently made two visits to Venice.<sup>9</sup>

While in England, Canaletto found subjects for his drawings and paintings, mainly of the Thames, with the occasional visit to the great country houses of his patrons. Topographical painting in England was practised at the time by other artists as well, but his luminosity was unrivalled. He brought to his English paintings and drawings the attention to light that pervaded his Venetian work. Whether he was depicting the view of the Thames seen from Richmond House, the procession of civic barges on the Thames on Lord Mayor's Day, or the spires of the city churches, dominated by St. Paul's, his views were perceived through Venetian eyes but were infused with a particular scintillating British light, rarely captured elsewhere.

Not all of Canaletto's English views, as far as one can tell, were originated on the spot, nor did he only paint what the eye could see. He turned frequently to the *capriccio* composition, in his case not necessarily an invented view, but rather, a real place transposed to an unrelated setting. The drawing *Capriccio: With Reminiscences of Old Montagu House, London*, thought to have been done in Venice after



Canaletto's final return from England, shows the façade of Montagu House, part real—part fantasy, not where it stood, but next to the Venetian Lagoon. A similar compositional construction had been adopted by Canaletto many years earlier, in the etched *capriccio*, *Imaginary View of S. Giacomo di Rialto* (30), where the church is transposed at the edge of the lagoon. There are other structural similarities between the drawing and the etching. Both show a statue on a pedestal on the water's edge, shipping, and in the foreground people engaged in their daily activities.

As mentioned previously, for his views from nature, Canaletto portrayed also the countryside of the Veneto. Here among the villages strung along the shores of the River Brenta, Canaletto found inspiration for his *vedute prese da i luoghi* (observed views), as he called them in the title plate to his etchings, where he himself differentiates these from the *vedute ideate* (the imagined views). One of Canaletto's earliest paintings of a subject outside Venice, *Dolo on the Brenta*, shows a certain affinity with two etchings of the same village, *Ale Porte del Dolo* (5) and *Al Dolo* (4).<sup>10</sup> More striking, however, is the similarity, not previously recognized, in the proportionately large, elegantly dressed patrician figures in the foreground. In Canaletto's etchings, populated with minute figures walking, talking and trading, it is the only instance where the human figure plays such an important role. Hardly any figure drawings by Canaletto have survived, but one of these, *Study of a Standing Man*, is related to the etching *Mestre* (3). The figure is on a different scale and retains the Lilliputian proportion of Canaletto's etched people, but the back view of a man in a long cloak and tricorne hat which appears on the etching above the coach, in the left foreground, is identical to the figure of the drawing.

The village of Dolo was frequently captured by Canaletto in every medium of his art. The drawing, *View of Dolo*, depicts, apart from a few minor differences, an identical composition to the second, finished state, of the etching *Al Dolo* (4). Surprisingly, it is the etching which served as a model for the drawing; this is borne out by the drawing being in the same direction as the etching rather than in reverse, which would have been the case had it served as a



preparatory study for the etching. The drawing also follows exactly the lighting of the houses next to the water-mill, as they appear on the second state of the etching. Canaletto had committed an error in the lighting of the walls and roofs in the first state, but of this only one impression exists at the Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe, Rome.<sup>11</sup> It was promptly corrected by the artist for the finished state; by following the etched composition the drawing resulted in a tighter handling of line than the more spontaneous drawing, *The Island of S. Michele with Venice in the Distance*. Characteristically, Canaletto's etchings consist of that same spontaneous freedom of line, and the etching *la Torre di Malghera* (2) shows affinity of style and draughtsmanship with this drawing, although the topographical motif differs. Cross-hatching, normally a distinctive feature in an etching, is absent in this composition. In its place we find the sparse use of line, similar to the calligraphy of the drawing. Nevertheless, the atmospheric luminosity peculiar to the Venetian Lagoon enfolds both drawing and etching.

Canaletto, on a number of occasions, focused his attention with brilliant results on Ascension Day, one of the most colourful Venetian festivities. The painting *The Bucintoro at the Molo on Ascension Day* shows the huge gilded barge with the Doge and procession of senators about to set forth for the Lido. There the Doge would drop a ring into the waters of the Adriatic, symbolizing the marriage between the sea and the maritime republic of Venice. The Venetian festival scene was to engage Canaletto once again towards the end of his life, on his return from England. At that time he executed twelve drawings which were to record the pomp of Venice. The drawings were done with the specific intention of being etched by the professional reproductive engraver, Giovanni Battista Brustoloni. This famous series of *Ducal Ceremonies and Festivals attended by the Doge* was published in Venice between 1763 and 1766.

Canaletto never again resumed etching, although on his return to Venice from England he was actively engaged in painting and drawing. One of the last accounts of Canaletto at work was provided by two Englishmen in 1760 who saw a little man sketching the



Campanile in the Piazza. It is recorded that "on venturing the name 'Canaletti' they were invited to his studio where he agreed to sell the painting to be made from the sketch and were given the sketch as a gift".<sup>12</sup> Canaletto's last known dated work is a drawing of an interior of S. Marco. It is inscribed 1766 in Canaletto's hand and states, with a great deal of pride, that it was drawn in Venice in his sixty-eighth year "*Cenzza Ochiali*" (without spectacles).

Arguably, no artist did more to capture the essence of eighteenth-century Venice for posterity. Throughout his long, active life Canaletto never faltered in his own interpretation of an idealized view, in whatever medium he was engaged. Only his extraordinary attention to light and shade, and his contemplation of man and nature, expresses his vision and becomes a common denominator of his paintings, drawings or etchings. This vision is the essential nature of Canaletto's art and it pervades the inspired, intimate moments of his etchings too.

Ruth Bromberg

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> A. M. Zanetti, *Della Pittura Veneziana*, Venice 1771, p.463
- <sup>2</sup> W. G. Constable and J. G. Links, *Canaletto*, Oxford 1976, I, p.9; credit to Mr Croft-Murray
- <sup>3</sup> Hilda F. Finberg, *Canaletto in England*, Walpole Society, London, IX, 1920-1, p.21; X, 1921-2, Supplement
- <sup>4</sup> Frances Vivian, *Il Console Smith mercante e collezionista*, Vicenza 1971, pp.5-9
- <sup>5</sup> Ruth Bromberg, *Canaletto's Etchings*, London and New York 1974, p.9
- <sup>6</sup> Bromberg, p.27
- <sup>7</sup> Bromberg, p.13
- <sup>8</sup> Constable/Links, II, nos. 424, 438
- <sup>9</sup> Constable/Links, I, pp.33-42
- <sup>10</sup> Constable/Links, II, no.371
- <sup>11</sup> Bromberg, p.8
- <sup>12</sup> The Rev. R. Hinchcliffe, *Barthomley*, 1856, p.53; account reproduced in full by Finberg.







## ETCHINGS

Sizes are in millimetres, height before width and, in the case of the etchings, refer to the impressions on loan from the Courtauld Institute Galleries, London, for this exhibition. Only the etchings are numbered.

The following abbreviations are used throughout:

De V	De Vesme, Alexandre, <i>Le Peintre-Graveur Italien</i> , Milan 1906
P & G	Palluchini, Rodolfo e Guarnati, G. F., <i>Le Acqueforti del Canaletto</i> , Venice 1945
Bromberg	Bromberg, Ruth, <i>Canaletto's Etchings</i> , London and New York 1974
Constable/Links	Constable, W. G. and Links, J. G., <i>Canaletto</i> , Oxford 1976

Canaletto's own titles inscribed on the plates have been maintained.



etching, second state

291 x 422 borderline

294 x 426 platemark

De V 1; P & G 1; Bromberg 1

In the centre a classical ruin frames the dedication to Joseph Smith,  
the English Consul at Venice: VEDUTE / Altre prese da i Luoghi  
altre ideate / DA / ANTONIO CANAL / e da esso intagliate poste in  
prospetiva / umiliate / All' Ill.mo Signor / GIUSEPPE SMITH /  
Console di S.M. Britanica appresso la Ser.ma / Repubblica di Venezia  
/ In segno di stima ed ossequio. /







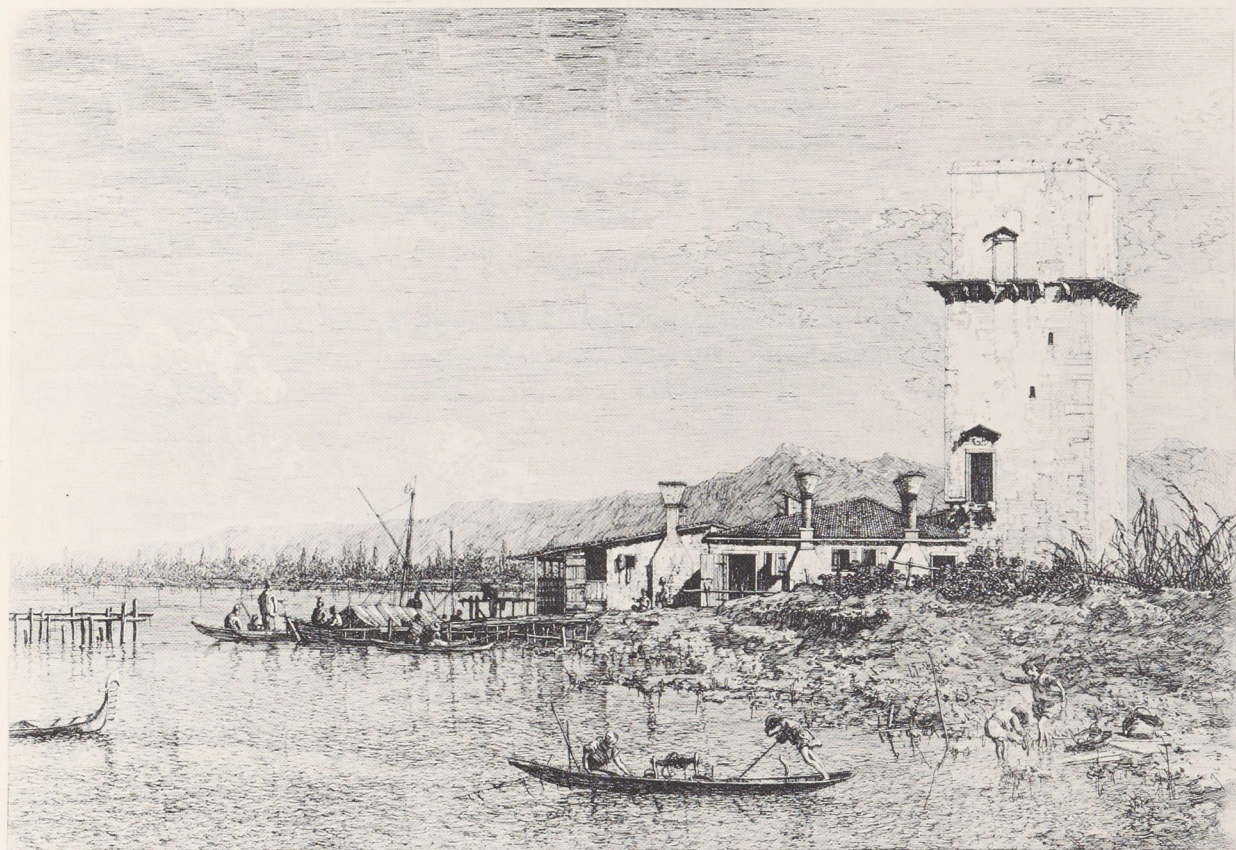
*la Torre di Malghera*

etching, second state  
294 x 424 borderline  
297 x 427 platemark

De V 2; P & G 8; Bromberg 2

At the right, the tower of Marghera, erected as a fortification by the Venetians in the 15th century. Adjoining, two houses with large chimneys. In the middle distance, a wooden landing-stage and boats with fishermen.





La Torre de Neghera



etching, first state  
294 x 424 borderline  
299 x 428 platemark

De V 3; P & G 5; Bromberg 3

A view of the landing place for boats plying between Mestre and Venice. On the left the façade of an inn with coat-of-arms and a sign.







etching, second state  
295 x 424 borderline  
298 x 427 platemark

De V 4; P & G 4; Bromberg 4

On the right bank of the Brenta stands the church of Dolo, dedicated to S. Rocco, facing the Palladian villa Zanon-Bon, formerly called Andruzzi. Across the background, three water-mills. The navigable zone of the river is defined by a row of *briccole* (mooring posts) in the centre foreground.







*Ale Porte del Dolo*

etching, second state  
293 x 423 borderline  
296 x 426 platemark

De V 5; P & G 2; Bromberg 5

In the centre foreground a *burchiello* (passenger barge) goes out into the river at Dolo. Beyond the far bank of the river the campanile of S. Rocco.







etching, second state

296 x 426 borderline

298 x 428 platemark

De V 6; P & G 3; Bromberg 6

A *burchiello* (passenger barge) lies moored to the quay in the locks at Dolo. An elegant couple strides across the foreground, while fruit vendors display their wares on the left and right. Within an archway a butcher sits surrounded by carcasses. In front, a lace-maker works, making pillow-lace on her *tombolo* (lace-pillow).







*S. Giustina in prà della Vale* (left half)

etching, first state  
293 x 422 borderline  
297 x 428 platemark

De V 8; P & G 6; Bromberg 7

On the far left, the basilica of S. Giustina (Padua) with six of the eight domes visible; adjoining, the Benedictine monastery. On the lower right borderline the partial outline of a man's coat.







*Prà della Valle* (right half)

etching, first state  
295 x 424 borderline  
299 x 428 platemark

De V 7; P & G 7; Bromberg 8

On the lower left borderline the partial outline of a man's coat.

*S. Giustina in prà della Vale* and *Prà della Valle* together constitute a panoramic view of one of the largest squares in existence. The partial outline of a man's coat printed beyond the borderline on the right and left sides respectively of *S. Giustina in prà della Vale* and *Prà della Valle* would seem to indicate that the etchings were meant to be joined after printing.







*View of a Town on a River Bank*

etching, first state  
293 x 424 borderline  
296 x 426 platemark

De V 9; P & G 9; Bromberg 9

On the far bank of the river a campanile flanked by houses. Along the waterfront towards the right, water-wheels and a wooden bridge. On the nearer bank several figures are occupied along the river's edge, while in the right foreground a man with a pole descends into a gully.







*The Portico with the Lantern*

etching, first state  
295 x 428 borderline  
298 x 431 platemark

De V 10; P & G 11; Bromberg 10

Before the addition and strengthening of lines on the ground, on the ruins, on the fence and on the figures. Before the heightening of the roof of the classical temple on the right.

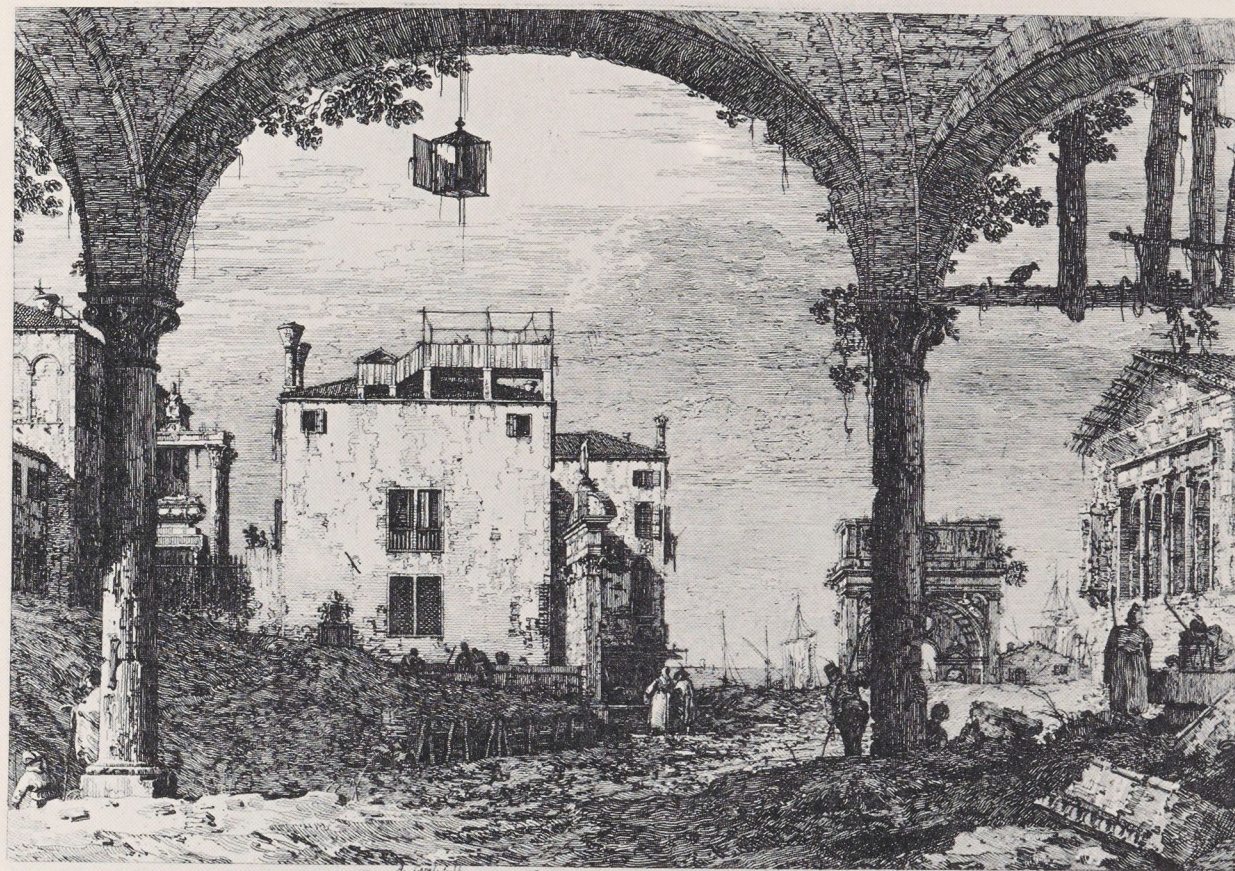
*The Portico with the Lantern*

second state

With the addition and strengthening of lines. With the heightening of the roof of the classical temple on the right.

A three-arched portico with an open lantern hanging from the centre span extends across the foreground. Beyond, on the right, a house with an *altana* (open terrace) built over the roof. On the edge of the lagoon stands a triumphal arch. On the far right, a partially visible classical temple. In the shade of the portico several figures rest near classical ruins.





second state



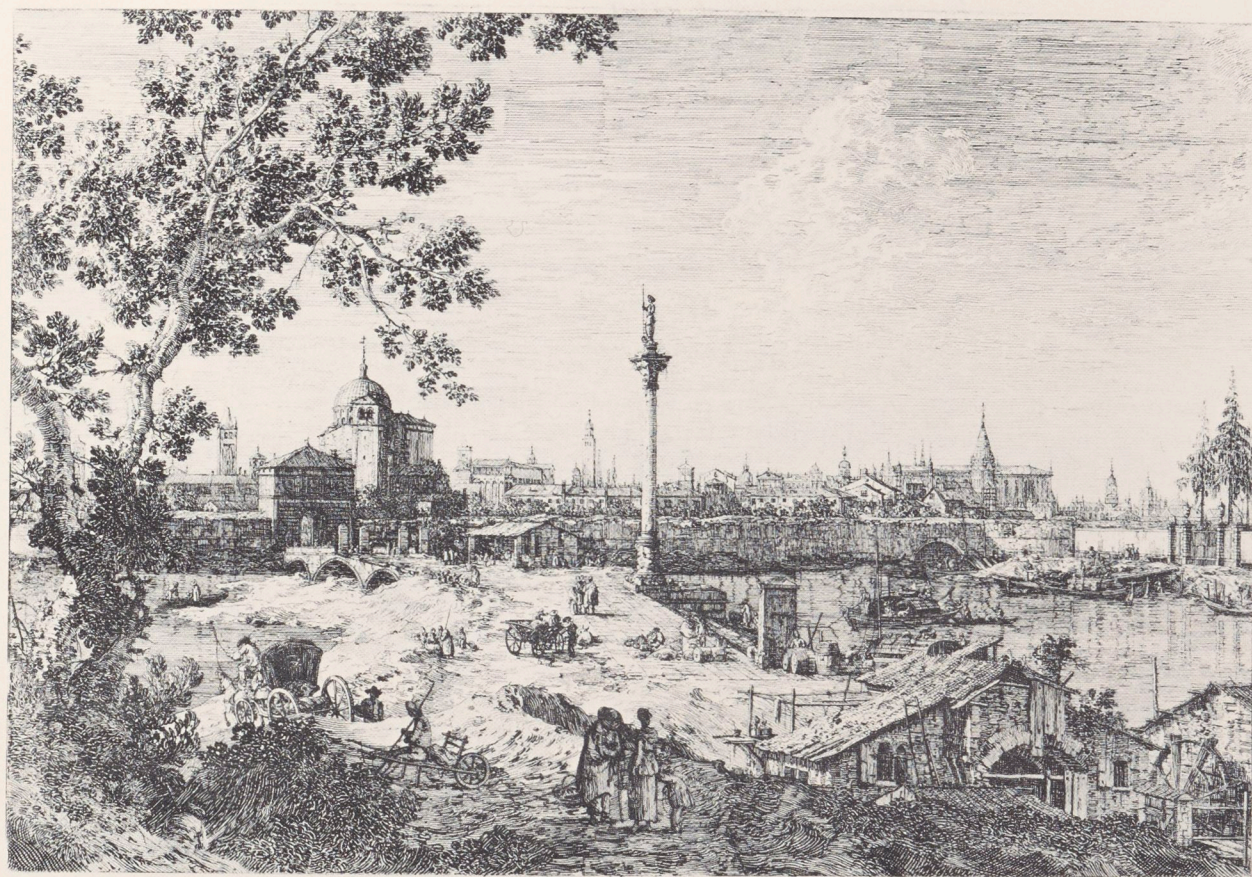
*Imaginary View of Padua*

etching, second state  
294 x 425 borderline  
298 x 427 platemark

De V 11; P & G 10; Bromberg 11

Across the background, the houses and churches of a walled town. On the stone pier in the centre stands a column surmounted by the statue of a saint. An unpaved road with vehicles and groups of figures leads towards the town. In the foreground, a partial view of a water-mill and a cottage.







*Imaginary View of Venice,  
Undivided Plate*

etching, one state  
293 x 432 borderline  
298 x 435 platemark

De V 12, 13; P & G 12, 12a, 12b;  
Bromberg 12

The composition, before the division of the copper plate by the artist, presents a panoramic view reminiscent of Venice and the lagoon. Inscribed 1741, it is the only datable etching apart from the title plate.







13

*The House with the Inscription*  
(left half of *Undivided Plate*)

etching, one state  
295 x 212 borderline  
298 x 215 platemark

De V 12; P & G 12a; Bromberg 13

Owing to the division of the preceding etching, *Imaginary View of Venice, Undivided Plate*, the standing man on the right foreground borderline appears incomplete. On the house with the *altana* on the extreme left, the inscription MDCCXLI. After the division of the plate, the low wall of the cottage below the domed church was erased and substituted with the lengthened façade.

14

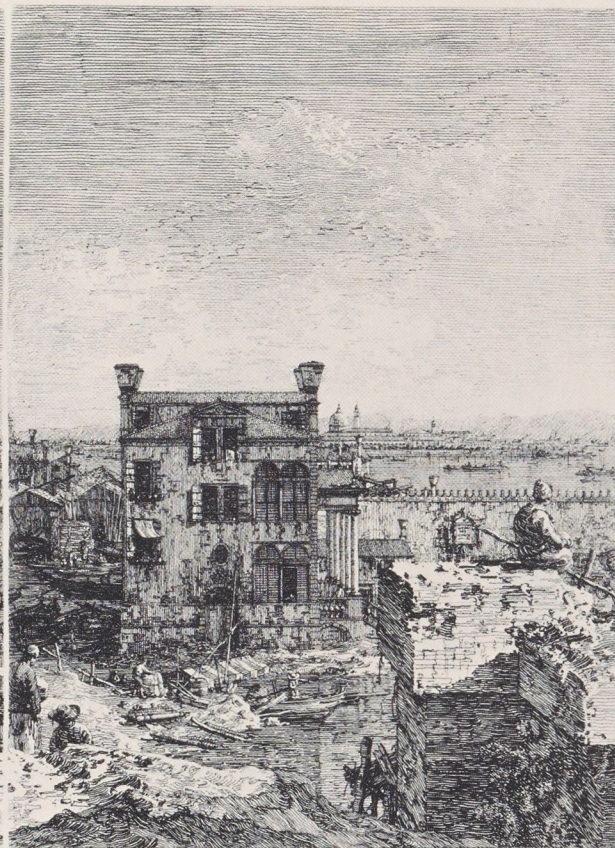
*The House with the Peristyle*  
(right half of *Undivided Plate*)

etching, second state  
294 x 213 borderline  
297 x 215 platemark

De V 13; P & G 12b; Bromberg 14

Owing to the division of the etching, *Imaginary View of Venice, Undivided Plate*, the figure on the left borderline now appears incomplete. Atop a ruined wall at right, a seated man observes the shipping on the lagoon. Boat-sheds and numerous boats and barges on the far left. In the middle distance the house with the peristyle stands at the water's edge.







15  
16  
17

*The Bishop's Tomb*  
*View of a Town with a Bishop's Tomb*  
*Fragment of a Bishop's Tomb*

Conceived as one composition, the copper plate was cut by Canaletto, for unknown reasons, into three separate plates. The lower left side, a fragment of the composition, is conserved at Windsor as the only known example.

15

*The Bishop's Tomb*

etching, one state  
216 x 127 borderline  
220 x 130 platemark

De V 29; P & G 13a; Bromberg 15

Two square pillars carved with grotesques and the statue of the Virgin occupy the centre foreground. On the right, the left side of the pinnacled canopy continued on *View of a Town with a Bishop's Tomb*.









*View of a Town with a Bishop's Tomb*

etching, second state  
293 x 298 borderline  
299 x 301 platemark

De V 14; P & G 13b; Bromberg 16

On the left, the continuation of the pinnacled canopy above the sarcophagus of a bishop. Beyond a sand-bank in the river, the view of a town with towers, houses, churches and distant hills.







*Fragment of a Bishop's Tomb*

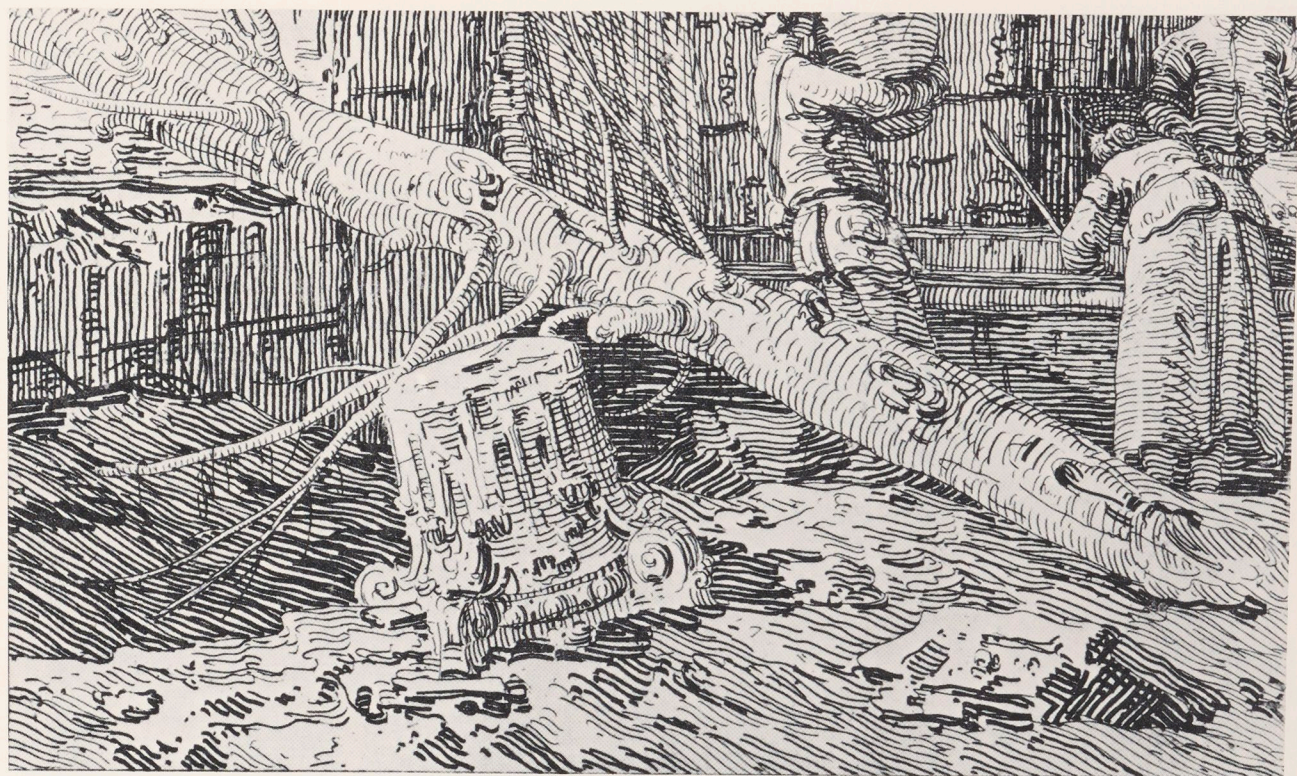
etching, one state  
75 x 126 borderline  
77 x 128 platemark

De V unrecorded; P & G 13c; Bromberg 17

The uppermost part of this etching, with the missing headgear and faces of the two men, appears above the bottom borderline of *The Bishop's Tomb* (15).

Not exhibited. The only known example is preserved at Windsor.  
Reproduced by gracious permission of Her Majesty the Queen.







etching, second state  
142 x 205 borderline  
144 x 208 platemark

De V 15; P & G 15; Bromberg 18

Before the erasure of the title and before the rework on the  
borderline and the lines directly above.

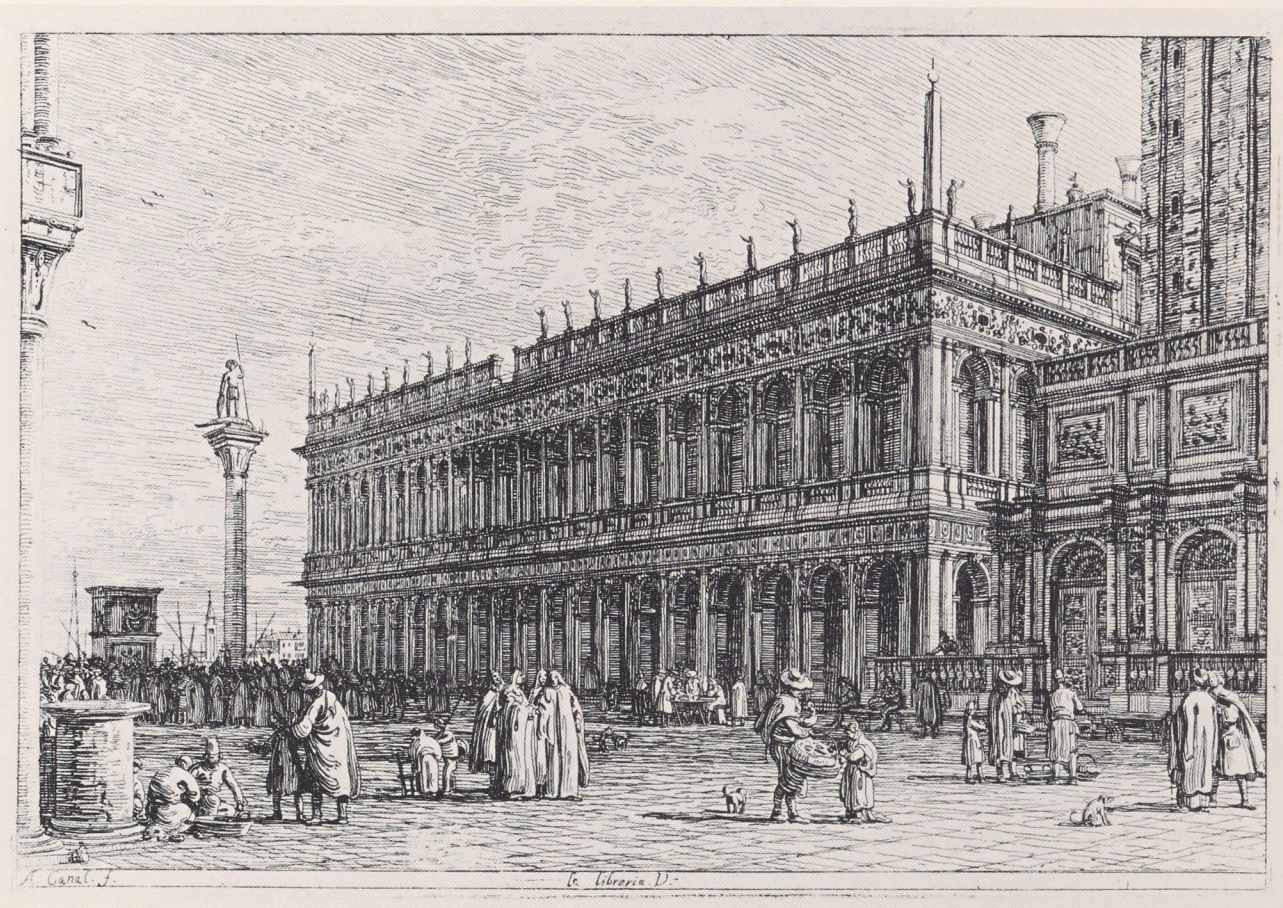
*la libreria. V.*

third state

The title has been erased. The borderline and the pavement lines  
directly above the title have been reworked. This state is considered  
posthumous.

On the right the Libreria, masterpiece of the architect Jacopo  
Sansovino (1486-1570). A partial view of the adjoining Campanile and  
Loggetta on the right borderline. A group of people throng around a  
puppet theatre at the far end of the Piazzetta, below the column of  
S. Teodoro.





second state



etching, second state

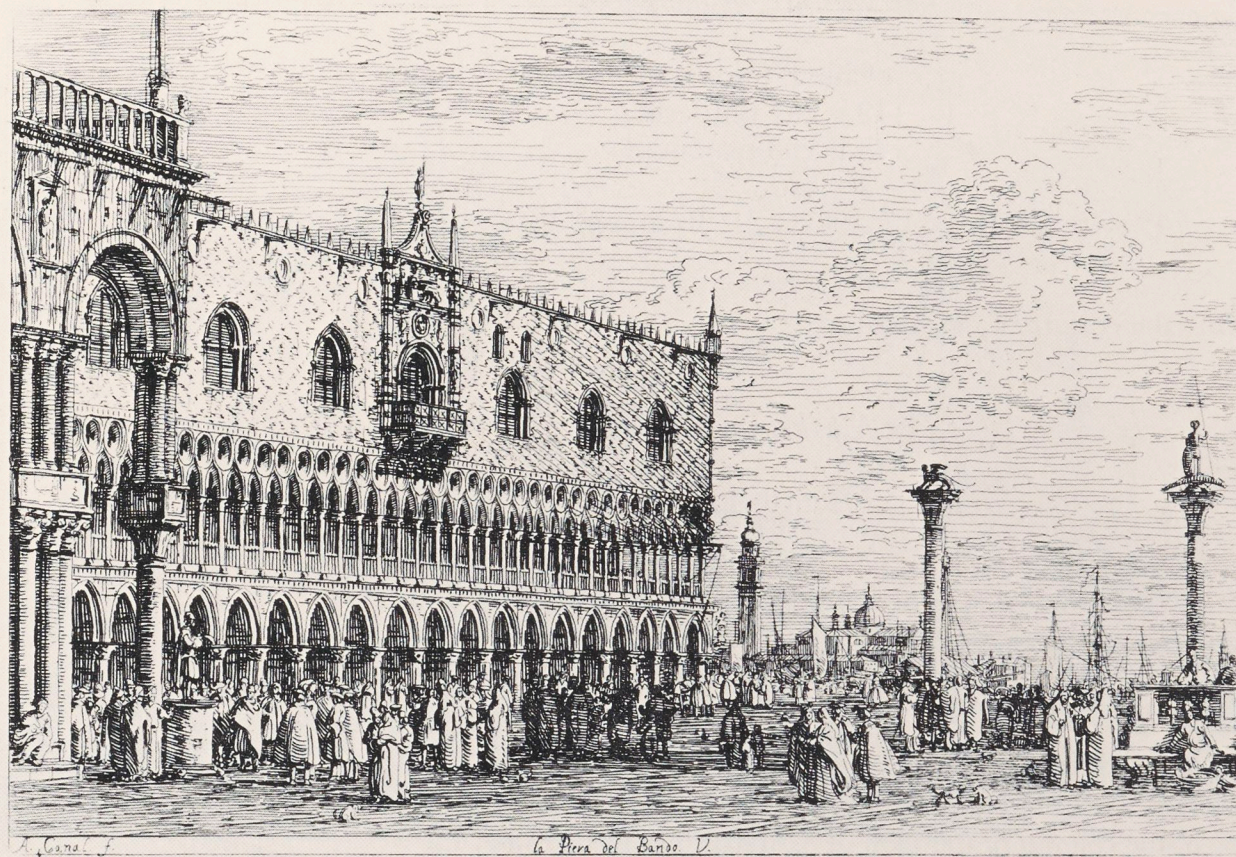
141 x 208 borderline

142 x 209 platemark

De V 16; P &amp; G 17; Bromberg 19

On the left, in front of the corner arch of St. Mark's, the *piero del bando*, fragment of a massive Syrian porphyry column, from which the *comandador* reads a decree to the populace gathered in the Piazzetta. The Doge's Palace on the left. Beyond the granite columns surmounted by the bronze-winged Lion of S. Marco, and the marble statue of S. Teodoro, patron saint of Venice, the church of S. Giorgio Maggiore with the onion-shaped campanile, dating from 1726-28.







*The Market on the Molo*

etching, third state  
142 x 207 borderline  
143 x 208 platemark

De V 17; P & G 21; Bromberg 20

Before the erasure of the signature.

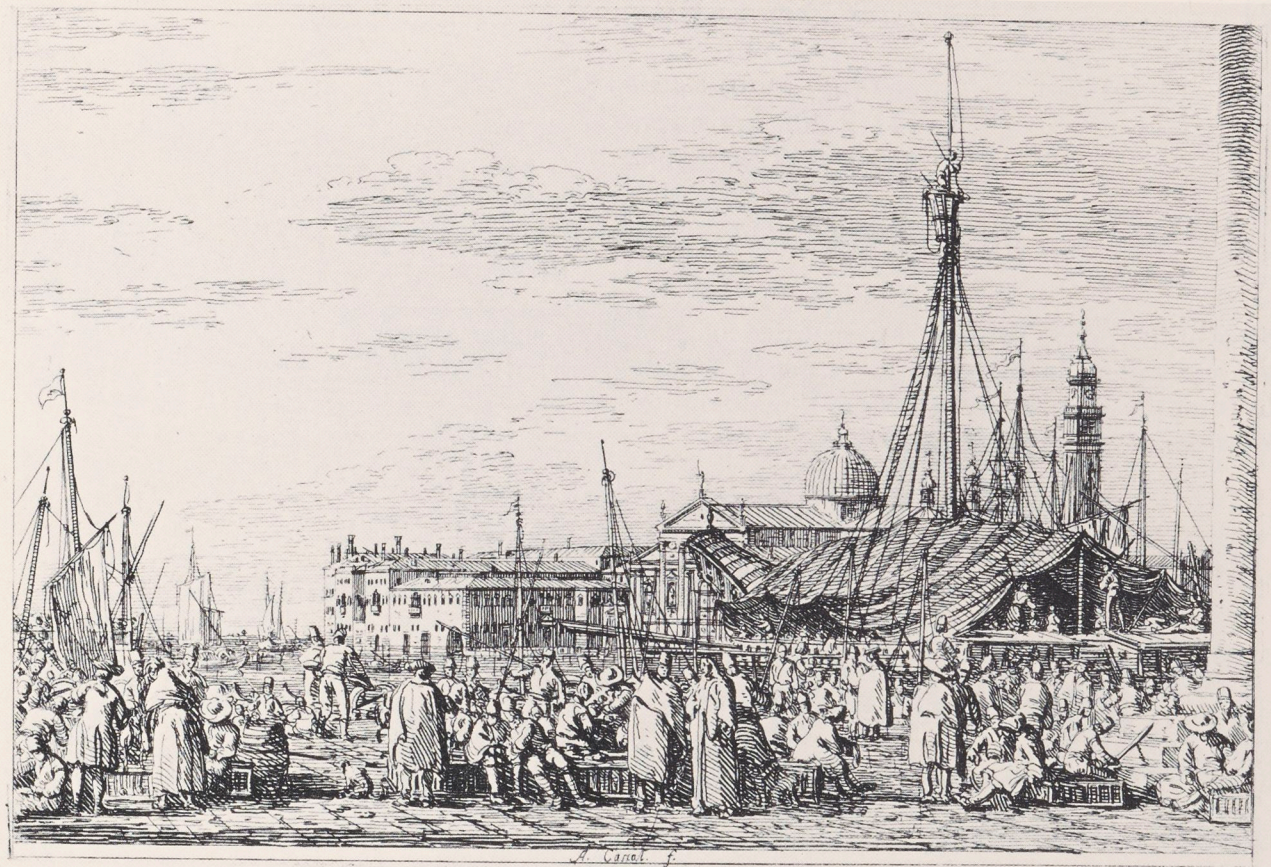
*The Market on the Molo*

fourth state

The signature has been erased. The scratch below the middle group of figures, noticeable on all preceding states from foot of standing middle figure down to the bottom borderline, stops at the pavement. This state is considered posthumous.

A large barge lies moored to the quayside over which men are hoisting a striped awning. On the extreme right borderline, a partial view of the column of the Lion of S. Marco. Across the water the Island of S. Giorgio Maggiore is seen in reverse.





third state

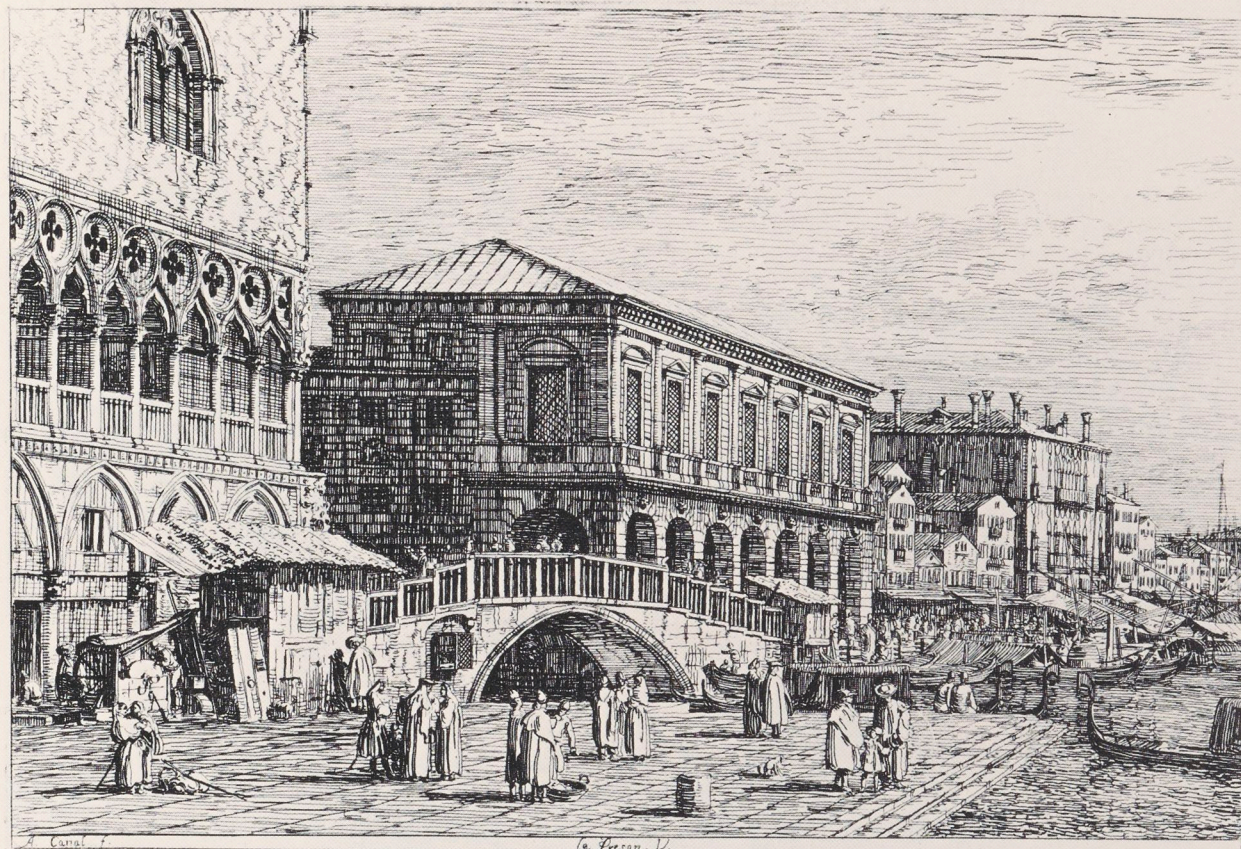


etching, second state  
141 x 208 borderline  
143 x 209 platemark

De V 18; P & G 14; Bromberg 21

View of the prison between a partial view of the Doge's Palace on the left and various buildings on the *riva degli Schiavoni*, towards the right. In front the *Ponte della Paglia* links the Molo with the *riva degli Schiavoni*.







*Mountain Landscape with five Bridges*

etching, second state A  
140 x 206 borderline  
143 x 209 platemark

De V 19; P & G 25; Bromberg 22

A traveller rests by an arched stone bridge in the right foreground. Four other bridges span gullies and streams. Beyond the resting traveller on the right, an arched bridge with a shrine, torture wheel, gallows and hanged man.







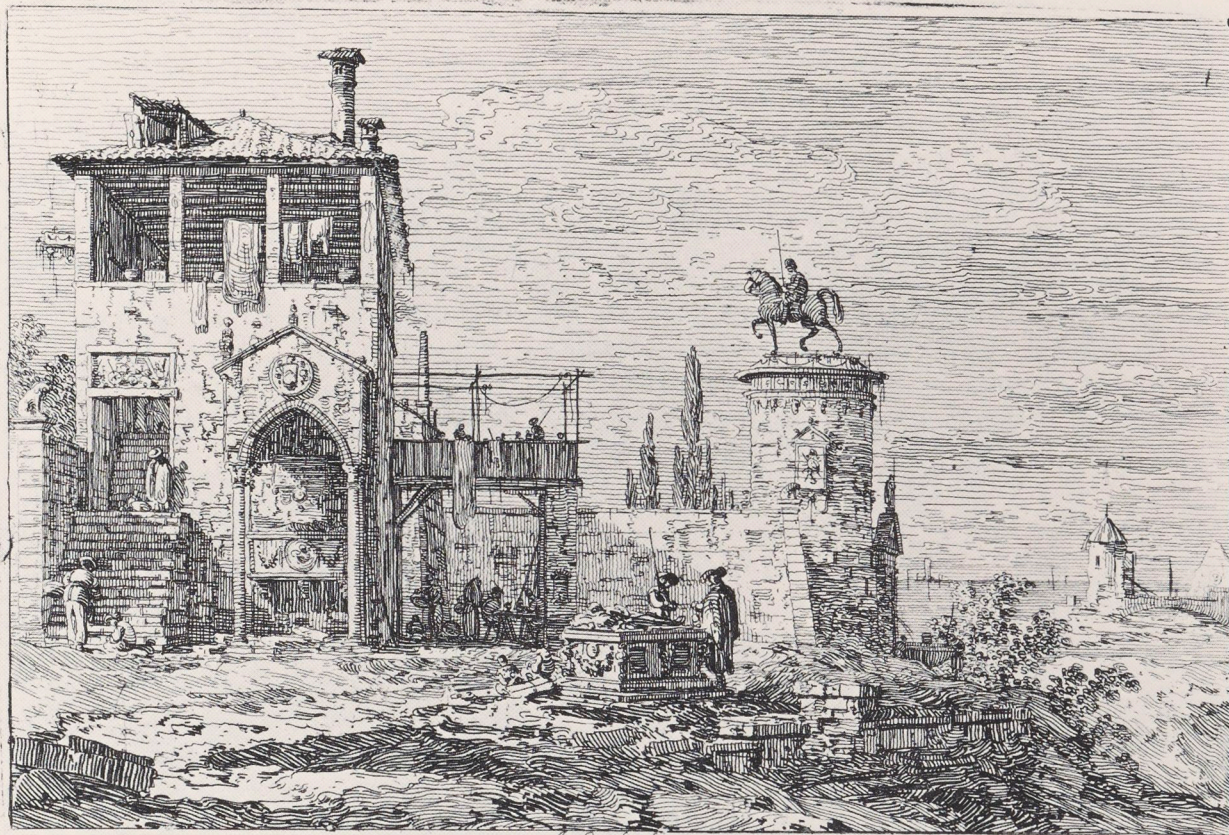
*The Equestrian Monument*

etching, one state  
139 x 205 borderline  
142 x 208 platemark

De V 20; P & G 23; Bromberg 23

Atop a massive column the Equestrian Monument overlooks the lagoon. Two men in the centre foreground stand by a sarcophagus. In front of the tall house on the left, a canopied tomb decorated with a shield and chevron.







*The Terrace*

etching, second state

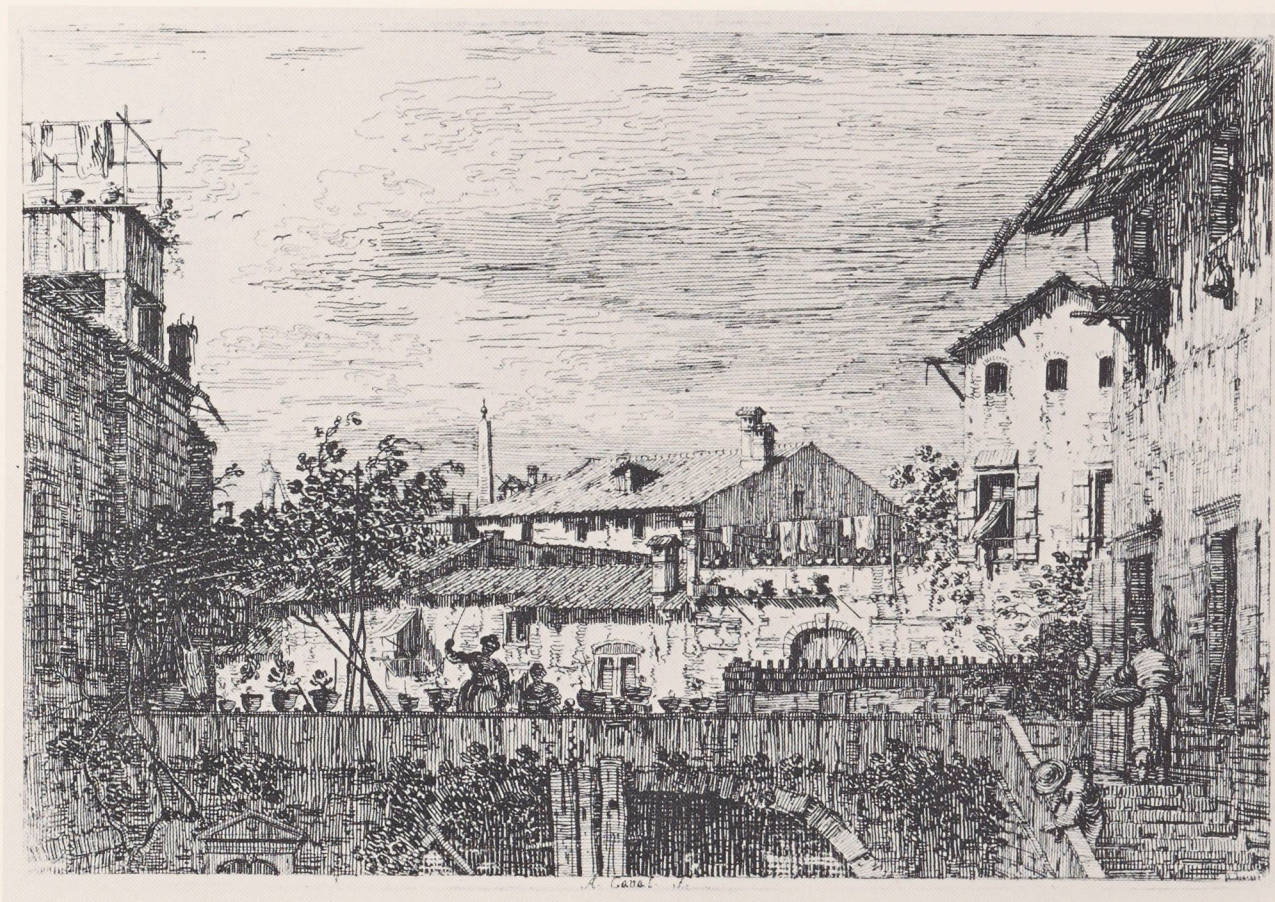
140 x 208 borderline

143 x 210 platemark

De V 21; P & G 18; Bromberg 24

A wide terrace with flower pots and vines spans the foreground above a partially visible archway. On the left borderline, a house with *altana* (open terrace). Beyond the wide terrace, houses and an obelisk. A man with a flat basket enters the doorway of a house on the right.







*le Procuratie niove e S. Ziminian V.*

etching, first state  
143 x 209 borderline  
144 x 211 platemark

De V 22; P & G 16; Bromberg 25

Before the erasure of the title.

*le Procuratie niove e S. Ziminian V.*

second state

The title has been erased. The scratch in the sky above S. Ziminian has become invisible. This state is considered posthumous.

View of the Piazza S. Marco with the Procuratie Nuove on the left, S. Geminiano in the centre background and on the extreme right a side view of the Torre dell Orologio. Numerous figures and stalls in the piazza. Two of the three flagstaffs, before St. Mark's, are visible.





first state



*The Market at Dolo*

etching, third state  
140 x 205 borderline  
144 x 208 platemark

De V 23; P & G 19; Bromberg 26

On the far side of the River Brenta stands a modified version of the Palladian villa Zanon-Bon, seen in the etching *Al Dolo*. On the near bank a market scene with groups of people and stalls. On the extreme left, a side view of the portal of S. Rocco at Dolo.





A Canal J.



*Landscape with the Pilgrim at Prayer*

etching, third state  
139 x 206 borderline  
142 x 209 platemark

De V 24; P & G 22; Bromberg 27

The pilgrim stands in contemplation before a shrine on the edge of the river-bank. Immediately below, two men in a boat. A steep road leads to a small fort on the top of a hill. In the left background, a triumphal arch provides entrance to a walled hilltop town.





A. Carol. f.



etching, second state

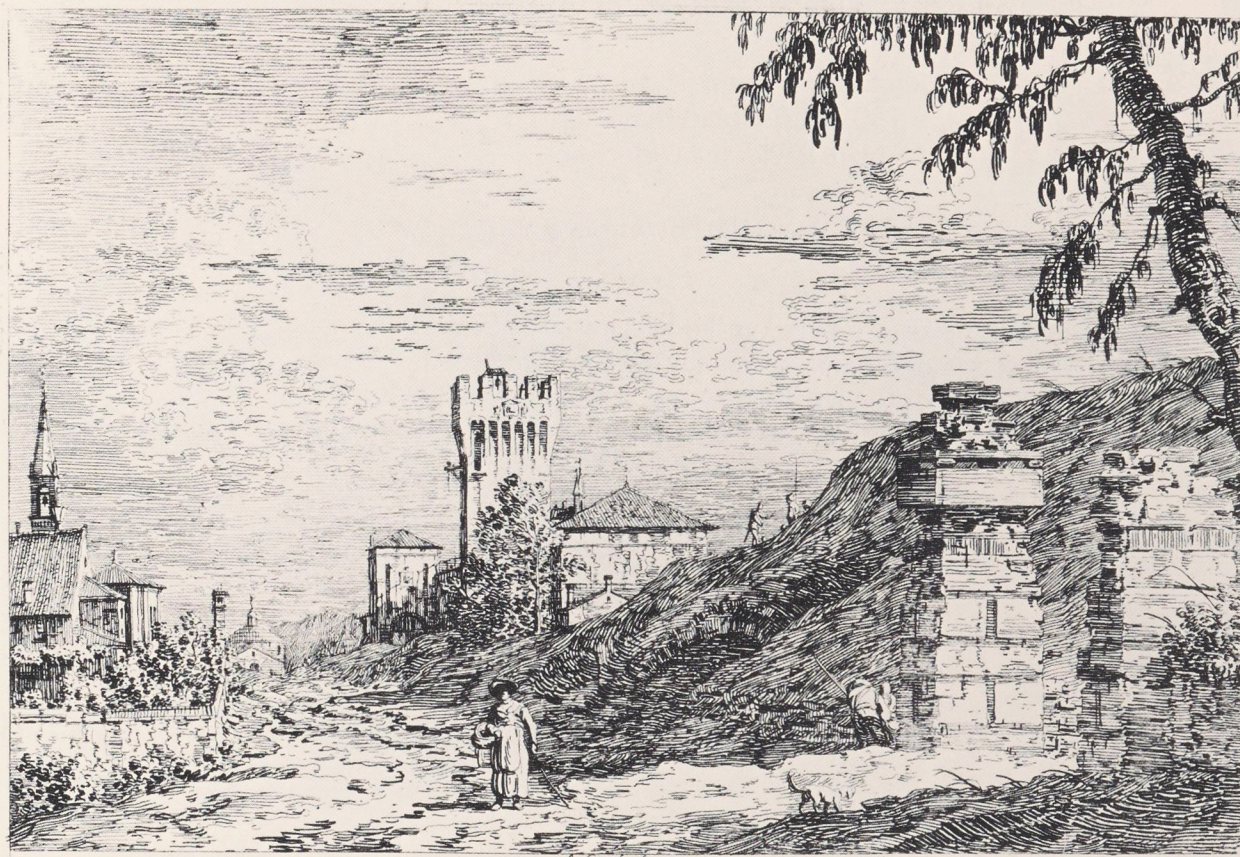
140 x 206 borderline

143 x 209 platemark

De V 25; P & G 27; Bromberg 28

In the background, a crenellated tower resembling the Torre di Enzelino (now demolished) at Padua. Near the two ruined pillars on the right, two men with a pole and a basket stand at the edge of a stream. A woman carrying a basket walks down the road in the foreground.





A. Canal. f.



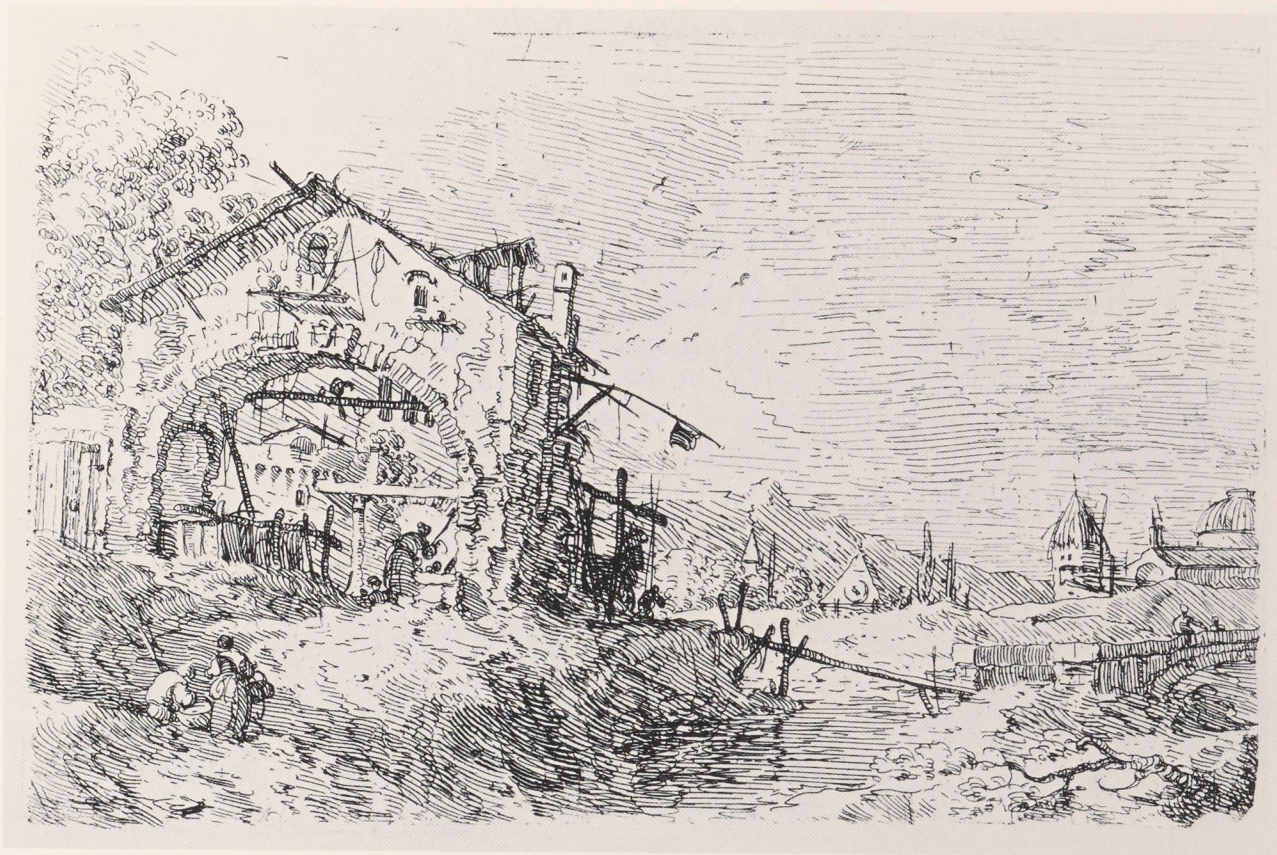
*Landscape with a Woman at a Well*

etching, second state A  
139 x 205 platemark  
(this plate lacks a borderline)

De V 26; P & G 24; Bromberg 29

Below the covered archway of a barn on the left, a woman draws water from a well. A wooden plank across the stream connects the well with a stone bridge. In the left foreground, a woman watches a man with fishing tackle on the edge of the stream.







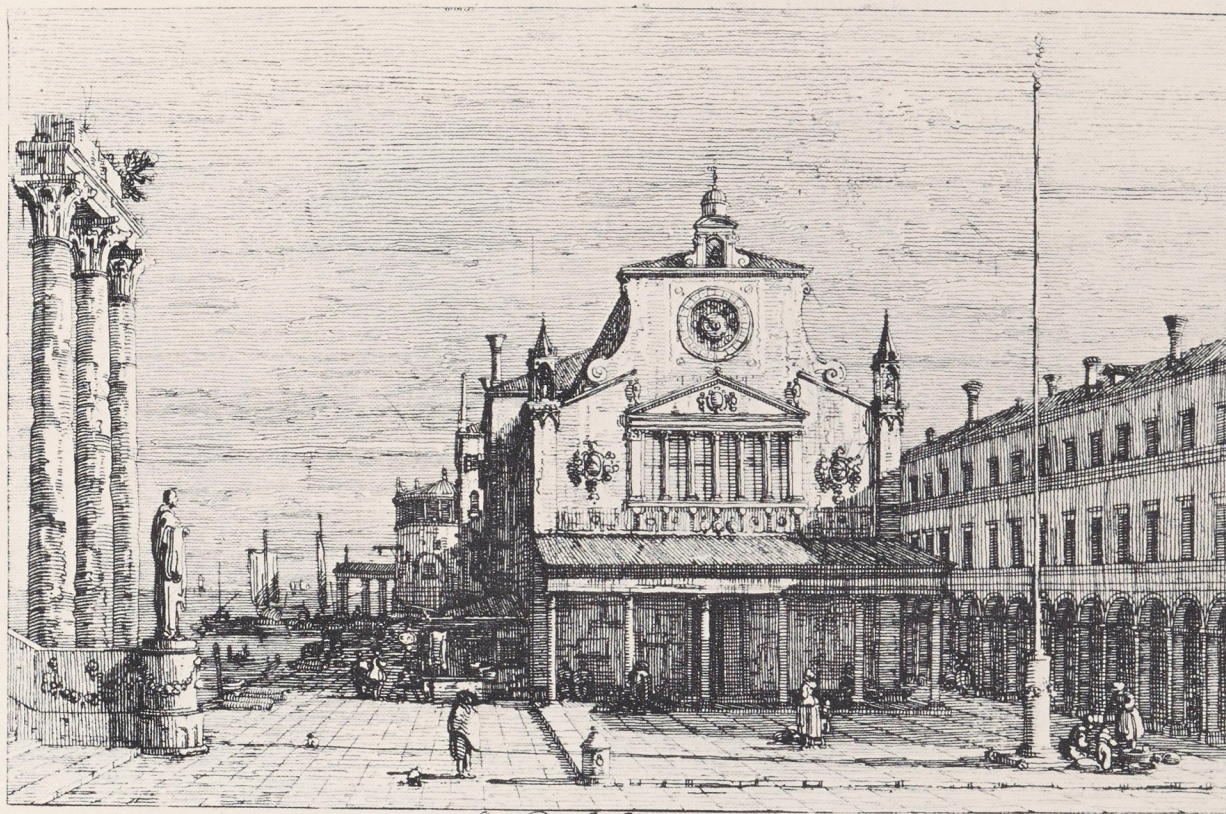
*Imaginary View of S. Giacomo di Rialto*

etching, first state  
137 x 210 borderline  
143 x 214 platemark

De V 27; P & G 20; Bromberg 30

S. Giacomo di Rialto, one of the oldest Venetian churches, stands facing the Campo di Rialto. The *sottoportici di Rialto*, with numerous shops, flanks the church on the right. Beyond the imaginary row of classical columns and a statue on a pedestal, the lagoon and shipping.





A. Canal. f.



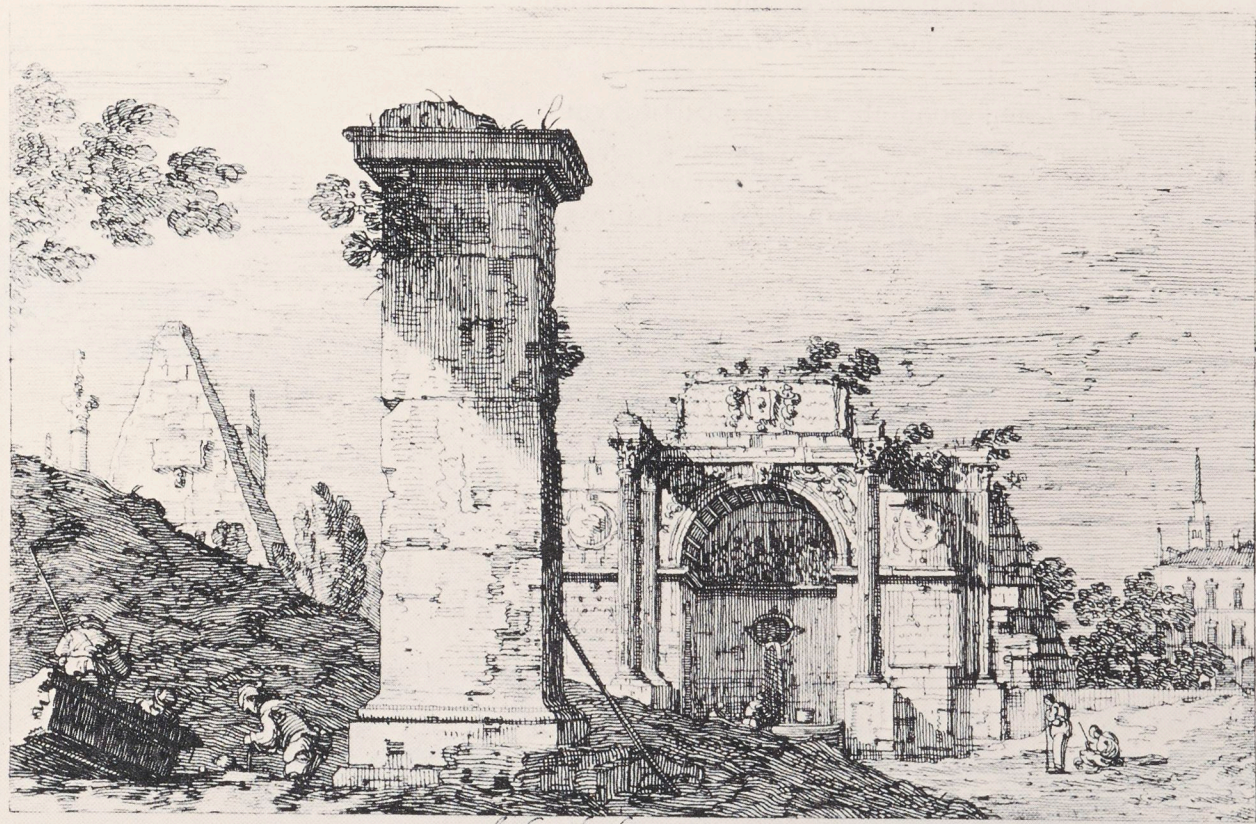
*Landscape with Ruined Monuments*

etching, one state  
138 x 212 borderline  
144 x 216 platemark

De V 28; P & G 26; Bromberg 31

Three partially visible men with poles dig near an architectural fragment on the left. Beyond, a pyramid and a statue atop a column. In front of a fountain enclosed by a triumphal arch looms a square column.





*Le Canal*



32  
33

*The Waggon Passing over a Bridge*  
*The Little Monument*

Conceived as one composition, the copper plate was cut by Canaletto, for unknown reasons, into two separate plates. The upper part of *The Little Monument*, a fragment of sky approximately 25 mm high, remains unrecorded and was presumably discarded by Canaletto when cutting the original plate.

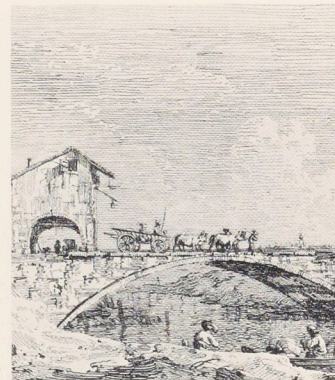
32

*The Waggon Passing over a Bridge*

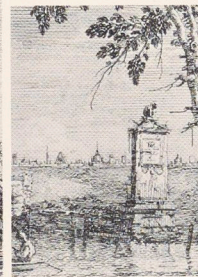
etching, second state  
140 x 124 borderline  
143 x 125 platemark

De V 31; P & G 29a; Bromberg 32

A waggon drawn by four oxen moves across an arched stone bridge spanning a river. Below, partial view of a boat and three men.



32



33





A Canal. f.



*The Little Monument*

etching, second state

115 x 82 borderline

119 x 84 platemark

De V 30; P &amp; G 29b; Bromberg 33

In the lower left foreground, the continuation of the boat and bridge partially seen on the preceding etching, *The Wagon Passing over a Bridge*. On the far bank of the river, the monument, framed by a tree and foliage. Across the skyline in the distance, view of a town with towers, campanile, domes and a pyramid.





A. C.



## DRAWINGS

### *Grand Canal with the Palazzi dei Mocenigo*

drawing, 193 x 279  
pen and brown ink

Courtauld Institute Galleries, London

Constable/Links 589

A rapid sketch of the type Canaletto often made on the spot and later used for reference in a more finished drawing in pen and wash, or for a painting. In this case it was probably used for the painting, in the Royal Collection, *Regatta on the Grand Canal* (Constable/Links 347) which Canaletto painted around 1732. This view of the Grand Canal was especially popular with Canaletto and he produced a number of variations of it.

The viewpoint is from the Palazzo Balbi, on the left bank of the Grand Canal where the Rio Foscari joins it. From left to right are the Palazzo Erizzo, the Palazzo Contarini dalle Figure, and the four Palazzi dei Mocenigo.

A. B.







*Study of a Standing Man*

drawing, 302 x 175 (sheet)

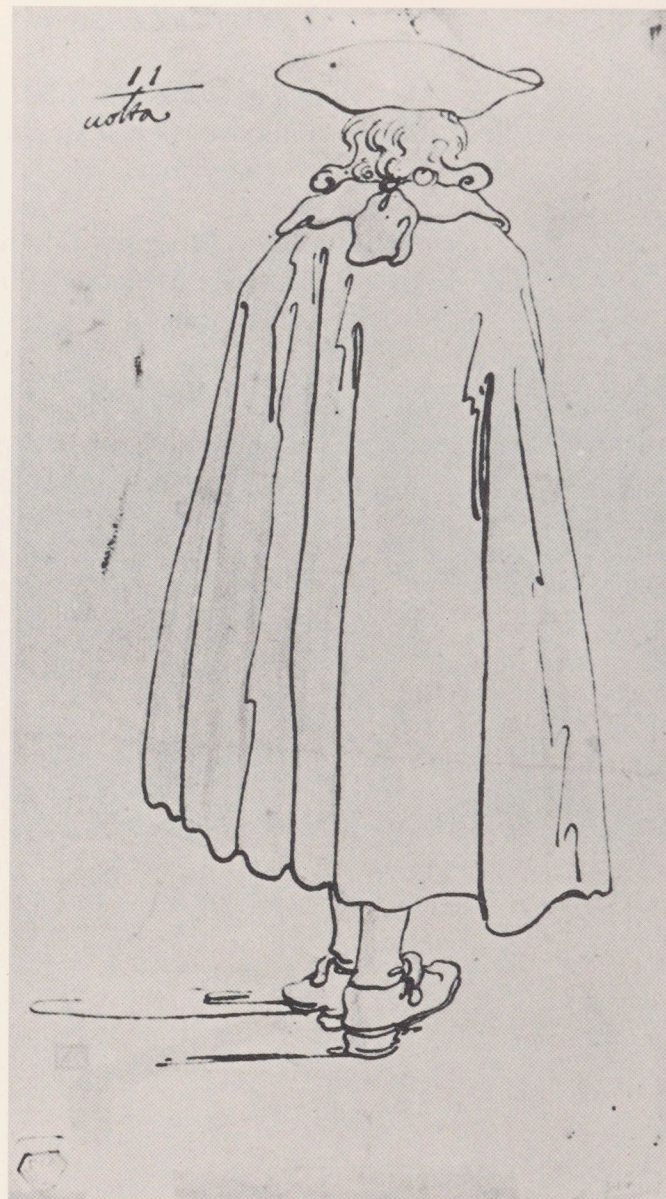
Pen, brown and dark grey-brown ink with  
pencil. Inscribed, upper left: *le-ualta*.

Courtauld Institute Galleries, London

Constable/Links 839

An identical back view of a man in a long cloak and tricorne appears  
in the etching, *Mestre*, above the coach, left foreground.







*View of Dolo*

drawing, 275 x 415

Pen and brown ink over pencil, horizontal  
red chalk lines.

Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
C.A.I. 419, Constantine Alexander Ionides  
Bequest

Constable/Links 669

Related to etching 4, *Al Dolo*. The shading on the roofs of the two houses to the left of the boat-sheds corresponds to the second state, finished etching.







*The Island of S. Michele with Venice in the Distance*  
c. 1730-40

drawing, 200 x 279  
pen and ink with grey wash

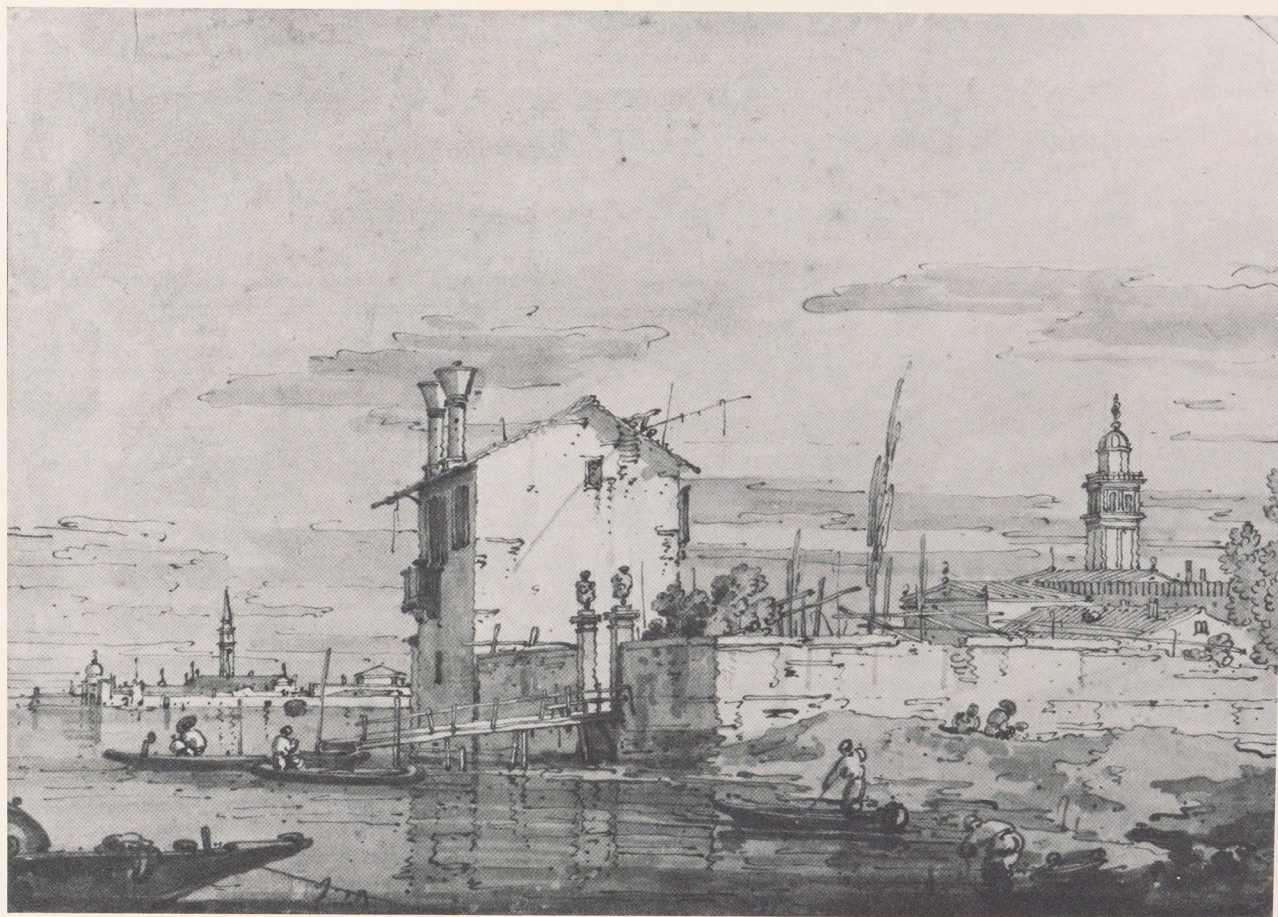
The Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Constable/Links 654

This forms one of a group of pen-and-grey-wash drawings in which Canaletto sought for new subjects among the islands in the Lagoon of Venice. The present drawing is of S. Michele, which now serves as the cemetery of Venice, with the Fondamenta Nuove in the background. The artist looks towards Venice with the dome of S. Pietro di Castello and the campanile of S. Francesco della Vigna clearly visible in the background. There is a painting of this view (Constable/Links 367) as well as two further drawn versions (Constable 653 in the Royal Collection at Windsor and Constable 654c in the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford USA). The drawing is sometimes dated 1742, because of its association with the engraving included in the series by Giuseppe Wagner, *Sei Villagi Campestri*, although the actual date of the publication of these prints is uncertain. Stylistically, a date at least ten years later would be more appropriate.

C. L.







*An Imaginary View with S. Simeone Piccolo*

drawing, 342 x 495  
pen and brown ink with grey wash over pencil

Detroit Institute of Arts

gift of Wilhelm R. Valentiner

Constable/Links 777

The design is reproduced with some slight variations in the series *Prospetti sei di altrettanti Templi di Venezia* engraved by Josef (Giuseppe) Wagner. The date of this series has been given as 1745, but this has not been substantiated. The engraving is inscribed *Canaletto pinx.* However, no painting has come to light of this subject.

George Knox, in an entry for a forthcoming catalogue of drawings in the Detroit collection, cites four drawings showing S. Simeone Piccolo and adjacent buildings in Canaletto's Venetian sketchbook (Terisio Pignatti, *Il Quaderno di Disegni del Canaletto alle Gallerie di Venezia*, Milan 1958, 52v, 53, 53v, 54). These drawings show the church very much as it is now, except that the steps are not completed. As Knox points out, in this drawing Canaletto depicts the staircase completed to its full width and embellished with balustrades which were never built. He also included a balustrade along the parapet above the tympanum and three statues on the tympanum which also were never executed. The element leading down to the window, or aedicula, on the central axis of the dome, which is only indicated in the sketchbook, is quite clearly shown as external steps in the drawing. The building on the right over the wall appears to be a rough rendering of the lagoon end of the Libreria with the roof of the Zecca appearing over it.

E. S.







*View through an Arch of Westminster Bridge c. 1746-1755*

drawing, 280 x 517  
pen and bistre with indian ink wash

Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York

Elizabeth H. Gates Fund, 1936

Constable/Links 732

The view is of the Thames and London with St. Paul's Cathedral in the background, seen through one of the arches of Westminster Bridge.

Canaletto, it is recorded, arrived in London from Venice in 1746, by which time all but two of the fifteen arches of the bridge were complete. He painted several views of Westminster Bridge, showing different stages of its construction, some of which are based on supposition rather than observation and hence distort the true sequence of the work.

The present view closely resembles another drawing of the same subject (Constable/Links 732) in the Royal Collection. Both drawings are also closely related to a painting of the same subject, *London: seen through an Arch of Westminster Bridge* 1746-47 (Constable/Links 412), the most notable difference being the inclusion in the painting of the centering (timber framework) which supported the arch during its construction. This does not necessarily mean the painting is earlier than the drawings, since Canaletto represented, in other paintings of Westminster Bridge, stages of its construction (begun in 1739) that preceded his arrival in 1746.

A. B.







*Capriccio: With Reminiscences of Old Montagu House, London*

drawing, 251 x 384  
pen and ink with wash over pencil

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

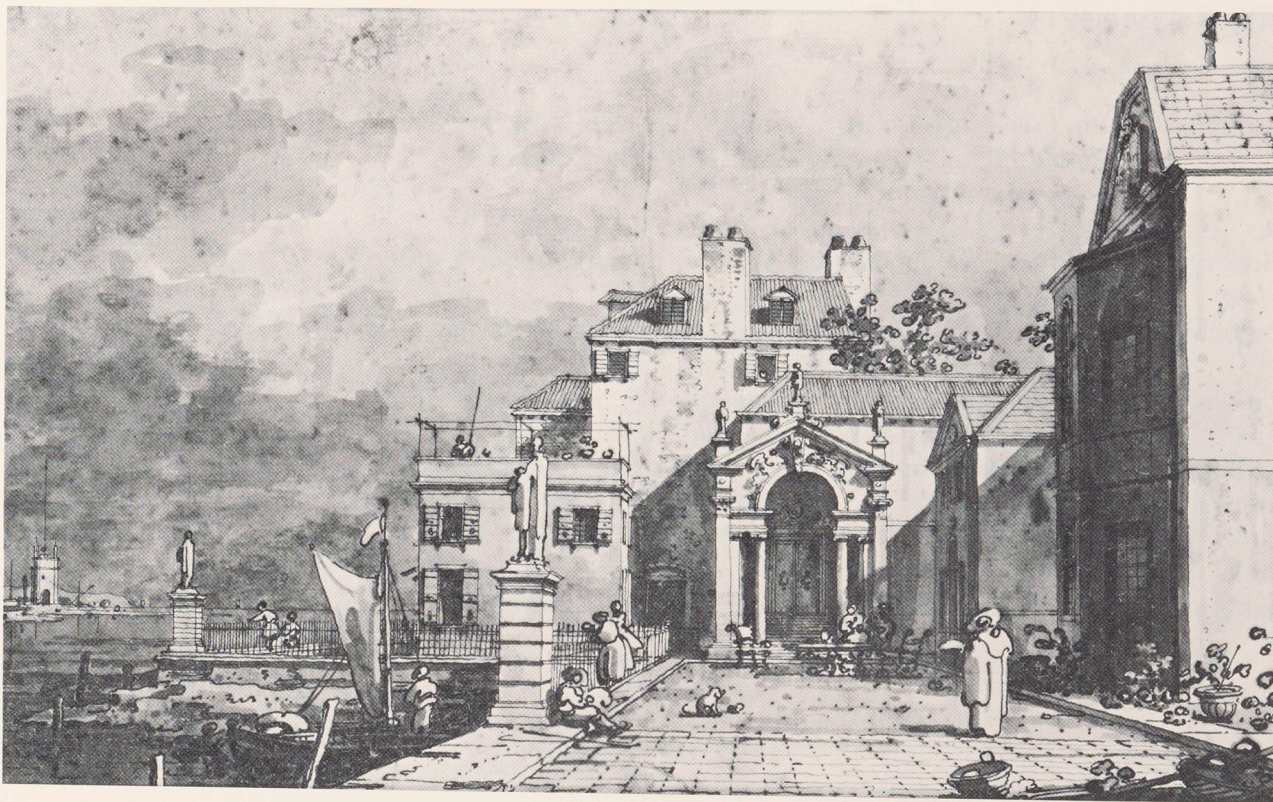
Constable/Links 786(a)

Probably executed shortly after Canaletto returned to Venice from England in 1755 or 1756 during a period when he composed numerous *capricci*.

Canaletto divided the continuous façade of Old Montagu House, the London residence of the Dukes of Montagu, into two separate buildings, added a Renaissance portal and transposed the architectural ensemble to a Venetian Lagoon setting.

A. B.







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