

I know not when I shall have the Pleasure of seeing you, Sir, for I can get nothing to bring; and am so infirm, I cannot walk far. But I shall not forget to search for the few you still want. As soon as I can see Bawtree, I will get him to make a Drawing of the Bed in the Holbein Room, for I despair of getting Carter to do it Nor is Geo. Harding very willing to make any more Drawings—he has had the one now sent upwards of a Fortnight in hand.¹¹

This letter is revealing on a number of levels. It shows Kirgate as facilitator, orchestrating the acquisition of missing prints for the collector while complaining about the exploding market in portrait prints, and displays George Harding's role as provider of drawings. It also illustrates the somewhat obsessional needs of the collector, has Kirgate acknowledging that he is himself compiling an extra-illustrated copy of the *Description*, and offers the possibly illusory prospect of "finishing" one's extra-illustrated book.

Kirgate offered his own extra-illustrated copy by raffle in 1801. The broadsheet advertising the sale, "For the Benefit of T. Kirgate, Late Printer at Strawberry-Hill," announced that:

Each Leaf of the above Book is inlaid on a large Sheet of fine Dutch paper; the Pages bordered with a double Line of red Ink; the Title printed in three Colours, and ornamented with a Drawing of a Foliage of Strawberries. The whole Book adorned with upwards of Two [crossed through in manuscript and amended to three] Hundred Drawings and Prints, illustrative of the external and internal Parts of that delightful Seat, its Furniture, Pictures, Sculptures, Antiquities, &c. &c. Several of the Prints are scarce and valuable, and most of the Drawings were made on Purpose for the Book, by the Friends of T. KIRGATE, who has been Fourteen Years in forming the Collection.¹²

Potential subscribers could inspect the book at Harding's shop in Pall Mall. The current whereabouts of the book are unknown, but it appears to have been a particularly fine example of Kirgate's industry in the years after he had left Strawberry Hill. Another example of his endeavors is an elephant folio scrapbook of images of Strawberry Hill and its contents, perhaps used to display to customers what images could be acquired or copied for the extra-illustrated copy they ordered: this is now in the collection of Lord Waldegrave of North Hill. There is also at the Lewis Walpole Library a volume compiled by Kirgate consisting of lists of images from the house. Firstly, there is a two-page list of forty-six pictures and sculptures there, with page references to the *Description*, twenty-four of them crossed through (perhaps as having already been obtained) and with Kirgate's comments in red ink against almost all of the others—two prints of Rubens's house "both scarce," Anne Hyde Duchess of York "A foreign print, 8vo. scarce," others "Engraving by Harding" or "In my List," while of four portraits in the Gallery described on page 52 he notes "I cannot say positively if there are Prints of these, the Pictures hanging too high to examine." This is followed by a list dated 26 July 1800 of twelve drawings, with their *Description* page numbers and prices, and then two longer lists, one "A List of the Prints and Drawings as placed in Lord Orford's Illustrated Copy of the Description of Strawberry-Hill printed there in 1784 by Thos. Kirgate," the other a list of the 335 prints and drawings in his own copy. The historical portraits

11. Kirgate MSS. Folder, Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University; quoted in Barker, *Horace Walpole's Description of the Villa*, 116; and Clarke, *The Strawberry Hill Press & its Printing House*, 87–89 (where it is explained that the letter, though undated, is probably of 1801).

12. Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 53 K634 801.