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978-1-108-08485-7 - Remarks on Forest Scenery, and Other Woodland Views: Illustrated by the
Scenes of New-Forest in Hampshire: Volume 1

William Gilpin

Frontmatter

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From the middle of the eighteenth century, with the growth of travel at home and abroad and the increase in leisure for the wealthier classes, the arts became the subject of more widespread appreciation and discussion. The rapid expansion of book and periodical publishing in this area both reflected and encouraged interest in art and art history among the wider reading public. This series throws light on the development of visual culture and aesthetics. It covers topics from the Grand Tour to the great exhibitions of the nineteenth century, and includes art criticism and biography.

Remarks on Forest Scenery, and Other Woodland Views

Clergyman, schoolmaster and writer on aesthetics, William Gilpin (1724–1804) is best known for his works on the picturesque (many of which are also reissued in this series). Moving in 1777 to become vicar of Boldre, Hampshire, he was able to endow two schools there with income from his successful writings. He defined ‘picturesque’ as ‘a term expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture.’ This two-volume work on forest trees, inspired by his New Forest home, was published in 1791. In his dedicatory address to his patron, William Mitford, he observes that his earlier experiences of the picturesque had been in mountainous or hilly areas; but in his walks and rides in the forest, he had become fascinated by the beauty of trees. Volume 1 discusses different forests and tree species, maintenance, felling and pollarding, and the aesthetic effects of light and shade.

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VOLUME 1

WILLIAM GILPIN



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R E M A R K S
O N
F O R E S T S C E N E R Y ;
A N D O T H E R
W O O D L A N D V I E W S .

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R E M A R K S
O N
FOREST SCENERY,
A N D O T H E R
WOODLAND VIEWS,
(Relative chiefly to PICTURESQUE BEAUTY)
ILLUSTRATED BY THE SCENES
O F
N E W - F O R E S T
I N
H A M P S H I R E.

I N T H R E E B O O K S.

Happy he,
Whom what he views of beautiful, or grand,
In nature, from the broad, majestic oak
To the green blade, that twinkles in the sun,
Prompt with remembrance of a present God.

COOPER'S Poems.

V O L. I.

By WILLIAM GILPIN, A. M.

PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY; AND
VICAR OF BOLDRE IN NEW-FOREST, NEAR LYMINGTON.

L O N D O N ;
PRINTED FOR R. BLAMIRE, STRAND.

M.DCC.XCI.

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TO
William Mitford, Esq.
LIEUT. COL. OF THE SOUTHERN BATTALION
OF HAMPSHIRE-MILITIA;
AND
ONE OF THE VERDERORS OF NEW-FOREST.

Vicar's-hill, March 4, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN your
friendship fixed me in this pleasing
retreat, within the precincts of
New-forest, I had little intention
of wandering farther among its
scenes, than the bounds of my
own parish; or of amusing myself
any

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any more with writing on picturesque subjects. But one scene drew me on to another; till at length I had traversed the whole forest. The subject was new to me. I had been much among lakes, and mountains: but I had never lived in a forest. I knew little of it's scenery. Every thing caught my attention; and as I generally had a memorandum-book in my hand, I made minutes of what I observed; throwing my remarks under the two heads of *forest-scenery in general*; and *the scenery of particular places*. Thus, as small things lead to greater, an evening walk, or ride, became the foundation of a volume.

In

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In methodizing my remarks I divided them into three books. In the first, I have considered trees, (which are the foundation of all scenery,) as *single objects*. I have endeavoured to investigate their general picturesque qualities—in their several kinds—and in the specific character of each; concluding the book with a short account of some of the most celebrated trees, which have been noticed.

The second book considers trees under their various modes of *composition*, from the clump to the forest. It considers them likewise under the several picturesque circumstances

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cumstances of *permanent*, and *accidental* beauty, in which we often find them. As the first book concluded with an account of distinguished trees, the second concludes with a short view of forest-history; and of the several forests, that may be traced in Great Britain.

This leads me directly to New-forest, which is the subject of the third book. It opens with a few observations on this celebrated tract of country. The scenery of it is next described in a series of journeys through it's several divisions; and lastly, the modes and habits of life are remarked,

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marked, of such animals, as in
habit, and embellish it.

It is now, my dear Sir, above
ten years, since you first saw this
work in MS.; during which time
it has received frequent revival;
and much addition, as new occur-
rences, and observations arose. To
many of my friends likewise I owe
obligations, who have assisted me
with their criticisms; and to you
in particular, who are so well
acquainted with these scenes, and
have furnished me with many ju-
dicious remarks, and entertaining
forest-anecdotes.—I am desirous,
you see, to engage you with me
in this work. You are as fond of
these

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these amusements as I am; and when we trifle, we like to have the sanction of those we esteem, to trifle with us.—I hope however, that while you, shewing the world how Herodotus and Thucydides would have written in English, are throwing the colours of truth on the crimes of antiquity: and while I am humbly endeavouring to point out, as my profession leads, that greater advantages should be attended with more virtuous conduct—the world will not be so cynical as to find fault with our amusements; which tho' certainly innocent, and rational, I believe neither of us considers as the principal employment of our lives.

How

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How far the following work
may be an amusement to others,
I know not: You will, I am
sure, accept it with indulgence;
and as a mark of that esteem,
affection, and friendship, with
which I am, my dear Sir,

Your very sincere,

And obliged, humble servant,

WILLIAM GILPIN.