

Neglected Genius: The Diaries of Benjamin Robert Haydon, 1808-1846

John Jolliffe



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The journal of Benjamin Haydon was, Max Beerbohm reported to Siegfried Sassoon, the best diary Beerbohm had ever read. Harold Acton declared Haydon 'a more exciting figure than Ruskin.' H.H. Asquith compared him favourably with Rousseau, while Aldous Huxley declared that 'Never was anyone more clearly cut out to be an author.'

Today Haydon's portraits and monumental historical paintings hang in almost all Britain's major collections. However in his own time (1786-1846) his reputation was less secure. Although an intimate of Wordsworth and Walter Scott, on friendly terms with lords and politicians, Haydon was also well acquainted with debtor's prison. Still he remained throughout a witty, brilliant diarist, vividly evidenced by this volume, expertly edited by John Jolliffe, which gathers opinions on everything from the Elgin Marbles and Turner's landscapes to Napoleon's digestion and Queen Victoria's complexion.

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