

# THE PORTRAITS

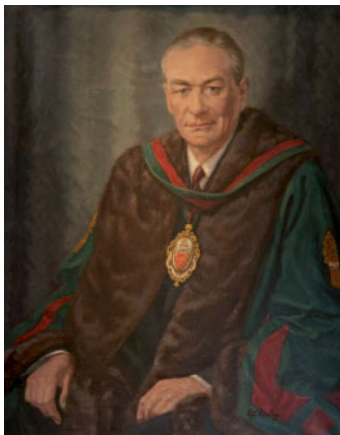


ART – NATURALLY



WEST LODGE PARK  
YOUR COUNTRY RETREAT

## INTRODUCTION



T. EDWARD  
BEALE CBE

The paintings at West Lodge Park are mainly portraits from the late seventeenth century, collected by T. Edward Beale CBE following two themes, (a) the works of his namesake the artist Mary Beale and (b) the Court of King Charles II, of which the owner of West Lodge Park, Henry Coventry, was a member.

Some of the portraits purchased by Edward Beale at Sotheby's and Christie's around 30 years ago are now attributed to other artists, but the collection includes some paintings known by documentary evidence to be by Mary Beale, and a rare example of a picture signed by her. The portraits in the front hall in their handsome matching frames are particularly fine.

If the people in the portraits could step out of their frames today, many of them would know each other. King Charles II would remember Lady Fairfax whose husband invited him to return to the throne of England, his able Secretary of State, Henry Coventry, his loyal courtier John Evelyn and his voluptuous mistress Barbara Castlemaine, and the King may well have cast an appreciative eye over his queen's lady in waiting, Margaret Blagge.

TREVOR  
BEALE



# MARY BEALE

Mary Beale (1633 – 1699) was Britain's first professional female painter who painted high society figures of the day right down to intimate family portraits of her husband and children.

Unfashionable for a long time, it is only in recent decades that her work has assumed the importance that she rightly merited. She was both talented and prolific, and at the height of her fame in 1677 painted eighty three portraits and earned the then considerable sum of £429.

Unique for the time was the role reversal of her marriage; her husband Charles Beale, a dilettante who never really settled down to a career of his own, became her muse and spent his life supporting her work, looking after the studio accounts, preparing her palettes, booking the sitters, and helping far more with the upbringing of their two children Bartholomew and Charles than was the norm at that period.

In fact the whole family combined in support of Mary, who often worked from dawn to dusk in her "paynting room". Charles mixed the paints and prepared the canvasses, while the two boys painted the sculptured ovals inside the rectangular frames and finished off the drapery after the sitter had departed.

Charles Beale kept detailed records of all the studio accounts and these notebooks survive in the British Museum and the

National Portrait Gallery, giving an intimate account of the goings on in their busy Covent Garden studio and a real insight into life in the latter half of the seventeenth century after the Restoration of the Monarchy.

Mary Beale has two connections with West Lodge Park – firstly because she painted the then owner of the house, Sir Henry Coventry, Secretary of State to Charles II, who took West Lodge as his country seat from 1673 until his death in 1686. The

original of this portrait hangs in the state dining room at Longleat, and a copy in the hall at West Lodge Park. The second connection is through the Beale family, current owners of West Lodge Park since 1945, who it is believed are descended from Charles Beale, her husband. His grandfather William

Beale was married in Hertford in 1586, the same area as the ancestors of the Beales of West Lodge Park.

The portraits in the Mary Beale Restaurant are from several sources: original Mary Beale portraits from the Edward Beale collection of Old Masters, original Mary Beale portraits from the Richard Jeffree bequest to the Art Fund and St Edmundsbury Borough Council Heritage Service, and copies of portraits found in the National Portrait Gallery and other London galleries.





## SELF PORTRAIT WITH HUSBAND AND SON

*Mary Beale (1659 - 1660)*

This copy of the charming self portrait of Mary Beale with her husband Charles and elder son Bartholomew is typical of Mary's informal style during this period of her work, which became more formal later on with an increasing number of society commissions.

The marriage of Charles and Mary was unusual in being a love match - they both shared an interest in art and throughout their married life, Charles always referred to Mary as 'Dearest Heart'. She accepted his offer of marriage with alacrity, although Charles was something of a dilettante, never really settling down to a profession of his own. Bartholomew was born in 1656 and their second son Charles junior in 1660. Mary did not become a professional 'paintress' until their move back to London in 1670.

Portrait from the Jeffree Bequest at the Geffrye Museum, London.



## DIARY OF CHARLES BEALE 1681

In Charles's diary of 1681, the records show they are hard up for cash and "borrowed of my cousin auditor Bridges in our great straites of disappointment of money the sum of four pounds...our Gracious good God was pleased to afford us this most reasonable supply..."

Courtesy of the Heinz archive at the National Portrait Gallery, London.



## MARGARET BLAGGE

*Mary Beale (1674)*

**Three quarter length in gold dress and blue stole, in a handsome carved oak frame.**

Margaret Blagge was a maid of honour in the court of Charles II. She carried out an intense platonic friendship with the diarist John Evelyn. They signed a pact of eternal friendship which Margaret broke when she married Sidney Godolphin (later Earl Godolphin, Lord Treasurer) without informing Evelyn.

She died young in 1678, giving birth to her first child. Both her husband and Evelyn were shattered by her sudden death. Sidney never married again, and Evelyn wrote in his diary "For certain wit, beauty, good nature, fidelitie, discretion and all accomplishments, the most choice and agreeable person that ever I was acquainted with". This painting was for many years in the possession of the Evelyn family.



## LADY FAIRFAX

*Mary Beale*  
(1633 - 1699)

**Half length in brown dress and blue cloak, in a sculptured oval with a Sunderland frame.**

Anne, Lady Fairfax, was daughter of Lord Vere and married Lord Fairfax in 1637. Fairfax was Commander of the Parliamentary forces and fought against King Charles I at the battle of Mareston Moor in 1644. After Cromwell's death, he was instrumental in arranging for the return to England of King Charles II.

## PORTRAIT OF A LADY



**Half length in a gold dress with blue caps, white collar and frilly sleeve. Label on reverse "Thos. Agnew & sons, Portrait of Maria".**

This painting has been tentatively dated to the end of the seventeenth century, but is now not thought to be the work of Mary Beale because of differences in the treatment of the face, the folds in the drapery, and the lace, although the cartouche is in her manner.



BARBARA  
CASTLEMAINE,  
DUCHESS OF  
CLEVELAND

*Mary Beale (1633 - 1699)*

**Three quarter length, in a golden brown dress.**

Barbara Castlemaine was the mistress of Charles II and dominated the years after the Restoration. She was a hectoring spendthrift personality known as the “splendid termagant”. The portrait is a copy of one by Lely. Mary Beale almost certainly painted the figure and others painted the drapery. Kenneth Malcolm, Deputy Director of Restorations at the National Gallery, restored the portrait in 1975.

PORTRAIT  
OF A  
LADY

*Mary Beale  
(1633 - 1699)*



**Three quarter length, in gold dress with blue stole.**

This handsome portrait is now attributed by experts to either Gerart Soest (1600-1681) or Pieter Borseller (fl.1644-1687) both Dutch artists working in England. The gold dress is particularly vivid, the face and hair very fine, although the shoulders are not in proportion. This portrait was formerly in the collection of the Hon. David Astor of Cliveden.

## RICHARD DOWDESWELL MP

**Head and shoulders in a red cloak and brown wig in a sculptured oval.**



Richard Dowdeswell, of Pull Court, Worcester, was High Sheriff of Worcester in 1689, and MP for Tewkesbury for many years. Although originally attributed to Sir Godfrey Kneller, the portrait is now thought to be by either Jonathan Richardson the elder (1665-1745), or John Riley (1646-1691), Court Painter under William and Mary jointly with Kneller.

## SELF PORTRAIT

*Mary Beale 1670's*



**Head and shoulders in brown and cream dress, in a sculptured oval.**

A rare example of a signed portrait by Mary Beale, signed bottom right as Mariah Beale. The sitter is unidentified but it is believed to be a self portrait. Mary Beale was the first woman in England to have established herself as a successful professional painter. She lived from 1633-1699 and is connected to the present day Beale family of West Lodge Park through her husband Charles Beale's grandfather William Beale who married in Hertford in 1586.





## PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN

**Half length in a dark robe with brown sleeves, lace cravat and cuffs, labelled on the reverse “The property of Henry Leycester Aylmer”.**

Although from the last quarter of the seventeenth century, this painting may not be by Mary Beale, but by Thomas Bate who was well known for his skill in painting lace.

## CHARLES BEALE

*Mary Beale  
c 1666*



**This portrait of her husband is believed to have been painted by Mary Beale at Albrook, Hampshire where they were living at the time.**

At least eleven distinct portraits of Charles by Mary are known, but this is the most ambitious, depicting him almost life-size. The sitter exudes a strong sensuous charm, and his relaxed pose, in a loose-fitting gown, creates an intimate mood which is comparatively rare in seventeenth century portraiture.

The landscape in the background, with mountains and a lake, seems Italianate and may have been included as a reference to Charles's possible early travels in Italy.

Portrait on loan from Moyses Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds with many thanks to St Edmundsbury Borough Council.



## AN UNKNOWN WIDOW

*Mary Beale  
c1680*

This portrait of an unknown widow is painted on pillow-ticking, the cheaper substitute for artists' canvas which Mary usually reserved for the portraits of her family and close friends "for study and improvement".

However this appears to be a typical formal commission undistinguished in colour, composition or characterisation.

Portrait on loan from the Richard Jeffree Bequest with grateful acknowledgements to the Art Fund and to St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

## MARY MAITLAND HAY, MARCHIONESS OF TWEEDALE

*Mary Beale  
c1680*



Lady Mary Maitland Hay was born in 1645, the daughter of John Maitland 1st Duke of Lauderdale, and Lady Anne Home. She married John Hay, 2nd Marquess of Tweedale on 11th December 1666. She died on 20th March 1702. Her husband became a privy councillor in 1680 and was a fervent supporter of the Union of Scotland and England.

Portrait on loan from the Richard Jeffree Bequest with grateful acknowledgements to the Art Fund and to St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

# BARTHOLOMEW BEALE

*Charles Beale 1693*



Charles Beale the younger was the second son of Mary Beale who grew up in his mother's studio and naturally progressed into the profession himself, becoming a competent portraitist in his time, although never to the same standard as his distinguished mother.

The portrait is believed to be of Bartholomew Beale, son of Bartholomew, elder brother of Charles Beale senior. Bartholomew senior read law at Gray's Inn and obtained the lucrative post of Joint-Auditor of the Imprests. He purchased the

estate of Hopton Castle on the Shropshire Herefordshire borders and the estate was inherited by Bartholomew Junior who was born in 1662.

Portrait on loan from the Richard Jeffree bequest at Moyses Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds, with many thanks to St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

MARY BEALE

*T Wright 1820*



**This is a stipple engraving published in 1820 by T Wright.**

Mary Beale was very prolific during the height of her fame, and has been termed the first truly professional female artist in Britain. Her clientele included not only her immediate circle of friends, particularly the Protestant clergy, but also nobility, landed gentry and children.

Her most successful year was 1677 when she obtained eighty three commissions and earned the considerable sum of £429.

Engraving from National Portrait Gallery, London.



## THE EARL OF COVENTRY

*Mary Beale*  
c1680

**This is a typical head and shoulders portrait painted by Mary in her middle years.**

It shows her “hard-edged” technique, chiefly used for commissioned portraits and the usual heavy framing cartouche around the sitter.

The Earl of Coventry was a title created twice in the Peerage of England. For many generations, successive Earls served in distinguished positions of authority in the West Midlands.

The ancestral seat of the Coventry family is Croome Court, near Pershore in Worcestershire, which remained with the family until 1996 when it was handed over to the National Trust.

Portrait on loan from the Richard Jeffree bequest at Moyses Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds, with many thanks to St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

## MARY BEALE AND HER SON CHARLES BEALE THE YOUNGER

*Thomas Chambers*  
1762



**This is an engraving of Mary Beale and her artist son Charles Beale the younger.**

Mary lived from 1633 to 1699, and painted right up to her death at the age of 66.

Her son Charles was born in 1660 and lived until 1726, painting with some skill as a miniaturist “but he practizd not above four or five years...his sight would not bear the practice” (Vertue) – an obvious handicap in a painter of miniatures!

Thomas Chambers (or Chambars) was a noted engraver with 46 works in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery. Engraving from National Portrait Gallery, London.



## SELF PORTRAIT

*Mary Beale*  
c 1665

**This is a small copy of the exceptional self portrait of Mary Beale that hangs in Gallery 6 of the National Portrait Gallery.**

Here she affirms her work as an artist by the palette hanging on the wall behind her; but also her status as a mother; the canvas she holds portrays her sons Bartholomew and Charles.

She painted this work during the time the family leased a house at Albrook in Hampshire where the family had fled to escape the Great Plague in London.

Portrait from National Portrait Gallery, London.

## CHARLES BEALE

*Mary Beale*  
c 1670



This copy of the exceptional portrait of her husband Charles shows him holding a laurel wreath, traditionally worn by a victor or someone worthy of special honour. This could allude to this role as his wife's muse in devoting himself to organising and running her studio, something he performed for over 20 years and recorded faithfully in his detailed notebooks.

Charles Beale's pose and consciously reflective manner are palpably poetic - he is bare chested and looks away melancholically into the middle distance while languidly holding the wreath.

Portrait from Philip Mould at Historical Portraits, London.

## PORTRAIT OF A LADY



**Half-length, as a shepherdess with a lamb, in an oval frame.**

Provenance: in hotel brochure of 1935 and included in the hotel sale to the Beale family in 1945.

This portrait of an unknown sitter has been tentatively attributed to John Baptist Closterman, who was active in London between 1690 and 1713.

KING  
CHARLES II

*Mary Beale 1670's*



**Head and shoulders in sculptured oval.**

**Provenance: Sotheby's 1969.**

This is a contemporary copy, the head deriving from the state portrait painted by Lely and belonging to the Duke of Grafton. There is documentary evidence that Mary Beale painted copies of this portrait. The sculptured oval may have been cut down in width since painting.



GEORGE  
WILLIAM  
6TH EARL OF  
COVENTRY

**Half-length, in brown velvet coat and painted oval.**

**Signed Enoch Seeman and dated 1742.**

**Provenance: Christie's 1972.**

The 6th Earl of Coventry was born in 1722 and died in 1809. He became Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire and Recorder of Coventry. Enoch Seeman lived from 1694 to 1744. Examples of his work are to be found in the National Portrait Gallery, and his full-length portrait of King George I hangs in the Middle Temple.

SIR JOHN  
EVELYN, BART



**Three quarter length in carved oak frame.**

**Provenance: Evelyn family. Christie's 1972.**

Sir John Evelyn (1632-1671), Baronet of Godstone, was first cousin once removed to his more famous namesake, John Evelyn the writer and diarist. This portrait has a handsome frame matching that of Margaret Blagge opposite, and both paintings belonged to the Evelyn family. Originally thought to be the work of Mary Beale, the portrait is now confidently attributed to Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), the most successful and prosperous Court and society painter of his age.



## JAMES BRYDGES 1ST DUKE OF CHANDOS

*Van der Min*

**Full length, with red and white cloak.**

**This is a reproduction of the portrait in the National Gallery attributed to Van der Min (1684-1741).**

One owner of West Lodge was James Brydges, the first Duke of Chandos, who had made his fortune in only a slightly less disreputable way than Sir Basil Firebrace, by being Paymaster-General to the Army from 1706 – 1712, during the War of the Spanish Succession, and getting rich on the profits. He built himself a magnificent house at Edgware called Canons, and maintained a private orchestra of 27 players for which Handel wrote the Chandos Anthems. Like General Pepper, he hoped to make profits from his position as Chief Ranger to the Enfield Chase but struggled for years against poachers and thieves, including some of his own servants.

## WILLIAM BEALE



William Beale, the fourth Beale in the story, came from humble beginnings in Hertfordshire (his father was a bricklayer) to seek his fortune in London. After his apprenticeship to his uncle, William saved up £50 and opened his own shop on Highgate Hill in 1861. The shop had a covered yard at the rear into which a horse and cart could be brought, and once the day's baking was over William used the residual heat from the ovens to cook dinners and send them out (the first involvement of the family in catering). A man of enormous energy and drive, he developed the business so fast that he was able in 1889 to open Beale's Restaurant, a large five storey building in Holloway containing a restaurant, grill room, banqueting suites, baker and departments selling a complete range of groceries and provisions, rather like a suburban Fortnum and Mason. William died in 1904, a pillar of local society and an alderman of Islington Council.