



JOHN WINTHROP, BY RICHARD S. GREENOUGH
Courtesy of The Fogg Museum of Art.

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The Art of Richard Greenough

By THOMAS B. BRUMBAUGH

WHEN the sculptor Horatio Greenough (1805-1852) died, his brother Richard (1819-1904) was his obvious artistic heir. In fact the life of the older of these two men seems to flow into that of the other, and looking at the sculpture of Richard Greenough, logically continuing in the direction Horatio's art had taken, one has the odd feeling that, perhaps, the older artist never died at mid-century, and that his real end did not come until 1904 after eighty years of activity under two different names. Richard, the youngest son of David and Betsey Greenough, born in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, April 27, 1819, grew to manhood, a devoted admirer of his already famous older brother, and from the first seems to have been overshadowed by him. Probably not the precocious child his brother had been, we do learn though, from an early biographer, seemingly grasping at straws, that

before he could speak plainly he frequently sung simple ballads in perfect time and tune, to an accompaniment played on the piano by his sisters. A correct ear for time and tune, and the enjoyment of musical harmony has been considered by good judges as among the strongest evidences of an artistic organization. Bartolini, the late celebrated Florentine sculptor, whenever a young pupil was presented to him . . . instead of examining specimens of what he had done, used to ask the lad to whistle some tune he was familiar with, and if the trial showed a correct ear, he would say, "You have the capacity, if you choose to study."¹

After attending Charles W. Greene's school in Jamaica Plain, Richard went to the Boston Latin School where he remained until he was seventeen, and although he was fully prepared, did not go on to college as his brothers had done. In 1822, when Richard was only three, four of David Greenough's sons were attending Harvard, but by 1835, family finances were in such a state that he seems to have found it necessary to work in the counting room run by two of his older brothers, commission merchants in Boston. Shurtleff, in his memoir, anxiously

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informs us that this sculptor of the philosopher of "a penny saved is a penny earned," was well chosen, as he worked zealously at his bookkeeping; but by 1837, he increasingly spent his leisure in drawing and modeling, and the brothers, respecting the artistic bent of still another member of the family, sent Richard off to Florence to study under Horatio.

He embarked on a vessel from Boston to Trieste, and from there, made his way to Venice, Ferrara and Bologna, and finally Florence, visiting the galleries in those and other cities, making drawings of the Greco-Roman antiques especially. In Florence with his brother, he was led about to all the leading studios to meet men like Thorwaldsen, with whom he drew and modeled from life. In the spring of 1838 he became ill, and after only six or seven months in Florence, went home to recuperate. He set up a studio in Boston in 1839, seeking local commissions, which seem to have been rather few, and, it is probable, also worked in the family counting room during the next five years; but in 1844, the immediate success of his bust of the historian William H. Prescott, was the means to his establishing himself as a professional artist. To Horatio Greenough, Prescott wrote:

I have been lately sitting to your brother Richard for a bust, and he has just completed the model in clay. It will be cast tomorrow, I think. It is pronounced a most faithful likeness by all who have seen it. I am no judge of this myself, but I shall be very content to have it so. Among those who have seen it are several best acquainted with the art here, and they agree that the execution of the work is excellent. I think this will give you pleasure as it augurs well for his success in a profession where mediocrity is not tolerated by gods or men. He seems to have his share of the genius which belongs to his name.²

To another correspondent Prescott confided:

This evening is a grand smash at Mrs. Nathan Appleton's, several hundred dear friends invited, four hundred consent, of whom I am not one, not caring to be converted either into a jelly or a pincushion. I am the more anxious to preserve my lawful dimensions just now, as I am in the process of being painted and being sculptured, the latter to please an artist and the former to please myself, or rather my wife.³

Sitting for Richard Greenough was done as a favor to the family by the famous historian; and just as Horatio's "John Quincy Adams" and "Lafayette" busts had meant the beginning of a demand for portraits by him, Prescott's "faithful likeness" created interest in the younger man. The bust seems not to have been put into marble, but many plaster casts were made and continue to grace New England institutions. The work's attention to detail, and the fact that it recorded a well-known and respected face, was its chief asset then, but now its lack of style seems to be its most remarkable property. The project of a good and earnest student, it lacked the authority of his brother's more assured and personal work.

Following this success, "he was constantly employed in executing portraits or fancy heads, and occasionally a statuette," we are told.⁴ The earliest work in marble we know is the sensitive "Bust of a Child" in the Boston Museum (Fig. 1). There is a simplicity of treatment in the drapery which suggests that it may have been carved by the artist himself. A pensiveness of mood is quite well conveyed, and we are reminded of the best work of Horatio, whose influence is strongly felt here, even to the use of a toga. Roman dress soon disappeared in Richard's work, as that convention which Benjamin West had helped do away with in painting in the late eighteenth century had almost completely run its course in sculpture by

1845. Except for the later "Alma Mater" or "Psyche," works of an allegorical nature, or obvious classical derivation, surface details of dress such as lace, fur, jewelry and the like, began to attract the new generation. It was the sign of a change in style from the "severe classic" to the "Hellenistic." A comparison of "Bust of a Child" with the "Bust of Cornelia Van Rensselaer," in the New-York Historical Society, done in 1849 (Fig. 2), will show the rapidly shifting attitude of the artist.

Going abroad again in 1848, he was quick to adopt the new mode of greater faithfulness to nature and costume. That year of revolutions heralded new middle-class taste for the literal, and the "aristocratic" allegorical devices began to disappear. Richard visited Florence during the year only briefly, and was soon off to Rome where William Wetmore Story and the second generation of sculptors in Italy were to establish themselves. "Cornelia Van Rensselaer" reflects a new classic attitude emboldened by contact with Roman baroque art. In Florence, Thorwaldsen and the quattrocento had been the masters, but with this bust, one is reminded somewhat of Bernini's portrait of Constanza Buonarelli in the Bargello at Florence. The fact that the Van Rensselaer bust was modeled in Italy and put into marble by Italian workmen, explains the lace collar and the fussy shirring of the dress, which Greenough's own technique as a marble cutter was probably not capable of at any time in his career. The establishment of a handsome balance between the clothing and the severely modeled head, makes this a pleasing work regardless of the extent to which Greenough was or was not responsible for the actual cutting of the stone.

On October 20, 1846, Richard

Greenough married Sarah Dana Loring of Boston, and by 1848 they had settled in Rome where Richard devoted himself to the trade in portrait busts commissioned by traveling Americans. Mrs. Greenough wrote a three-volume novel there, as well as a book of short sketches, *Arabesques*, which her husband illustrated.⁵ The writing reflected the extensive travels of the newly married couple throughout Europe and North Africa during a period of six or eight years, but was a fragmentary sort of prose which is painful to read today, what with its heavy-breathing style, suggestive of stilted translations of Pierre Louys.

The self-conscious archness of travel books by lady amateurs was frozen into marble with such works as Richard's "Cupid Warming an Icicle with his Torch" of about 1849, and a "Psyche" of the same period, set up as a memorial to his wife in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome soon after her death in 1885. It was of just such statues in the taste of the mid-century, by the American sculptor, Harriet Hosmer, that one of the typical and revealing critical stories of the period was told: "The Crown Princess of Germany (afterwards the Empress Frederick) on viewing ('Puck') exclaimed, 'Oh, Miss Hosmer, you have such a talent for toes.'" ⁶ And developing his "talent for toes" was a preoccupation which led Greenough to make the "Shepherd Boy with an Eagle" of 1853. Modeled in Rome, the plaster was brought to Boston by the artist and cast in bronze at the Ames Foundry in Chicopee, Massachusetts, and became one of the first works of "high art" to be cast in this country. Less than life size, it is not an imposing work, and excessive attention paid to the "charming" and the "graceful" has given it a disastrously

dated look. In spite of, or because of an effeminacy which it shared with Harriet Hosmer's "Puck," the work was purchased by a committee of the Boston

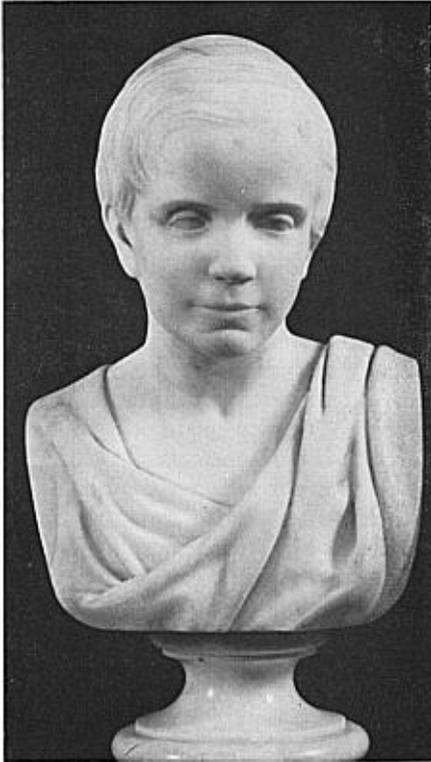


FIG. 1. BUST OF A CHILD, BY
RICHARD S. GREENOUGH

Courtesy of The Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston.

Athenæum for its collections for the sum of fifteen hundred dollars. When one remembers that Miss Hosmer sold more than thirty copies of "Puck," each priced at about that figure, one is less impressed by the financial success of Richard Greenough. But artistically the "Shepherd Boy" is a more interesting work, pleasingly organized and less sentimental. It

is derived from Thorwaldsen's "Ganymede," yet decorously avoids that subject by including a nest and having the boy in the act of robbing it, a deed evidently more to the taste of the time. The picturesque quality of the group won for it considerable praise, and the high finish of its surface, a product of a Massachusetts foundry, gave it further status in the community. Lorado Taft is the only modern critic to take any notice of it, and he finds the work "hardly interesting. . . . The exigencies of the sculpture have compelled the artist to reduce the eagle to a portable size." And Greenough "never extorts from one the cry, 'Oh, the poor man!'" as did Puget's 'Milo of Crotona' from the emotional Maria Theresa. It must be acknowledged that some of Richard Greenough's portrait statues are more likely to call forth such an exclamation."⁷

It is not certain why Richard Greenough happened to be in Boston in 1853, leaving behind him in Rome a growing patronage for portrait busts and "ideal" subjects, but it is likely that friends on the "Franklin" statue committee had privately summoned him, and that their desire to have a "Franklin" modeled by a Bostonian in Boston, could only be fulfilled by Greenough. It is further probable that he had the "Shepherd Boy" cast in Chicopee as a sample of his "American" work and his willingness to co-operate with the growing nationalistic concerns of the period. In spite of the awed and slavish respect of Americans for foreign art and ideas, Horatio Greenough a generation before had found that they were stubbornly true to their concept of themselves and their ideas of reality as well, and he had been a victim of his own Yankee inability to compromise in the creation of his curious toga-clad "Washington." But

Richard Greenough was to have no such problem. His portrait busts gave close attention to the dress of the sitters and pleased because they dealt, first of all, with the likeness. A bust of his sister, Laura Greenough Curtis, still in possession of her descendants, preceded his arrival in Boston and helped create faith in him as the artist of a "Franklin," for "it is thought to be an excellent likeness and of exquisite workmanship."⁸ It was fitting that later the actual suit of clothes worn by the illustrious patriot and philosopher on the occasion of the signing of the treaty of alliance with France, in 1778, was loaned to Greenough by the Massachusetts Historical Society as a precaution that the "Franklin" would be correct in all respects.

Probably one of the most carefully documented works of art of the nineteenth century, this statue was to be the subject of a commemorative book of more than four hundred pages, in which every name, receipt, note and letter connected with it seems to have been recorded. It was certainly planned that the committee in charge of the monument should find the sculptor "busily engaged in preparing his exquisite 'Boy and Eagle' for being cast in bronze, and otherwise much occupied."⁹ After hearing suggestions as to what sort of work was desired, Greenough made a rough sketch in clay followed by more conferences, in the course of which some dissatisfaction was shown about the lack of finish of the sketch. Men who were spending approximately twenty thousand dollars wanted to see what they were getting, and Shurtleff explained:

The statuette modelled by Mr. Greenough, and exhibited by the Committee on Design, was intended simply as a rough and unfinished sketch, to convey an idea of what the artist proposed; and as such, it met with the de-

cidated approbation of the members of the General Statute Committee who were present at the meeting.¹⁰

Nevertheless, a very exact copy, one fourth the size of the actual statue, was made under the sculptor's direction by Miss Florence Freeman (1836-1876) of Boston, and this helped somewhat to dispel the fears of togas or poorly finished work. Something of the distrust must have been partially due to rumors of new



FIG. 2. CORNELIA VAN RENSSELAER, BY RICHARD S. GREENOUGH, 1849

Courtesy of The New-York Historical Society, New York City.

and heretical directions being taken by French sculpture and painting, and the fear that this member of the Greenough

family might possibly be another classicist in disguise. In a way this was true, but Franklin's old suit of clothes with its fur trimming covered it up rather well. Using language which recalls that of his older brother in describing the "Washington," he wrote to the committee in May of 1854, in regard to a very different sort of work:

I have endeavored to trust my statue in harmony with his character simply. I would have it thoughtful, dignified, of kindly expression, and unconscious. In pursuing this course I am gratified to feel that the same principle was observed in the most eminent portrait statues of antiquity. The statues of Menander, Demosthenes, Sophocles and Agrippina are signal examples in support of simplicity, always winning the attention, because they do not appear to wish to be seen of men! As it is important that the work be completed as speedily as is consistent with faithful execution, I would propose that the bas-reliefs be entrusted to such other sculptors as your committee think capable.¹¹

Apparently the Boston sculptor, Hammat Billings (1818-1874), was considered for the bas-reliefs, but in the end Greenough himself did two, and Thomas Ball (1819-1911), designed "Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776" from John Trumbull's painting of that subject in the Yale Gallery, as well as "Treaty of Peace and Independence, September 3, 1783." Ball's reliefs, his first public commission, were placed on the sides of the pedestal, while Greenough's "Franklin as a Printer" was placed in the front, because the chief monetary support of the statue had come from Boston's mechanics and tradesmen; "Experiments with Lightning" was put on the rear. "Curiously enough," Post points out, "of the four pictorial reliefs on the pedestal, the two simpler panels from Franklin's early life by Greenough are better than the two more complicated

panels from his later life by Ball."¹² Indeed, the "Experiments with Lightning" is one of Greenough's most appealing works in its balance of the human figures against two horses huddled together in a stormy landscape. (Fig. 3) Thomas Ball's "Josiah Quincy" (1878), which now balances the "Franklin" on the front lawn of the City Hall, is also far from being its equal.

The pedestal itself was designed by Henry Greenough, the architect-brother, and finally, early in September 1856, the statue was put in place and made ready for the inauguration planned for it. This was, indeed, to be one of the most impressive ceremonies Boston had seen until that time, as Shurtleff's volume assures us, but James Russell Lowell in a letter of September 9, to Edmund Clarence Stedman, gives us an amusing and private picture of the affair:

Tomorrow . . . we are to inaugurate Greenough's Franklin with a tremendous procession. . . . I may just mention that the American Academy comes in before the governor, and Charles perhaps can tell you who *some* of the fellows are. *It is thought* that they will find carriages provided for them. . . . There are to be two addresses and an oration. Only think how interesting! and we shall find out that Franklin was born in Boston, and invented being struck by lightning . . . and that a penny saved is a penny lost, or something of the kind. So we put him up a statue. *I* mean to invent something—in order to "encourage sculptors."¹³

The Pan-Bostonian procession to this "veritable jubilee" wound its way among streets and houses decorated with bunting and mottoes such as, "Little strokes fell big oaks," while one printer "exhibited a kite and a key with the inscription (also inscribed on the base of the statue itself) '*Franklin- Eripuit Coelo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis!*'"¹⁴ After a lengthy oration and two addresses of

precisely the type which Lowell had anticipated, an "Ode" by James T. Fields was sung:

Give welcome to his sculptured form!
Art's splendid triumph here is won;—
Thus let him stand, in light and storm,
Our sea-girt city's greatest son.¹⁵

A competition among the city's fire companies ended the day, and "Franklin"

toga were proven groundless, but *The Crayon* article continued,

This (common-sense) is a quality not by any means so usual in modern Art as men might suppose in these practical times. I believe, indeed, it is the rarest of all artistic traits. . . . The head is a grand thoughtful piece of character . . . shrewd, thoughtful, profound indeed, yet essentially material . . . a genuine work of Art—the realization of an idea.¹⁶

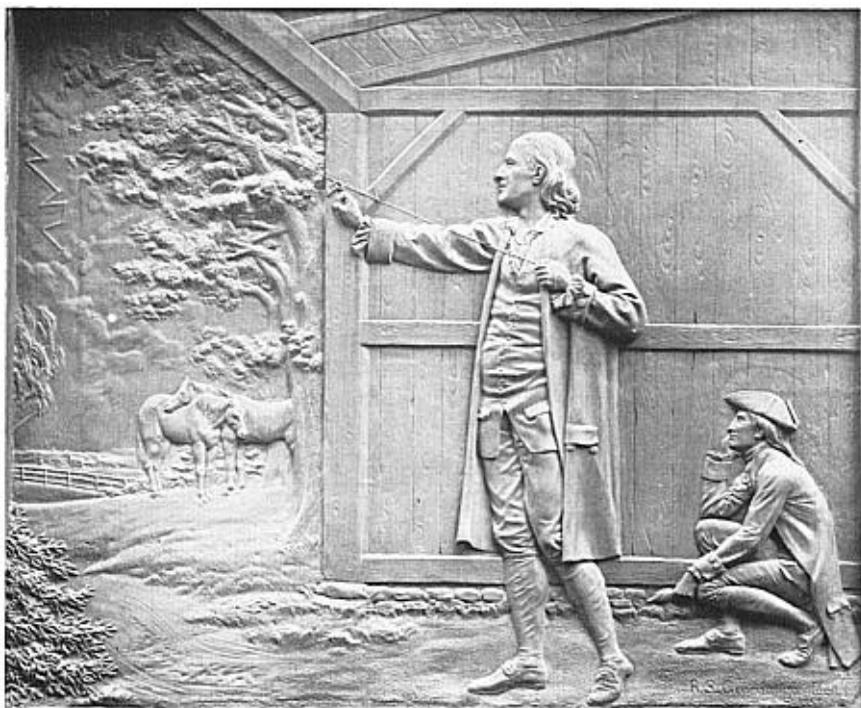


FIG. 3. "EXPERIMENTS WITH LIGHTNING," RELIEF BY RICHARD S. GREENOUGH, 1857, FOR BASE OF THE FRANKLIN STATUE, CITY HALL, BOSTON

was on its way to becoming a landmark in front of the Boston City Hall. The editor of *The Crayon* pronounced it a "noble work, unaffected and thoroughly full of common-sense." The fears of those who had dreaded to see the old philosopher of the matter-of-fact in a

An anonymous critic in the next issue of *The Crayon* was pleased to note that "Franklin's" head was enough to make the work outrank "Houdon's statue . . . that has its nose in the air so high that one ought to be on a level with the face in order to appreciate the likeness fully."¹⁷

And a public merit of the work lay in its dauntlessly withstanding the test of changing times and tastes. Almost thirty years after its erection, T. H. Bartlett in a rather severely critical series of articles which still hits the mark, wrote:

The bronze Franklin . . . is the most pleasing staute in the city. The pose is happy, human and effective; the statue looks like a fine, full-bodied old gentleman of another time. Its whole sentiment is refined. It does not show the verve, freedom of treatment, and knowledge of the human form that are found in famous statues, it neither shocks by vulgar pretence, careless workmanship or want of study. The historic halo that increasingly surrounds the name of Franklin will not be diminished by Greenough's tribute. The interesting scenes that the bas-reliefs on the pedestal depict will preserve them in public regard, although they are not quite as picturesque as the subject would warrant.¹⁸

By means of a conservative and conventional work, Greenough managed to escape the derogation of both his own time and that of the next generation into which he lived. Even Wendell Phillips seemed to be saying what he thought of Franklin the man, rather than what he saw in the statue, when he wrote: "It is a tipsy old gentleman, somewhat weak in his spindle-shanks, swaying freely to and fro on a jaunty cane, as with villainous leers he ogles the ladies."¹⁹ The "jaunty cane" had been copied most accurately from the very crab-tree walking stick which Franklin had bequeathed to Washington, so there could be no complaint on that score.

Time and chemistry have dealt kindly with the statue, for even the yellow bronze, "made of copper . . . from Lake Superior where silver mingles with the copper," which reminded one critic of cheese, has taken on a rich green patina in our time.²⁰ The "Franklin" undoubtedly marked the summit of the artist's fame, and because it was a wholly satisfactory

work, seemed to culminate the careers of the Greenough sculptors. If Horatio had lived, he would almost certainly have made such a costumed figure. The fact that it was made at the beginning of a taste for bronze and "iron photography," and is a realistic document of Franklin's appearance in 1778, is not too obviously the source of its faults. Greenough was never to waste his talents sculpturing shoelaces and buttonholes like his friend Story; he is even "classic" in doing nothing to excess in the "Franklin," but perhaps the work's great fault is that it seems to have none, or at least seems to avoid making any statement beyond the obvious. Horatio Greenough had usually dared to speak his mind, but Richard was content to be competent and to please his patrons. Aside from the rough sketch, the actual work itself, and Florence Freeman's copy, the Ames Foundry cast a small bronze copy as well as one in silver which was presented to Newell A. Thompson, chief marshal for the ceremonies. Further attesting to the popularity of the statue, thousands of lead and chalk copies were also made, and New England antique shops still sell these souvenirs of a momentous day and a work that enjoyed great fame in its time, and is now seen to be uninspired but competent and acceptable. In Richard, Horatio's challenge to public taste as well as his feeling of responsibility for it, has been resolved, and those who knew what they liked because they liked it, had been given precisely what they expected and deserved. In fairness to a major product of a minor talent, though, it might be said that Richard gave more than might have been expected of him. (The Franklin statue itself, so often pictured, has been omitted from these illustrations in favor of other less well-known works.)

Midway in his work on "Franklin," the sculptor was commissioned by the proprietors of Mount Auburn Cemetery to make a seated figure of John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts Bay (now transferred to Harvard's Memorial Hall), to be placed in the chapel there (Frontispiece). They looked toward creating a Westminster Abbey in the midst of a necropolis on the outskirts of Boston, and had begun as early as 1830 to assemble effigies of great men, as well as to extract promises from living ones that they eventually allow themselves to be buried in or near the chapel. The fact that both Horatio and Richard Greenough, as well as members of the family lie there, is evidence of the success of one sort of collecting,²¹ but it was also one of the chief glories of the place that "the chapel . . . contains a sitting statue of Governor Winthrop. The painstaking, almost exquisite finish of the work, indicates a refinement of mind in the treatment of marble, that deserves a closer and more intense relationship with the true sense of sculpture."²² Or in Lorado Taft's words, it is a portrait of a "world-weary schoolboy, the scapegoat of the class," and a sculpture in which an incredible technique has gone for naught.²³ Delineation of details of clothing in the "Franklin," especially the fur of the coat, had pleased many Bostonians, and on this basis, it might have been safe to assume that the boa which drapes "Governor Winthrop" was the essence of success, but this did not prove to be the case. The rather retiring and even shy attitude of the figure was only emphasized by its lack of weight and "consequence." The sensitive face, the costume and the prayerful hands suited the known facts of Winthrop's life, but unlike the costume pieces of French academic sculptors like Fre-

miet and Dalou, which it suggests, it lacked the tension that comes from a rigorous training and a strong artistic conviction.

On the positive side, it is possible to admire the fine craftsmanship of the carv-

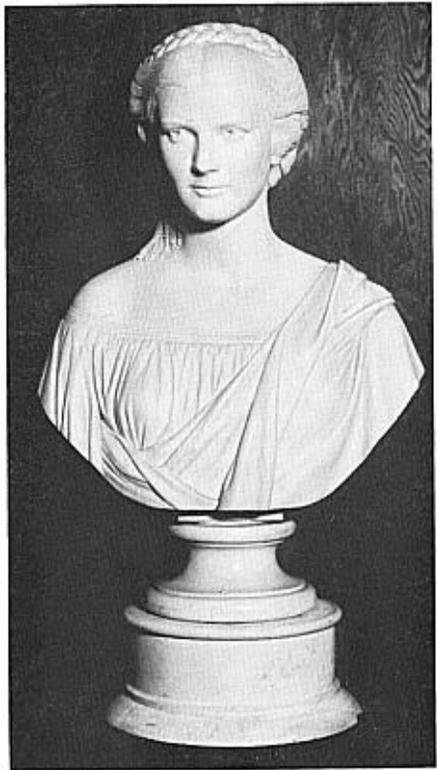


FIG. 4. MRS. R. C. WINTHROP, JR., BY RICHARD S. GREENOUGH, PARIS, 1860
From the Society's Collections.

ing. And if nothing of this was done by the artist himself, his initial modeling of the ruff, or the folded charter with its pendant seal, lying across the left leg, is surely an excellent display of technique. Pride in surface and neatness of finish reached a high peak in this work, but even though the figure is life-size, it has

no monumentality. Sacrifice of scale to detail produced an absurdly large "miniature," a porcelain figurine which seems to have been transcribed from a Dutch seventeenth-century painting by a minor master. It is certainly significant that a number of critics who wrote of it sympathetically at the time, were forced to fall back on the word "exquisite" to describe it.

It is likely that a "Bust of Lafayette" in the New-York Historical Society, attributed there to Horatio, but surely of a later style, is a work by Richard Greenough, done during the eighteen fifties. Related to the Horatio Greenough head of 1832, it shows a refinement and sweetening of the features of the earlier bust, and a tastefully disheveled rearrangement of the hair which recalls Michelangelo's "Moses." The toga has given way to nineteenth-century dress.

Back in Europe late in 1854, Richard and his wife continued to travel widely, but by 1855 they had settled in Paris where Greenough was one of the first Americans to work and study, finding however few friends among French artists trained in the severely political and inbred academies and studios of Paris. Outsiders were not encouraged to share in what was a virtual monopoly of the taste of the period, to say nothing of official commissions all over Europe. Distinguished Americans such as Henry James and James Russell Lowell were among the visitors to Greenough's studio, but as his perhaps most notable work had been accomplished, the later sculptures seem an anticlimax, and his studio increasingly attracted Americans making the grand tour, some peripheral minor nobility, or members of the extensive Greenough family. Although he was to establish a Newport, Rhode Island studio

before 1870, nearly all of the busts are signed Paris or Rome.

The plaster model of "Washington Sheathing his Sword" (1858), Greenough's only work to find its way into the Louvre collections, is a curious amalgam of elements. The figure of Washington is taken directly from Houdon's Virginia statue, while the horse is caparisoned so elaborately that one scarcely notices the rider. A bronze copy, cast in the Williams Foundry, New York, also signed and dated, "Richard S. Greenough FECIT, Paris 1858," is in the United States Military Academy Museum, West Point. A pair of cast lead horses in the Detroit Institute of Art (cover), there attributed to Greenough, seem to bear some relationship to what was probably a study for an equestrian Washington commission, and they have a vigorous quality and energy which is akin to that of the horse which Washington rides. Allowing for differences in size, the surface effects of cast lead and bronze, and their traditional attribution, it is quite possible that these are genuine works of Richard Greenough, and as such are among his best achievements. It is sad that we are so rarely permitted to see the basic form of his art, usually smothered beneath surface glossiness.

In 1861 John Lothrop Motley, historian, and Lincoln-appointed ambassador to the Austrian court, posed in Paris for his bust while en route to his assignment in Vienna. A copy in marble took its place with the earlier "Prescott" in the Boston Public Library, but it is interesting to note that in the course of twenty years, the toga drapery had disappeared and been replaced by what is, in effect, a loosely draped business suit. "The likeness is very characteristic of the distinguished historian," Thomas B. Curtis,



FIG. 5. CARTHAGINIAN GIRL, BY RICHARD S. GREENOUGH, 1863
Courtesy of The Boston Athenæum.

brother-in-law of the artist, wrote in a letter to George Ticknor, asking him to accept the work; and "I have thought it could not be more appropriately placed than in the Public Library of Boston," he continued, evidently with some feeling, for by that time the Curtis house could boast a collection of at least seven works by the sculptor brothers.²⁴

"The Carthaginian Girl" (Fig. 5), in the Boston Athenæum, signed and dated 1863, "an interesting and almost spirited figure . . . comes near being attractive and even distinguished," according to Lorado Taft in his rather woebegone picture of American sculpture before the advent of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.²⁵ Ostensibly an illustration of an incident of the second Punic war, it shows a young girl cutting her long hair to be used for bow strings by the defenders of Carthage. The torso and arms are modeled in a soft, boneless manner, and the "Venus de Milo" has been clearly quoted, but in this case the lovingly pumiced surface texture helps make "The Carthaginian" a work of appropriate sensuousness. Use of the device with the "John Winthrop" strikes one as being unjustified. In the seminude, one is aware of an allusion to Titian's venuses who look into mirrors and admire themselves. A cascade of drapery and the texture of the hair are delightful exercises in baroque, "painterly" handling of marble; for "classicism" here has become Hellenistic, conceived by a sculptor who evidently admired Bernini's "Magdalen" in the Siena Cathedral, and similar works.

Exhibition records of the eighteen sixties list many portraits of anonymous ladies and gentlemen, and such busts as an unlocated "Shakespeare," of which Tuckerman tells us that he has "selected the

Chandos picture and other authentic portraits, taking scrupulously the features in which they all agree, and has composed an ideal head of intense beauty and truth."²⁶ Beauty and truth, no doubt, lay in the fact that such a work described the mid-century ideal of Shakespeare, and as such was highly successful, even though it had little to do with the poet. Henry James in a short story, "The Tree of Knowledge," about a sculptor named Mallow (one thinks of marshmallow or *mal* ough) tells us:

There was luckily a certain independence, of the pecuniary sort, all round: the Master could never otherwise have spent his solemn *Wanderjahre* in Florence and Rome, and continued by Thames as well as by the Arno and the Tiber to add unpurchased group to group and model, for what was too apt to prove in the event mere love, fancy-heads of celebrities either too busy or too buried—too much of the age or too little of it—to sit.²⁷

"Cupid and the Tortoise," sometimes called "Cupid Bound," was one of the unpurchased groups which is still in the possession of a descendant, Mr. Francis B. Richardson, Charles River, Massachusetts. Exhibited at the British Royal Academy in 1865, in the course of its ninety-some years of existence, the nose and toes have disappeared and it has become a garden statue, almost covered with ivy, and until recently assumed by its owners to be the work of Horatio Greenough. Part of the "little staring white population, heroic, idyllic, allegoric, mythic, symbolic," of James's "fictional" sculptor's studio, it shows a loosely draped and "winged amor" or "erote bound," evidently forced to ride on the back of the tortoise. The meaning of this "allegoric" group seems to be that love has a slow and bumpy road to travel, and in spite of the greatness of the theme in

the hands of earlier artists, it seems hopelessly trivial in this variation of it. Louise Chandler Moulton, who saw the work a few years before the artist's death, felt that:

Mr. Greenough has been cruel to cupid—no, it was the nymphs who were cruel to him, and the sculptor only made his portrait. The nymphs have clipped his wings and bound them with silken cords, and set him on the tortoise, slowest creature that moves at all; and here he is with the half-pathetic, yet half-mischievous look upon his face,—as lovely a vision as sculptor ever summoned from the white depths of the marble.²⁸

Elements of the group were borrowed from Roman and Hellenistic cupids and dolphins, and children with various animals, or perhaps, one of Laocoön's sons, but one is hard put to discover the reason for Greenough's borrowing the Belvedere Apollo's hair arrangement. Nothing can save it from being one of the least consequential of his works. In a letter from London he confirmed Henry James's guess, for such sculptures had put him into a situation where, "with all my industry and economy, I have barely kept out of debt, and if I had no property of my own I could not have done that."²⁹

A "Mary Magdalene at the Tomb" of 1869, now in the Cooper Union Museum, New York, seems scarcely to be the work of the same man.³⁰ Slightly larger than life, and almost gigantic in scale, it has its "inspiration" in baroque caryatids, dying Amazons, and Bernini's ecstatic saints; and the sculptor had evidently been attracted to the revival of interest in Jean Goujon and the French Renaissance. Another sculpture which was never sold, it was of that species which, as James suggested, was made for "mere love;" nevertheless, it was completely unlovable, except as a revealing and libidinous document in the mood

of the figure for Chapu's "Tomb of Regnault." One thinks of other statues in "Magdalene's" presence, for from its artist's struggle with style and "art" has come a sort of curious anthology in which it is hard to distinguish one eclectic element from the other. Such efforts seem much less satisfactory than those heroic and misguided ones Horatio Greenough made in his struggle with himself and his contemporaries.

"Alma Mater Crowning her Heroes," is a quietly modeled, life-size figure of a seated woman holding aloft a laurel crown. Of approximately the same date as "Magdalene," it has something of the reticent air of the seated "Winthrop." One feels that here the artist knew what he was about, undisturbed by a quasi-religious subject or historical accuracy to costume. "The wife of Dr. John Collins Warren [Dr. Warren had had his bust made by Horatio] posed for the studies of the statue when she was a young girl in Rome. Those who died in the war are named on the shield which she is holding. Those who are returned are named on two marble tablets near the statue."³¹ Dedicatory exercises held in December of 1870, produced a considerable amount of laudatory verse, but the most remarkable example was the "Ode" of Henry Williamson Haynes of the class of 1842, who wrote:

Hoc marmor vovimus, discipuli tui
Sculptum, cara parens, artificis manu,
Fraternis animus, cordibus aemulis,
Grates testificous opus.

One of the last classically draped statues made by Greenough, it is also significant of the dying Greco-Roman vogue that a translation of the poem, which suggests that it had been written prior to the Latin version, was furnished on the program:

This marble, sculptured by the hand of one,
Whom thou, O Alma Mater, ownst as son,
With hearts where mingle brothers' pride and
love
We pledge, our lasting gratitude to prove.³²

The oration by the Honorable William Maxwell Evarts, lawyer and statesman, who "clothed his thought with sentences as long as the English language can supply, and with great involution and circumlocution . . . of style drove on a whole flock of several clauses, before he came to the close of a sentence,"³³ was also a suitable tribute to one of the last of the neoclassic statues: "The artist, with a touch grave and solemn, a sense of the duty which we all feel, has produced this emblematic mother full of exultation at the glories of her sons, full of grief at their sacrifice, full of serene joy that other sons yet survive."³⁴

Until 1876 Greenough received no public commission in America, and aside from the dedicatory encomiums, public reaction to "Alma Mater" was simply neutral. Receiving indifferent attention, the sculptor returned to waning years filled with busts and ideal heads of Elaines, Portias, Beatrices, and Joans, most of whom have "disappeared" into private hands where no one pays any attention to them, evidently. Fortunately, however, unlike his brother, Richard Greenough seems to have signed much of his work, and thus, except for questionable early pieces, it can easily be identified when future art historians might seek it out. The standing figure of Governor John Winthrop is signed and dated 1876, which suggests that the work, with copies in bronze and marble, was the product of four years' labor. The bronze version, cast like the "Franklin" by the Ames Foundry, was not too well received, as is seen in an article on New-

England monuments in which T. H. Bartlett wrote:

The last statue erected in Boston (1880) was the bronze of Governor Winthrop by R. S. Greenough, in Scollay Square. It is intended to illustrate the first governor at the moment when he steps from the ship onto the soil of Massachusetts, carrying the documents and objects of his authority and hope. The general feeling is that nothing could be worse than this mass of metal, a dirty yellow in color, without character except for its concentration of everything bad. If good work in the past is to mark the memory and preserve the fame of an artist, let it be remembered in this connection, as having exhibited . . . legitimate expression.³⁵

The marble version, until recently in the United States Capitol's Statuary Hall, was one of the first ten works to be placed in that strange room now overflowing with icons of gesticulating heroes of the fifty states. More satisfactory than the seated "Winthrop" of twenty years earlier, the standing figure is technically above the average of its time, as Lorado Taft points out, and it advances with a good stride on carefully drawn legs, while the arrangement of the arms is well considered and sculpturally massive.³⁶ In its new position, closely framed by columns in a nearby corridor, amidst the alien rhetoric of other rejectees from the main hall, it seems, however, to lose any authority it may once have had. Greenough's continuing delight in starched lace is remarkable, but the Scollay Square version, now moved to the yard of the First Church, Boston, has been improved by a generalizing patination. An exact replica, the bronze medium creates a more rugged effect, although knowing the artist's interest in particulars, one is forced to conclude that this was not his original idea.

A "Circe" signed and dated 1882

(Fig. 6), was Greenough's last large work, one of those which Henry James recalled in 1900, as "the monumental being all diminutive and the diminutive all monumental."³⁷ When the artist's

... and the cup she offers,—I would drink it from that hand though I knew I must dwell henceforth and forever in her pigsty. Look at that hunting leopard under her chair! He was once a man. He loved her, and he drank from her cup. But is his fate so hard who dwells



FIG. 6. CIRCE, BY RICHARD S. GREENOUGH, 1882

Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

granddaughters presented the work to the Metropolitan Museum, they wrote: "The Circe is life-sized in white marble and about to offer the enchanted wine to Ulysses—one of her transformed victims fawns beneath her chair."³⁸ The attitude of the figure clearly invites the spectator into the role of Ulysses, and Mrs. Moulton, somewhat carried away, wrote:

forever in the sunshine of her beauty? Perhaps she puts out her hand and touches his head sometimes, when we are not there to see.³⁹

The "monumental is all diminutive" in "Circe," it should be noted, and it is a most curious example of a large piece of marble being handled so that it has no weight or size. Detail here has been used without any consideration of its relation to the figure problem involved, and one

is convinced only of its suitability for ivory or *blanc de chine*. As in the late busts of his cousin, William Whitwell Greenough (1889), in the Boston Public Library, and "my lovely boy," Constance Fenimore Woolson (1887), the writer, in the Rollins College collection, the eyes have a peculiarly lackluster expression. "After an illness Miss Woolson's hair fell out, and when the new hair came in, it was soft and curly. Mr. Greenough declared that the moment in which to make the bust because the graceful shape of the head could be seen."⁴⁰ Even so, "Circe's" graceful head lolls back and stares with a provocative look that would be appropriate for a sick Victorian doll.

The W. W. Greenough bust, draped with a compromised toga, is the work of an old man, seen in one of his later commissions. In this portrait we feel nothing of the deeper sense of conviction displayed in even the most commercial busts by Horatio; the mechanical means, the lace and ruffs have not been attempted, and we feel only that the statement has been pointless, as we are not given a convincing likeness, even though it may have been a recognizable one. The bust of George Bancroft in the Harvard Library, is only slightly more satisfactory. It tends toward the *fin de siècle* French taste for realism and Beaux-Arts academicism which relished smoothness spiced with a mild form of Rodin's impressionism, but the classic mold had been too strong, and in Greenough's last years, he worked in a style twenty-five years behind the most conventional academic tradition, and one which had almost nothing in common with the innovations of men like Rodin, Bourdelle, and Gauguin, who were his contemporaries.

Richard Greenough never had, and perhaps does not deserve a full-scale bi-

ography, but Cornelia Carr's account of Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908), sums up the way in which the last neoclassicists must have seen themselves, in spite of the extent to which they may have sinned against their own code:

After the contortions of the Bernini school, arose by revulsion of taste the more modern classic school, of which Thorwaldsen was the bright, particular star, and so will it be to the end. Schools will arise in which grotesqueness will be called "originality" and caricature "nature." But after all these schools have completed their little cycles, lovers of all that is beautiful and true in nature will seek their inspiration from the profounder and serener depths of classic art.⁴¹

Further deploring the state of bad times as seen in the new French academic naturalism, Miss Carr quotes from a letter of Harriet Hosmer, written in her old age, concerning the tomb of de Maupassant in Pere Lachaise:

I also asked the Baroness Adolphe if it were true that the monument to Guy de Maupassant . . . really had a modernly dressed young Parisian seated at the foot of the column reading one of his novels? I read the description in a paper but could scarcely believe that art had dropped so low. The Baroness says it is quite true and that when she walks there . . . she avoids the place, not to have her eyes offended by the sight! So much for art in the 19th century.⁴²

In his allegory on the Richard Greenough family, Henry James has the painter son ask, "But what did the Master, all aloft in his senseless fluency, know of impotence, and what vision—to be called such—had he in all his blind life ever had?" And the answer was—"for any artist—at least to 'do' something."⁴³ Although Richard Greenough was the weakened end of a tradition, he nevertheless left monuments behind him which mark his place and his time; a few are works of value which do him honor. In

his sometimes "senseless fluency," he may have seemed a monster to an acquaintance like the acute and intellectual James, yet even in his most insipid and hackneyed work, he revealed certain facets of his century's experience which help preserve for us the sense of that total phenomenon. He was probably an artist of the

third rank, as his brother was of the second, but they were sometimes genuine artists as well as curious figures in the history of taste, and as one or the other or both, they have a permanent place in the cultural history of America, and deserve neither destructive condescension nor our forgetfulness.

NOTES

¹ Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, *Memorial of the Inauguration of the Statue of Franklin* (Boston, 1857), p. 378. (Hereafter Shurtleff.)

² William H. Prescott, *The Correspondence of William Hickling Prescott* (Cambridge, 1925), p. 455. Letter of March 31, 1844. (Hereafter Prescott.)

³ Prescott, p. 447.

⁴ Shurtleff, p. 379.

⁵ Sara Dana Greenough, *Arabesques: Monarè. Apollyona. Domitia. Ombra*. (Boston, 1892).

⁶ Cornelia Carr, *Harriet Hosmer, Letters and Memories* (New York, 1912), p. 79. (Hereafter Carr.)

⁷ Lorado Taft, *The History of American Sculpture* (New York, 1924), p. 193. (Hereafter Taft.)

⁸ Hannah F. Lee, *Familiar Sketches of Sculpture and Sculptors* (Boston, 1854), II, 227.

⁹ Shurtleff, pp. 358-359.

¹⁰ Shurtleff, p. 361.

¹¹ Shurtleff, pp. 359-360.

¹² Chandler R. Post, *A History of European and American Sculpture* (Cambridge, 1921), II, 234.

¹³ J. R. Lowell, *Letters of James Russell Lowell* (New York, 1894), I, 272.

¹⁴ Shurtleff, p. 110.

¹⁵ Shurtleff, p. 274.

¹⁶ W. J. Stillman, "R. S. Greenough's Franklin," *The Crayon*, I (March 7, 1855), 155.

¹⁷ Anon., "Franklin and His Statue," *The Crayon*, I (March 21, 1855), 186.

¹⁸ T. H. Bartlett, "Civic Monuments in New England," *The American Architect and Building News*, IX (June 11, 1881), 281.

¹⁹ Quoted in Mark A. Howe, *Boston Landmarks* (New York, 1946), p. 112.

²⁰ Ralph W. Emerson, *Letters*, ed. Ralph L. Rusk, 6 vols. (New York, 1939), IV, 46.

²¹ It is interesting to note that Richard Greenough and the painter Winslow Homer, who were acquainted during their lifetimes, share the same vault at Mount Auburn.

²² T. H. Bartlett, "Sitting Statues, III," *The American Architect and Building News*, XIV (June 12, 1886), 280.

²³ Taft, p. 194.

²⁴ Letter of July 5, 1867 (Boston Public Library Correspondence File).

²⁵ Taft, p. 194.

²⁶ Henry T. Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists* (New York, 1867), p. 593.

²⁷ Henry James, *The Short Stories of Henry James* ed. Clifton Fadiman (New York, 1945), p. 417. (Hereafter James.) Mr. David McKibbin of the Boston Athenæum has informed me that Greenough's descendants always understood "The Tree of Knowledge" to be based upon what James knew of the relationship between Richard Greenough and his son Gordon, the painter.

²⁸ Louise Chandler Moulton, *Lazy Tours in Spain and Elsewhere* (Boston, 1898), p. 118. The author has found a well-preserved version of "Cupid and the Tortoise," signed "R. S. GREENOUGH, SC. ROMA, 1887," in the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, India. The Salar Jungs, I, II and III, were Nabobs who accumulated conglomerate treasures in their travels. Salar Jung, II, evidently came into contact with Greenough.

²⁹ Richard S. Greenough to Charles Greeley Loring; London, March 25, 1865 (Harvard Library).

³⁰ In Mrs. Greenough's *Mary Magdalene* (Boston, 1880), we have a poetic parallel inspired by the sculpture.

³¹ Pauline Holmes, *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge, 1935), p. 250.

³² Henry F. Jenks, *Catalogue of the Boston Public Latin School . . .* (Boston, 1886), p. 130. (Hereafter Jenks.)

³³ F. C. Hicks, "William M. Evarts," D.A.B. (New York, 1931), p. 218.

³⁴ Jenks, p. 131.

³⁵ T. H. Bartlett, "Civic Monuments in New England," *The American Architect and Building News*, IX (June 25, 1881), 304.

³⁶ Taft, pp. 261-262.

³⁷ James, p. 423.

³⁸ Miss Alice Blight to the Director (Metropolitan Museum Letter File).

³⁹ Moulton, p. 118.

⁴⁰ Mrs. Nina Dean, English Department, Rollins College, informs me that an anonymous catalogue there records the circumstances of the bust and Greenough's fond appellation.

⁴¹ Carr, p. 334.

⁴² Carr, p. 348.

⁴³ James, p. 430.