PRE-RAPHAELITES IN CORNWALL

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Although the Pre-Raphaelites had an immense impact on British landscape painting, they were not associated with any particular region or locations. They worked in various areas around London and such provincial centres as Liverpool, and some made forays into other countries; but they were not drawn to the places already conspicuous in the British landscapist's repertoire: not to the parts of Scotland, Wales, Yorkshire, and the Lake District that were then popular. However, one location possessing a character all its own became newly accessible to the landscape painter: this was Cornwall, at the southwestern extreme of England, which had been the source of subject-matter, both literary and visual, for Georgian readers, art-lovers, cultural tourists, and artists including Thomas Rowlandson (*Scenes in Cornwall*, 1812), Thomas Luny (1759-1837, himself Cornish), and the better known J.M.W. Turner. Cornwall drew painters looking for an unhackneyed English rural vocabulary and the contrast between nature and industrialization, with its wind-swept coastal scenery, mining, and sea-going lore. It came into focus in another way too, with Tennyson's popularization of the Arthurian legend, as Arthur was supposed to have held court at Tintagel on the northern coast of Cornwall. This essay investigates how Pre-Raphaelite painters engaged with this charismatic landscape.

Cornwall's remoteness and small population gave it the wild character of a primitive region locked in old ways and habits, comparable with the Scottish islands or parts of Ireland but more curious because it was part of mainland England. Inevitably, Cornwall's coasts were said to have seen the actions not only of such resonant names of English maritime history as Raleigh, but also of innumerable pirates and smugglers. Famous shipwrecks put Cornwall on the map and infamous "wrecking" was a well-known phenomenon that gave the area an outlaw character. Although the county's tin-mining industry dated from the mid-17th century, throughout the years of the Victorian era there were still no towns of any size other than Truro that had civic and commercial consequence. On the south coast, Falmouth could claim a singular importance