

## Portraits of Sir Nathaniel Lloyd<sup>1</sup>

By JOHN GUINNESS

THE motives that have led men and women to sit for their portraits are very varied. Portraits were painted to commemorate marriages and also the return of an unfaithful wife to her husband's tutelage. Portraits were used as family records and were sometimes given by members of the Royal family as a reward for services rendered. The portraits that hang in the halls, parlours, common and combination rooms and lodges at Oxford and Cambridge are the result of the wish to perpetuate the memory of the founders, benefactors, masters, fellows and also some of the more important alumni of the college or university. Mrs. Poole has traced the genesis of the college collections and in particular the emphasis towards the end of the 16th century on creating portraits of founders, if they were lacking.<sup>2</sup>

Another aspect of academic portraiture is brought to light by some letters among the manuscripts at All Souls College, Oxford. They refer to a portrait of Sir Nathaniel Lloyd that was painted by Thomas Gibson in 1733-4, and which still hangs high up in the hall at All Souls (PLATE VIII).

Sir Nathaniel Lloyd was the son of Sir Richard Lloyd and was born in 1669. He entered Trinity College, Oxford, and matriculated in April 1685. He was also at one time a commoner at Lincoln College. But his relations with Lincoln were not happy, as he notes in his will: 'I gave to Lincoln College Oxford where I was a Comoner five hundred pounds in 1737; but it not being laid out as I directed—so no more from me.'<sup>3</sup> He became a Fellow of All Souls in 1689 and received his D.C.L. in 1696. He also entered the College of Advocates, Doctors' Commons, and throughout the remaining years of his life was active in the Admiralty and ecclesiastical legal fields.

That he prized his fellowship of All Souls highly is apparent from a letter he wrote to the Warden on his appointment as Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in 1710.

'I will trouble you with my thoughts abt the Consistency of my fellowship; I hope a Good Man as well as a Righteous Man may Ever Hope to hold

<sup>1</sup> I should like to thank the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford, for their kind permission to reproduce the portrait of Sir Nathaniel Lloyd by T. Gibson and to quote from manuscripts in the Library at All Souls. I should also like to express my gratitude for the assistance given me by the late Sir Edmund Craster, the late Librarian, and Mr. Webb, the Sub-librarian of the College.

<sup>2</sup> *Catalogue of Oxford Portraits* by Mrs. R. L. Poole, 1925, vol. II, Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> *Warren's Book*, edited by A. W. W. Dale, C.U.P., 1911, p. 320.

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itt. My being Vice Chll. cannot bee a true Cause of Absente to assign a Reason of Absenting from One Place, because I absent also from Another . . . I shall not bee in Cambridge 8 weeks the whole Year. And so they Know.<sup>4</sup>

Lloyd did not intend to permit the Mastership of Trinity Hall and the fact that he was Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge in 1710 to detain him long in Cambridge. The letter suggests that much of his time was spent at Doctors' Commons in London. He nevertheless took a keen interest in the affairs of All Souls and corresponded with the Warden about ecclesiastical matters that were of interest to the College. In 1726 he informs the Warden of his desire to be buried at All Souls. On 1 February 1728 (O.S.) Dr. George Clarke<sup>5</sup> suggests to the Warden that great reliance may be placed on Lloyd's good inclinations towards the College. This hope is confirmed by Lloyd's offer in July 1729 to lend £1,000 to be employed 'towards turning the Hall'.

The first mention of the idea of having a portrait painted of Sir Nathaniel appears in a letter written by Lloyd to the Warden, Stephen Niblett. This was sent via another Fellow of All Souls, who was also a Member of Doctors' Commons and was later to be Lloyd's executor, Dr. Edward Kinaston.

Mr. Warden,<sup>6</sup>

I immediately Acknowledgd the Honour to Dr. Kinaston, who sent mee the Order: I thought 'ere this he Had wrote my Purpose, in a familiar way expressed a If I must be Hang'd, I begg'd a Reprieve for Some times.

I woud not Top upon Seniority, There is a much Finer, & Nobler Length to Grace Your Hall. The Anima of Our Mundis—<sup>7</sup>

I added in mine to Dr. Kinaston that it being Sol. Col. I thought they shd. appoint the Hand, and Direct the whole of the Peice, and when I might sitt for my Physis—I now add to Disgrace the Best Finish'd Room in Oxford. I Joy You of it. May it be yr. Domus Capitularis for the Election of Fellows, who may Prove Good and Great in Church and State.

N. LL

Kinaston forwarded Lloyd's letter to the Warden together with a covering note that reveals the College's true motive in requesting Sir Nathaniel to sit for his portrait.

<sup>4</sup> All Souls MSS. Appeals and Visitors' Injunctions 318. Sir N. Loyd to the Warden, 9 December 1710.

<sup>5</sup> Fellow of All Souls. Died in 1736.

<sup>6</sup> All Souls MSS. Exhibitions etc. 15. Sir N. Loyd to the Warden, 12 November 1733.

<sup>7</sup> Poole, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 180, no. 2. A portrait of Henry Chichele painted by Sir James Thornhill and presented by Lloyd to the College.

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*The Order.* he means I sent him word of [what] was the result of the meeting where in I was desired by You and the Society to acquaint Sr. Nathaniel with the favour You ask of him to sit for his picture.

The Hanging being reprieved alludes to an Expression of mine in my first letter to Sr. Nathaniel wherein I happend to say the College desired him to sit for his Picture of the same dimensions wch [sic] the Founder & Coll. Codrington's<sup>8</sup> to be *hung* in the New Hall.

You'l perceive at what little twigs he catches at modestly to get a *Reprieve* but not as I think totally to decline the College Request but on the Contrary; after what he sayes, which I was glad to [see] . . . , of his senior in the College.

N.B. my own thoughts the thing pleased Him and has Catchd him, not my own thoughts only but the sentiments of one who knows him intimately than I doe, who said, it was a Stratagem of the College & that he believed one day or another the College wd find this request answerd to their own advantage. This I desire may be kept inter nos.

You'l please to answer the letter Yourself to Him.<sup>9</sup>

It is possible to trace the stages of development of the portrait through four other letters. The first is from Dr. Kinaston and the other three from Lloyd. They are all addressed from Doctors' Commons to the Warden. They provide further illustration of the sitter's somewhat ponderous wit and his very individual spelling.

I had a letter last night from Sir N. which begins thus—

'Who better than Dr. Clark to name the Hand and direct the whole?

Now Sr we have set the Wheels agoing and it falls into the Person You thought of to conduct them forward I doubt not but this affair will be done well & with satisfaction.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Kinaston wrote mee, that Dr. Clarke has taken the Direction of the Affair and I shall Obey his Orders. Mr. Gibson has been at Drs. Commons already.<sup>11</sup>

I am here imured in yr. Service (and shall Let none See my Face but Mr. Gibson).<sup>12</sup>

I attended Mr. Gibson the third time On Thursday; and am Dismissed, to return to Sunbury next week . . . You will see an intire Obedience to the

<sup>8</sup> These two portraits by Sir James Thornhill still hang in the hall at All Souls.

<sup>9</sup> All Souls MSS. Exhibitions etc. 16. Dr. E. Kinaston to the Warden, 13 November 1733.

<sup>10</sup> All Souls MSS. Exhibitions etc. 17. Dr. E. Kinaston to the Warden, 27 November 1733.

<sup>11</sup> All Souls MSS. Exhibitions etc. 19. Sir Nathaniel Lloyd to the Warden, 10 December, 1733.

<sup>12</sup> All Souls MSS. Exhibitions etc. 21. Sir Nathaniel Lloyd to the Warden, 25 December 1733.

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College Commands and Dr. Clark's Designing, With Due Respects to all—If  
the Original fails, may There bee ye Truest Copy of,

Yr. most humble Servant,

Nath Lloyd.<sup>13</sup>

These letters show conclusively that the All Souls portrait was painted by Thomas Gibson and not, as Mrs. Poole suggested, by Sir James Thornhill.<sup>14</sup> The fact that the full length portraits of the Founder and Colonel Codrington were painted by Thornhill perhaps led Mrs. Poole to believe that of Lloyd was by the same hand. The final confirmation is Thomas Gibson's signature and the date 1734 that appears half-way up the portrait to the left of the back of the chair.

The portrait is mentioned by George Vertue in his Notebooks. 'A whole lenght of Sr. Nath Lloyd for Queens College Oxon by Mr. T. Gibson.—1734.'<sup>15</sup>

However, Vertue was mistaken in believing the portrait was destined for Queen's—a college with which Lloyd had no affiliations.

The choice of Thomas Gibson (1680?-1751) as the artist is perhaps a result of his earlier connection with Oxford. Vertue notes in July 1732:

'Mr. Gibson removed to Oxford—for some time.'<sup>16</sup>

Mrs. Poole mentions portraits by Gibson in six other Oxford colleges. He also seems to be the type of painter that might appeal to 18th-century dons.

'Mr. Thomas Gibson . . . many years courted & caressed for his excellent skill in painting of portraits true drawing and just likeness. alwayes exact. he alwayes practizd a correct & firm manner of drawing. as he rose to fame he still modestly continued the same price for his pictures.'<sup>17</sup>

Gibson shows Lloyd clothed in the scarlet and crimson gown of a D.C.L. seated in a high-backed chair on a carpeted dais. In his left hand he holds a document to which a large seal is attached. Through an opening on the right there is a view of the recently completed Wharton building at All Souls. The face is firmly drawn and the whole composition is suitably dignified for its place in 'the Best Finish'd Room in Oxford'.

At Lincoln College, Oxford, there is a three-quarter length copy of the All Souls Portrait.<sup>18</sup> It, however, differs from the All Souls portrait in that

<sup>13</sup> All Souls MSS. Exhibitions etc. 23. Sir Nathaniel Lloyd to the Warden, 12 January 1733 (O.S.)

<sup>14</sup> Poole, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 191.

<sup>15</sup> Vertue *Notebooks*, vol. III. The Walpole Society, vol. XXII, 1934, p. 69.

<sup>16</sup> Vertue, vol. III, p. 61.

<sup>17</sup> Vertue, vol. III, p. 45.

<sup>18</sup> Poole, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 176, no. 18 Rep. Nothing of the earlier history of this portrait is known. Mrs. Poole also gives this portrait to Thornhill. It is in fact rather an inferior copy by or after T. Gibson.

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it has a view, not of the Wharton building, but of the Hall range of the Front Court of Trinity Hall. Sir Nathaniel, who died on 30 March 1741,<sup>19</sup> left in his will £3,000 to Trinity Hall 'to raise the Hall [to] conform to the Chapel then on the North [side].'<sup>20</sup> The refacing of the walls of the Hall in Ketton stone, the building of the cupola and the insertion of sash windows to match those already completed in the rest of the Front Court was carried out by Essex and Burrough in 1742.<sup>21</sup> Therefore the buildings shown in the Lincoln portrait were completed after Lloyd's death and this suggests that the portrait is a posthumous copy perhaps by Gibson himself, who lived on until 1751. It is, however, possible that the portrait was painted earlier and the view of the Hall range added at a later date.

Another portrait of Sir Nathaniel Lloyd hangs behind the high table at Trinity Hall, Cambridge<sup>22</sup> (PLATE IX). It was first mentioned by Samuel Warren in 1742.<sup>23</sup> Describing the new interior of the hall he writes: 'the hanging at the upper end taken away and an enriched baldachin with a Portrait of Sir Nath. Lloyd were set up in its stead.' The painter of this portrait is unknown, although Thornhill has again been suggested. It is, however, a more magnificent portrait than the Gibson at All Souls. The stylish chair, the imposing architectural background, the intricate design of the carpet and the sitter's self-confident expression all help to create a really dignified and grand academic portrait.

All Souls's 'Stratagem' bore fruit in time. In December 1734 Lloyd offered to make a contribution towards the cost of further building operations. This particular offer, however, came to nothing. Perhaps the College had not paid due attention to the Bishop of St. Asaph's<sup>24</sup> warning to the Warden on 14 March 1733 (O.S.) on the occasion of another offer from Sir Nathaniel. The Bishop suggested that in spite of the difficulties involved the offer must not be refused, as Lloyd was easily offended and had determined to give up the Mastership of Trinity Hall in consequence of offence given him there. Despite these two barren offers, All Souls benefited in the end. He bequeathed 'to All Souls College of wch I was Fellow, One Thousand pounds to finish the North Pile, or if finished towards compleating the Library'.

Lloyd in fact resigned the Mastership of Trinity Hall in 1735. In spite of his earlier somewhat disdainful remarks about Cambridge and Trinity Hall,

<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Poole always gives 1745 as the date of Lloyd's death. He, however, died on 30 March 1741. *Warren's Book*, p. 324.

<sup>20</sup> *Warren's Book*, p. 320.

<sup>21</sup> I am grateful to Mr. C. W. Crawley for assistance on this point.

<sup>22</sup> I am grateful to the Master and Fellows of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, for their kind permission to reproduce this portrait.

<sup>23</sup> *Warren's Book*, p. 85.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Tanner (1674-1735), Bishop of St. Asaph, Chaplain of All Souls College, 1695.

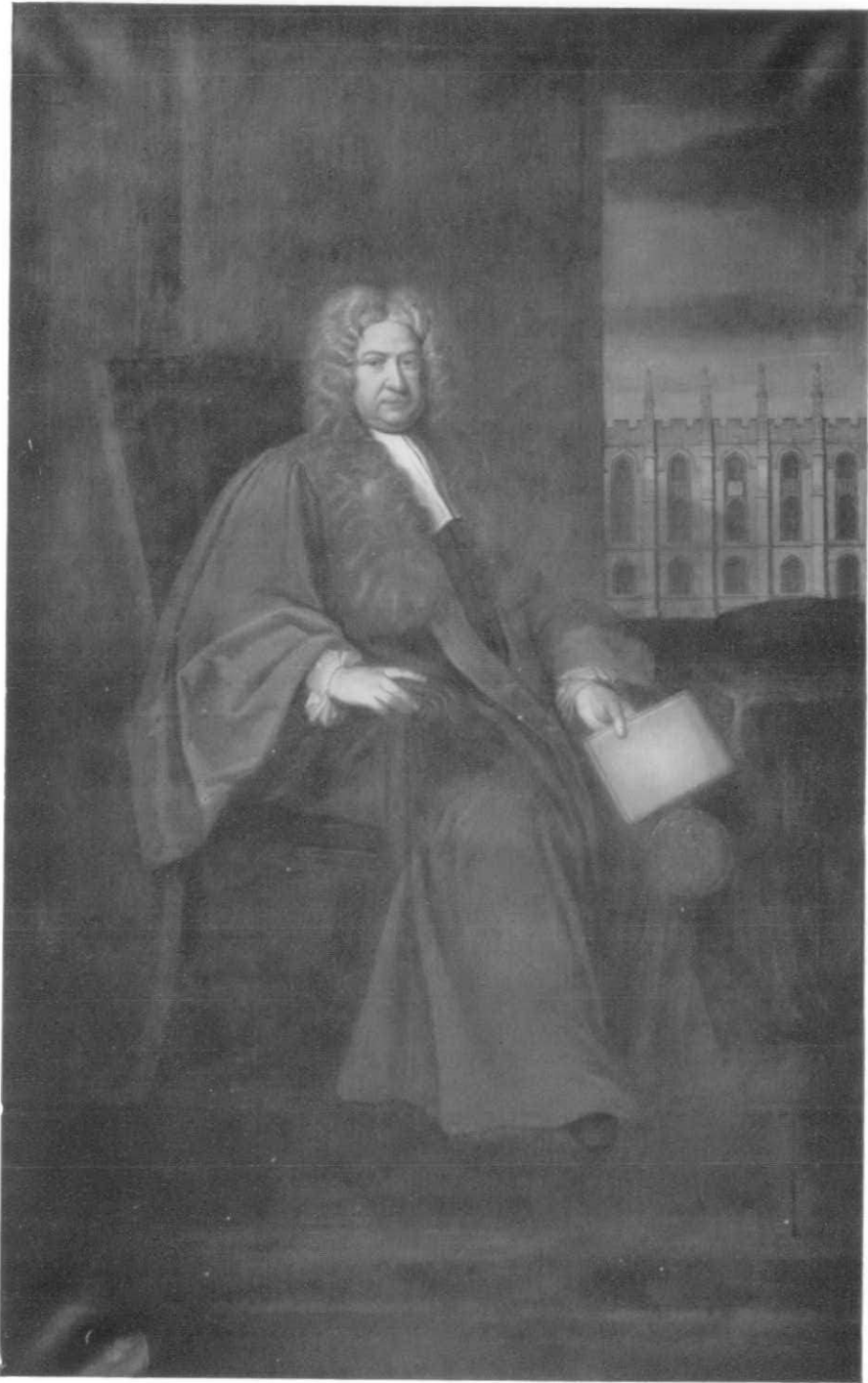
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and the Bishop of St. Asaph's remark, Sir Nathaniel took a certain interest in the College and left it £3,000 and his books. He also left minute instructions as to what was to be done on his death. 'To be carried from the place where I shall Dye by break of Day, within 4 Days to the Undertakers at London—after 2 or 3 Days, to be carried thence . . . to Cambridge. To be directly carried to Trin-Hall and layd in the Outward Chapel that night.'<sup>25</sup> He died on 31 March 1741 and was buried in the Chapel of Trinity Hall before Morning Prayer on 8 April of the same year.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Warren's Book*, p. 322.

<sup>26</sup> *Warren's Book*, p. 324.

PLATE VIII



Sir Nathaniel Lloyd by Thomas Gibson, 1734, All Souls, Oxford.





Sir Nathaniel Lloyd by an unknown artist, Trinity Hall, Cambridge.