

MN Painting

April 1st

I believe in what I saw -

- I believe in the finished painting as record of what I saw at that moment, probably a bad inconsistent effort but at least I have put it down and there is room for another though to come to the surface.

April 11th

I am listening now for the sound of the triple roll

All fields become striped from rolling and subtle patterns are appearing as the tractors harrow the newly planted fields.

Birds hare/have a shadow across the ground and cloud patterns flock the earth.

April 28th

Hurrah for St George

At Theberton a large glad of red and white was pulling out into the sky.

- as it was and bright it caught the eye and the tower, tall and well balanced below, grey in colour and seen askew in passing.

Appearing to twist and be pulled out of true by the dominance of the flag.

Crayon done(?)

now do it

(on hardboard for texture)

and think as if you are standing below it on the edge of the grass (a(?) green allotment(?))

May 10th

Neither painters or paintings can be judged one against another

We are all individuals and are talking to ourselves

(in strong pen, easy to read could use scan rather than annotated text)

May 13th

Please come in and sit with me in my paintings.

May 16th

These are not great paintings.

I am just trying to say something about peace and calm and space round oneself.

May 29th

I am looking across the landscape not at it

a new venture- picking out the silent (?) features.

The first attempt is across the open landscape near Hempnall. Three churches stand out also the base of one windmill in - otherwise a receding not very noticeable series of hedges, groups of trees, patches of arable land.

Towards Gissing the immediate landscape is quite different, undulating grassland possible red parkland, interspersed with mature trees, heavy in full leaf but still a light new green.

June 14th

Paul Klee is great because he found a way of saying *exactly* what he wanted to say

about what he thought

and about what he saw in his mind by drawing it out of the paper.

June 23rd

I should like to have been a stone mason and kept racing pigeons at the bottom of the garden in black and white striped huts.

Learning both skills diligently amongst rows of well grown vegetables.

I can make bread and the hens will lay eggs.

What more could you want

Also a bell ringer at night.

June 25th

Of all the types of painting I love the wall paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum. The freedom of those at knows us (?) and the Etruscan (?) tomb paintings - seen only of course in reproductions.

On seeing any original painting after the familiar postcard reproduction, the scale is often astonishing - generally much larger but occasionally smaller and with less surprise.

- Often of course, more brilliant with colour and energy, but sometimes again a milder painting than the condensing of the reproduction would suggest.

July 11th

A new painting 88

Wild flowers will soften the stiffest lady

It will be difficult to do, but i will try. On the common a lady walks stiffly along in her best suit and hat. She rounds the corner by the water tyrant and red rusty pipes, to be suddenly confront by a wall of dog roses. The path bends round the bushes and then straightens out again.

The poppies are red and shouldn't be there.

The sky is mediaeval blue. The clouds are white.

The lady stops and takes off her jacket and reveals a soft yellow blouse.

She stops to smell flowers that have no sent(?) and goes on her way - her stiffness gone.

September 21st

Tethered animals pull to the extent of their tether and leave circular chewed patches in the grass.

December 21st

By any means at their disposal a great artist says exactly what he wants to say, and we acknowledge it. *e.g. Femme an corsage a fliers Lithograph. Picasso '57 (check)*

While using smooth board it seems desirable to use the roughness which canvas dictates, but while working on a large rough canvas I would like the delicacy of a smooth surface to slide over. We always want what we can't have.

Notes not in diary - use as text in book

I understand now that I am painting what is left of the 'Paradise Garden', in the cold clear light of a shadowless dream, in the faith that it still exists in my country, and that it is there for anyone who wishes to seek it, and walk in it.

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MN Travel

23rd May

The lighthouse stood unmoving - the rocks Immobile

- the sky moving fast, horizontally, and of into the South West.

- the water heaving and 'boiling' up and down, sucking wildly at the rock base.

Waves are like tongues but cold and white as they lick at the rough surfaces. The foaming rises as with its own energy.

Water drops on the edge of the foam are spit smoke and mist from hidden Welsh valleys.
Rises and sucks up the sides of the rocks in the same mysterious (silent) way. It hangs also rather like steam from a boiling kettle in a warm small kitchen.

Rocks against the light seem to project sharp teeth edges in anger and self defence as the teeth of a dog seem when caught against the light.

I like the contrast of rounded stones and rocks which are not so much eroded as softened by careening, not gashed by biting.

Little sea urchin fossil where have you been all this time. Am I the first person to pick you up - or did early man in Metfield pick you from the soil and throw you down as an unknown symbol of magic, and leave you for someone else to pick up.

- Remember the hairy mammoth at Homersfield.

28th June

In Wales now the sun would be pushing to shine in the gaps between the mountains, and small adiabatic clouds would be sitting like white hats on all the mountain peaks stretching out into the distance.

R.S Thomas The Place from Not That He Brough Flowers (book of poems)

Martins - a lack in this house as we have no martins

I used to watch them for hours wheeling and returning to the window with balls of soft mud to attach to their last years walls.

- patting the soft ball in place with their beaks, pressing in hard, twisting their beaks to make a cleaner release.

The young ones leaned out from their hole into the daylight wings still pinioned like figureheads on a wooden ship.

ref. Figure heads at Trinity House Yarmouth and inadequate drawings

ref. Figureheads staring out to sea at the Fishermans rest Southwold.

September 19th

I would like to go back to Wales, to the Conway Valley to Conway Castle and to follow the estuary down as it narrows towards the hills.

Sedges as the tide came in
(catalogue)

Little fishes have such freedom not knowing their hazards

December 20th

If it is dull when travelling, I can always look at roofs and wires.

Poles and wires divide the skyline and quarter the spaces between the buildings. Here is a good start anyway to an interesting subject.

-

MN Animals

January 2nd

New Naples yellow

This bright naples yellow I saw round the eye of a frog - inside it a soft orange to ring the eye - inside that a deep green of the eye itself which came from the side of the tank. The vertical ridges of the tank were soft viridian and rain bowing at the corners.

May 19th

A caterpillar very very close.

Rows of hairs many more than can be drawn.

The front segments and mouth parts seem to drop off towards me. 2 red marks like eyes glowing in each segment.

It turns its head towards me,
and the shadows of the spines fall across its body.

June 6th

Pigs frighten.

They often have left covered with mud, high up and appear as if they are wearing long socks.

This combined with the fact that they are poised high on their hoofs, gives them a ludicrous appearance as if wearing shoes with high heels.

June 27th

The 1st bee died of cold

The 2nd bee was trodden on

The 3rd bee died in the rain

the 4th bee died of too much blossom

- poor dead bee

Some bees do not die but remain on their backs confused.

(This reads like a description in a bestiary)

July 1st

Norfolk Show

Very old ram falling asleep sitting on his haunches in the rare breeds survival trust tent
handbook of rare breeds & cards/calves?

The largest charollais(?) bull I have ever seen at the A I(?) tent

Goats again alerted at the entry of large bunches of leafy branches - it was exactly same as seen 2 years ago (see notes) remember the stripes in the bee tent everyone quietly busy.

British whites with wonderful translucent skin slightly patched with blue grey. Above these patches, at random, darker hairs of paynes(?) grey-black.

Heavy horse judging - magnificent with their strong arched necks and spectacular trimmings.

I waited for the hot air balloons, down wind behind the trees but didn't see them.

I drew the jacob sheet again & again as usual - animals carrying black and white have an immediate appeal (remember belted galloway at Cotswold Farm park Guiting power(?)).

August 1st

Harvest spider walking down a green path between 2 brick walls (Metfield) after a fête.
It's body was a sunken red velvet (painting in watercolour)
Its shadow on the grass reseda green
Its body was sprung on the wide delicate legs as alight
Velvet cushion on a spiders web.

August 20th

Today I was looking at a striped insect (wasp?) as it paused in the sun on the terrace.
The shadow it cast was deep and long, stretching ahead from the proboscis.
At that moment a large noisy aircraft flew over as they are wont to do here. Its shadow immediately covered and extended that of the insect, so that it appeared to have an aeroplane for a shadow,
a moment in time - there is is - or was
I drew it quickly. (see painting)

September 5th

A red underwing
It ran along the table towards me as I drew it and even sat on the page wrapping a leg round the pencil.
Observers book of common insects and spiders p977
"When disturbed the moth will run along like a mouse seeing shelter instead of taking to the wing"

September 14th

Swans today swimming or pushing along in water made of lead.
They made a dent only in the water about 1ft ahead of the forage of the crop. This was encased in a float of bubbled.
The breast bone could be seen half white under the water - the legs extended black backwards.
Wings and tail sculptured by the light.

September 15th

I wish the geese would go away. They press so close with button eyes. Their beaks are faceted - angular as a church steeple in Lincolnshire.
You thought they were white but look again.
They are eating the roses and their feathers glow pink.

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MN The English Countryside

Brown notes in drawing folder:

distant spires
tall black steeples

sequence: seeing something you expect to happen

- behind flower banks
- suddenly seen on turning a corner
- behind people on sky line

- set in hollow in a landscape
- contrast to church if average church
- church towers

May 2nd

Walking again to Floridan common brings to mind vividly the day I trod hard on a grass snake and our subsequent fright and panic

Starting yet again:

4 stages in the panic of the snake I disturbed

May 7th

We went late to the river, which was overhung with leafy trees. The sun was setting to the left and very very quickly the remaining light was daring away. Into this graded green gently rowed a boat containing two pink ladies. The rower was in plastic viridian and the boat was cream. Within a few seconds they had glided into the dark brown green shadows.

May 7th

Momentarily a squared ginger and white horse stood awkwardly under a crab apple tree. The shadows were mauve. The Vision was my own.

August 9th

Flies on the water in abundance - trout rising and weeds flowing horizontal in the water.

August 28th

Don't worry, the shells will all wash back into the sea.

The dandelion will push up through the asphalt.

The man will whistle and none will hear him.

The grass will push through the paving stones and cover us all.

The country is companionable. Towns are not.

September 5th

Saw rafts of bubbles on a swollen river

one day I will try again to paint.

Mountain bubbles carrying views of mountains

bubbles, inside them contain inverted view of the landscape.

Raindrops having on a twig, each contain a perfect view upside down of the immediate small patch of hedge in front of me, surrounded often by Rainbow edges

Rainbows in the sky cannot be effectively shown in paint.

September 28th

A river is a fine place to sit. The river is going somewhere and you are not. There is very slight activity all the time. There is a sense of travelling - either you can go with it, conjure up the view round the next corner.

Look back and recreate its passage in your mind.

Better to be going somewhere all the time - however slowly.

November 18th

Remember the caterpillar hanging on invisible threads - seen through the hole in a leaf - in the distance a football match in progress.

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MN Figures

*The feast of guardian angels
here today - a pure thin October sky
transparent leaves on the trees, many fallen so the guardian angels will show if they are in the sky
of angles in paintings*

- *with figureheads on ships sometimes truculent*
- *always looking past us, ignoring us, out to sea, very proud*

ref. stars as our umbrella still

*guardian angels not always benign as we would have been led to believe
hard vacant faces looking through me, ignoring me, as a figurehead on a passing ship
guardian only of the idea of a vulnerable human being.*

*Go back to the sailors reading room in Southward and look hard at the figureheads, redraw the beach, the
moving shingle, the wet stones, the insistent to and fro of the waves - also impersonal - man is not important
at all.*

but our ideas are important so we must put them down in concrete form before we die.

*Yes of course we believe we have guardian angels an interesting proposition to ask people what their
particular angels look like.*

October 2nd

A new theme - how men carry colour with them

- *men carrying flags (Snape)*
- *morris dancers*
- *man with a bunch of gladiola*
- *man coming round the corner. Walpole (just where I expected him to)*
- *a man balancing a tray of geraniums on the handlebar of his bicycle*
- *man with red waistcoat sitting on the river bank*
- *man with heavy bunches of gladioli coming down the steps of the quayside to board the paddle steamer
crossing the Humber from Hull*
- *man cycling in a field of gold*
- *country men putting a rose in their caps*
- *man in running shorts and coloured vest running through the forest*
- *footwalkers with striped vest (early oil paris)*
- *walker with planatins*
- *walker kicking up moths from the side of the dusty road*

10th August

Remember how men carry colour with them as flowers

- in hats
- in buttonholes
- on bicycles, front and back
- on boots caught up
- or stuck on clothes

October

Struggling to paint the girl from Guernsey gathering limpets.

She is emerging from an already beautiful background so that every new mark is vital and unalterable

Trying to control the blues, depth, texture, overall balance of Girl with Butterfly Brooch Gathering Limpets

The *narrative* content the oddness of the juxtaposition of butterfly brooch, bladderwrack seaweed and close clinging, strongly patterned limpets all set between slippery rocks.

The painterly content is impossible to explain to anyone who was not used to a similar problem.

No the cobalt violet on the left has picked up and out the pink on the right. It's interesting and something to play on but not what I intended.

(Bring in the sky light on the wet seaweed)

January 19th

Girl with limpets - All blues controlled and startling

One dot on the blue skirt has anchored it to the background on a level with the seaweed. Now the limpets on the right rock have shot out of place. Only patience will bring them back again.

January 25th

Girl with butterfly brooch, St Peter Port, Guernsey

Finished, breathtakingly in seconds when I thought I was just laying it out

Yellow ocine(?) onto pink - cream - picking up pink on rocks on right - rough blocking in of further rocks which by a miracle ringed round the head at the same level on the surface of the canvas.

Although I had intended details they cannot be added.

February 1st

Girl with Limpets

Falling into the canvas with exhaustion but it's done

I wanted it to be Bizarre but it has come out delicate

February 4th

Along Tivetshall long mile. A man was burning wood.

The smoke was really blue. the bluest I have ever seen. The man wore blue working dungarees and the tractor was also blue.

- blue and yellow are the colours of spring.

Blue of the triple roll.

Blue of the fertiliser bags and many other patterned ones swell.

March 24th

March 17th

The dog had spots, the lady had a spotted dress. By that time the sky had spots too, but of a different colour. (draw this quickly)

April 1st

Watched a lady dropping bread on a swan

I cast my mind to goats and light and darkness inside a tent.
See - Royal Norfolk Show
April 11th

May 15th
Feathers and straw going up in birds beaks and falling on our heads
gaudy birds
(feathers falling on a quiet man)

May 15th
Two trains met and passed. At the rear of each one in the window a man was reading a newspaper. In belated pairs(?) a party of young heifers careered off up the hill away from the trains. All the young willows were in leaf.

June 23rd
I should like to have been a stone mason and kept racing pigeons at the bottom of the garden in black and white striped huts.
Learning both skills diligently amongst rows of well grown vegetables.
I can make bread and the hens will lay eggs.
What more could you want

Also a bell ringer at night.

July 5th
Tivetshall long mile - all grasses flowing in a pink

Again I have seen a man with a bicycle holding a large bunch of sweet williams

ref - lady with sweet williams walpole
man seen on next visit in the same lane, (walpole church spire above the bank)

coming round the corner, in the distance, towards me wheeling a bicycle and carrying on his handlebars a large bunch of flowers

It seems country people visit each other on bicycles still and take with pride a bunch of flowers, that they have grown, to their friends.
Often in the country garden a row of flowers is grown for cutting e.g. sweet williams, gladioli, chrisantherum, sweet pea (in abundance)
a sea of bloom

note on side of page - What better than a bunch of flowers. Your friend will love them and will give you some in return. I wonder what they will be.

The fox

red - also man with a gladioli (oil painting) - done

man with a gladioli coming down sloping ramp to get on the ferry across the Humber(? *maybe she meant Harbour*) (Hull side) small drawing note

ref - man with a tray of geraniums balanced on his handlebars

July 7th
To Diss by bus.

At Gissing a man stood hiding his bicycle with a large bunch of sweet williams clutched at the centre of the handlebars.

Behind him the round towered church and lovely cockerel up in the sky

At his side, on the corner the little chapel with new bright yellow door in a clearing.
in a copse.

I'm interested in the way people stand with bicycles and flowers.

Often it is necessary to walk as the flowers are precious and may break.

Country people often walk with their bicycles. They are an aid to rely on when tired.

The great things the contact with the roadside and hedgerows and the slowness of progress is relatively unimportant.

cross ref

- man at Gissing
- man with gladioli coming down ramp to the ferry at hull
- man with a board [or box] on which were balanced several pots of red geraniums

August 7th

Out into the river when everything else had gone came a small tub containing a lady and a large black dog. The very slight wash was silver. Her coat was green, the dog sat on. The woman rowed looking round occasionally to see the dog.

After half an hour when more light had gone she returned past us, rowing slowly, turning to talk to the dog.

The dog sat on like a little black mountain.

Both were very peaceful and companionable to one another.

It was a perfect moment.

(see two drawings)

August 27th

Grey hat on a grey head

August 29th

To the fair

This will be unusual for me - a crowd scene

The people are going to the fair.

They like one another and understand each others way of life.

In the distance, through a gap in the hedge, there is a crowd scene of colour and activity, flag and tents and even more people.

There is a central gathering place and music and muffled conversation.

The people are colourfully dressed, odd but interesting. They will exchange ideas, old clothes and books, buy and sell, talk and play music, dance and frolic and sit on the grass.

Although the grass is wet, and the skies are full of rain, it doesn't matter - this is fair day.

November 23rd

Feathers falling on a quiet man (feathers in folder 5/6)

December 19th

Draw the curtains night is coming

[two people coming at the same time to the bay windows of a prim house, and pulling the curtains shut. Cat on a gate in the front - all manner of evil things approaching them. Did they but know a bit, over the hill and cascading down to them, at the back of the home.]

Man says to god

What is 100 million years to you?

God: Just a minute

Man: Whats a 100 million pounds to you?

God: Just a penny

Man: Can I have a penny then?

God: Sure, Just a minute

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MN Plants and Gardens

April 18th

Urns

- inadequate potting
- adjacent walkers
- semi curious visitors
- watching urns
- urns with overwhelming ornament
- urns too large for their gardens

June 2nd

Dog roses an individual one dose(?) up is a dramatic arrangement of pink-white-yellow.

a bank is like a fabric

or in detail like the background flowers

of a mediaeval enclosed garden ref. Kenneth Clark 'Landscape in art

or the details of a subdued French tapestry

A sequence here

they call to mind when I was cycling on the concrete pathways of an ole aerodrome

the pathways were light - the old shapeless grassy a dull soft terre verte

full banks of many years growth of tangled bush, covered with dog roses

Along came a lady stiffly dressed in beige silk, a suit and prim because it was a Sunday. She rounded the

corned of a large bush and was picked out in sunshine. She didn't see me - a phrase came to mind:

'Wild flowers will soften the stiffest lady'

This could be a project

Immediately I remember the lady in pink amongst the poppies waiting for a bus - many years ago lady in a

homemade coat - all pleases - reaching for marguerites?

July 7th

To Diss by bus

July 22nd

Today we went to the Aldeburgh gardens and saw

- 'urns in sunlight'

- 'urns in heat'

- 'a garden with urns'

- and 'steps on a dull day'

watching urns - still and monumental

- hot ginger terracotta

- not soft and mellow

- lovely textured flights of steps

- a little man climbing them

Flags (a list elsewhere but here a reminder)

flags for:

- decoration

- celebration

- returning

- ownership

- guidance

messages
triumph
welcome etc

August 9th

A squirrel visiting different gardens

-running down the garden steps from one house

along the road - looking in a garden gate - deciding against it - trying the next one.

Did he sense there were no nuts - did it smell of dogs or other animals - what decided him to select the next house nose in the air, whiskers alert, prim and obviously selective.

September 19th

I have noticed at the top of the hill the difference in intensity of blue in the chicory flower and the scabious how deep it is. The light reflects orange from the sky and this may effect the mauve blue of the petals - I do not know how.

Below the allotment the scabious appeared much paler indeed.

-

THE UNIVERSE

If there is a God of The Universe his is energy

If there is a God for our planet - it is the sun.

May 19th

Glowworms in the churchyard - midsummer night

deep in the grass the body seemed pink (apricot).

We put one in a thin plastic cup and the blue green light from its tail glowed through the plastic

There are females

The males fly above the grass in the dark (check)

Our faces look down on them like moons.

June 21st

Twisting black vetch pods popping in the sun

July 28th

The morning sun was orange - yellow in the middle of the day - burning to a white with blue floating patches - apricot in the evening

this seems to be a feature of East Anglia

or anas(?) of clear air near the sea

August 26th

Trying to paint the afterglow of sunlight by working with green across a glowing red orange blue and green random background.

March 29th

Sometime ago, in an aviary, in freezing conditions, there were many many zebra finches. They were all in one small area on a top bird, pressed against the inner wall, where a patch of pink winter sun was preparing a warm patch for inner and outer boost - but both I and the finches had to keep shifting along as the sun moved inch by inch.

Soon it disappeared completely to the right and we all froze.

I was facing the sea, the sea being East, the sun behind, being near to the West (gardens at Lowestoft)

March 24th

Very cold this morning but the sun will warm us soon
If there is any life in him the kind old sun will know
note for Rupert Brooke (his or Mary's writing?)

This reminds me of the large blue green flashing dragonfly at Linstead with wet crumpled wings drying them in the sun by the hedge, like a jewel suddenly seen.

My new block of cobalt blue can be used.

February 9th

Look up the zodiac and try to understand astrology.

I like to think of the great minds of astronomers who could think in space and depth and mathematic calculations .

It is easier to dent(?) stars as a black mark on white paper
(but how false a picture is imagined)

I tried in my charts of the night to create a dorne(?) effect - equally false and impossible - better to look back at mediaeval painting or even Carolingian painters
(surely they had a great sense of humour)

From the immensity to the particular - a study of raindrops and their colours from the spectrum - a fraction of an inch of movement from anyone observing them and they change colour as of magic.

88 A start on a large canvas which is bothering me because the built up underpainting is complete in itself and is lovely. Anything added to it can only spoil it.

suggestions

- lady in jade mackintosh at le petit boe

- girl walking in wind and sun

- in flying sand at cavalier

- lady sitting by the boat

deep ultramarine

jade

yellow ochre pebbles finely graded

fine white sand blowing
pink yellow top spray
pink sky
2 dots (spray)

February 6th

Space has become encased and time has shrunk
March 20th

'86 Orion on his way tonight. How many people will see him pass across the sky.
'87 very cold indeed Orion still there striding on
January 7th

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At one time, not so long distant, we were all looking for Kahoutele, hanging out of our windows examining the sky, working out it's possible position. It was nearing the earth - it might appear at anytime. When we went out to tend the animals in the dark, we looked hopefully for a long time. Weeks went by and the sky, with it's prick mark of stars took on the look of a pin striped suiting as our eyes tired and dropped down towards the skyline. We were apprehensive and the animals became so. They sense the atmosphere of that man sets - fear, quietness, confidence etc. In the end Kahoutek never appeared. It had taken a path, leading away from the earth, out of sight. Recently in East Anglia we were able to see, on close inspection of the night sky, for 2-3 nights only Iras-Iraki-Alcock(?) a faint wuzzy mass the size of an orange - if we knew where to look. Luckily the noble television told us.

December 7th

This is the very brightest night - ever
Paint looking for constellations (remember supernova)

having given up comets

Kahoutek
(it was interesting to hear on talking to someone from Minnesota, that they too had been looking on anxiously at the same sky same position)

Hallis comet

Iras Irake Alisck (triumphant)
Locally to East Anglia - have met someone who knew aliesk and have given him a quick oil sketch I made at the time

My version of a flying saucer ref watercolour

January 16th

Astronomy figures are astronomical

- ourselves in the solar system
- the solar system in the galaxy 'the milky way'
- the milky way galaxy as one of unknown number spinning relentlessly in space which has no end but it is easier to imagine, space as something finite and contained but what with?

and so to bed where the room has walls.

December 15th

Joyous - yellow balloon so very large in the binoculars, people leaning out red faced in the sun that was serving illuminating them but not ourselves. Dark cobalt stripes rising up from the narrow neck. Crimson red collar orange flame burning crimson inside the canvas. No wind below but just enough to carry it silently over our heads.

12th March

The White Park cattle - containing colour as marble does, horns up for heifers and down for bulls. There was once an eclipsing moon hanging over the white cattle as they stood straight backed, unmoving in their small calving paddock. No one on the bus appeared to notice that the newly risen full moon had a large bite out of it or that the statuesque cattle were as made of marble, or that the little house with its single chimney was a Hopper house alone in its landscape and on a small mound between the cattle and the moon.

I tried to paint it but did not succeed (?) [found a painting that fits]

-