

# COLNAGHI



SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, P.R.A.  
(Bristol 1769-1830 London)

*MRS THOMAS OOM,  
NÉE PAPENDIEK,  
LATER MRS JOSEPH PLANTA  
(1783-1854)*

oil on canvas  
76.2 x 63.5 cm; 30 x 25 in.

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## Provenance

The Sitter, Charlotte Oom (£21 paid to the Artist on 28 Feb. 1806); and (presumably) by inheritance to her son Adolphus Kent Oom; Sir Philip Wodehouse Currie (1834 – 1906); Colnaghi, London, acquired from the above in 1895; Friedrich Christian Karl Fleischmann (d. 1907), Liverpool and London; thence by inheritance to his widow Mrs Eliza Fleischmann, nee Ashcroft (d. 1924), London; thence by inheritance to her son Frederick Noel Ashcroft [Fleischmann] (1878 – 1949), London; thence by inheritance to his widow Mrs Constance Muriel Im Thurn Ashcroft (b. 1880), London; Edward Speelman Ltd, London, acquired from the above; Private Collection, acquired from the above, 20 October 1981.

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## Literature

W. Armstrong, *Lawrence*, London, 1913, p. 158.  
K. Garlick, *Sir Thomas Lawrence*, London, 1954, p. 54.  
K. Garlick, *Sir Thomas Lawrence: A complete catalogue of the oil paintings*, Oxford, 1989, p. 247 (illus.)

## Related Literature

M. Kassler, *The Memoirs of Charlotte Papendiek (1765 – 1840): Court, Musical and Artistic Life in the time of King George III*, London, 2021.

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## Exhibited

London, White City, *Franco-British Exhibition*, 26 May – 31 Oct. 1908, no. 57.  
London, Agnew's, *Exhibition in aid of the British Red Cross Society*, June 1915, no. 6.  
Ipswich, Ipswich Museum, *Gainsborough Bicentenary Exhibition*, 7 Oct. – 5 Nov. 1927, no. 79.

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Charlotte Augusta was the daughter of Christopher and Charlotte Papendiek. She married firstly, in 1800, Thomas Oom, a Russian merchant, whose wealth seemed to evaporate shortly after the wedding due to a business failure. (A family friend, Leigh Hunt, wrote of the couple in 1806: 'Mrs Oom is as lively and lovely as ever, but she ought to have married Apollo, or at least some spirited young fellow with a mind as cultivated as her own; she is a rose buried in Russian snow.') Fortunately, Mrs Oom was able to supplement the family income by working as a tutor and music teacher, and her son Adolphus (her second son; her first, Thomas, died in infancy) was educated at Eton. Mr. Oom eventually recovered his fortune before dying in 1830. Several years later, Mrs Oom married the Right Hon. Joseph Planta, M.P. for Hastings and later Secretary of H.M. Treasury and Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. When he died in 1846, Mrs Planta, as she then was, was given rooms at Hampton Court Palace where she lived for the remainder of her life. She was also granted the post of occasional Reader to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester, a role she continued to perform until her death.

As official 'dresser' to Queen Charlotte, Charlotte Augusta's mother Mrs Charlotte Papendiek was in a position to observe, at first-hand, the goings-on at the court of King George III and she wrote a valuable account of young Lawrence at Windsor Castle when he was working on Queen Charlotte's full-length portrait (**fig. 1**). Mrs Papendiek herself was captured by Lawrence in a double-portrait with her two-year-old son Frederick, wearing a fashionable hat and the Queen's own pearl bracelet with a miniature portrait of the King (**fig. 2**). She writes that the bracelet was a later addition to the portrait of the Queen, who could not be persuaded to give Lawrence additional sittings for the adjustment, and thus the Queen permitted Mrs Papendiek to model it for the artist.

Mrs Papendiek's entertaining *Memoirs* cover the period from 1761, when Princess Charlotte first arrived in England from Germany as the King's betrothed, until 1792. The Papendiek family formed friendships with a varied sector of society, including the artists Lawrence and Gainsborough, musicians Johann Christian Bach (the son of Johann Sebastian) and Joseph Haydn, and the astronomer William Herschel. This portrait, painted in 1805 in Lawrence's studio at 57 Greek Street, steps from Soho Square, is recorded in the Coutts list as having been paid (£21). Upon Lawrence's death, Mrs Oom claimed a

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drawing of herself 'lent to be mounted', which was delivered to her. It remained untraced according to Garlick, writing in 1989.

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**Fig. 1.** Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Queen Charlotte*, 1789, oil on canvas, 239.5 x 147 cm. London, National Gallery.

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**Fig. 2.** Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Mrs Papendiek and her son*, 1789, chalk on paper, 30.5 x 25.2 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.