

Mr. 23 ALFRED BOYD HOUGHTON. 1875.

WE observe with great regret the announcement of the death of Mr. Alfred Boyd Houghton, the painter and wood-designer, on November 23; he was buried on the 27th in Paddington Cemetery. He was still a young man, only thirty-nine years of age. Following after the deaths of Mason, Walker, and Pinwell, the loss of Mr. Houghton

leaves a real gap in the ranks of the rising men from whom truly fine things were to be looked for: as a designer he was perhaps even more decidedly gifted with genius than any of the other three. He had invention and peculiarity, strong draughtsmanship, good powers of combination, unfailing resource, inexhaustible readiness. With a certain turn for singularity drifting towards the grotesque, he always drew firmly and executed solidly: the union of these qualities gave him his special *cachet*, and perhaps, since the maturity (now dating many years back) of the endlessly facile and capable John Gilbert, no designer for the wood has worked with more gift and vigour than Houghton, or has produced drawings more worthy of being collected and prized as a series. Some of his productions will be found in the illustrated *Arabian Nights*, in *Fun*, in the *Graphic*, and numerous elsewhere. He was also a painter in oils and water-colours—some of his principal works having been exhibited at the Water-colour Society. Except in colour, his pictures were just as fine as his woodcuts, showing the same tendency and the same supereminence. They ought to be valuable in the market already, and more so with the lapse of years. In colour Houghton had a special difficulty to contend with. He had lost one eye at an early age; the other eye suffered a corresponding reduction of power; and he was at times not much better than colour-blind—indeed his eyesight in all respects was both feeble and precarious. Indomitably resolved to be a painter, he came nearer, year by year, to conquering his difficulty with colours. Even his earlier works are fairly discriminative in this respect, though marred by a certain purplish-brown tinge: his recent productions presented no peculiarity of colour to excite remark, becoming constantly more mellow and more varied, and it is probable that within a few years, had he lived, Houghton would have been on a par with all ordinary painters, accomplished in their art but not specially colourists. Mr. Houghton, who was twice married, leaves a young family, and, among his friends, the memory of a kindly, frank, energetic character.

W. M. ROSSETTI.

189.626.1

May 1872

Studio No 1

Queen's Terrace

N.W.

Dear Sir John Gilbert -

You will greatly
oblige me by sending to
the above address a
dinner ticket (with
several benevolent brethren)

when quite convenient

to you
I am

Dear Sir John Gilbert

Your truly

A. Boyd Thompson

May 1872

Studios

Mt. Queens Terrace
St John Wood

Dear Sir John Gilbert

Will you kindly let me
know when & how I am to pay
for ticket &c. for Saturday
dinner.

I am - dear Sir John Gilbert

Yours truly

Alfred Houghton