

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, Case 14 (2022-2023) <i>Prince Saunders</i> (c.1775–1839) by William Hobday	
Statement from Expert Adviser	<p>Statement of the Expert Adviser to the Secretary of State that the painting meets Waverley criterion three.</p> <p>See below</p>
Statement from the Applicant	<p>Statement from the applicant referencing the three Waverley criteria against which the Committee will consider whether an item referred to it is of national importance.</p> <p><i>a) Is it so closely connected with our history and national life that its departure would be a misfortune?</i></p> <p><i>b) Is it of outstanding aesthetic importance?</i></p> <p><i>c) Is it of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?</i></p> <p>See below</p>
Note of case hearing	<p>The Committee found that the painting did not meet any of the Waverley criteria.</p> <p>See below</p>

RCEWA – *Prince Saunders* (c.1775–1839) by William Hobday

Statement of the Expert Adviser to the Secretary of State that the painting meets Waverley criterion three

Please note that images and appendices referenced are not reproduced.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Brief Description of object(s)

William Armfield Hobday (1771-1831)
Portrait of Prince Saunders c.1815-16
Oil on canvas, 72 x 56 cm

A bust-length portrait representing a Black man, possibly Prince Saunders (c.1775-1839), in Van Dyck costume with a red cloak wrapped around him, set against an atmospheric sky.

Condition

Based upon a viewing of the work by the advisor and conservator, the painting is in good and sound general condition. It is unglazed and has clearly been cut down and relined previously. There is a fine network of age cracks and some areas of retouching, though these are primarily in the background and around the edges, not around the face. The varnish is somewhat uneven, but this is a superficial issue. There appeared to be a number of white spots on the reverse which could indicate mould, although further examination is needed and this is not a cause for alarm.

2. Context

Provenance

With Arthur George Tite, 30 Burlington Arcade, London; Dennis Daybell (1908-1958), 90 Piccadilly, London; by whom bequeathed in his will to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1905-1962); thence by descent.

Key literary and exhibition references

This picture has only recently come to light, as such it does not have an exhibition history.

Although it has not previously been identified in the literature, the following are key reference texts:

'Memoir of William Armfield Hobday,' *Arnold's Library of Fine Arts* 11, no.2 (1831), p.384-391.

'Prince Saunders of Hayti,' *Caledonian Mercury*, 29 June 1839.

Westenley Alcenat, "'Children of Africa, shall be Haytians": Prince Saunders, Revolutionary Transnationalism, and the Foundations of Black Emigration (1815-1865),' PhD diss., Columbia University, 2019.

Earl Leslie Griggs & Clifford H. Prator eds., *Henry Christophe & Thomas Clarkson: A Correspondence*, University of California Press: Berkeley & Los Angeles 1952.

Charles Robert Leslie, *Autobiographical Recollections*, vol.I, London, 1860, p.243-5.

Arthur O. White, 'Prince Saunders: An Instance of Social Mobility Among Antebellum New England Blacks,' *The Journal of Negro History* 60, no.4 (Oct. 1975), p. 526-535.

3. Waverley criteria

Waverley 3

This is a work of outstanding significance for the study of art history and British history. It is thought to be a portrait of Prince Saunders, representing the only painted image of the African American educator, abolitionist and activist. His time in Britain in 1815-16 proved pivotal for his future activities: this period shaped his political outlook, established his international network among abolitionists and radical thinkers, and saw the beginning of his lifelong relationship with Haiti and promotion of Black emigration there. His biography speaks to the important role of Black people as cultural changemakers in the British abolition movement particularly, but also reveals the international context and connections that enabled this. It is, also, of great importance as a rare depiction of a Black sitter in the early nineteenth century of exceptional quality. In this respect, the painting is testament to the importance of Black people in Britain, the prominent positions they held and the public engagement this sparked. While the portrait also speaks to European racial attitudes of the period, it reveals the potential for such images to subtly undermine or disrupt these views too. The growing interest within art history as a discipline in revealing these previously overlooked stories, engaging with Britain's imperial and colonial histories, makes this painting ripe for further study. Given the

number of British portraits of Black sitters that have already left the country (for example, Gainsborough's portrait of Ignatius Sancho now in the National Gallery of Canada or William Hoare's portrait of Ayuba Suleiman Diallo now in Qatar Museums), this painting would make an invaluable contribution to our understanding of British portraiture and to the representation of Black histories in public life.

DETAILED CASE

1. Detailed description of object(s) if more than in Executive summary, and any comments.

This striking bust-length painting of a Black sitter is thought to depict the African American, Prince Saunders (c.1775-1839). Shown slightly larger than life-size, he is framed against an atmospheric, cloudy sky and illuminated from the top right. He is dressed in a Van Dyck costume consisting of a black satin suit (one button artfully undone) with a white lace collar and cuff, and a vivid red cloak attached by a clasp on his right shoulder. The cloak is swept around him as he draws it together in front of him with his right hand, to display a gold ring with black gems and pearls on his little finger. The portrait is characterised by its quiet confidence and dignity. The sitter is shown gazing out to the left, his head turned in a three-quarter profile. His lips are slightly parted and smiling, as if about to speak, while the light catches his forehead and the whites of his eyes, creating a sense of animation. This mode of representation - notably the dramatic sky, illuminated brow, steady far-off gaze, and measured expression - is typical for sitters shown in thought or contemplation during this period and was likely intended to elevate the sitter through emphasising their inspiration and reason.

The identification of the sitter as Prince Saunders is supported by its close resemblance to a known portrait of Saunders (see Fig.1). This portrait was engraved by Charles Turner (1774-1857) after a lost drawing by Richard Evans (1784-1871) and used as the frontispiece for Saunders' book, *Haytian Papers*, published in London in 1816. Evans and Saunders likely met in Haiti, where Evans was employed by King Henry Christophe as painting master at the new art academy in Sans Souci. This painting and the engraving would, therefore, seem to be of a similar date. The two portraits share similar features, particularly around the eyes and hairline, and both display a ring on their little finger. An old, typed label on the back of the stretcher-bar also reads 'Prince Saunders, King of Hayti, by Hobday' (misidentifying his position), suggesting this may have been the traditional identification of the sitter for some time (perhaps since the early twentieth century). This may give further credence to the identification as Saunders, as it seems an unusual identification for this time if only speculative.

Yet, the engraving and painting show men of very different demeanours; the engraving presents a thoughtful, learned and serious man, dressed in contemporary clothes, whereas the painting appears more theatrical and expressive, not least due to the flamboyant, historicising outfit. This, with the unusual size of the painting, raises questions regarding the identity of the sitter and the intention of the image: if it is Saunders, why is he dressed this way? Does this mode of representation suggest the sitter was being treated as an artistic subject rather than as an individual? Was the painting intended as a character study or fancy picture rather than as a 'straight' portrait? Did the artist intend the painting to be an example of his skills in producing a dashing subject? Whether the painting is Saunders or not, it is ripe for further research – it presents a rare portrayal of a Black sitter, is testament to the public presence of Black people in Britain, and speaks to Eurocentric attitudes to race in the early nineteenth-century, at the very moment that the global wars with France ended and the campaign for abolition resumed in Britain.

The painting is attributed to William Armfield Hobday (1771-1831), an artist that enjoyed moderate success in his lifetime as a portraitist and miniaturist, but today is less well known. Given the limited biographical information available about Hobday, the circumstances that gave rise to this painting remain uncertain. Further research is needed to establish how the artist and sitter met, but the painting was perhaps produced in Bristol, where Hobday was based from 1804, or London, where he lived from 1817. Bristol was, arguably, Hobday's most productive period when he was well patronised by officers about to go to war. However, this was not enough to offset his extravagant lifestyle – as one early biography comments, his early years had been 'a whirl of fashion and revelry.' His career does not seem to have revived in London, and he devised a scheme to sell pictures on commission by opening a 'Gallery of Modern Art' in his home in Pall Mall in 1828. The list of artists exhibiting there – including prominent contemporaries like Thomas Lawrence, as well as French painters Eugene Delacroix and Horace Vernet – speak to Hobday's professional network. Nonetheless, the gallery was a commercial failure and Hobday was bankrupted in 1829 (this painting, unless noted as simply a 'portrait of a gentleman' – which seems unlikely given the usual naming conventions for Black sitters – does not appear to have been exhibited in his gallery or sold at the time of his bankruptcy). After this, he retired to live with a friend and died in relative obscurity in 1831.

Hobday's portraiture is represented by 17 firmly attributed pictures in public collections in the UK, particularly in the South-West, reflecting his association with the region. Several share a similar format and composition (notably the device of depicting one hand to introduce movement or a prop), however they crucially differ

in representing solely White sitters and, of the male sitters, all are dressed in contemporary clothes. Two particularly fine examples include his portrait of *Richard Reynolds* (c.1805-10, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery), the ironmaster and principal landowner of the Coalbrookdale Company, which was widely reproduced as an engraving, and his portrait of *Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex* (1819 or before, Museum of Freemasonry), the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England between 1813 and 1843. The latter may suggest a link to Prince Saunders, who travelled to London in 1815 as a delegate of the Masonic Lodge of Africans, but this would require further research to determine a connection. A notable example of his female portraiture is *Mary English* (1818, National Portrait Gallery), the writer, adventurer and businesswoman, painted the year before she travelled to South America – her portrait may represent a possible parallel to this portrait, depicting sitters as they prepare to travel abroad by boat. Hobday's *Self-Portrait* (1813-14) is now in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; it is remarkably self-assured, showing the artist at work, pausing to look directly out at the viewer. Lastly, one of Hobday's most ambitious paintings, *The family of W.N. Rothschild (sic)* (exhibited 1821), remains in a private collection, but as a multi-figure composition on a large scale, little comparison can be drawn. Future research may bring other works in private collections to light, but in recent years only examples of his miniature painting have been on the market.

2. Detailed explanation of the outstanding significance of the object(s).

If this is a portrait of Prince Saunders (c.1775-1839), it represents the only known painted depiction of him. Saunders – sometimes spelt Sanders – has a remarkable and unique biography, as a highly educated, cosmopolitan educator, activist and abolitionist who *chose* to live circum-atlantically, between America, Britain and the newly independent Haiti. His life and career speaks to the crucial role people of colour had as changemakers at the turn of the eighteenth century and the international networks that enabled this.

Born to enslaved parents, probably in 1775 in Connecticut, Saunders was baptised in Vermont in 1784 where he also received his early education. By his early twenties, he was already a successful teacher and landowner. He continued his liberal arts education at Dartmouth College and as far as the historical record shows, he was the first African American to earn a degree there. In November 1808, he began a four-year career teaching at Boston's African School. While there, Saunders mixed in intellectual and progressive circles, gaining considerable influence and position: he became secretary of the African Masonic Society and founded the Belles Letters Society (a literary group of predominantly White young men). He was also an important advocate for African Americans in Boston and

negotiated a grant to support Black education. Significantly, this was also when Saunders was introduced to the Black emigration movement, a cause he promoted throughout his life. In 1815, Saunders came to London as a delegate of the Masonic Lodge with Thomas Paul (1773-1831), the Baptist minister and abolitionist, later founder of the first African Baptist Church. This marks the beginning of Saunders's circum-atlantic career and his growing prominence within abolitionist and Black emigrationist circles.

In London, Saunders became something of a celebrity. The artist and writer Charles Robert Leslie recalled that 'He was noticed by Mr. Wilberforce, and soon became a lion of the first magnitude in fashionable circles.' This speaks to two important aspects of his time in London: his strong ties with Britain's abolition movement and his public persona. Anecdotes from this time reveal a man adept at moving through a prejudicial and racist world with grace and confidence. The most often cited example is an American lady in London's uncertainty over how to receive him given his greater social standing in Britain – upon asking if he had breakfasted, Saunders responded by saying he was going to breakfast with the Prince Regent at Carlton House. As this suggests, he was, reputedly, much in demand among London's high society. Unsurprisingly, Saunders's first name caused confusion among both his admirers and detractors, who believed he was in fact royalty; Saunders did not try to correct them, deliberately omitting any title on his calling card. This may explain Saunders's access to such elite circles, but also speaks to European racial attitudes and stereotypes, whereby Saunders's accomplishment and cultivated manner were considered unusual and proof of noble birth. That Saunders was willing to play with his own identity in this way, however, may be one possible explanation for the unusually lavish costume depicted in Hobday's painting.

Saunders quickly became established within London's abolitionist circles, not least as his views on Black emigration aligned with William Wilberforce's own project in Sierra Leone. As the art historian Temi Odumosu has discussed in detail, we know that Saunders attended the African Institution (evidenced in George Cruikshank's caricature *The New Union Club*) and was closely connected with leading abolitionists of the day, notably Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, and James Stephen. It was through them that Saunders's attention turned to Haiti as a new Black republic. On their recommendation, Saunders first travelled to Haiti in February 1816 to support education there. He quickly formed a close alliance with King Henry Christophe, who wrote of his 'great satisfaction' in receiving Saunders, trusting him to return to Britain with his letters and to find more teachers for Haiti. It was while back in London, that Saunders published *The Haytian Papers* (1816), in which he paid homage to Haiti and Christophe, reflected on the efforts of the antislavery movement, and translated Christophe's manifesto as well as Haitian

state proclamations, laws and constitution into English. This was met with success in Britain, Joseph Banks stating that upon reading the *Papers* he judged Christophe's Code 'the most moral association of men in existence.'

In Autumn 1816, Saunders returned again to Haiti, where he continued to work establishing the Lancastrian system of education and introducing vaccination. He seems to have remained there until 1818, when he returned to Boston (where he published the second edition of *Haytian Papers*) and later settled in Philadelphia. While it doesn't appear that Saunders returned to Britain again after this second trip to Haiti, we know from surviving correspondence and his pamphlet, *A Memoir Presented to the American Convention...* (1818) that he maintained many of his transatlantic connections, including Wilberforce and Clarkson. Despite a cooled relationship with Christophe, Saunders continued to promote the emigration of Black free Americans to Haiti throughout North America. In 1820 he returned to Haiti and had convinced Christophe to supply a ship along with \$25,000 to support this plan, when a coup and Christophe's subsequent suicide abruptly brought this to an end. As Saunders himself put it in a letter to Clarkson, '[I] lost everything but my life'. Nevertheless, Saunders seems to have remained committed to this cause (even as emigration became increasingly unpopular among many African Americans) and spent the rest of his life travelling between America and Haiti, where he later died in Port-au-Prince in 1839.

Arguably, his time in Britain shaped the rest of his life. It was in London that Saunders appears to have sharpened his political outlook, established a lasting, international network of radical thinkers and abolitionists, and began regularly travelling to Haiti, all of which acted as a catalyst for his activity thereafter. The fact he was directed towards Haiti in Britain is significant, as it speaks to the shockwaves the Haitian Revolution sent around the globe and the political shift this represented. In Britain, Haiti had a mixed reception as it represented both the defeat of a common enemy, but also the possible threat of similar uprisings in its own colonies. As scholars have recently highlighted, Henry Christophe mobilised this in seeking British alliances and in making a claim for Haiti's place among world powers (as art historian Esther Chadwick has discussed, this is visualised in Richard Evans's portraits of Henry Christophe and his son which draw heavily upon British grand manner portraiture). That Britain became a sort of political and cultural touchstone for Haiti – evidenced by the extensive correspondence between Wilberforce, Clarkson and Christophe and the assimilation of British models of education in Haiti – is an area of growing academic interest. Moreover, the timing of Saunders's visit to London also coincides with the revitalisation of the abolition movement in Britain following the end of the war against France in 1815. In this respect, his biography not only acts as another reassertion of the important role Black abolitionists played in the campaign, but also suggests the relationship

between Britain and America at this juncture, including the importance of such global networks. By attending to Saunders's mobility and connections, we gain further insight into circum-atlantic history, which David Armitage defines as 'the history of the people who crossed the Atlantic, who lived on its shores and who participated in the communities it made possible' (see *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, 2nd Edn, 2009). Saunders's experiences, therefore, illuminate two rich and growing areas of historical interest: the Atlantic as a zone of exchange, interchange, circulation and transmission, and the importance of mobility in shaping the Black Atlantic.

With further research, it is hoped that the circumstances around the production of this portrait will become clearer, bringing greater certainty as to the sitters' identity too. Yet, even if this is not a portrait of Prince Saunders, it remains a remarkably fine and rare image of a Black sitter. The care with which the painter has rendered the sitter is evident, presenting a more sensitive and individualised image than is often seen in pictures of people of colour during this period. Moreover, the unusual Van Dyck costume self-consciously inserts the sitter within a tradition of English grand manner portraiture. This dress also places the image in dialogue with other portraits of people of colour from this period, the majority of which show the sitter in dress distinguishing them from the everyday, whether that be fancy dress, livery or 'exotic' costume. In this regard, the painting enriches our understanding of British portraiture during the period and speaks to the many Black people living in Britain in the early nineteenth century, and the work that remains to be done to put names to faces. As is well established in the literature, actual formal portraits of people of colour – which implicitly recognise their social status – were very rare before the eighteenth century and, even then, not very common (see for example, David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates Jr., *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part III & IV, 2011 and Jan Marsh, *Black Victorians*, 2005). As Jan Marsh has stressed, the Black presence in British art of the nineteenth century 'is less than it should be, given the importance of the Caribbean, Africa and the USA to British economic power and identity'. In this context, sympathetic representations of Black sitters, like this painting, gain further importance – while painters themselves were conditioned by Eurocentric racial attitudes and cultural norms, these images still hold the possibility of rejecting these norms and subtly undermining prevailing assumptions of European superiority to other ethnic groups by depicting the complexity and humanity of the sitter. This painting makes an important contribution to this body of works therefore, at a time when art history as a discipline is increasingly looking to recover subaltern voices and diverse stories, informed by a greater engagement with Britain's imperial and colonial history. Indeed, the outstanding questions around this painting, the archival absences to date, demonstrate the historical lack of interest in sitters of colour and the potential for new research in this area.

Through this painting, we may learn more about the role and status of Black people in Britain in the early nineteenth century, how this relates to their representation and the social and cultural attitudes of the period, and how this intersects with the wider global context, namely abolition, the movement of people, and competing imperial interests.

The rarity of oil paintings of people of colour is reflected in the limited number of related works in public or private collections in the UK. Examples of Black sitters shown in bust length include: two portraits after Sir Joshua Reynolds, widely understood to represent Francis Barber (c.1742-1801), the servant of writer Samuel Johnson (both Tate, London; Reynolds's original unfinished version is in the Menil Collection, Houston), and *Portrait of an African*, attributed to Allan Ramsay (c.1758, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter). Significantly, there remains uncertainty about the identification of the sitter in these examples, while the same questions of intention – whether portrait or artistic subject – are surfaced in the pictures of Francis Barber, due to the unfinished state, the brilliant sky detaching the sitter from any context, and the historic titles attached to the work. Another important series of portraits are those representing Ira Aldridge who, as a celebrated actor (he first debuted in London in 1825), was represented by several artists and may have had a role in shaping his own image in these pictures. The most notable of these are his portrait as Othello by James Northcote (1826, Manchester Art Gallery), a version after this picture (c.1826, National Portrait Gallery, London) and his portrait by John Simpson (1827, Tate, London). The latter is closely related to *The Captive Slave* (1827, purchased by the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008), a larger painting of Aldridge also by Simpson, probably inspired by his performance in Thomas Morton's musical drama *The Slave*. These blur the lines between actor and character but have come under greater academic scrutiny in recent years. This is reflected in the fact that Simpson's portrait of Aldridge at Tate has been one of the most requested paintings of its period for loan in recent years. Lastly, though distinct in scale and ambition, Reynolds's portrait of Omai, is currently at risk of leaving the country and has subsequently drawn considerable public attention. If this work is exported, it would be the latest of many works depicting people of colour to leave Britain, of which notable examples include Gainsborough's portrait of Ignatius Sancho (National Gallery of Canada), William Hoare's portrait of Ayuba Suleiman Diallo (Qatar Museums), and Gabriel Mathias's portrait of William Ansah Sessarakoo (Menil Collection), among others. Collectively, these works highlight the paucity of images of people of colour during this period and demonstrates the invaluable academic and social contribution this painting would make, not only in extending our understanding of British portraiture and circum-atlantic history, but crucially in enriching the representation of Black histories for the UK public.

RCEWA – *Prince Saunders* (c.1775–1839) by William Hobday

Applicant's statement

Please note that images and appendices referenced are not reproduced.

Is the item closely connected with our history and national life?

This portrait depicts the African-American educator, scholar, diplomat and abolitionist Prince Saunders. Thought to have been born circa 1775 and baptised in Lebanon, Connecticut on 25 July 1784, Saunders was raised in Thetford, Vermont, in the home of the prominent local lawyer George Oramel Hinckley, where he received his early education. By his early twenties Saunders was a Thetford landowner and teacher at the African School of Colchester, Connecticut. Between 1807-08 Hinckley sponsored him to attend Moor's Charity School at Dartmouth College, where Saunders caught the attention of Dartmouth's President, John Wheelock (1754-1817), who recommended him to the Unitarian minister William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) for a position as a teacher at Boston's African School. In Boston Saunders mixed in intellectual circles and was associated with leading figures such as Channing, the publisher Caleb Bingham (1757-1817) and the founder and first librarian of the Boston Athenæum William Smith Shaw (1778-1826). By 1811 he was secretary of the African Monastic Society and had founded the Belles Lettres Society, a literary group of mostly young white men which he also administered. In 1815 Saunders persuaded the rich merchant Abiel Smith to bequeath \$4000 in stocks to the city of Boston for the education of black children, the income from which went to support the establishment of three African primaries and an African grammar school, which in 1835 was dedicated as the Smith School (now part of the Museum of African American History). He also taught at the abolitionist and black community leader Thomas Paul's African Baptist Church and at one stage was engaged to the daughter of the abolitionist and ship captain Paul Cuffe (1759-1817).

Together with Thomas Paul (1773-1831), in 1815 Saunders sailed to England as delegates of the Masonic Lodge of Africans with letters of introduction to William Wilberforce. In England Saunders turned his attention to Haiti, which had emerged as the first black republic in the Western Hemisphere in 1804. Saunders travelled to Haiti in February 1816 and suitably impressed King Henry Christophe who was looking to establish a system of black education in Haiti. In Saunders he found the perfect man for the job. With his striking negro features, urbane manners and excellent education, he provided the embodiment of black accomplishment. Together with Christophe, Saunders introduced the Lancastrian system of universal education to Haiti and set up several schools, as well as introducing smallpox vaccination to the country, even personally vaccinating Christophe's own children. Saunders became a naturalised citizen of Haiti and it was during his time on the island that he penned *The Haytian Papers*, his great *magnum opus* upon the constitution and laws of Haiti.

In 1818 Saunders returned to Boston, where he recruited support for Christophe's educational reform. He later moved to Philadelphia where he served as a lay reader for Absalom Jones's St. Thomas's African Episcopal Church and joined the Pennsylvanian Abolition Society, promoting colonisation to the Caribbean, particularly Haiti. It was here that he delivered and later published his *Address Delivered... Before the Pennsylvanian Augustine Society for Education of People of Colour* and *A Memoir Presented to the American Convention for Prompting the Abolition of Slavery*, further championing emigration to, and the pacification of, Haiti. Returning to Haiti in August 1820 he successfully convinced Christophe to supply a ship and \$25,000 to facilitate the emigration of thousands of free black Americans to Haiti. However, just as Saunders was on the point of successfully leading a powerful American black population to settle and pacify Haiti, disaster struck. Christophe, who was suffering the aftereffects of a stroke, was displaced in a coup and committed suicide. Saunders lost everything except his life and the newly installed President John Pierre Boyer refused support for the former ally of King Christophe. Saunders continued to work to promote education and emigration to Haiti, travelling between the United States and the Caribbean a number of times. However, although a claim has been made that he served as Boyer's Attorney General, it seems doubtful that Saunders played a key role in Haitian politics after 1820. He lived out the rest to his days in relative obscurity in Haiti and died in Port-au-Prince in 1839.

As an American, who spent most of his life working between the United States and the Caribbean, spending only a very brief amount of time in Britain (less than a year), the subject of this painting is not closely connected with our history and national life and therefore does not qualify for pre-eminence under Waverley One.

Is it of outstanding aesthetic importance?

William Armfield Hobday is an exceptionally minor early nineteenth century portrait painter, with little formal training and of whom we know very little. Principally a miniature painter, born in Birmingham, he is believed to have been apprenticed to the engraver W. J. Barney in London for six years from 1786 to 1790. Between 1804 and 1817 Hobday moved to Bristol where he was chiefly employed painting portraits and miniatures of officers embarking for the war in the Peninsular. There are at least twenty examples of Hobday's work in National Collections in the UK (source: Art UK website), none of which, as with the present portrait, reveal a particularly high level of aesthetic achievement. At its best, his work demonstrates a debt to the style of Thomas Philips and John Hoppner. Painting at a time dominated by the exceptional talents of Sir Thomas Lawrence, Benjamin West, Sir William Beechey, and others, Hobday's work cannot be said to possess great aesthetic merit and therefore this painting does not qualify for pre-eminence under Waverley Two.

Is it of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?

Whilst portraits of Prince Saunders are rare, the discovery of this image does not significantly add to the study or understanding of this historical American figure, his work or the international abolitionist movement in the early 19th century. Further, as a work by a minor, little known portrait painter of limited talent and artistic merit (one of a large number of such regional portrait painters working across Britain in this period), it does not significantly add to our study or understanding of portraiture or the art world in early 19th century Britain. Lastly, though painted in Britain, the subject of this work is an American born, nationalised Haitian citizen who only visited England very briefly during the course of his life. His work, including his writing, educational reforms and activism, was, and his legacy is, almost entirely centred upon the United States of America and the Republic of Haiti. Consequently, both the subject and the painting itself have very little to add to our national story. Therefore, this painting does not qualify for pre-eminence under Waverley Three.

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, note of case hearing	
Meeting date	Wednesday 18 January 2023
Object	<i>Prince Saunders</i> by William Hobday
Expert Adviser's objection	The Curator of British Art c.1730-1850, Tate Britain had objected to the export of the painting under the third Waverley criterion on the grounds that its departure from the UK would be a misfortune because it was of outstanding significance for the study of British portraiture and the representation of Black histories in public life.
Committee Members & IAs	Six of the regular eight Committee members were present and able to inspect the painting. They were joined in person by three independent assessors, acting as temporary members of the Committee.
	<p>The applicant was informed that there was currently an interim process in place for Committee hearings. The Committee was still holding hybrid meetings but any Committee members, including the independent assessors, were required to attend in person and inspect the object/s under consideration prior to discussing the case and voting. Any permanent Committee members or independent assessors who were not able to attend in person and view the object were not able to vote.</p> <p>The applicant confirmed that the owner understood the circumstances under which an export licence might be refused.</p>
Value on the licence	The value shown on the export licence application was £538,465.07 which represented the sterling equivalent of the agreed sale price (\$620,000) subject to the granting of an export licence, calculated on 15 September 2022, in advance of submitting the export licence application.
VAT	The applicant confirmed that the value did not include VAT and that VAT of £26,281 on the Buyer's premium would be payable in the event of a UK sale. This represented the sterling equivalent on the date of the export licence application.

<p>Expert Adviser's comments</p>	<p>The expert adviser stated that they had nothing to add to their submission. The expert adviser was questioned about the uncertainty surrounding the identity of the sitter and they noted that the portrait's likeness to the other known depiction of Prince Saunders made it likely, but even were it not, it was still of significance in relation to the portrayal of Black sitters during this period, there being very few available. When asked whether the painting was correctly attributed to William Hobday, the expert adviser accepted that there was some uncertainty but highlighted this as the traditional attribution.</p> <p>Responding to the applicant's assertion that Prince Saunders' connection to abolitionist circles in America was much more significant than his work in Britain, the expert adviser highlighted the uniqueness of Saunders choosing to live "trans-Atlantically" between Britain (very briefly), America, and Haiti. They noted that Saunders was embedded in British abolitionist circles, that it was in Britain that his association with Haiti was first initiated (speaking to the wider political and cultural relationship between Haiti and Britain at this time), and that he contributed to expanding the global network of activists across Britain and America. Furthermore, they stated that it was significant that Saunders was depicted in the Grand Manner portrait style, in 'Vandyke' dress, which was unusual in paintings of sitters of colour and spoke to a particular moment in the development of British portraiture.</p> <p>Finally, they asserted that the portrait was not only of academic interest, but of public interest. They highlighted that it would make a significant contribution to the work of national institutions seeking to represent the diverse audiences that they serve through the artworks displayed.</p>
<p>Applicant's comments</p>	<p>The applicant stated that they had nothing to add to their statement that disputed that the painting met the Waverley criteria. However, they reiterated that the export of the painting would not be a misfortune as its significance was much stronger in America and Haiti than in Britain and that the physical portrait was not essential for any further research into Prince Saunders' biography. The applicant noted they had no reason to doubt the identification of the sitter.</p>

Committee's discussion	<p>The expert adviser and applicant retired, and the Committee discussed the case. They agreed that it was a striking image when viewed in person, but that it had suffered from being cut down, losing some of its dramatic quality. They noted the element of doubt regarding the attribution to William Hobday and the identity of the sitter, particularly as Prince Saunders would have been in his early 40s at the assumed date of the painting, and that the portrait seemed to depict a much younger man. Furthermore, the depiction appeared to be quite condescending in the apparent cheerfulness of the sitter, contradictory to the typical seriousness of portraits, potentially signifying this as a 'fancy picture' or character study.</p> <p>They agreed that if the portrait was correctly identified as Prince Saunders, it was not of outstanding national significance, as Saunders' work was much more prominent in America and Haiti and he was only in Britain for less than a year. Ultimately, however, there were doubts about the identity of the sitter and therefore this painting could not be of outstanding significance to a particular area of study or to our national life.</p>
Waverley Criteria	<p>The Committee voted on whether the painting met the Waverley criteria. Of the nine members, only three members voted that it met the third Waverley criterion. The painting was therefore not found to meet any of the Waverley criteria.</p>
Communication of findings	<p>The expert adviser and the applicant returned. The Chairman notified them of the Committee's decision on its recommendation to the Secretary of State.</p>