

Take the Tour!

The Siege of Colchester Paintings— The Charles Debenham Collection

Charles Debenham is a prolific Colchester artist. He has painted numerous street scenes of our city, capturing interesting features and using paintings to tell a story.

St John's Green School is very fortunate to have in our possession eight large paintings by Charles Debenham, these were gifted to us by Colchester Museums/ Colchester City Council and we are very grateful for the exciting addition to our history and art curriculum study.

Our pupils and staff are researching the Siege of Colchester scenes in the paintings, so you will not find any commentary next to the paintings. Our job, and yours, is to interrogate each painting - to pose questions, to consider possibilities, to have a conversation with whoever is standing next to you as you view each painting in the collection.

On the other side of this card you will find some questions to start you off. Some questions can be asked of all the paintings, some are painting specific.

However, once you get the hang of interrogating a painting, we think your questions will be even better than ours!

Now begin the Tour—there are 3 paintings downstairs, 2 as you go upstairs, and 3 in the Top Hall.

Happy viewing ...

The One Square Mile: Heritage on our Doorstep Team



Painting Interrogation for History & Art Thinking

When were they painted?

Why were they painted?

Who else has seen these paintings? What local landmarks can you see?

Can you see anyone that looks like you, or someone you know?

If you stood where the artist stood to paint the painting, what would you see now?

That man is pointing, why?

Who is the man on the white horse, what about the brown horse?

What is the parade for? What do you think the boy could be saying?

How many places of worship can you see?

What evidence is there of daily life?

Do you know the names of the weapons?

Is the fire on purpose, or an accident?

What scene would you choose to continue the story?

Which painting gave you the most questions?

Does the artist use the same colours / techniques?

Which painting is your favourite and why?

What would you like to find out about any of the paintings?

What is missing in the indoor painting?

What happened to the soldiers?

Why are the paintings so large?

Why don't you write your questions down, so we can add them to this list ...