

French

WILKIE (SIR DAVID),

Scotch

1785—1841

Sir David Wilkie's whole life was given up to Art. From early life he cared for nothing else; he says himself that he could "draw before he could read, and paint before he could spell." At twenty-one, his painting, "The Village Politicians," was sent to the Academy, and was the picture of the year, making its author at once famous. From this time he was continuously at work until 1824, when his health began to fail; in 1840 he started on that pilgrimage to the East, from which he was never to return. On his way home he took suddenly ill after leaving Malta, and died on 1st June, 1841; the solemn burial at sea has been commemorated by Turner in his great picture, "Rest, Burial of Wilkie." Bulwer, in writing about him, says: "Wilkie is the Goldsmith of painters, in the amiable and pathetic humour, in the combination of smiles and tears, of the familiar and the beautiful; but he has a stronger hold over the more secret sympathies and the springs of a broader laughter than Goldsmith himself."

40. A group from "The Village Festival"

Owner, D. Morris

James Ross