



Cover illustration:

Moving In, oil on canvas, 9½in. by 13¼ (visible). It is inscribed on the back, Samuel Watkins, Bristol: he may have been a supplier of artists' materials, if not the painter. The costumes suggest a date around the 1860s or 70s.

The picture shows a chaotic occasion: presumably the artist tried to cram as much activity as possible into the scene. The painter and glazier have not finished before the removal team arrive (nothing changes!); the owner is concerned because a mirror has been broken and the crinolined lady in the foreground (probably his wife) looks anxiously at the contents of a packing case: she appears to be examining a bird cage. Three dining chairs, partially visible, appear to be from a set of balloon backs with turned front legs and upholstered seats, possibly of mahogany. On the far left of the picture there is an object which could be a cheval mirror or firescreen. The most explicit item is the painted washstand, being carried upstairs by two servants. The children and a dog threaten to get in the way, and only the jug and the beer mug on the top of the upright piano gives hope of well-earned relief.

A painted washstand, probably dating from the second quarter of the 19th century, similar to the example illustrated in Watkins' painting, but without the lower shelf.

Courtesy of John Boram

