harshly treated by one of the partners, which caused his father
to remove him, and to leave him at liberty to exert himself in
acquiring more scientifically the rudiments of art. For this
purpose, he took lessons at a drawing school; and in 1759 he
was deemed qualified to be admitted a student at the Duke of
Richmond’s gallery, which contained excellent casts of many of
the finest antique statues.

In 1760, he sustained a great loss in the death of his father,
who was a very ingenious man, but of a reserved and shy
disposition, which prevented him from profiting, as he might
otherwise have done, by his ingenuity. He left his widow and
children wholly unprovided with means for a maintenance, ex-
cept what they might be able to procure by their industry.
Edward Edwards was now but twenty-two years of age, and
with but a slender foundation in his art, he had to support his
mother and a brother and sister. He had lodgings in Compton-
street, Soho, and with other efforts to obtain the means of living,
he opened an evening school, (at his lodgings) and taught draw-
ing to several young men who either aimed to be artists, or to
qualify themselves to be cabinet or ornamental furniture makers.

But under all his difficulties, he steadily persevered in his en-
deavour to acquire power in the art to which he had devoted his
mind, and in 1761 he was admitted a member of the academy in
Peter Court, St. Martin’s Lane. Here he had the advantage of
studying the human figure with the principal artists of that
period, and made such progress as to be encouraged to offer a
drawing for a premium proposed by the Society established for
the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce; and
succeeded.
In 1763, his prospect of employment became more promising. Mr. Boydell having undertaken to publish a set of engravings from celebrated pictures by old masters, engaged Edwards to make drawings, from which engravers were to be employed to work.

In 1764, he obtained a premium from the Society of Arts, &c. for the best historical picture in chiaro oscuro. He now became an exhibiter with the Incorporated Society of Artists, and was admitted a member of that body; but was soon disgusted with the factious proceedings which prevailed in it, and which caused a considerable number of the principal artists to withdraw themselves from it. But as several of his most intimate friends still remained in it, he was induced to continue some time longer a member and an exhibitor.

In 1770, he was employed by the President and Council of the Society of Antiquaries, to make a large drawing* from an old picture in the Castle at Windsor, representing the interview between Henry VIII. and Francis I. at Calais. Upon this he was engaged more than six months. His work was approved, but he was not rewarded with a spirit of liberality; indeed, it may be said he was treated unjustly. He received only one hundred and ten guineas for his time and trouble; a very inadequate recompense.

But whatever might be his disappointment, he was not of a disposition to despond, and although he had still a mother and sister to support, his fortitude under all circumstances of difficulty remained unshaken. It was his happiness to look

* The size of the drawing was 3 feet 11 inches, by 1 foot 11½ inches.
forward with hope and with confidence to a period when his exertions would have their reward in fame and success; and this temper of mind rendered his spirits cheerful, and his application to his professional studies pleasant. His great object was to be an historical painter; but the necessities of his situation obliged him to accept offers of employment of various kinds. He made drawings, painted landscapes and portraits in large or in miniature; and occasionally made designs, and began pictures on historical or poetical subjects. Thus proceeding, he obtained a moderate income, which he managed with frugality.

In 1771, he exhibited with the Royal Academy, in which, for the advantage of academical study, he had been some time a Student. His good character and general ingenuity made a due impression on the minds of the Academicians, and in 1773 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy. Soon after he was employed by Lord Belborough, at Roehampton, to repair a ceiling painted by Sir James Thornhill; and by Mr. Bell, the bookseller, to make designs and drawings for several publications. He had also the good fortune to be employed by Robert Udney, esq. in whom he found a warm friend. Mr. Udney being apprised of his desire to seek improvement abroad, offered him pecuniary assistance to enable him to accomplish his wishes; and in consequence he made arrangements for that purpose, and in July 1775 he left London, and proceeded to France on his way to Italy.

He was absent from England till September 1776, when he returned to London. His chief residence, while he was abroad, was at Rome, but he visited most of the other principal cities in Italy; and varied his route on his way back by passing through Turin,
Turin, and over the alps to Lyons. Thus, though his tour was made in little more than thirteen months, he saw what was most remarkable both in nature and art in that celebrated country.

On his arrival in London, he again established himself in his profession. He had seen much, and his opinions, which were given with undeviating integrity, were always respected; but his productions could not excite much approbation. There have been few instances where an artist, with so much general capacity and vigour of mind, has not been enabled to make greater proficiency.

After these observations, it will not be necessary to relate many particulars of his professional practice, which, as before he went to Italy, was various, and did not produce to him more than was sufficient to support himself and his aged mother and sister. His admirable conduct as a son and a brother caused him to be regarded with particular esteem, and he was distinguished in society for the uprightness of his proceedings and the rectitude of his heart.

Mr. Udny continued to be the friend of Edwards, and gave him employment; and he had commissions to execute for Sir Edward Walpole. In 1781, he obtained a premium from the Society of Arts, &c., for a Landscape Painting. The same year he presented to the Royal Society his paper on the Storm at Roehampton, accompanied by drawings made by himself of the singular and extraordinary effects of it.

In June 1782, he went to Bath, where he was employed to paint three arabesque ceilings, in the house of the honourable Charles Hamilton. This was one of the greatest commissions he ever received, and occupied him till March 1783. Here his time passed very agreeably, owing to the politeness and liberality of Mr. Hamilton.
About a year before his death, his sister first noticed a change in his constitution. She perceived that he had become weaker, but there was no other apparent symptom of decay, and it was not till a few weeks before he died that he suffered any confinement. The disorder which occasioned it, did not excite in him apprehension of danger. He thought his complaint was of a rheumatic nature, and that he should soon recover. On the morning of the day on which he died, December 19, 1806, he wrote to a friend a question respecting a point in his Biography. In the evening he was seated by the fire conversing, when he suddenly rose, and desired to be supported to a bed in the next room, on which, in a few minutes, he expired. Upon the examination of the surgeons, nothing extraordinary appeared, except about three or four ounces of water in the pericardium.

He was attended to his grave in St. Pancras church-yard by B. West, Esq. President of the Royal Academy; J. Farington and J. Nollekens, Esq. Academicians; Sir William Blizzard, Mr. Baker, Mr. Edridge, Mr. Hearne, Mr. Milbourne, jun. and Mr. Sotheby, jun.; who, with much regret, saw deposited the remains of their much respected friend, and of a truly good man.