A watercolor landscape painting of a coastal town. In the background, a town with numerous buildings and a church with a tall steeple sits atop a green hill. The town is reflected in the calm water of a bay. In the middle ground, a small sailboat with a single sail is visible on the water. The foreground is composed of rocky, sandy shores with some green vegetation and a large, craggy rock formation on the right side.

KAREN TAYLOR FINE ART

CONSTANCE FREDERICA GORDON-CUMMING (1837 – 1924)  
A LADY OF ADVENTUROUS DISPOSITION

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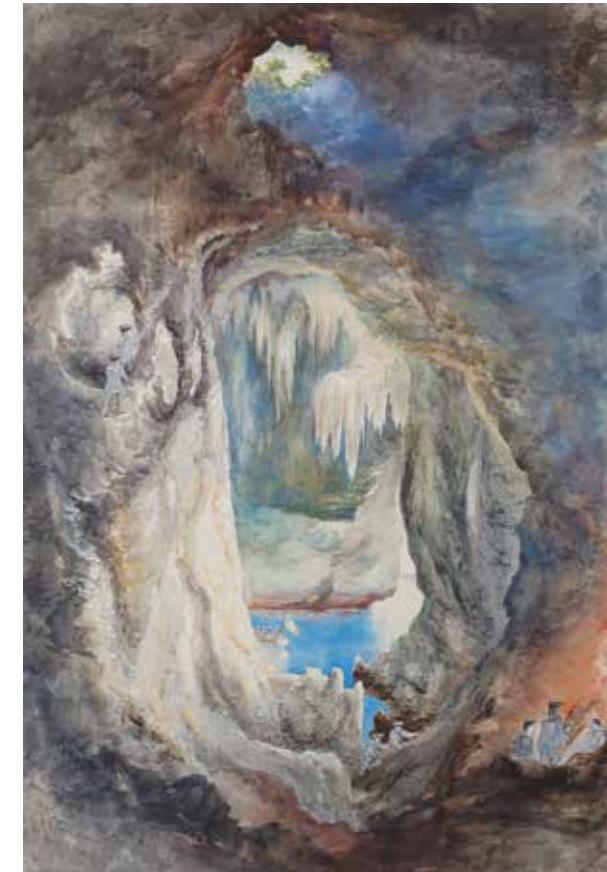
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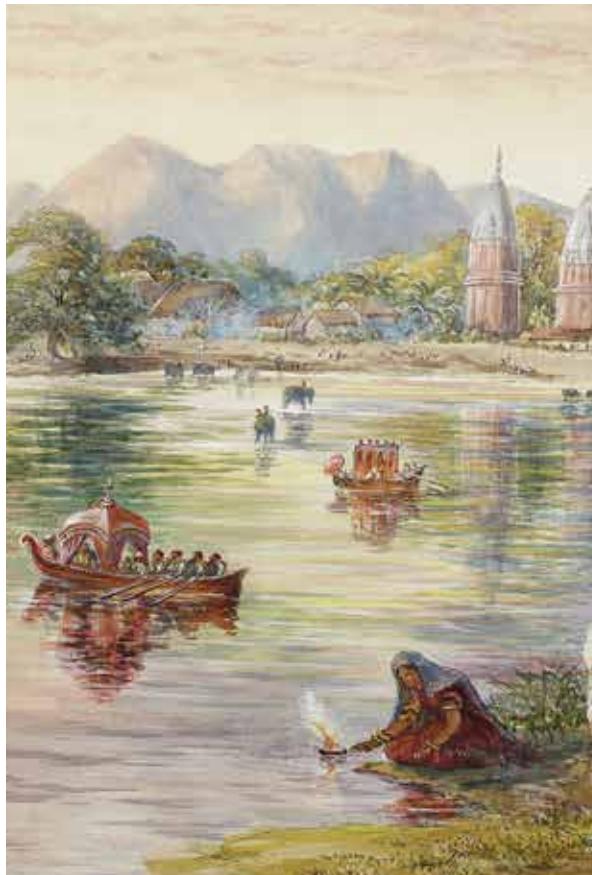
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Front cover illustration: *Fort Frederick from Trincomalee, Ceylon* catalogue number 58

Frontispiece illustration: *Coral Grotto, Vava'u, Tonga* catalogue number 76



The recent discovery of this exceptional group of fresh watercolours in a portfolio in the attic of a country house in the north of England, reveals the considerable talents and trailblazing ambition and achievements of Constance Frederica Gordon-Cumming, who while famous in her own lifetime, is largely forgotten today. Gordon-Cumming's extensive publications and her participation in important exhibitions meant she was well known to her contemporaries. William Henry Davenport Adams, a contemporary chronicler of women travellers, described her courage, endurance, literary ability and art as unrivalled ..'a lady of adventurous disposition...she has put a girdle round the world with unfailing ardour'. Yet in the century since her death, she has largely faded from view, mainly because her work has rarely been shown, as it has remained in the hands of her descendants.

The artist, known as Eka, was the twelfth child of Sir William Gordon-Cumming, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baronet of Altyre and Gordonstoun and his first wife Eliza Campbell. She was part of a large family with some fifty first cousins. She was born at the family seat of Altyre, Morayshire, on the river Findhorn in the Scottish Highlands, which her family had owned for over seven hundred years. She spent her early years there, a beautiful place which she described as 'a dream of delight' in her autobiography *Memories* (p. 7).

As was normal at that time, Gordon-Cumming was educated at home, presumably by governesses or tutors. Eka was brought up in an artistic environment, as her mother painted in both oils and watercolours, and her siblings also drew. Her natural talent was therefore nurtured, encouraged by artists such as Sir Edwin Landseer (1803 - 1873), Sir William Ross (1794-1860) and James William Giles (1801-1870) who were frequent visitors to Altyre. Her mother was also a palaeontologist and her collection, which she drew extensively, is today in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. Sadly, Eliza died shortly after giving birth to her thirteenth living child in 1842. At around the time, Eka later recalled how she came across her father's collection of travel books in his dressing room, which included large illustrated editions of Captain Cook's *Voyage to the South Seas*, which no doubt encouraged her wish to travel and her sense of adventure.

In 1843 her elder sister (Anne) Seymour married Oswin Baker Cresswell and she went to live with them, first at Cresswell Hall, Northumberland and then at nearby Harehope Hall, where they moved as their family grew. Eka returned to her father and stepmother, Jane

Eliza Mackintosh, at Altyre in 1846. From 1848 to 1853 Eka went to Hermitage Lodge in Fulham, a school run by the three Stevens sisters. In 1854 she did the London season.

The artist spent her summer holidays at the Gordon-Cumming home at Altyre, sketching, fishing (comparatively unusual for women in Victorian England), walking and climbing and visiting Gordonstoun. She developed an adventurous temperament and love of mountaineering.

Following Ida Gordon-Cumming's marriage to Oswin's brother, William Gilfrid, a cavalry officer, Harehope became a second home for Eka and her sister Eleonora, known as Nelly. The four girls, Seymour, Ida, Nelly and Eka were close and wrote to each other regularly. After her father's death in 1854 the artist returned to live with her sister Seymour. This arrangement was not to last, as Oswin died suddenly from typhoid in 1856, followed two years later by Seymour's death from consumption. Their children went to live with their paternal grandparents at Cresswell Hall, so Castle Grant and Easter Elchies, on the banks of the Spey became her homes from 1859, following Nelly's marriage to George Grant, of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Highlanders.

Gordon-Cumming pursued her artistic development in the 1860s exhibiting in Edinburgh and Glasgow from 1866 and 1867 respectively. Gregarious and sociable, she stayed with friends and relations, always sketching and painting in watercolours as she went. In 1868 she made her first painting tour of the Western Isles.

In November 1868 the artist travelled to India, at the invitation of her half-sister Emilia and her husband Warden Sergison, formerly of the 4th Hussars. She travelled on the steamship, *Pera*, calling at Malta and Alexandria. After crossing the Egyptian desert by rail, she boarded the *Candia* and sailed down the Red Sea and on to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) before arriving at Calcutta (Kolkata) just before Christmas.<sup>1</sup>

She returned to the United Kingdom in February 1870, with many watercolours and drawings, when her first article 'Camp Life in the Himalayas' was published in *Good Words*. She wrote more about her travels in *From the Hebrides to the Himalayas* in 1876. Henceforth, inspired by her first long journey, painting, writing and travel became her way of life.

Gordon-Cumming drew and painted watercolours extensively while she travelled. She filled 'innumerable' sketchbooks and portfolios (see *Two Happy Years in Ceylon*, p. 5) kept diaries and wrote letters and travel-notes on each of her expeditions. Some of the watercolours in this collection have been signed by friends and travelling companions as she wanted to record their kindness to her on her travels. These annotations provide an interesting insight into her life and working practice. She rose around 4 or 5 a.m., working very fast to produce accurate pencil sketches, which she would subsequently touch in with watercolour. In addition to small sketchbooks and larger blocks of paper, she travelled with a very large zinc block contained in a large tin box. This enabled her to compose larger compositions unconstrained by the risks of accidental damage (*Memories*, pp. 199-200). Determined to capture everything she saw,

the artist was imaginative in addressing local hazards, such as leeches disrupting her sketching:

'I found that many of the loveliest sketching-grounds were absolutely untenable to a defenceless artist..I always carried a large waterproof rug, and had also a large waterproof sack, which secured my bedding from rain or dust...whenever the desirable sketching-ground was likely to prove very leechy, I commenced operations by spreading the waterproof rug on the ground, with the sack in the very middle, and my paint-box and sketching-block in positions... I stepped into the sack, which I then tied securely under my arms, and thus prepared, set to work', *Two Happy Years in Ceylon*, pp. 263-4.

After a while in the United Kingdom, staying with her brother William at Auchintoul, she returned to Ceylon in 1872, at the invitation of Hugh Jermyn, the Bishop of Colombo, who had, by coincidence, been the minister at Altyre. She stayed in Ceylon from February 1873 to July 1874, describing in her autobiography how 'I proved, as I have often done before, how soothing are long days of solitary sketching, alone with beautiful nature', *Memories*, p. 211. She travelled across Ceylon with the Bishop and his daughter and returned with several hundred paintings 'of exceeding interest' which were exhibited in London, Glasgow and elsewhere (*Memories*, p. 213). On her return she stayed at Inveraray Castle with the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, and noted that the exquisite Autumn colours in Argyllshire and the graceful Highland birches were equal to the luxuriant tropical foliage of Ceylon. *Two Happy Years in Ceylon* was published in 1892 and was well received.

<sup>1</sup> This catalogue has adopted place names in use in Gordon-Cumming's time and that reflect those used in her writings.

In 1874 Rachel Hamilton Gordon invited the artist to accompany her and her husband Sir Arthur Gordon, to Fiji, following his appointment as the first British Governor of Fiji. The party left England in March 1875 stopping at Singapore before arriving in Sydney. The artist spent three months in Australia visiting the Blue Mountains and the Duntroon sheep station. Between September 1875 and March 1878 Gordon-Cumming visited Fiji and New Zealand, and travelled across the South Seas, following a fortuitous encounter with the captain of a French man-of-war, the *Seignelay*, which enabled her to travel to Tonga, Samoa and Tahiti. The Roman Catholic bishop of Samoa, who was on a cruise around his oceanic diocese, acted as her chaperone. The French officers fitted up a pretty little cabin to accommodate the artist. This trip is recorded in her subsequent books *At Home in Fiji* (1881) and *A Lady's Cruise in a French Man-of-War* (1882).

The artist then proceeded to California, where she spent several months in the Yosemite Valley. 'In California I found such attractive sketching-ground that six months slipped away like so many weeks, chiefly in the grand Sierra Nevada', *Memories*, pp. 230-231:

'I for one have wandered far enough over the wide world to know a unique glory when I am blessed with one, and the first glimpse of this extraordinary combination of granite crags and stupendous waterfalls showed me plainly enough that it would take me weeks to make acquaintance with them, and that if I fail to do so, I shall regret it all my life ...'

She rode in all directions, glad of the sidesaddle she had with her, to paint the views from various mountain summits and watched the seasons change from the melting of the snow, when the crags were

visible and the trees leafless, to the growth of the vegetation. The Sequoia Gigantea captured her imagination as did the other trees, 'the whole combines to produce a dream of loveliness, a true forest sanctuary', *Memories*, pp. 230 – 231. She organised the first art exhibition in Yosemite to show around fifty of her watercolours and sketches and recorded her time there in *Granite Crags* (1884).

Gordon-Cumming continued her travels to Japan and arrived in Nagasaki on 6 September 1878. She spent a couple of months in Japan and left from Yokohama for China in December. She travelled through China until June 1879 visiting Hong Kong, Canton, Tsientsin and Peking. There she met a Scottish missionary, William Hill Murray, who had invented the Numeral Type system and was teaching blind Chinese to read and write. Gordon-Cumming became a stalwart supporter of his school and wrote two books about the blind in China, in addition to her publication *Wanderings in China* (1886).

Gordon-Cumming continued what was to become her longest trip by returning to the United States via Japan, arriving in San Francisco in September 1879. On 1 October she left for Hawaii and spent two months exploring the islands and observing their volcanoes, as recorded in her publication *Fire Fountains: The Kingdom of Hawaii* (1873). She then crossed the United States and finally docked in Liverpool on 13 March 1880.

Her home for the next nine years was with Nelly, her now widowed sister, at Crieff, Perthshire, and after Nelly's death in 1889, she lived there alone. Her most productive period followed, during which she wrote many of her books and articles and continued to paint. Her autobiography *Memories* (1904) was her final work.

The artist's work was extensively exhibited in her lifetime. In 1884 she contributed watercolours of many of the largest and most celebrated trees in the world to the International Forestry Exhibition held at Donaldson's College in Edinburgh. In 1886 the Indian and Colonial Exhibition at South Kensington included over three hundred of her watercolours in the various national courts into which the exhibition was subdivided. They were recorded in the exhibition catalogue with her name and a brief description of the place depicted. Subsequent Colonial exhibitions in Liverpool and Glasgow included many examples of her work. She received medals from the Indian and Colonial and Forestry exhibitions.

In 1914 Gordon-Cumming's achievement was recognised when she was made a Life Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. She died at Crieff on 4 September 1924.

This magnificent group of watercolours was stored with her sisters' descendants, initially in an attic at Birdsall, home of Lord and Lady Middleton, (whose eldest son Digby had married the artist's niece Eisa Gordon-Cumming) in a portfolio, undisturbed for nearly one hundred years. The label on the portfolio, written in the artist's hand on a sheet of writing paper, reflects her awareness of the importance of her work and her desire that it should be properly cared for.

The artist was a landscape painter, an explorer and a mountaineer. Aware of her privileged circumstances she wanted to record the places she visited to share them with others. She was drawn to high peaks and mountains and was able to ride and climb to a level unusual amongst Victorian women. Her interest and aptitude must have



started in her childhood in the Highlands of Scotland (views of two Munros, Schihallion, and Ben Lawers are included in this collection). She was to climb in the Himalayas, the tea country in Ceylon where she ascended Adam's Peak and Mount Pedro, the highest mountain on the island, the Blue Mountains in New South Wales, and the volcanoes of the South Sea islands. Yosemite particularly impressed her as she wrote in *Granite Crags*,

'Truly these Californian Alps hold treasures of delight for lovers of all beautiful nature, who on their part can bring strength and energy for mountaineering — a sure foot, a steady head and any amount of endurance'.

She had a sense of adventure and a physical prowess which sometimes exceeded that of her male companions, such as, for example, 'half a dozen stalwart planters', with whom she climbed Adam's Peak in Ceylon. Her habit of sitting outside and painting was not the norm for women in late Victorian Britain and she took full advantage of freedoms she could enjoy away from home. In April 1876 she wrote from Isle Nagau, Fiji of how a bath could be taken in the open air 'in an exquisite stream..just deep enough to lie down full length', and when alone would simply undress and wade into the water. She wrote in *Wanderings in China* (1886) that 'physical fear is a sensation which I have never experienced'.

Gordon-Cumming embellished her watercolours with detailed renderings of the local flora and fauna, in which she took a keen interest and which is described at some length in her publications. She was aware of the environment and critical of deforestation in Ceylon (see her watercolour of Adam's Peak with tree stumps in the foreground, cat. no. 48). She also wrote about the unintended consequences of deforestation and of the impact of man upon the environment in California in *Granite Crags*. She had particular affection for the forests of ancient diodara in which she camped in the Himalayas. All of her writings are punctuated with evocative descriptions of the plants she came across on her travels.

The opportunities for travel from which Gordon-Cumming benefitted were accessible to her due to her wide network of connections which spread around the world as its members took up postings across the empire. Advances in communication and shipping and

the spread of European colonial rule enabled travel to places previously inaccessible, especially for women. Her extensive writings about her travels and the documentary quality of her works reflect the importance of categorising and describing areas of the world newly accessible to the Victorians, and which formed a key plank of the imperial project. Her writings display both typical attitudes of her time towards non-European places and people, and deep curiosity and knowledge about the places she visited.

The artist benefited from being a lone woman traveller as opposed to a wife, which came with responsibilities and restrictions. Anna Stoddart, the biographer of her friend and fellow traveller Isabella Bird wrote, 'Four Englishwomen have, during the last thirty years, established for themselves a well-grounded fame as travellers - Mrs Bishop (Isabella Bird), Miss North, Miss Kingsley and Miss Gordon Cumming', (*The Life of Isabella Bird - Mrs Bishop*, 1906).

Marianna North wrote of meeting Gordon-Cumming 'a thorough lady: genial and warm-hearted, but so strong and resolute that it might be quite possible that she had walked certain limp Anglo-Indians to death before now'.

Gordon-Cumming was conscious of her artistic legacy. Her work generated considerable notice during her lifetime and was widely exhibited. Her numerous well-received and critically acclaimed publications created further awareness of her paintings. She knew Marianna North (1830 – 1890) and admired her still extant gallery in Kew Garden, The North Gallery, which opened in 1882.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> It houses 832 of North's botanical and topographical paintings amidst decorative panels and woods from around the world, divided into geographical areas, the individual works in black japanned frames. A catalogue was produced and a handbook which sold for sixpence.

In her *Memoirs* Eka wrote that she felt strongly that the value of her own work was collective, a record of all the places she had visited and drawn. She did not have the funds to build and maintain a gallery to display her work - her name would surely be much better known today had she managed to build a dedicated gallery with her name attached. Instead she lent her work to various exhibitions all over the British Isles and finally gave it to members of her family, where much of it has remained to this day, stored in portfolios such as the one which protected this group of drawings.

I hope that this catalogue will serve to bring to Constance Gordon-Cumming's work the recognition it deserves after a century hidden from view. Her skill was considerable, her powers of observation acute, her artistic ambition considerable and she visited many places which were infrequently drawn. Consequently, this collection is a remarkable record of many corners of the world that had rarely been depicted before, at a time of insatiable curiosity about the wider world, contemporary with the high point of western Imperialism.

Gordon-Cumming's disappearance from view after her death is all too familiar to scholars of female artists. Women artists have been judged differently from their male counterparts and the notion of them as amateurs is all the more entrenched for those from the upper classes who did not sell their work. Happily, current interest in the work of women artists and makers of the past is at last giving equal recognition to their achievements alongside those of their male peers.

Karen Taylor



## SCOTLAND



These views of Scotland, where the artist spent many summers, date from early in her life, when her style was looser than in her mature work.



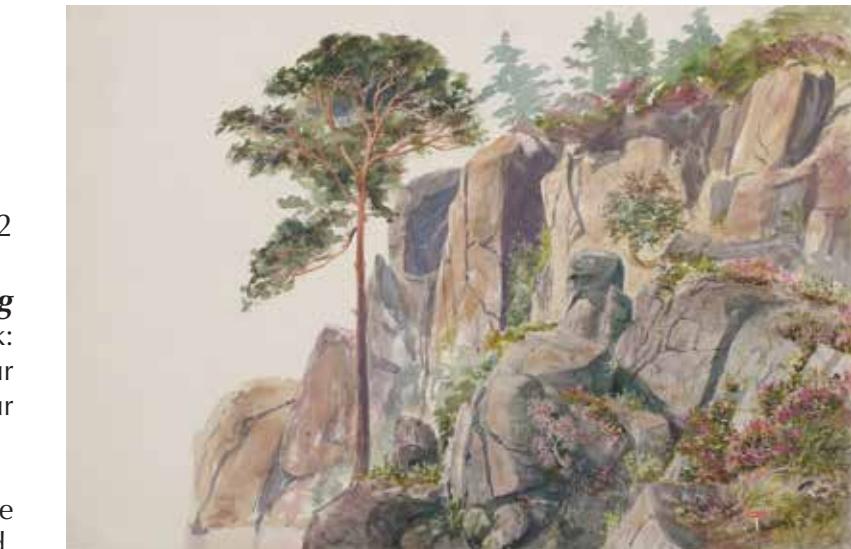
1

***The Upper Part of Glenmoriston,  
Scotland***

Watercolour over pencil heightened  
with white, inscribed in ink verso: *The  
Upper Part of Glenmoriston.*

35 x 68 cm.; 13 3/4 x 26 3/4 inches

Glen Moriston is a river glen in the Highlands that runs from Loch Ness at the village of Invermoriston westwards to Loch Cluanie which is popular with fishermen.



2

***Study of Rock, Fir Craig, Stirling***

Inscribed with title verso in pen and black ink:  
*Study of Rock. Fir Craig. Stirling*, watercolour  
over pencil with touches of bodycolour  
35.2 x 50.5 cm.; 13 7/8 x 19 7/8 inches

This beautiful watercolour captures the late summer landscape in Scotland.



3

***A mountainous view, Breadalbane, Perthshire***

Inscribed verso in pen and black ink:  
*Schehallion, Black Mount. Three  
 Shepherds*, watercolour recto and verso  
 14.7 x 67.1 cm.; 5 3/4 x 26 3/8 inches



Schiehallion is a Munro and one of Scotland's best-known hills. The artist enjoyed walking and sketching from an early age.

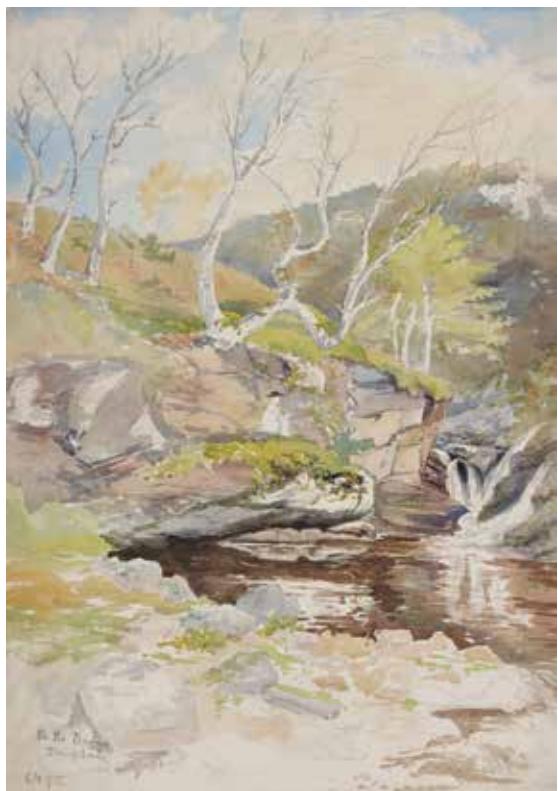
4

***Invermoriston from Levassie, Scotland***

Signed, inscribed and dated verso:  
*Invermoriston from Levassie./C.F.G.C. Oct.  
 1864./Crystal Palace/C.*, watercolour over traces  
 of pencil with touches of white, on two sheets,  
 joined  
 17.2 x 52 cm.; 6 3/4 x 20 1/2 inches

Invermoriston is a Highland village on the  
 northern shores of Loch Ness.





***Loch Tay and Ben Lawers from Castle Menzies Rock, Breadalbane***

Inscribed in pen and black ink verso: *Loch Tay and Ben Lawers from/Castle Menzies Rock*, watercolour over traces of pencil with touches of white  
 35 x 68 cm.; 13 3/4 x 26 3/4 inches

Ben Lawers is the tenth highest Munro on the north side of Loch Tay.

***On the Divie, Dunphail, Moray***

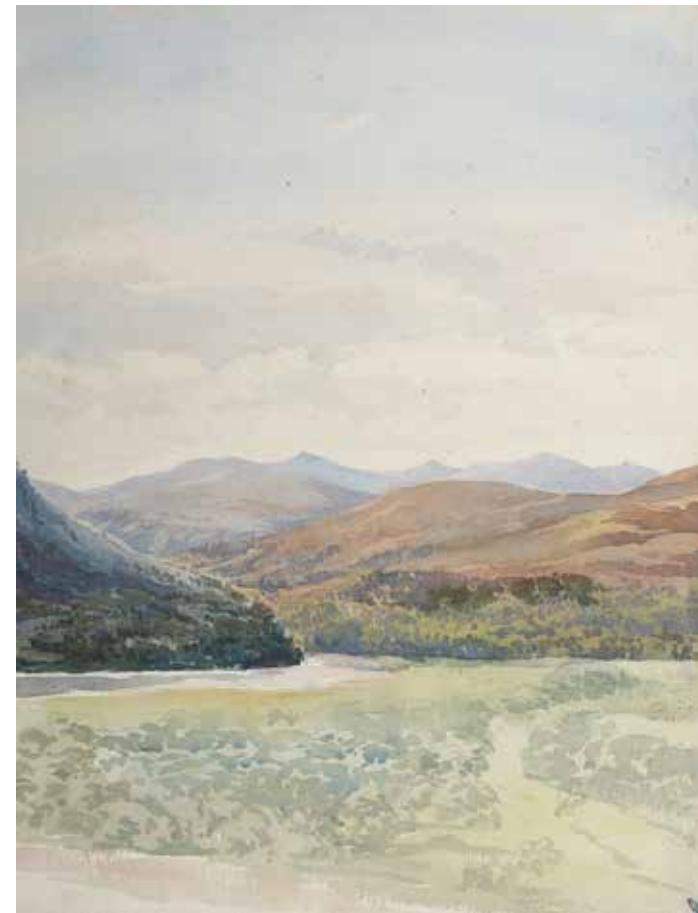
Signed and inscribed l.l.: *On the*  
*Divie/Dunphail/C.F.G.C.*, watercolour over pencil  
 50.6 x 35.4 cm.; 19 7/8 x 14 inches

The Divie is a tributary of the river Findhorn.

7

*Trees on a loch*

Watercolour over pencil

19.8 x 26.6 cm.; 7  $\frac{7}{8}$  x 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches

8

*A river valley in a landscape, probably Scotland*

Watercolour over pencil

35.3 x 26.6 cm.; 13  $\frac{7}{8}$  x 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches



9

***Selsdon Park, near Croydon***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Selsdon Park/C.F.G.C./1864*, watercolour over pencil  
35.1 x 50.5 cm.; 13 3/4 x 19 3/4 inches

The house was owned by the Smith banking family from 1809 - 1877. George Smith (1765-1836) and his wife Frances, née Moseley, had fifteen children and their second son Oswald's daughter Frances married the thirteenth Earl of Strathmore in 1853. This Scottish connection may have introduced the artist to Selsdon Park.

# EUROPE





10

***Old Gateway N.W. Side, Aix la Chapelle, Germany***

Inscribed and dated I.r.: *Old Gateway N.W. Side/Aix la Chapelle/Sept. 8th/1865*, pen and brown ink and watercolour over traces of pencil heightened with touches of bodycolour on blue paper  
 25.5 x 17.2 cm.; 10 x 6 3/4 inches

The artist went on a trip to Germany and Switzerland in the summer of 1865. This 14<sup>th</sup> century gateway known as the Ponttor is one of the two remaining gates of the original city walls of Aachen or Aix la Chapelle.



11

***Vaulted Hall under the Terrace,  
Heidelberg, Germany***

Inscribed and dated I.l.: *Vaulted Hall under the Terrace. Heidelberg/Sep 21st/1865*,  
 watercolour over pencil with bodycolour on blue paper  
 17.2 x 25.5 cm.; 6 3/4 x 10 inches

The ruined Heidelberg Castle is one of the most important Renaissance buildings north of the Alps.

12

***The Castle of Chillon, Switzerland***

Watercolour over traces of pencil, a still life of objects on a table in pencil, a small box inscribed H.B.C., verso  
22.6 x 30.2 cm.; 8  $\frac{7}{8}$  x 11  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches

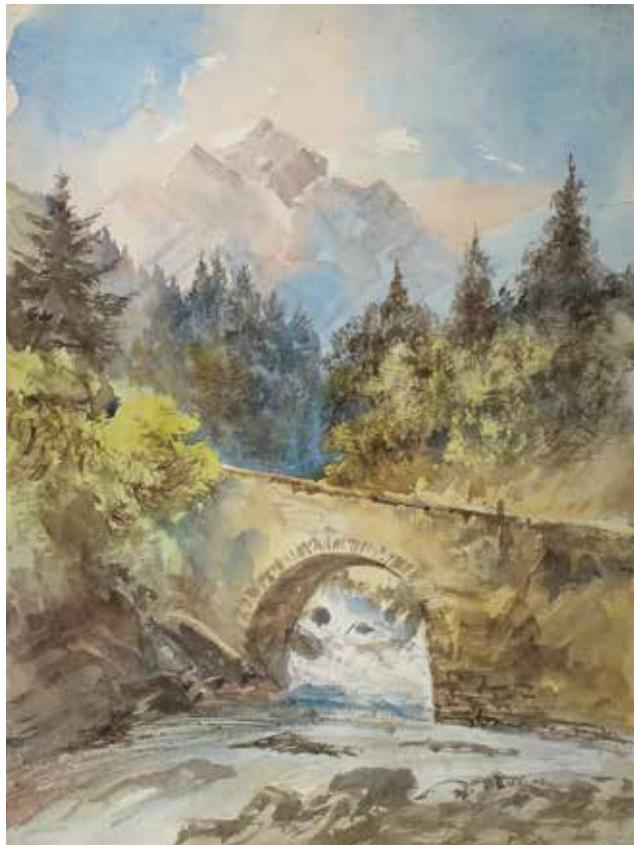
The artist has chosen to draw the famous mediaeval island castle on Lake Geneva from a slightly unusual viewpoint.



13

***Boatyard on the shore of a lake, Switzerland***

Watercolour over traces of pencil  
25.2 x 35.4 cm.; 9  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 13  $\frac{7}{8}$  inches

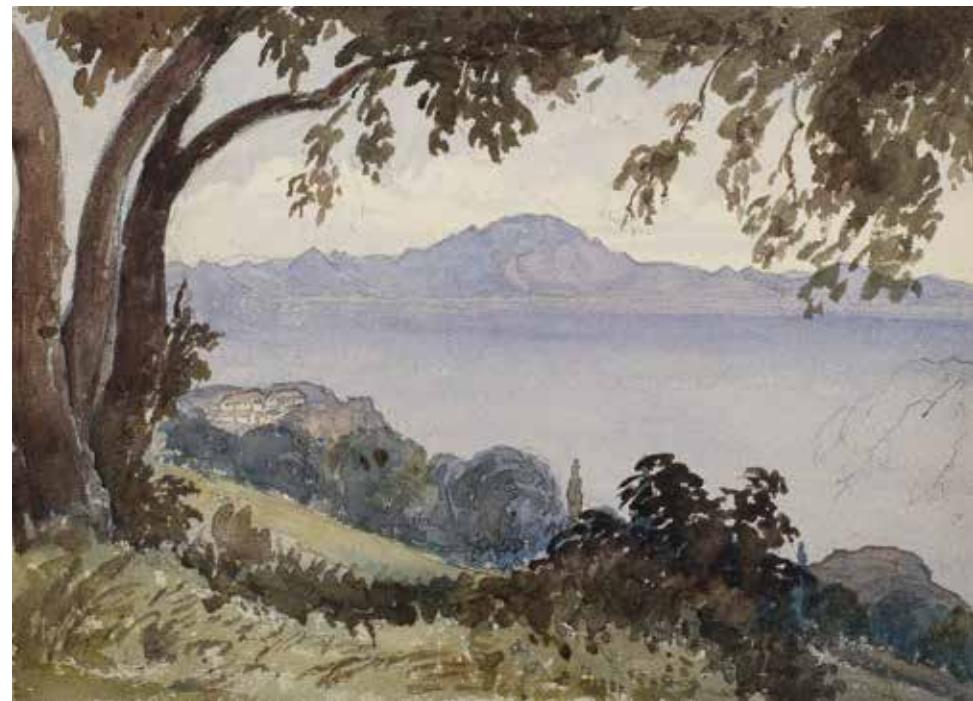


14

***Devil's Bridge, Mt. St Gotthard, Switzerland***  
Watercolour over traces of pencil  
30.2 x 22.6 cm.; 11 3/4 x 8 7/8 inches

The famous bridge was painted by many artists, notably J.M.W. Turner.

***A lake from a hillside***  
Watercolour over pencil  
17.7 x 26.2 cm.; 7 x 10 3/8 inches





16

***Old houses with a traveller***  
Watercolour over pencil  
30.5 x 22.6 cm.; 12 x 9 inches

## THE VOYAGE OUT AND INDIA



The artist left for her first foreign trip to India in November 1868 on board the steamship the *Pera*, passing Gibraltar and calling at Alexandria. The passengers who were continuing to India crossed the desert by railway and embarked on another ship at Suez and sailed via Ceylon, finally reaching Calcutta on 23 December. She spent Christmas with Mr Oglivie of Corrimore who worked for Messrs Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Co. and then proceeded up-country. After travelling extensively from Lucknow to Delhi and Agra she met up with her sister Emilia and her husband Warden Sergison at Meerut and accompanied her sister to Simla. She was very responsive to her new environment and wrote that she began to see things differently after being there for a few weeks.

Eka left her sister with a new baby and travelled further in the Himalayas with some friends, Colonel and Mrs Graves, whom she described as perfect sketching companions. They followed the course of the Sutledge, travelling hard and sometimes pitching their small hill tents on steep hillsides looking right up at the snowy peaks of the Himalayas. After a further spell in Simla she visited Massourie and Landoun in the Himalayas and Dehra Doon. She went to the holy Hindu cities of Hardwar and Benares. Thereafter she visited Jubbulpore and the marble rocks, and travelled on by rail to Bombay (Mumbai) and then sailed for England. Her return journey was made at the end of 1869 when she spent some time around Cairo in Egypt, embarking at Alexandria on 1 January 1870.

Her first book was partly inspired by the enthusiasm with which her portfolios of drawings were greeted by those to whom she showed them (sometimes she had to 'do portfolio' four times a day). Her first article, 'Camp Life in the Himalayas' was published in *Good Words* magazine in 1870, followed by *The Hebrides to the Himalayas* in two volumes in 1876. Eka later revised this work into two separate volumes *In the Hebrides* and *In the Himalayas and on Indian Plains*.



17

**Rock of Gibraltar and the Sierra Nevada**

Inscribed and dated l.r.: *Rock of Gibraltar and /The Sierra Nevada/Nov. 1868/C.F.G.C.*,  
watercolour over pencil with touches of white  
22.7 x 53.3 cm.; 9 x 21 inches



18

**Gibraltar**

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Gibraltar./"Queen of Spain's (have /Spanish & English flags.)/"Othello"/July 17th.74./C.F.G.C.*, watercolour over pencil heightened with white  
13 x 55 cm.; 5 1/8 x 21 5/8 inches

This dates from the artist's 1874 passage.

***Sinaitic Range from the sea***

Inscribed and dated l.l.: *This is all we saw of the/ Sinaitic Range/Dec. 1st 1868, watercolour over pencil*  
 13.2 x 56.5 cm.; 5 1/4 x 22 1/4 inches

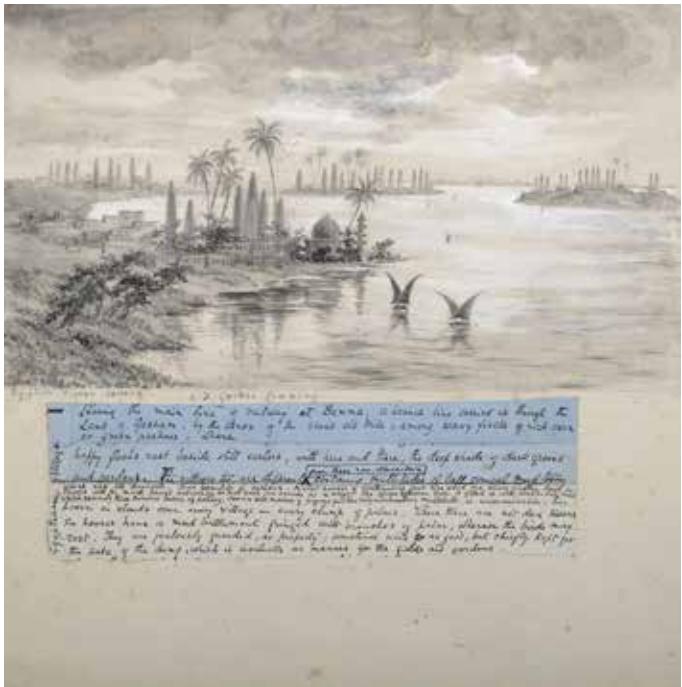


***Memphis and the Nile from the Powder Magazine, Cairo***

Signed, inscribed and dated: *Memphis and the Nile from the Powder Magazine, Cairo./Dec. 27.1869-C.F.G.C./Egushin Mosque.?Pyramids of Dahshur/Sakara Pyramid/Gizeh Pyramids,*  
 watercolour over pencil  
 22.6 x 53.1 cm.; 8 7/8 x 20 7/8 inches

This was drawn on the return voyage when she spent some time in Egypt.

21



### ***Egyptian Pigeon Towers***

Signed and inscribed l.l.: *Egyptian Pigeon towers./ C.F. Gordon Cumming., pen and grey ink and grey wash heightened with white, inscribed on 3 sheets adhered below the drawing: Leaving the main line of railway at Benna, a branch line carried us through the Land of Goshen, by the banks of the broad old Nile, among wavy fields of rich corn/or green pastures, where/happy flocks nest beside still waters, with here and there, the deep shade of dark groves/and gardens. The villages, too, are different from those near Alexandria, containing multitudes of tall conical mud towers/which are all dovecots. Their formation is curious. A vast number of earthenware jars are piled one above another, laid in/layers with the mouth turned outwards, so that each jar series is a nest. The space between them is filled up with plaster and mud/which cements these curious towers of pottery, wherein vast numbers of pigeons find their readymade homes. Their multitude is inconceivable; they/hover in clouds over every village-every clump of palms. Where there are not dove towers the houses have a mud battlement fringed with branches of palm, whereon the birds may/rest. They are jealously guarded as property; sometimes used as food, but chiefly kept for/the sake of the dung, which is invaluable as manure for the fields and gardens./Egyptian Village*

14.7 x 26.2 cm.; 5 ¾ x 10 ¼ inches



22

### ***The Tanks and the Trees, Aden***

Inscribed and dated l.r.: *The Tanks & the trees- (cost of/the latter incalculable/Aden/Dec. 1869, watercolour over pencil heightened with touches of bodycolour on grey paper*  
 36.1 x 52.5 cm.; 14 ½ x 20 ½ inches

In her *Memoirs* the artist records Aden 'transfigured by the glory of the sunset, which flushed the summits crimson, while the town and the tanks and seaboard were wrapped in imperial purple'.

## INDIA

These drawings date from the later part of the artist's Indian travels.



23

***Hindoo temple near Dehra***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Hindoo Temple near Dehra/Himmalayas in the background-/Oct. 1869./C.F.G.C.*, watercolour over pencil with touches of white  
40 x 63.4 cm.; 15 3/4 x 25 inches

Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand, is in the foothills of the Himalayas. On the banks of a river is a Hindu temple in front of which figures ride elephants through the shallow waters. On the riverbank, a woman performs the aarti, releasing a diya to float upon the waters as an offering.



24

**Massourie from Dehra Doon**

Inscribed and dated l.r.: *Massourie from/Dehra Doon./Nov. 1st/69*, watercolour over pencil  
17 x 35 cm.; 6 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches

The artist spent a happy month in the hills of Massourie where she stayed with the David Frasers of Saltoun, recalling 'evenings of pink sunrises on the boundless plains - pink sunsets on the eternal snows,' *In the Himalayas and on Indian Plains*, p.494. In this work she captures the view looking back on the hills of Massourie from Dehra Doon (Dehradun).



25

**Bit of the snowy range from Yakko, Simla**

Inscribed and dated l.r.: *Bit of the snowy Range/from Yakko-/Simla/69*, pencil  
26 x 36.2 cm.; 10 1/4 x 14 1/4 inches

The artist, an intrepid mountaineer, noted her disappointment at the optical scale of this mountain range in her book *In the Himalayas*. She wrote of how 'we had expected to find ourselves close to the snows' and yet saw, 'peaks of glittering snow, which seem only like crested waves on the sea-line.' Nevertheless 'after a while we learned to know and love each line of that picture,' *In the Himalayas*, p. 299.



26

***Raldung from Chagaon over Jula***Inscribed l.l.: *Raldung from Chagaon over Jula.*, watercolour over pencil

17.3 x 29.5 cm.; 6 3/4 x 11 5/8 inches

A 'Jula', rope-bridge runs over the Sutlej river by Chagaon in Himachal Pradesh. The artist recorded an encounter where 'we found a most horribly unsafe jula- four ropes, quite decayed, stretching from rock to rock, while far below raged the turbid river, swollen by the mass of melted snow,' which she was eventually forced to cross, *In the Himalayas*, p. 446.



27

**Sverow, wife of the Chakedar at Serahan**

Signed and inscribed: Sverow./Wife of the Chakedar at Serahan. Woman carrying a kilter/C.F.G.C., watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour  
 25.3 x 17.5 cm.; 10 x 6  $\frac{7}{8}$  inches

Further inscribed by the artist on an accompanying label from the old mount:  
*Paharis (i.e. Himalayan Highlanders) of the Bussahir district. On the Sutledge, a hundred miles above Simla.*

Sverow, the wife of the Chakedar (Chowkidar), the 'watchman', of the village, is drawn in the small town of Sarahan on the Sutlej river. This is a hereditary position to which a degree of status is attached. Eka has observed the bright colours the subject is wearing and her elaborate gold jewellery. In the background, a woman carries a 'kilter', a conical shaped basket used by Paharis to transport food, plants and wood. The artist developed a particular affection for the Pahari people.

28

***Bridge of Boats and Old Fort, Benares***

Inscribed and dated l.l.: *Bridge of boats and/old Fort-/Benares-/Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>*, watercolour and pencil  
17 x 35 cm.; 6 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches

In this drawing made on the spot at Benares (Varanasi), the Hindu holy city on the banks of the Ganges, a colossal sculpture can be seen on the steps of an old fort. Across the river boats have been lined up and firmly anchored, so that planks can be laid across them to provide passage for people, carts and carriages, *In the Himalayas*, p. 108.

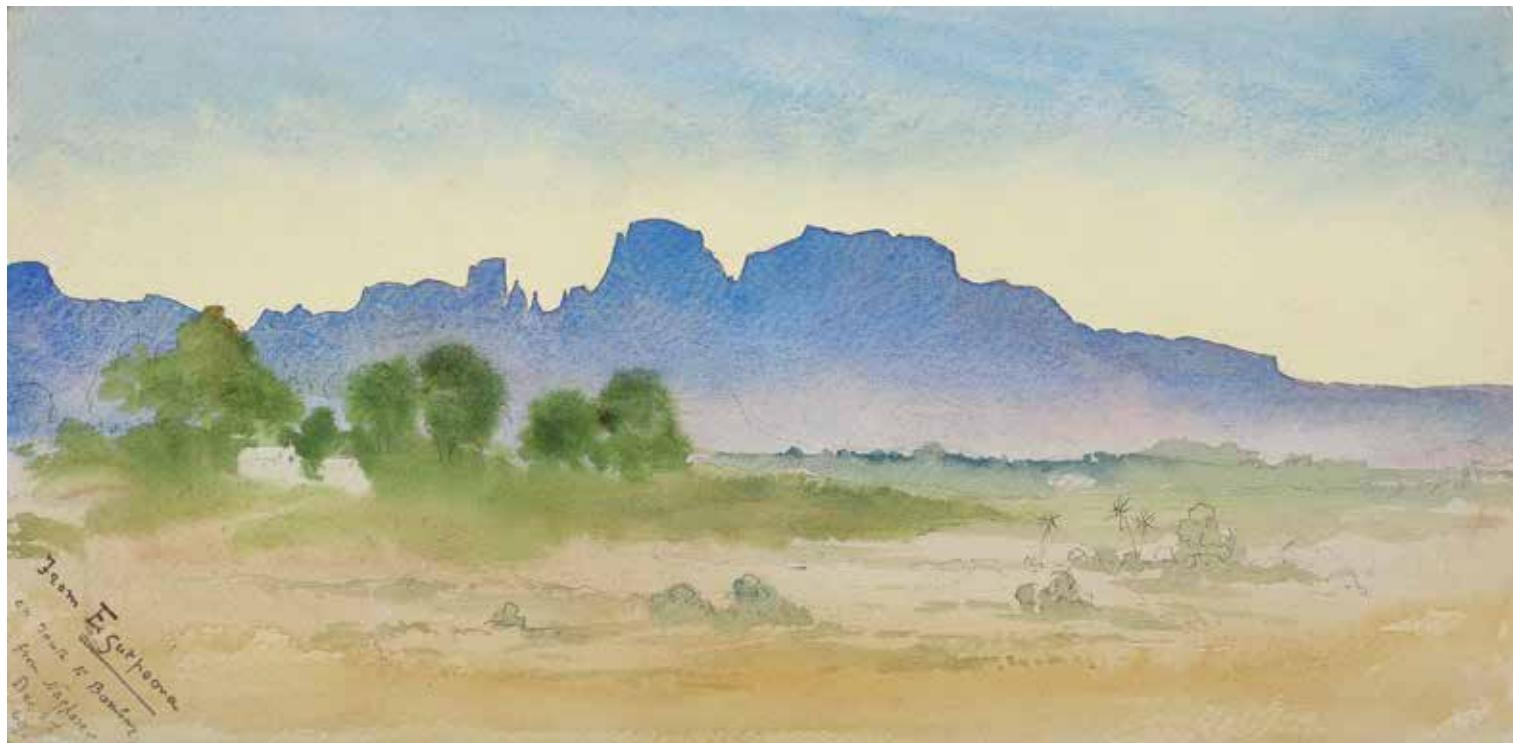


29

***Hindoo Temple, Jubblepore (Jabalpur)***

Inscribed and dated l.l.: *Hindoo Temple/built before the Christian Era/at the Marble Rocks/Jubblepore-/Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>/69*, pencil with watercolour  
17 x 35 cm.; 6 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches

This temple in Behdaghat, Jabalpur, is a Chausath Yogini Temple, dedicated to the worship of yoginis, specifically honouring female divinity. The circular wall surrounding the temple is decorated by 84 niches in which sculpted yoginis are visible. The artist encountered the impressive site en route to see the famous 'Marble Rocks' of the sacred Nerbudda river, *In the Himalayas*, p. 596.



30

***From Egutpoora, en route to Bombay***

Inscribed and dated l.l.: *From Egutpoora/en route to Bombay/from Nagpore/Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>/69*, watercolour over pencil  
17 x 35 cm.; 6 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches

The artist stopped in Nagpore 'the city of the Naga', or serpent, on the railway to Bombay, *In the Himalayas*, p. 569.

***Tannah-/Bombay Line/Dec, Bombay Line***

Inscribed l.l.: *near TANNAH-/BOMBAY LINE./DEC 2<sup>ND</sup> 69, watercolour over pencil*  
*17 x 35 cm.; 6 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches*

The artist recorded these small boats on the watery plain below the Himalayas while travelling on the railway from Bombay, *In the Himalayas*, p. 73.



32

***Cave on the Island of Elephanta, Bombay***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Cave on the Island of Elephanta/Dec 9<sup>th</sup>. 69* and further signed by another,  
watercolour over pencil  
17.3 x 35.3 cm.; 6 7/8 x 13 7/8 inches

Eka visited the famous Hindu temple carved into the rockface on the island of Elephanta. Constructed between the fifth and sixth century, the temple is part of the 'City of Caves' devoted to the cult of Shiva.

## SRI LANKA

The artist spent two years in Ceylon. Her fourth and fifth brothers, John and William, had moved to Ceylon in 1845, John as a coconut planter and William as a hunter. She corresponded regularly with John, who also became a hunter in the forests of the East coast and who died from a brain tumour at Batticaloa in 1865. Eka hoped to be able to visit his grave and was delighted to take up the invitation of the Bishop of Colombo and his daughter to visit the island from 1873-74. In her *Memoirs* she records that she 'was so fascinated with the loveliness of other parts of the isle and

the kindness of many friends that I lingered there for two years, sketching the very varied scenery and the wonderful "jungle cities". Her two volume *Two Happy Years in Ceylon* published in 1892 is a detailed travelogue of the island, filled with her insightful observations and commentary about this beautiful island, its economy, scenery, flora and fauna and inhabitants and their various religious beliefs. Devising novel methods of overcoming difficulties with leeches, she returned with portfolios of watercolours.



### *Kabret Station on the Bitter Lakes, Egypt*

Signed, inscribed and dated I.I.: *Kabret Station/On the Bitter lakes/Jan. 10th 73/CFG.C.*, and signed by five others, including Godfrey Massy Molony

Watercolour over pencil  
14.3 x 56.5 cm.; 5 5/8 x 22 1/4 inches

The artist passed through the Bitter Lakes in Egypt on her way to Ceylon.

34



***Bunyan Bungalows on the  
Mahaweli Ganga***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.:  
*Bunyan Bungalows & Stone/on the  
Mahamilla (Mahaweli) Ganga/F.  
Gordon Cumming/Feb/ 4<sup>th</sup>./1874,*  
further inscribed with notes and  
signed by: Tom Gray, Sarah Gray,  
Henry J.M. Coall, Henry A.  
Claremont, Evan Knightponce,  
watercolour over pencil  
39 x 62 cm.; 15 3/8 x 24 1/4 inches

The Mahaweli is the longest river in Ceylon, 'which rising near Adam's Peak, wanders through the mountains till it reaches Kandy, the mountain capital, whence, descending to the plains, it travels northwards, a total distance of 134 miles, and finally enters the sea by several branches near Trincomalee', *Two Happy Years in Ceylon*, p. 102.

35

***Old Coffee Fields in the Matele Hills from Kabragalla Estate, Kalibooka District***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *The Matele Hills from Kabragalla Estate/C.F. Gordon Cumming./March 2<sup>nd</sup>. 74*, and signed by: Knightly H. Coke, Huntingdon Clarke, watercolour over pencil with touches of white 39 x 62 cm.; 15 3/8 x 24 3/8 inches

Matele is about a hundred miles inland and around 1,274 feet above sea level. It was an area with many coffee districts, as was Kalibooka. Eka Gordon-Cumming lamented the deforestation and soil erosion caused by the extensive planting of coffee (*Two Happy Years*, p. 564).



36



***Sunset with the Allegalla and Kaduganawa Peaks from Bellongalla, Bellgodde, Kornegalle Hills***

Inscribed l.r.: Allegalla and Kaduganawa Peaks from Bellongalla./Bellgodde. Kornegalle Hills, and further inscribed: coffee and with colour notes, watercolour over pencil  
 35.5 x 50.5 cm.; 14 x 19 3/4 inches

The artist stayed with Bessie Farr, whom she met on her journey to Ceylon who was travelling to her future husband Tom Farr. They lived at Oolanakanda, 'perched very high on the majestic Allegalla Peak, at the foot of a mighty crag, and overlooking a billowy sea of mountain ranges. ...from there we could see in the far distance the other great mountain of Ceylon... "Adam's Peak", but to the Singhalese ..the "Sri-Pada", *Memories*, pp. 211-212.



37

***Looking to Elephant Plains from Barrack Plains, Newera Ellia***  
Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Looking to Elephant Plains/from Barrack Plains-Newera Ellia/April 24.*  
73/C.F.G.C. watercolour over pencil  
35 x 50.8 cm.; 13 3/4 x 20 inches

The artist notes in *Two Happy Years*, p. 153, that 'nine miles to the north of Nuwara Eliya, at a somewhat lower level, lie the grassy Elephant Plains'. Nuwara Eliya was the hill station to which planters and others retreated from the heat.



38

***Looking to Gampola from the top of Pedro (Pidurutalagala)***

Signed, inscribed and dated I.l.: *Looking to Gampola from the top of Pedro./April 28<sup>th</sup>. 73-/C.F.G.C.* and signed by A F Berry (?) and Ernest Everard Swaine, watercolour over pencil  
40.2 x 63.2 cm.; 15 3/4 x 24 3/4 inches

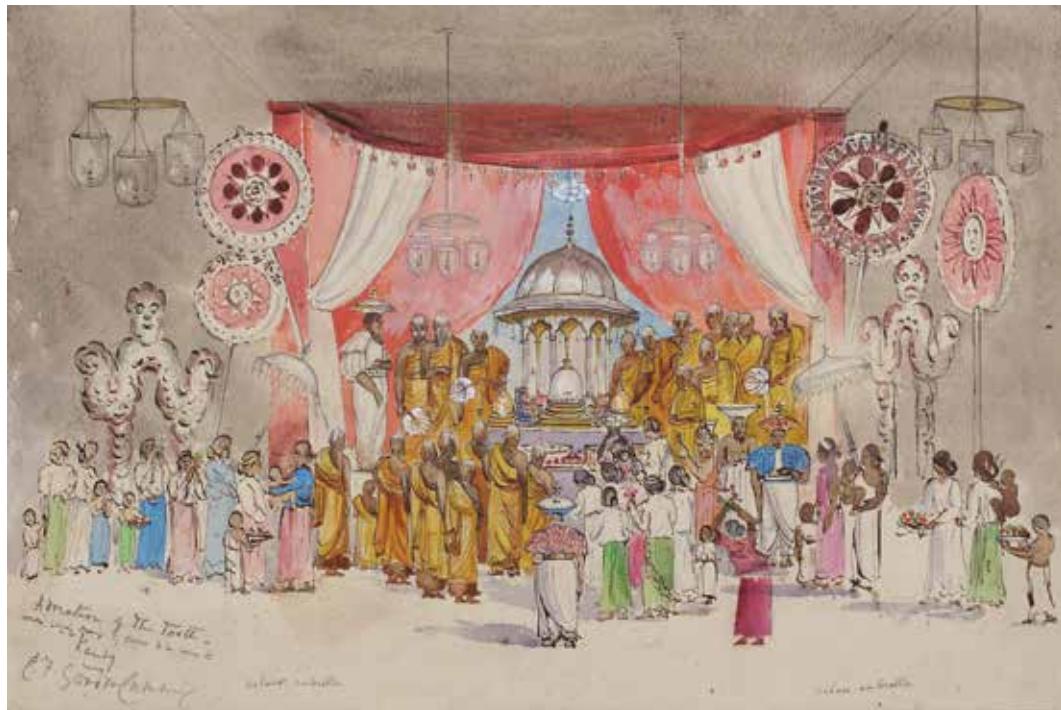
The artist recorded a visit to the summit from her diary, 'Staying at Headquarters House - i.e. of the General in command. At 6 A.M. the Governor's carriage came to take me to breakfast at the Cottage. Rode with his Excellency, by a somewhat steep jungle-path, to the top of "Pedro," the highest mountain in Ceylon. Its real name is Pidura-tala-galla, which means "the mat-weaving rock." It was so called on account of a sort of rush which was abundant here and was used for making mats. From the summit we literally overlooked the whole Isle, the sea being clearly visible both to the east and west. Before us, as on a map, lay outstretched the intricate mountain-ranges clothed with dark-green forest, brighter green marking the coffee plantations, and a still lighter tint the mountain meadows called patenas with silvery lines and glittering mirrors indicating streams and pools. In the wonderful stillness we heard the voices of many mountain torrents rushing tumultuously down the rocky ravines and gullies,' *Two Happy Years in Ceylon*, pp. 143-4.

***Ferny Burn in the Weddennelley Jungle, Ascension***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Ferny Burn/in the Weddennelley Jungle/May 22<sup>nd</sup>.*

*Ascension-73/C.F.G.C./, 60, and signed by another: Norman W. Grieve, watercolour over pencil, and with colour note: green, inscribed verso: Pink creeper – (mislabeled) *Kendrickia Walkerii**

35.5 x 51 cm.; 14 x 20<sup>1/16</sup> inches



40

### ***Adoration of the Tooth, Kandy***

Signed and inscribed l.l.:

*Adoration of the Tooth./women  
bringing offerings of flowers to lay  
before it/Kandy/C.F. Gordon  
Cumming/silver umbrella and  
again l.r.: silver umbrella,  
watercolour over pencil  
26 x 39 cm.; 10 1/4 x 15 3/8 inches*

Accompanied by a transcription of a letter concerning the ceremony taking place in the Temple of the Tooth, with a further pen and ink sketch of the shrine of the Tooth and a Singhalese woman.



The artist records in *Two Happy Years* that the tooth, said to be that of the Buddha, was only taken from its shrine and shown when the Temple needed funds and she was fortunate 'to witness and draw the rare proceedings by passing among the worshippers so often that she drew the revered ivory in the palm of her hand discreetly, to avoid causing offence', pp. 291-4. She writes vividly of the temporary altar with three miniature crystal dagobas or bell shaped reliquary shrines and two golden candle sticks: 'the central shrine, of purest crystal within which lay a large golden lotus-blossom, from the heart of which...was upraised the worshipful piece of yellow ivory'. She was allowed to sketch the scene from a raised dais in the middle of the temple, having obtained permission of the Dewa Nilami and subsequently showed her drawings to some of the interested priests. She also witnessed the elaborate ceremony with elephants when the Tooth was returned to its shrine, described in great detail in her book.



'The red-tiled double roof, shaded by luxuriant palms loaded with nuts and blossom, each crown a study in green and gold and brown; gnarled old temple-trees filling the air with fragrance; and yellow-robed priests laying offerings of yellow flowers before small dome-shaped relic-shrines, beneath huge Bo-trees with spiritual-looking white stems and light foliage', *Two Happy Years*, pp. 247-8.

The Burial Place, or the Asgiri Maha Viharaya, is one of two fourteenth-century Buddhist monasteries in Kandy, which contain in their grounds the Sri Dalada Maligawa, or Temple of the Tooth. The Asgiri had served as a royal crematorium and burial ground since the late fourteenth century, a tradition that started when Queen Chandravati, mother of the Kandyan King Sena Sammatha Vikramabahu, was cremated and buried there. However, in 1880, the royal burial ground and funerary dagobas were destroyed by the British to make way for a railway line to Matale.

***Burial Place of the Kandyan Queens, Kandy***

Inscribed l.l.: *Burial Place of the Kandyan Queens/Kandy*, inscribed c.r.: native coffee, watercolour over pencil  
35.3 x 54 cm.; 14 x 21 1/4 inches

The artist described Kandy as 'a beautifully situated little town' where 'the vegetation of the hills meets that of the plains, and all the lovely varieties of foliage peculiar to each mingle in rank luxuriance', *Two Happy Years*, p. 243.



42

***Gangarami Vihara near Kandy***

Signed and inscribed l.l.: *Gangarami Vihara/near Kandy/Kandasali Road/C.F.G.C.*, indistinctly inscribed

l.r., watercolour over pencil

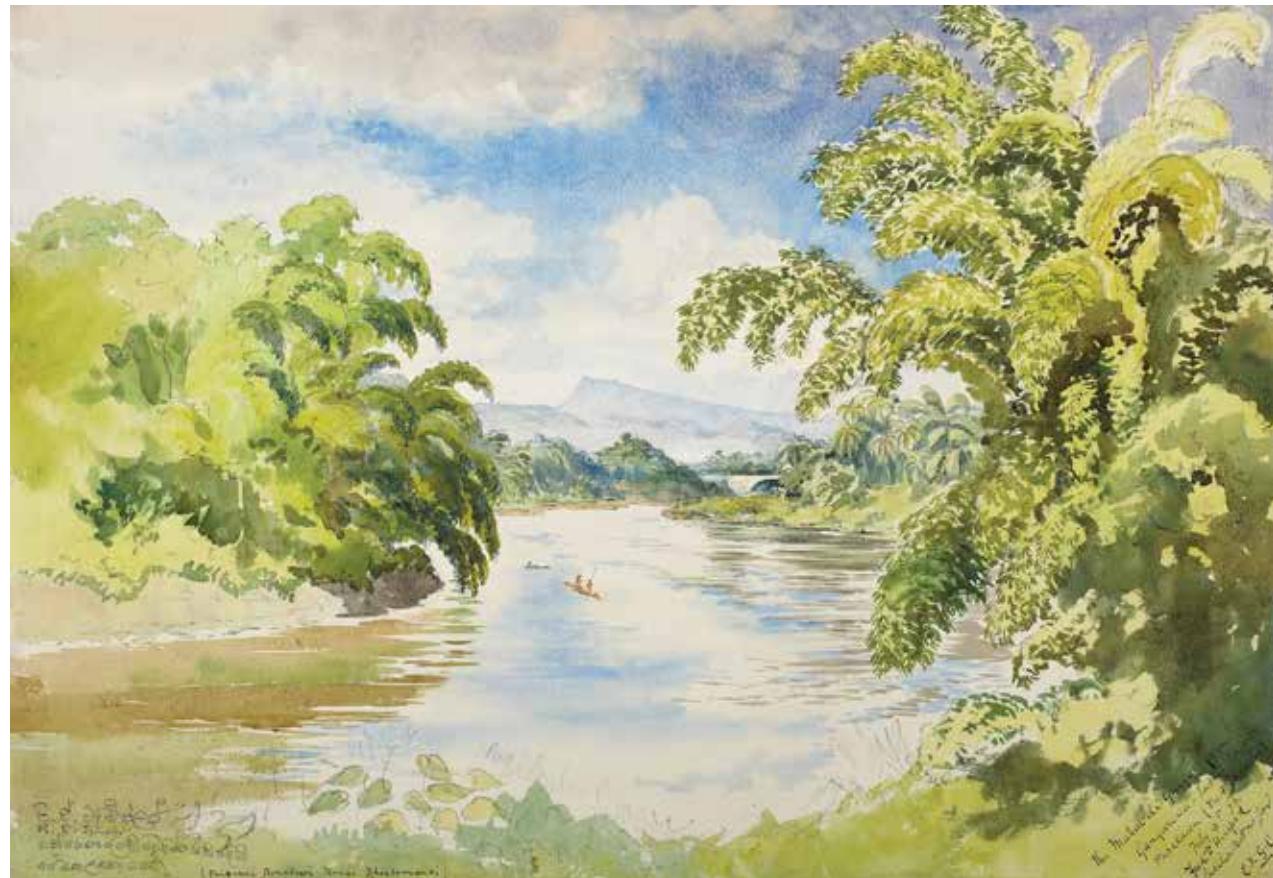
39 x 62 cm.; 15 3/8 x 24 1/2 inches

This temple is on the outskirts of Kandy, at Lewella in Mahanuwara, and near the Mahaweli Ganga. It was built around 1750, on the orders of King Kirti Sri Rajasinghe.

43

***The Mahaweli Ganga from  
Gangarowa looking towards  
Puselawa***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.;  
*The Mahaweli Ganga from/  
Gangarowa. looking towards  
Puselawa (The Peacock)/July 9th.  
73, C.F.G.C.* and also signed by  
 Frederick Horsford and Cecilia  
 Horsford, inscribed l.l.:  
*(Gangarowi Bomaluwi Pavinci  
Rheotamanci)*, further inscribed in  
 Tamil and *Pi. E. Temple*,  
 watercolour over traces of pencil  
 35.3 x 50.7 cm.; 13 3/4 x 20 inches



In her autobiography the artist records 'I found peculiarly lovely subjects among the huge bamboo clumps overhanging the beautiful river Gangarowa, on whose banks I was the guest of the proprietors Mr and Mrs Horsford, most kind friends', *Memories*, p. 211. Their signatures can be found on this watercolour. Their coffee estate on the banks of the Mahavelli river was opposite the Peradeniya Botanical Gardens.



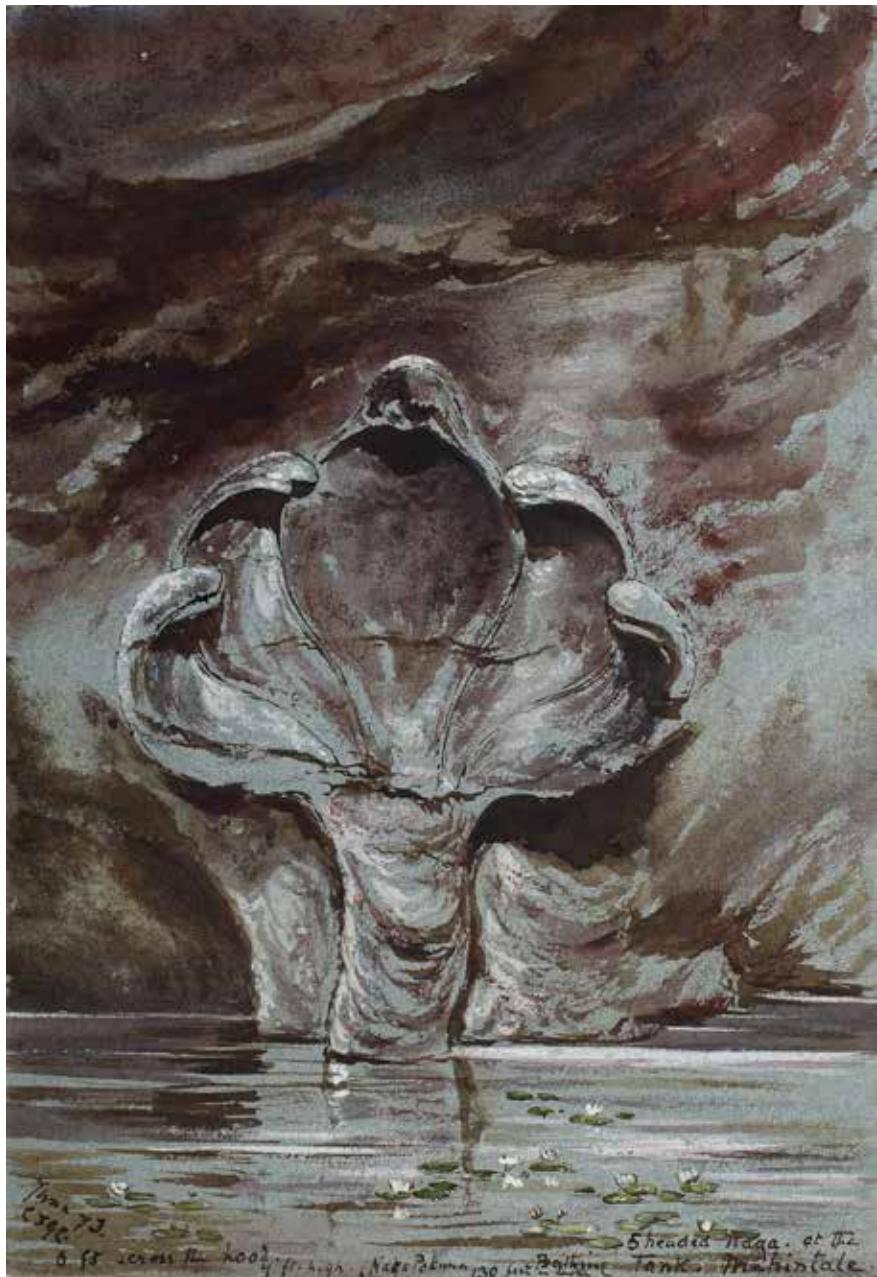
The artist made quite a few sketches at Matale the Maha-talawa, or great plain, which lies 560 feet lower than Kandy: 'I would advise any artist in search of characteristic scenery to ride from here to the summit of Vicarton Gorge, which is about 3,500 feet above the sea', *Two Happy Years*, p. 238.

44

***Matele- south from  
Vicarton Gorge with  
paddy fields***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.:

*Matele-south-from/Vicart-  
on Gorge/June 23<sup>rd</sup>  
73/CFG/C/Seliganna and  
further inscribed, also  
signed by ..Maurice,  
watercolour over pencil  
40 x 63 cm.; 15 3/4 x 24 3/4  
inches*



**5 headed Naga at the Bathing tank, Mahintale**

Signed, inscribed and dated: June 73/CFG/6 ft across the hood./7 ft. high. Naga Pokuna/130 feet in length/5 headed Naga. At the/Bathing Tank. Mahintale, watercolour and bodycolour on blue paper  
 25.5 x 17 cm.; 10 x 6 3/4 inches

This drawing is illustrated in *Two Happy Years in Ceylon*, vol. 1, facing p. 433.

Naga Pokuna is situated on an elevated plateau on the side of a hill just below the Maha Thupa and Mihindu Saya. Naga Pokuna or Cobra Pond takes its name from the five hooded cobra cut in low relief on the rock surface above the pond.

'The Naga Pokuna, or snake bathing-place, lies near the path. It is a pool about 130 feet in length hewn out of the rock, and guarded by a mighty five-headed cobra, sculptured in high relief from the background of dark rock. It is only about seven feet high and six feet across the hood, but somehow it looks much larger as it rises from the dark still pool, where small white lilies float so peacefully. It impressed itself on my memory as a very suggestive picture'.

46

***Kandy Railway passing Kaduganawa***

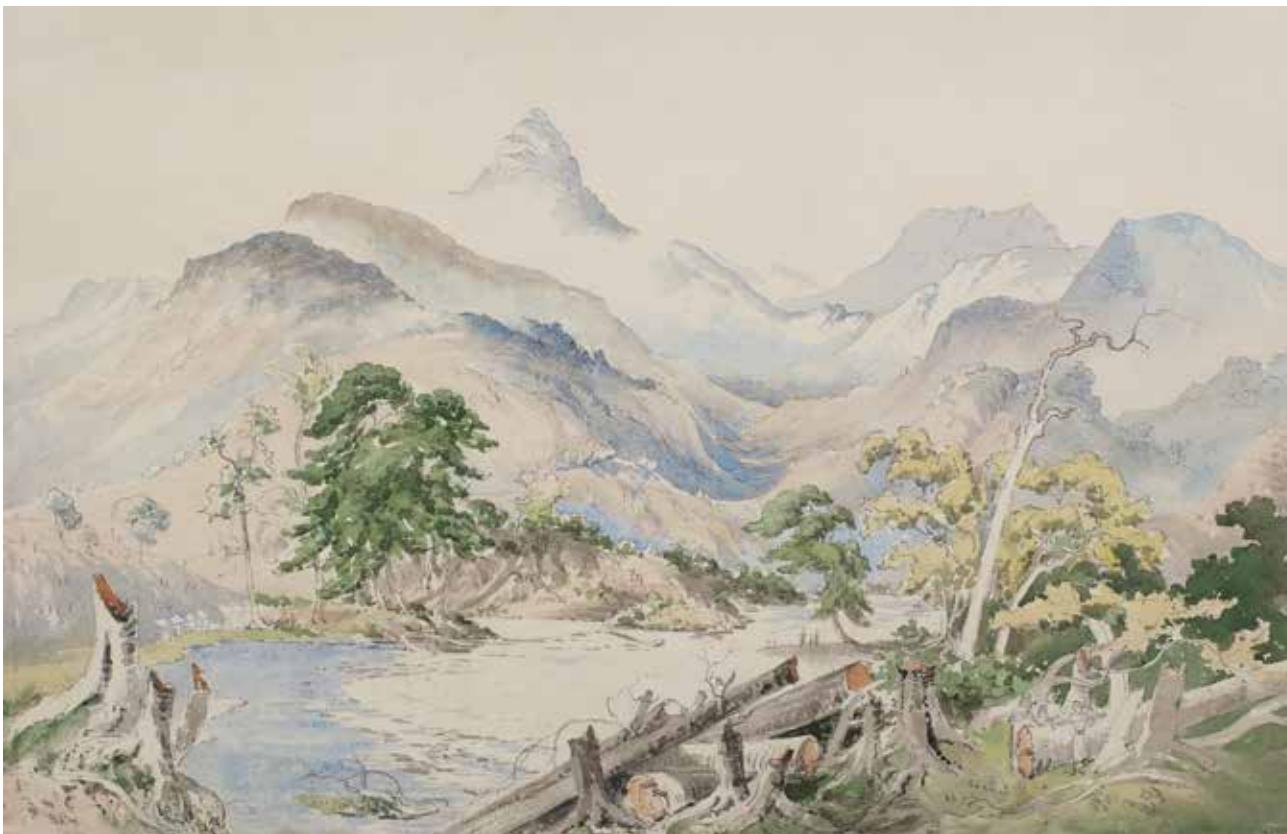
Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Kandy Railway passing Kaduganawa/Allegalla Peak-/Turret Rock in the distance./looking S.W./July 26.73/CFG.C.* and also signed by Bessie Farr, Thomas Farr and H. Williamson, watercolour over pencil  
35.5 x 50.5 cm.; 14 x 19 3/4 inches

The artist met Bessie Farr on the voyage out to Ceylon and spent time with her and her husband Tom at their home at Olanakanda. 'That home was in a sheltered nook embosomed in fruit-trees, and overlooking such a magnificent view as we may sometimes obtain for a few moments by climbing some mighty Alp, but which few homes can claim as their perpetual outlook', *Two Happy Years*, p. 159. The view of the train from their house 'labouring on its tortuous up-hill course, winding round the steep hillside. It was so far below us that it seemed like a fairy's toy'.

Alagalla Peak is the highest point of the Alagalla Mountain Range, located on the rail route from Colombo to Kandy, and standing at almost 4,000 feet. Eka Gordon-Cumming took this single broad-gauge line in train line in the spring of 1874, noting that the uniform gradient while rounding the flank of Alagalla was one in forty-five. She spent some time staying in the area before moving onwards to Kandy, enjoying 'happy days and weeks spent exploring many a lovely corner in that vast panorama'.



She wrote of her memory 'perched at the base of the mighty crag which crowns Allagalla Peak ... in a sheltered nook embosomed in fruit-trees, and overlooking such a magnificent view as we may sometimes obtain for a few moments by climbing some mighty Alp, but which few homes can claim as their perpetual outlook', *Two Happy Years*, p. 159.



***Adam's Peak with pilgrims***

Watercolour over pencil

36.5 x 57.5 cm.; 14 1/2 x 22 3/4 inches

This is a study for the large watercolour of this subject (see cat. no. 48).



48

***Adam's Peak with pilgrims***

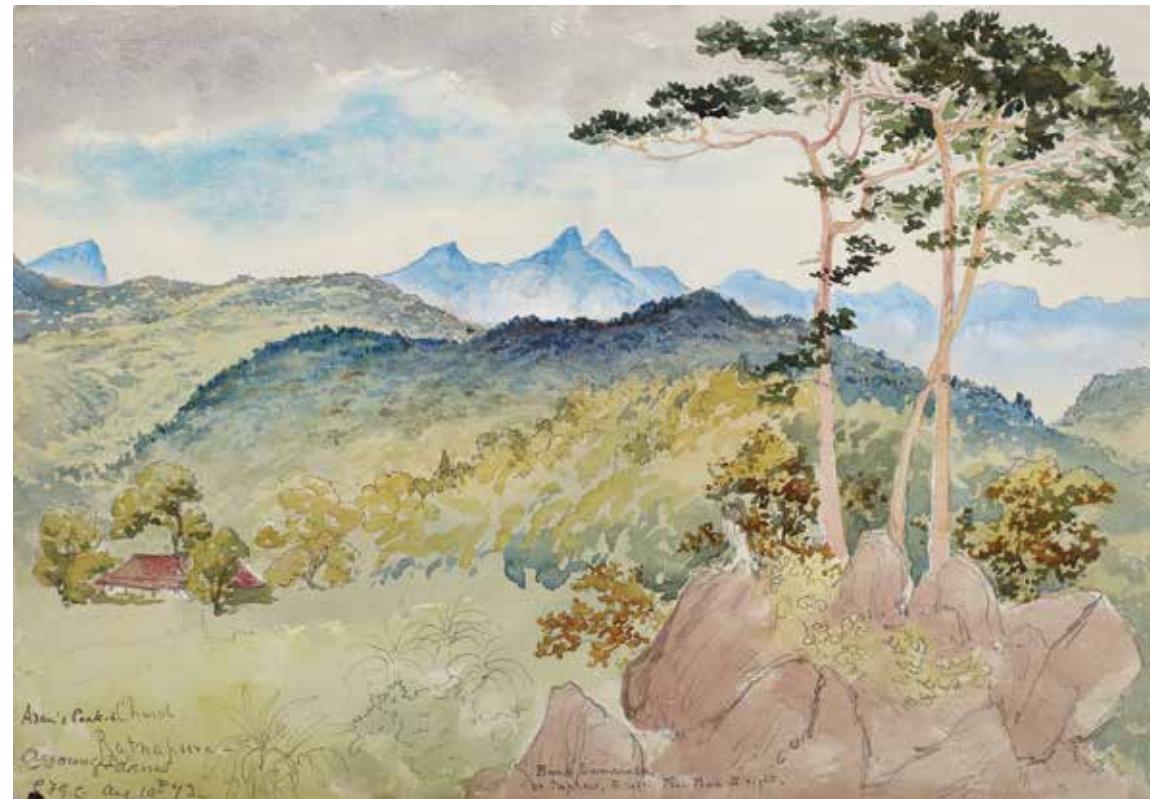
Signed and inscribed l.l.: *Adam's Peak/C.F. Gordon Cumming from Bunyan/Pilgrim on the Pilgrims Path to the shrine/on the summit., watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour and gum arabic*

56 x 78 cm.; 22 x 30  $\frac{7}{8}$  inches

49

**Adam's Peak and Church, Ratnapoora**  
 Signed, inscribed and dated l.r. and l.c.:  
*Adam's Peak &  
 Church./Ratnapoora-CFG.C. Aug 10<sup>th</sup>  
 73-/Bana Samanala/or nephew. To left.  
 True Peak to right. and also signed by A.  
 Young Adams, watercolour over pencil  
 25.4 x 35.5 cm.; 10 x 13 3/4 inches*

The artist climbed Adam's Peak 'a very steep and toilsome expedition', *Memories*, p. 212. She refused to be deterred as she had heard of only two European women who had climbed it and made the expedition accompanied by 'half a dozen stalwart planters', one of whom was presumably A. Young Adams who signed this work, *Memories*, p. 212. Her sensitivity to local customs and beliefs is reflected in her account of this view, 'the [other] great mountain of Ceylon, known to us as "Adam's



Peak" but to the Singhalese as the "Sri Pada' or Mount of the Holy Foot, because of an impression, six feet in length, on the extreme summit of that lofty peak, which is revered by millions of the human race as that of whatever saintly person they most revere. The Buddhists believe it to have been the footprint of Buddha, the Mohammedans of Adam, the Sivites of Siva while the Roman Catholic Christians suppose it to have been that of St Thomas'.

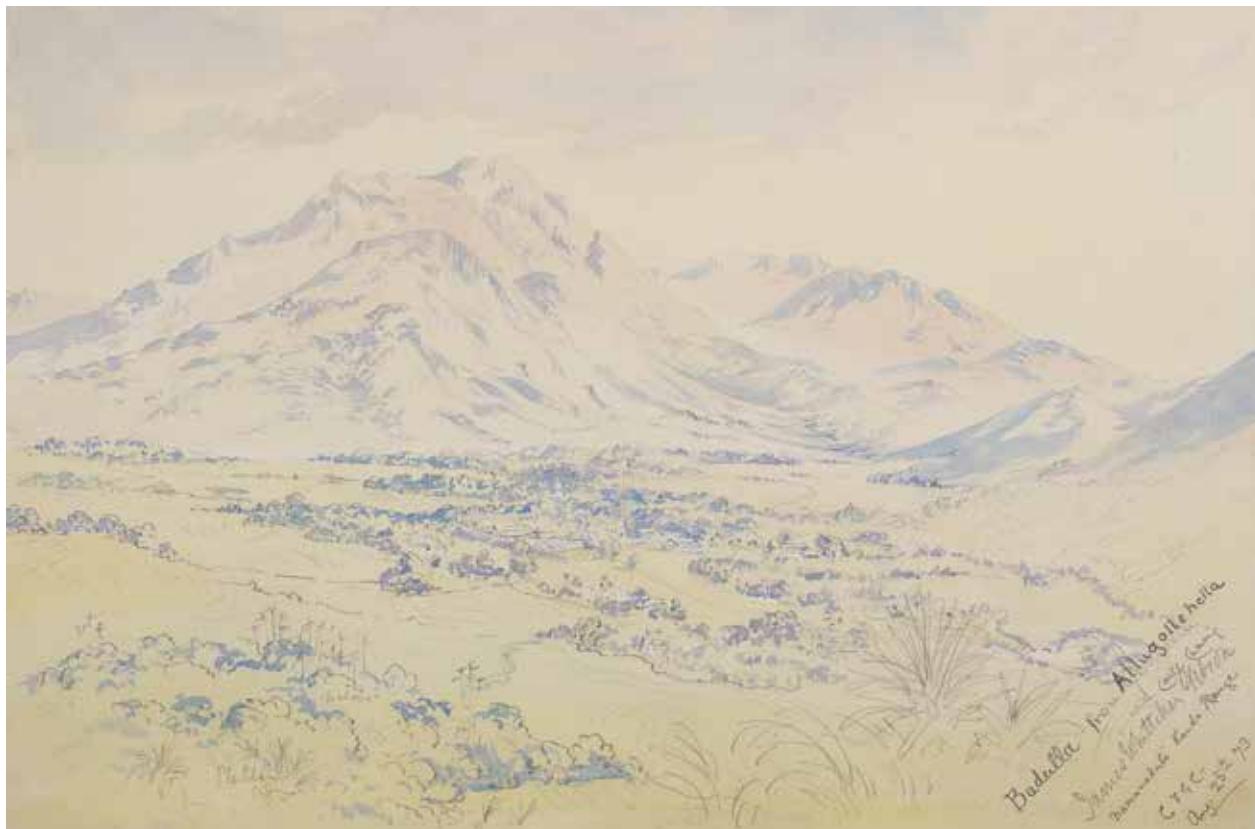


50

### ***Buddhist Vihara at Pelmadulle***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Buddhist Vihara at Pelmadulle & Juggermat/Car/Induruwe Piadasse'/C.F.C.C./Aug 12th./1873/Argamma Rewata/fernry wall and inscribed in Tamil, watercolour over pencil*  
 35.5 x 50.6 cm.; 14 x 19 3/4 inches

The artist describes visiting the Vihara where she sketched a great gilded festival car with five tiers of crystal lamps. The priests gathered around to watch her and made complimentary comments about her work, *Two Happy Years*, pp. 325-6.



51

***Badulla from Allugollehella, alias  
Castle Cumming***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Badulla  
from Allugollehella/alias Castle  
Cumming/Namamakuli Kanda  
Range/CFCG-/Aug. 25<sup>th</sup> 73* and signed by  
James Whittaker Gibson, watercolour  
over pencil.

35 x 51 cm.; 14 x 20 inches

'Badulla, the capital of Uva, a very pretty little town in the midst of a grassy and well-wooded and well-watered plain, about 2,200 feet above the sea-level, and surrounded on every side by fine hills of very varied form. There is a considerable amount of rice culture round the town, which seems like an island crested with cocoa-palms rising from a sea of velvety green', *Two Happy Years*, p. 335.



52

### **Temple at Badulla**

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Temple at Badulla-/Aug 27<sup>th</sup>. 73/CFGC/aloes* and signed by Agnes Jermyn, watercolour over pencil 35.5 x 51 cm.; 14 x 20 inches

Agnes Jermyn, who signed this drawing, was one of the Bishop's party with which the artist was travelling.

'I found another sketching ground at the Kataragam Devale, an old Hindoo temple to Skanda, the god of war, which attracted our unwilling attention by the deafening noise of its 'services' daily at 5 A.M. and all the evening', *Two Happy Years*, p. 336.

***Dunbar looking to Elbedde-Kandy***

Inscribed l.r.: *Dunbar looking to Elbedde-Kandy. Between Dimbola & Dickoya-6631 ft, and signed by J.T. Beckett, Mr Naylor ..., C. Swinburnton and one other, watercolour over pencil*

*27 x 43 cm.; 10 5/8 x 16 7/8 inches*

Signs of deforestation of which the artist was critical are evident in this watercolour.



54

### ***Chandivelli Batticaloa***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Chandivelli Batticaloa/CFG.C./Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> 1873* and signed by Stuart C. Munro, Hugh W Colombo and Agnes Jermyn, watercolour over pencil with touches of bodycolour and numbered 106  
35.5 x 50.5 cm.; 13 3/4 x 19 3/4 inches

Batticaloa is a major city in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka and its former capital. The artist has captured a seated elephant, a snake charmer, crocodile heads and coconut pickers creating a colourful street scene. The artist refers to her brother John's diary pages from this place in her book *Two Happy Years*, to commemorate the place of his death.



55

***The Galvihare, Polanaruwa***

Signed, inscribed and dated I.I.: *The Galvihare./Polanaruwa-/Sept. 18th/CF-GC/Gigantic Buddhas carved in solid rocks....Anande*, watercolour over traces of pencil heightened with bodycolour  
35.5 x 51 cm.; 14 x 20 inches

A watercolour of this temple from a slightly wider viewpoint is illustrated in *Two Happy Years*, p. 394. Polonnaruwa became the second capital of Sri Lanka after the destruction of Anuradhapura from about A.D. 769. It reached the zenith of its power between A.D. 1153 and 1240. The ancient city, and these three buddhas at Gal Vihara, hewn out of solid granite, are one of the most famous sites on the island. The artist and the bishop's party rode through the forests and camped at Polonnaruwa amongst the ruins and the water tanks.



56

***Corner of the Band of the Tank,  
Tapawewa, Polanarua, looking to the  
Matele hills***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Corner of the Band of the Tank (Tapawewa)/(Polanarua)/- looking to the Matele hills./Kandy/Sept 19<sup>th</sup> 73./CFGC/117*, watercolour and pencil  
15.7 x 50.5 cm.; 6 1/4 x 19 3/4 inches

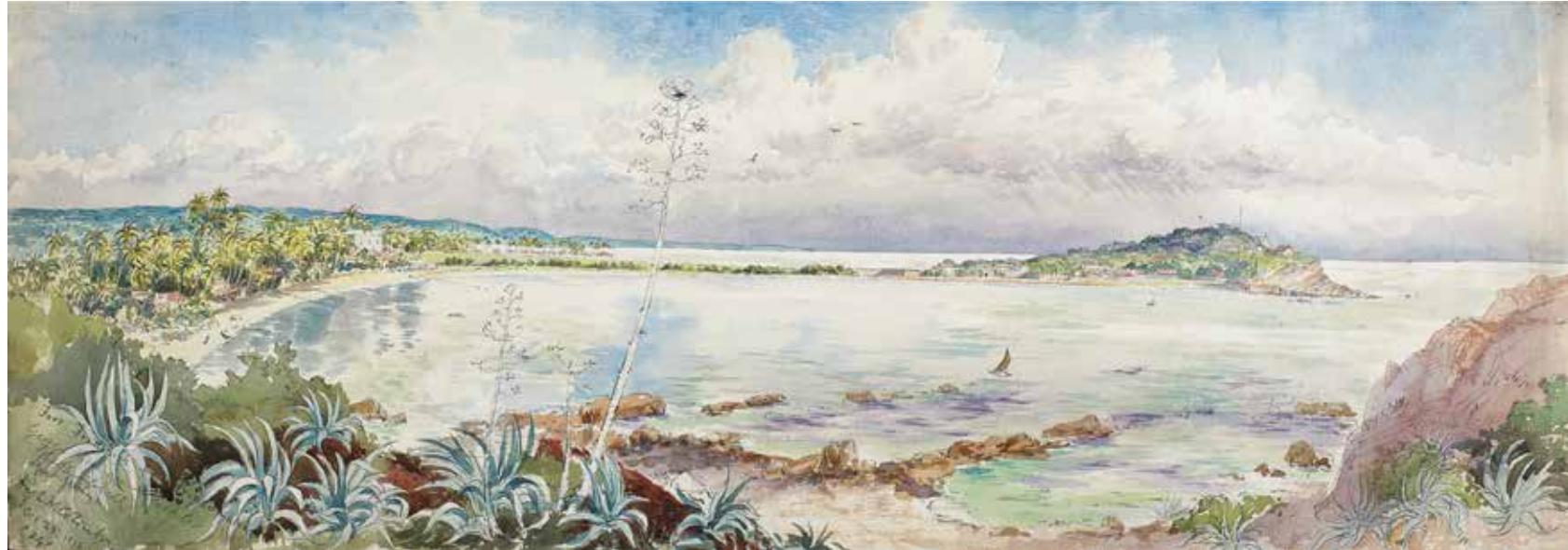


57

***Ruins of the Temple at the furthest point at  
Dondra Head***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Ruins of the Temple at the furthest/point of Dondra Head. Southernmost point/of Ceylon. CFGC./Nov 7<sup>th</sup>/1873*, and signed by Isabel Lloyd Hill, H Lloyd Hill, Edward Elliott, Mary Emily Elliott, and various others, numbered l.l.: 138A.  
watercolour and pencil  
35.5 x 50.5 cm.; 14 x 19 3/4 inches

This was one of many beautiful sunsets witnessed by the artist in Ceylon.

***Fort Frederick from Trincomalee***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Fort Frederick from Trincomalee./Oct. 23 1873/CF.GC* and signed by Hugh W. Colombo,  
Agnes Jermyn, John Campbell and George William ..., watercolour over pencil  
22.8 x 65 cm.; 8 7/8 x 25 1/2 inches

The advent of severe thunderstorms caused the Bishop to become unwell and he had to abandon his plans to travel northwards from Trincomalee to Jaffna. The party embarked on the Government steamship Serendib towards Batticaloa and Galle to make the most direct journey back to the capital.



59

***A sailing boat off a coastal inlet at moonlight, probably Trincomalee***

Watercolour over pencil  
15.7 x 36 cm.; 6 3/16 x 14 1/8 inches

The artist recorded the phosphorescence of the sea at Trincomalee, where her party left by boat after sunset, 'The sky was very dark, with stormy clouds scudding before a pretty stiff breeze, but the sea was all full of dancing, glittering points of pale white fire, with here and there large dazzling stars, which gleamed suddenly, then faded away into darkness, like the intermittent flash from some beacon-light', *Two Happy Years*, pp. 481-2.



60

***A corner of the Bazaar, Galle***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *A corner of the Bazaar. Galle/C.F.C./Nov. 1st 73*, and signed by Mary Fitz... , Sidney Craven and George Schrader, watercolour over pencil with touches of bodycolour  
35.5 x 50.5 cm.; 14 x 19 3/4 inches

The artist parted company with the Bishop of Colombo's party at Galle, having decided to linger with several friends in the area to draw and make the journey back to Colombo by road.

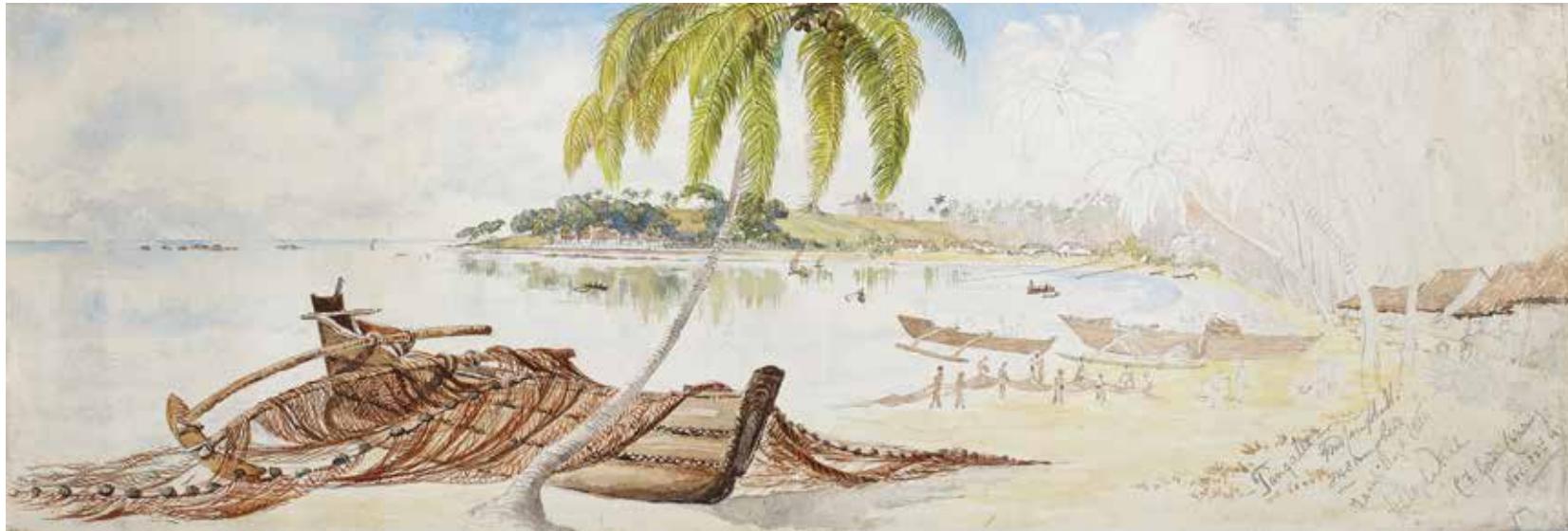


61

***Matura, mouth of the Milwale Ganga, looking towards Dondra Head***

Signed, inscribed and dated I.I.: *Matura-mouth of the Milwale Ganga. Looking to Dondra Head/C.F.G.C./Nov. 1873/135A*  
and signed by Mrs Campbell, H. Lloyd Hill and Isabel Lloyd Hill, watercolour over pencil  
24.5 x 74 cm.; 9 5/8 x 29 1/9 inches

The artist stayed with her friends, the Lloyd Hills, in a bungalow on the edge of the Nilwalla River near Matara, where she found 'most fascinating sketching ground at every turn', *Two Happy Years*, p. 445.  
Dondra Head is the southernmost point of Sri Lanka.

**Tangalla (Tangalle)**

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Tangalla/C.F. Gordon Cumming./Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1873*, and signed by J.H. Campbell, Isabell Lloyd Hill and H. Lloyd Hill, watercolour over pencil

25 x 75 cm.; 9 3/4 x 29 1/2 inches

The artist and her party visited the District Judge at Tangalle, 'a hospitable Scotsman' who lived in an old bungalow by the sea. Tangalle was 'a pretty little seaside town' about twenty miles away to the east. 'The charms of that shore, with the quaintly-built canoes, with great outriggers and nets hung up to dry, and the picturesque groups of brown figures...' *Two Happy Years*, p. 454.



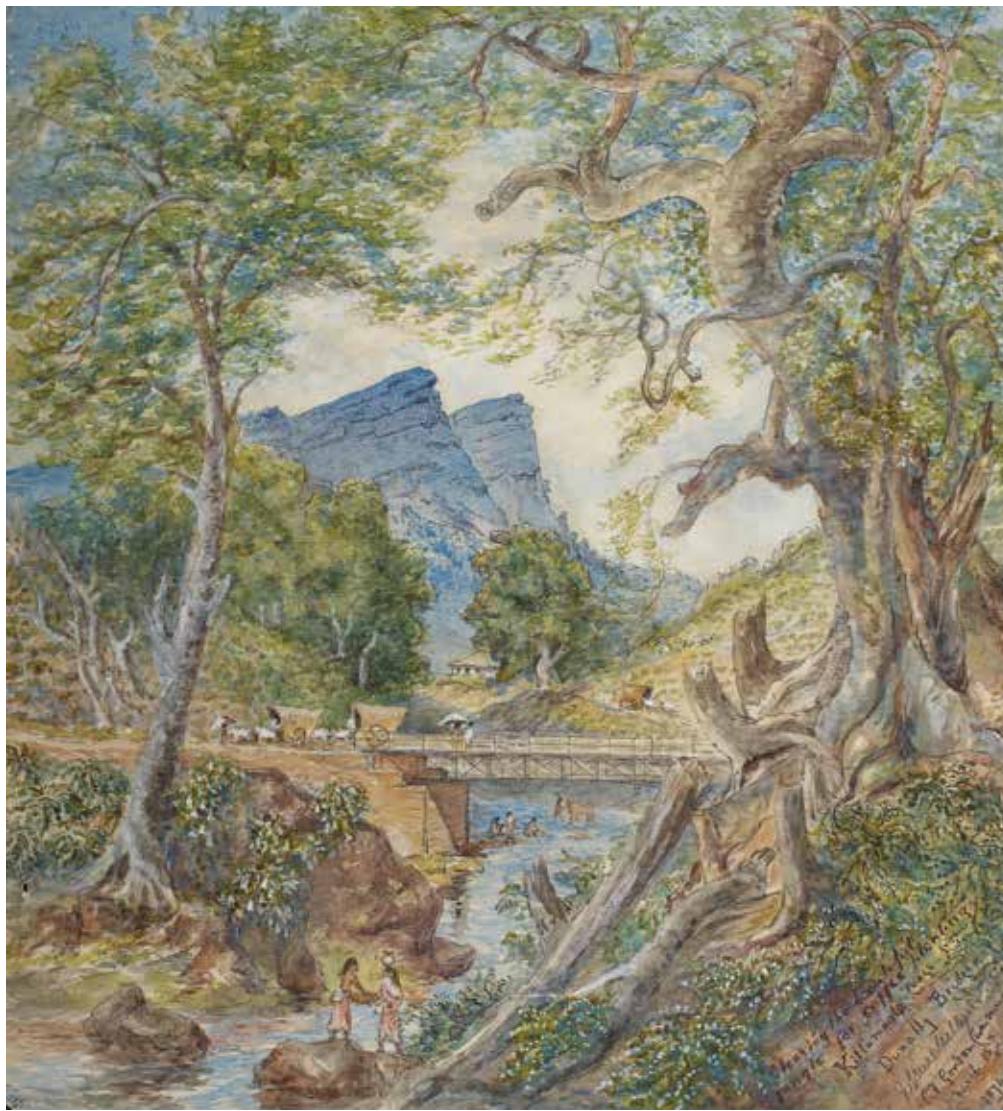
63

***Paddy Fields beside the Mahavelliganga near Gampola***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Paddy fields beside the/Mahavelliganga. Near Gampola/C.F.G.C./Jan 1<sup>st</sup>/74*, inscribed verso:

*Paddy edge red darker/green line/blue watershows.../brilliant green*

26.5 x 54 cm.; 10 3/8 x 22 1/4 inches

***Kitlamoula Crags from Dunally Bridge***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Clearing the beautiful/jungle for coffee planting/Kitlamoula Crags from/Dunally Bridge/C.F. Gordon Cumming/March 15<sup>th</sup>/1874*, and signed by one other, numbered l.l.: 65, watercolour over pencil  
29 x 35.5 cm.; 11  $\frac{3}{8}$  x 14 inches

The artist was saddened by the deforestation she witnessed in Ceylon which she records in this watercolour.

65



***The Lake, Colombo, looking to Norris Road***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *The Lake. Colombo. Looking to Norris road/St Philip Neri church from/Darley Road./April 13<sup>th</sup> 74/CFG.C.,* and signed by G Campbell, pencil with watercolour

23.5 x 53.5 cm.; 9 1/4 x 21 1/8 inches

The artist stayed with the Campbells in their home in Captain's Gardens, a promontory jutting into the Lake of Colombo. Her host, George Campbell, who was later knighted, was in charge of the Native Police Force. This is a sketch for a finished watercolour illustrated in *Two Happy Years*, facing p. 476. The artist described the 'most luxuriant vegetation-flowering trees gorgeous with fragrant blossom, kittool-palms seeming literally overladen with ropes of fruit, all reflected in the calm water, on which floated a wealth of lovely lilies', *Two Happy Years*, p. 476.

66

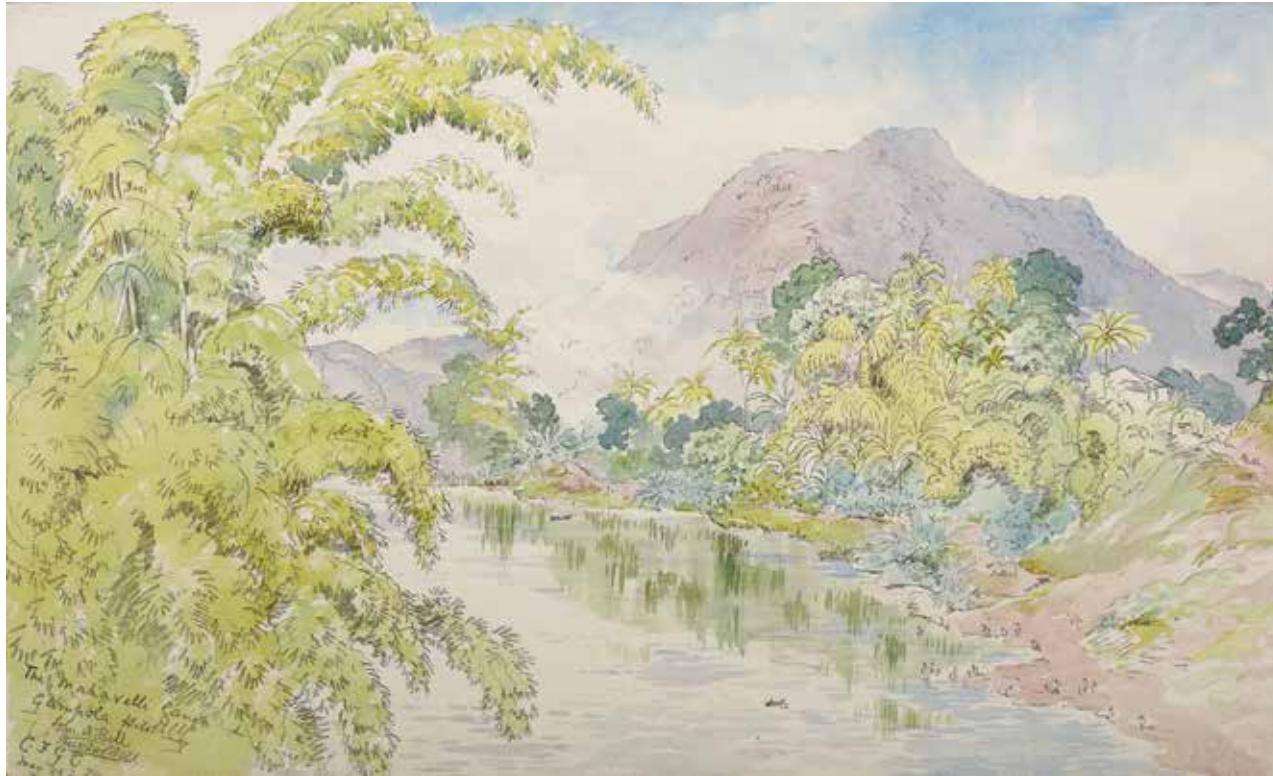
***Kurunégala from the top of the Rock***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Kurunégala from the top of the Rock/C.F Gordon Cumming./April 18<sup>th</sup> 1874/Nalunde Hills/Rock Temple/Yakdessa Gala/Devil Dancers Rock/140,* and signed by three others including G.J. Julungalle (?), watercolour over pencil

29 x 66.5 cm.; 11 3/8 x 26 1/4 inches

Kurunegalla, fifty eight miles from Colombo, was the ancient capital of Sri Lanka and the site of the royal residence. The town and lake lie at the base of a large red rock shaped like a giant beetle, three miles long. The countryside is a mixture of paddy fields and palms and plumbago mining took place there.



***The Mahavelli Ganga***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *The Mahavelli Ganga/Gampola Hill/C.F.G.C./May 29<sup>th</sup> 74* and signed by John A Bell and Mary Bell, watercolour over pencil  
27 x 45 cm.; 10 1/2 x 17 5/8 inches

Gampola succeeded Kurunegalla as capital of Sri Lanka in 1347 A.D.

## THE VOYAGE TO FIJI



The artist arrived in Sydney on 25 May 1875, en route to Fiji, which had become a British crown colony in 1874. At his wife Rachel's invitation she accompanied Sir Arthur Gordon, who was to serve as the first Governor of Fiji (1875–1880), and his party which included his secretary and cousin Arthur Gordon, Dr Mayo, who was also a botanist and antiquarian, and Mr Le Hunte, a lawyer. They were welcomed by Sir Hercules and Lady Robinson at Government House, Sydney. The artist and Lady Gordon and her two children stayed in Australia for several months until a suitable home was prepared in Fiji, enabling the artist to draw in New South Wales and visit the Blue Mountains. Once in Fiji she was able to act with comparative freedom, roaming the land and taking naked baths in the rivers. She wrote to her sister Elisa in December 1875, 'I walk alone in perfect security, wherever fancy leads me'. She recorded her travels in the area in *At Home in Fiji* published in 1881.

***Isle of Sumbawa, Malay Archipelago***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Isle of Sumbawa./Malay Archipelago. (& Vlack?)/May 7<sup>th</sup>. 1875/C.F.G.C.*, watercolour over pencil  
12.4 x 56.5 cm.; 4 7/8 x 22 1/4 inches

Sumbawa is an Indonesian island, part of the lesser Sunda Islands chain. Lombok is to the west and Flores to the east.

## AUSTRALIA



69

### *Somerset, Queensland, Entrance to the Torres Straits*

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.; *Somerset. Queensland./Entrance to the Torres Straits./S.S. Brisbane.C.F.G.C./May 14th 1875 and inscribed l.r.; (Narcisse Pelletier. Rescued after 17 years residence with the wild Australians./a French boy shipwrecked in the St Paul of Bordeaux. near this place.)* and signed by numerous others including Narcisse Pelletier, watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour  
 29.5 x 54 cm.; 11 3/4 x 21 1/4 inches

This atmospheric watercolour depicts the entrance to the Torres Strait from Somerset, Queensland. The work has been signed by numerous members of the British party, the artist's 'Fijian family' whom she referred to as the 'Knights of the Round Table'. The many signatures on the work include those of Rachel Hamilton Gordon, wife of Sir Arthur Gordon.

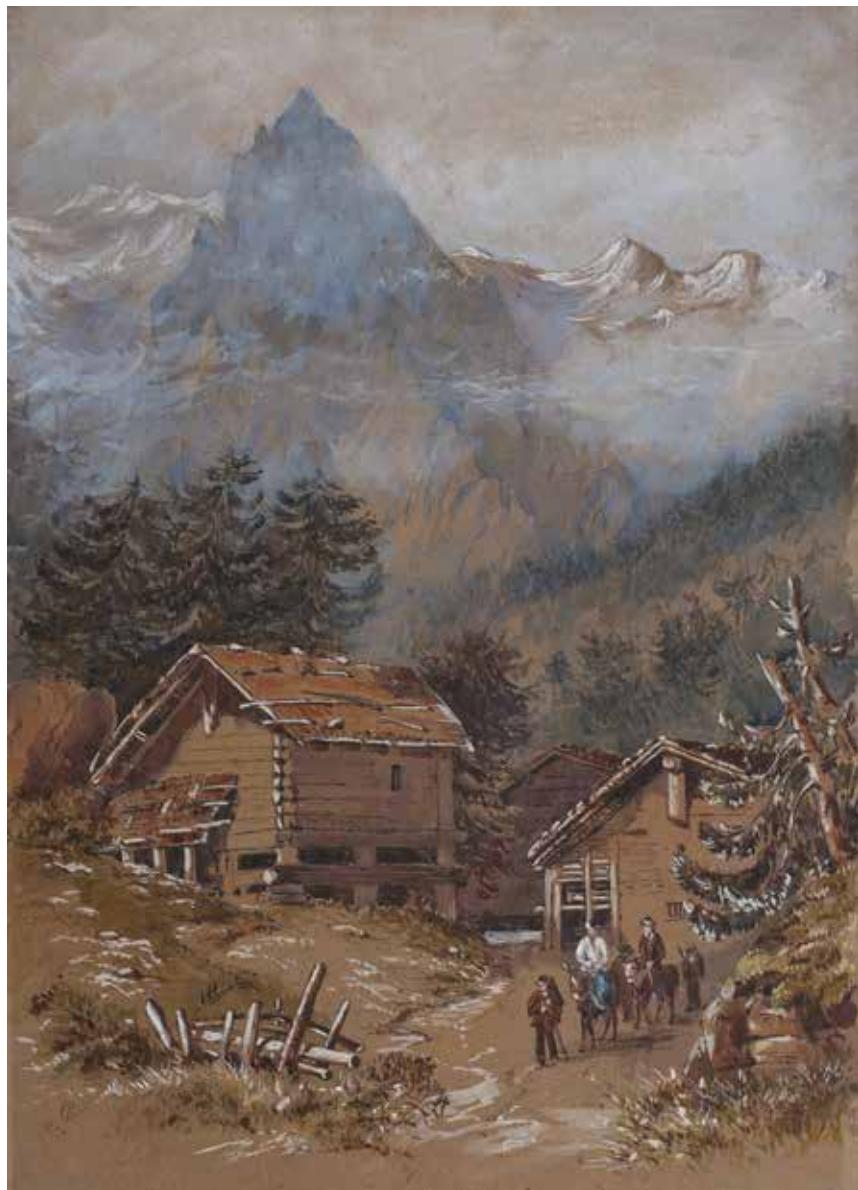
The work is also signed by Narcisse Pelletier (1844–1894), a French cabin boy shipwrecked in 1858 off the coast of North Queensland. Pelletier lived with the Utaalnganu people, who cared for him, for seventeen years before being found earlier in 1875.



The Zig Zags are a series of railway lines stretching across the peaks of the Blue Mountains. The artist records the experience of seeing them, writing, 'We have had several pleasant expeditions in the neighbourhood. Last Monday, Sir Hercules [Robinson, the Governor of New South Wales], having ordered a special train to take us to see the Blue Mountains, we started early and went as far as the wonderful zigzags by which the rail is carried across the mountains. I had the privilege of sitting on the engine, so I obtained an admirable view.' At *Home in Fiji*, p.26. The watercolour is signed by Alfred Maudslay, the private secretary to the Governor of Queensland, Sir William Wellington Cairns who accompanied the artist on her expedition to the Blue Mountains. Maudslay became Sir Arthur Gordon's private secretary and went on to Fiji. He was to become an eminent authority on the Maya ruins of central America.

***The Zig Zags crossing the Blue Mountains, New South Wales***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.:  
*The Zig Zags crossing the/Blue Mountains/New South Wales/C.F. Gordon Cumming/Aug 14<sup>th</sup>. 1875.,* and further signed by Alfred P. Maudslay, watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour  
 47.5 x 74 cm.; 18 3/4 x 29 1/4 inches



## NEW ZEALAND

Many of the artist's pictures of New Zealand were borrowed by the New Zealand Commissioners and shown at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London in 1886.

71

### ***A party on horseback in a mountainous landscape***

Signed with monogram I.I. and dated 1877, watercolour over pencil with bodycolour on buff paper  
46.5 x 33.5 cm.; 18 1/4 x 13 1/4 inches



Mansion House, Kawau Island can be seen at the water's edge. The house and island were owned by Sir George Grey (1812-1898) who signed this watercolour. He purchased Kawau Island in 1862 after he had returned to New Zealand for his second term as Governor. In 1870 he went to live on Kawau with his niece and began transforming the island. He planted many trees and shrubs and acclimatised many birds and animals. Grey employed Frederick Thatcher to extend the square twenty-year-old former mine manager's house. Thatcher added a very large new wing with a long verandah and sweeping bay window. Grey was a bibliophile and collector who in 1888 retired to Auckland and sold the island, which is now part of the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park.

Grey was twice Governor of New Zealand, and the 11th premier of New Zealand from 1877 to 1890.

***The Kawau looking to Auckland***

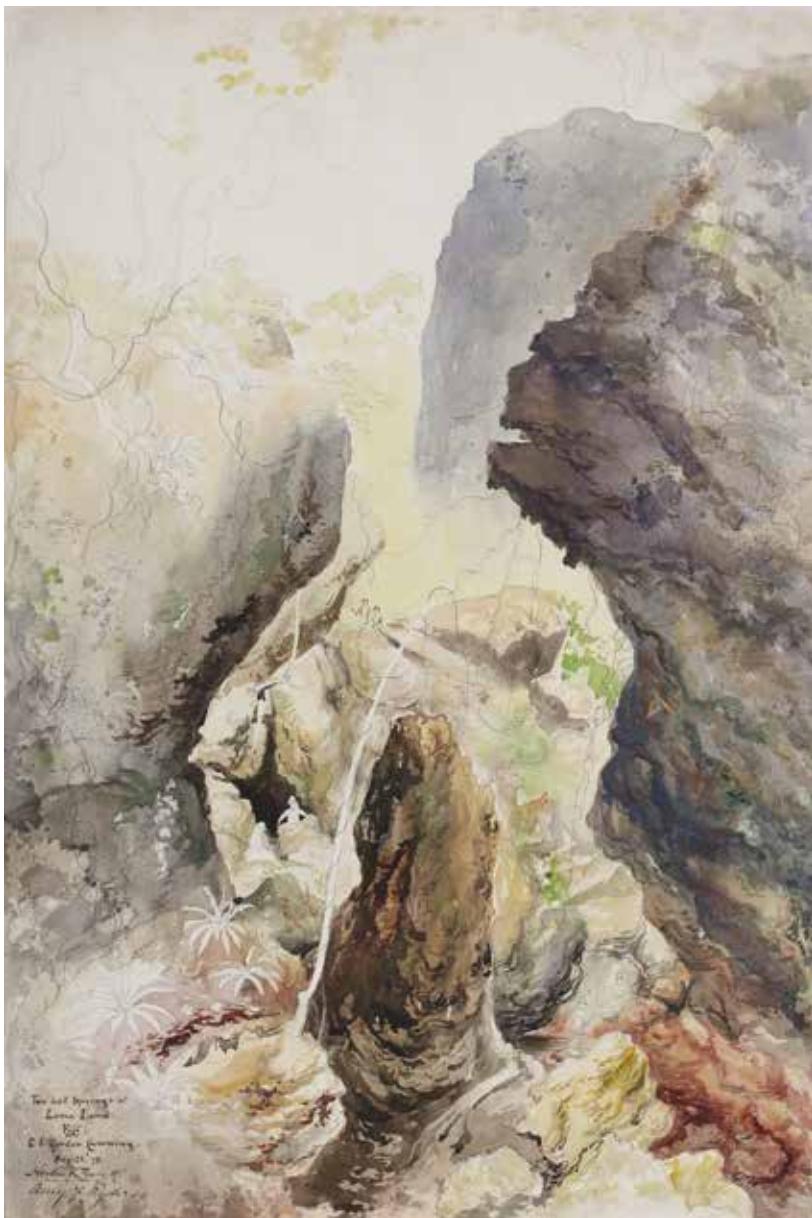
Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *The Kawau. Looking to Auckland./Sir George Grey Island/C.F. Gordon Cumming/C.F. Gordon Cumming/-Jan. 1877/Middle Harbour/Rangitoto (Extinct Volcano.)Mount Eden. Volcano.) Mount Eden Volcano, and further signed by G. Grey, A. V. Gray, Lavinia Coates, Alfred P. Maudslay, Rachel Hamilton Gordon, watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour*  
 48 x 75.3 cm.; 18 3/4 x 29 5/8 inches



73

*Isle at Kawau, New Zealand*

Signed and inscribed twice in pencil and in watercolour l.l.: *Isle at  
Kawau/New Zealand/C.F. Gordon Cumming/Scotch .....*  
watercolour over pencil with touches of white  
49 x 75 cm.; 19 1/4 x 29 1/2 inches



## FIJI

74

***Too hot Springs with natives and picnickers at Loma Loma, Fiji***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Too hot Springs at/Loma Loma./Fiji.C.F. Gordon Cumming./Aug 25th 76./and also signed by Herbert Revell (?) and Augustus J. Ryder, water-colour over pencil*

60 x 40 cm.; 23  $\frac{5}{8}$  x 15  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Loma Loma was the main port for ships arriving from Tonga. The artist wrote of her fascination with hot springs and in particular the local practice of cooking food in the boiling waters, 'They take their crabs, bunches of bananas, yams or taro, wrap them up in banana-leaves and deposit them in the boiling spring; then they go and bathe some way off where the hot and cold streams have mixed, and return to find their dinner ready cooked,' *At Home in Fiji*, p. 217. The artist has included figures of both local inhabitants and picnicking visitors in the watercolour. The watercolour is signed by Augustus J. Ryder, a settler and sugar and cotton plantation owner in Fiji.



75

***Korotumba District, Ra Coast, Viti Levu, Fiji***

Signed and inscribed l.l. and l.r.: *Korotumbu District/Nadau. (Nangilo gilo on the hill)/Ra Coast-Viti Levu./C.F. Gordon Cumming/Navolau. Na Vunindawa. Raki Raki /Nananu* and signed by three others, watercolour over pencil

34 x 61.5 cm.; 13 3/8 x 24 1/4 inches

The Ra Coast is on the northern side of Viti Levu, the main island of Fiji. Small houses can be seen dotted along the coastline.



## SOCIETY ISLANDS

The artist travelled to Tahiti with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Samoa aboard the *Seignelay*, a French man-of-war, in October 1877, as he visited the most remote portions of his diocese. Her journey is recorded in *A Lady's Cruise on a French Man-of-War* published in 1882. She also wrote a piece for *The Contemporary Review* in 1881 entitled "The Last King of Tahiti".

### ***Coral Grotto, Vava'u (Vava'u), Tonga***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Coral Grotto/Vava'u Tonga/Sept 14 77./C.F. Gordon Cumming/(Revd. G. Fox)*, watercolour over pencil with touches of white on paper  
watermarked J. WHATMAN 18  
60 x 40 cm.; 23 5/8 x 15 3/4 inches

Illustrated

*A Lady's Cruise on a French Man-of-War*, 1882, facing p. 29

Upon encountering this cave the artist wrote 'never before, in all my wanderings, had my eyes been gladdened by such an ideal fairy grot.' The expedition was led by the missionary Reverend G. Fox, who signed the picture, and facilitated by a crew of ten French sailors, who can be seen exploring the grotto, their boat with a French flag visible at the entrance. The printed image is accompanied by vivid descriptions of 'water of the purest ultra-marine, which was reflected in rippling shimmers of blue and green on the white marble roof'.



77

**Tahiti and the town of Papeete**

Extensively inscribed with locations in pen and black ink, signed and dated I.l.: *C.F. Gordon Cumming. Oct. 1877*, pen and black ink, watercolour heightened with bodycolour on tracing paper, two sheets joined, laid on a board with further inscriptions

19 x 64.5 cm.; 7 1/2 x 25 3/8 inches

The artist drew this from the Semaphore on the hill looking down on the harbour towards the Isle of Moorea.

This landscape records some of the key landmarks of Papeete, including the British consulate, the Roman Catholic church, the native Protestant church and another French ship *La Magicienne*.

78

***Mouarea and Tohuvea Peaks, Isle  
Moorea, Society Group***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.;  
*Mouarea and tohuvea. Peaks/Isle  
Moorea. Society Group/Nov. 1st 1877.*  
*C.F. Gordon Cumming, watercolour  
over pencil heightened with touches of  
white*  
*35 x 50 cm.; 13 1/2 x 19 5/8 inches*

The towering peaks of Mounts Mouarea and Tohuvea depicted here record the artist's first encounter with the isle of Moorea. The watercolour, described by the artist as a 'rapid outline of the strange and beautiful hills,' *A Lady's Cruise*, p.227, where she declared the island to be 'by far the most wonderful I have seen'.





79

***Fautaua Valley, looking to Diademe, Aorai, Tahiti***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Fautaua Valley/looking to Diademe (Maiao)/Aorai. Tahiti/C.F. Gordon Cumming./Nov. 1877*, watercolour over pencil with touches of bodycolour on paper watermarked J. WHATMAN 1875

49 x 73 cm.; 19 1/4 x 28 3/4 inches

The Diadème and Mount Aorai dominate the beautiful Fautaua valley. The artist painted this majestic watercolour while staying with Queen Marau of Tahiti. Marau Taaroa was the third daughter of Princess Ariioehau and Alexander Salmon, an English merchant in Tahiti. Her mother was the cousin and adopted sister of King Pomare III and Queen Pomare IV. She was educated in Sydney (1869-1873) and in 1875 married Ariiaue who reigned as Pomare V.

***Mount Rotui, Cook's Bay (Pao Pao) and Opunoku Bay, Moorea***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.: *Mt Rotui./Cook's Bay & Opunoku Bay/Pao Pao/Moorea/C.J. Gordon Cumming/-Dec. 17. 1877/Dec. 12 77/Cook's Bay (Pao Pao)/Opunoka Bay and signed by V. Michelli, watercolour over pencil with touches of white*

49 x 73 cm.; 19 1/4 x 28 3/4 inches

From a vantage point of two thousand feet, the artist captures the two bays of Moorea, Cooks Bay (Pao Pao) and Opunoku Bay, 'two calm lagoons lying to the right and left of a mighty rock-pyramid'. On the right hand side of the mountain a window appears 'through which the sky is seen, as through the eye of a needle', the artist notes that this natural feature is a 'phenomenon duly accounted for in Tahitian legends by the spear-thrusts of certain demigods and heroes', *A Lady's Cruise*, p. 317. The drawing is signed by V. Michelli, an Italian doctor who accompanied Gordon-Cummings on the challenging expedition to this view point, though he did not reach the summit.





81

**Mount Muaroa, Head of  
Opunuhu Bay, Moorea, Tahiti**

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: Mt.  
Muaroa./M. Valles house Head of  
Opunuhu Bay./Moorea. Near Tahiti/-  
Dec. 1877/C.F. Gordon Cumming.,  
watercolour over pencil with touches  
of bodycolour

49 x 73 cm.; 19 1/4 x 28 3/4 inches

Amidst the lofty mountains, the  
tranquil Openuhu bay presents an  
idyllic image of missionary life on the  
isle of Moorea. In the distance on the  
hillside, the house of M. Valles, a  
retired French officer, is just visible.  
On the shore, figures recline beneath  
a shelter while others explore the  
foreshore. A native man rows a  
canoe and a ship is moored in the  
bay, *A Lady's Cruise*, p. 322.

***Opunuhu Bay, Isle Moorea, Society Isles***

Signed three times, extensively inscribed and dated l.r.: *CFGC/Opunuhu Bay/Society Isles/Isle Moorea/French Mission House/M. Brun/1877/C.F. Gordon Cumming/Oleanders. Bananas and l.l.: C.F. Gordon Cumming/Bread Fruit Tree/Each leaf shines and reflects light*, watercolour over traces of pencil heightened with bodycolour  
36 x 65 cm.; 14 x 25  $\frac{5}{8}$  inches

The French mission house in Opunuhu Bay was run by M. Brun, the protestant pastor of Moorea, whose signature appears in the bottom right hand corner of this watercolour. The artist often stayed with missionaries and M. Brun accompanied and assisted her while she was on Moorea. Amidst the idyllic setting dotted with small figures engaged in religious learning, the artist focuses carefully on the reflectivity of the breadfruit tree, writing in 'each glossy leaf...is a mirror, which exactly reflects the condition of the weather-glancing bright in sunlight,' *A Lady's Cruise*, p.154.



## YOSEMITE

The artist proceeded to California, where the building of railroads had recently opened up the American West, and she spent several months in the Yosemite Valley.

'In California I found such attractive sketching-ground that six months slipped away like so many weeks, chiefly in the grand Sierra Nevada', *Memories*, pp. 230-231. In *Granite Crags* she expresses dismay at the extent of deforestation of *Sequoia sempervirens* in California, 'north and south the lumberers are busy felling the beautiful growth of centuries, to be turned to common use' (chapter 2).

'Truly these Californian Alps hold treasures of delight for lovers of all beautiful nature, who on their parts can bring strength and energy for mountaineering — a sure foot, a steady head and any amount of endurance.'

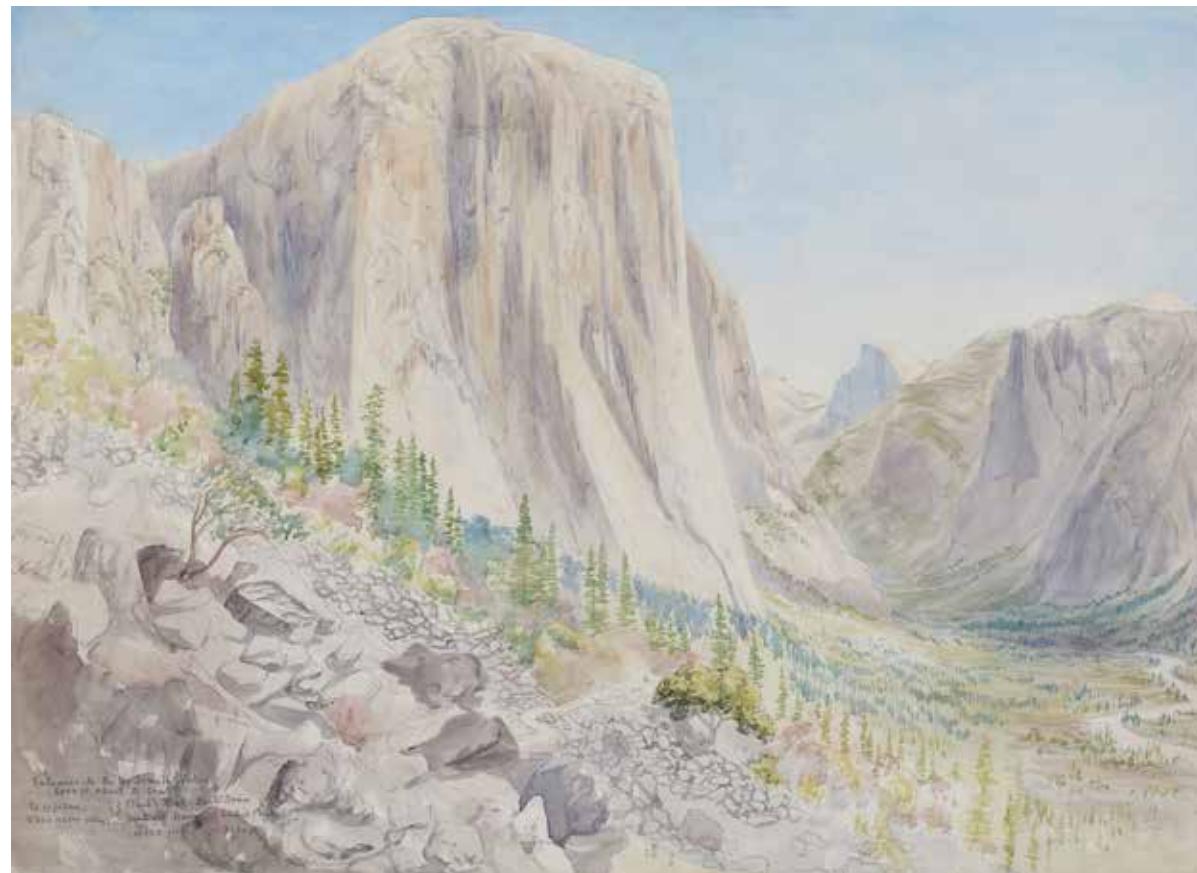
She rode in all directions to paint the views from various mountain summits and watched the seasons change from the melting of the snow, when the crags were visible and the trees leafless, to the growth of the vegetation. She had taken with her a side saddle from home. The *Sequoia Gigantea* captured her imagination as did the other trees 'the whole combines to produce a dream of loveliness, a true forest sanctuary', *Memories*, pp. 230-231. In *Granite Crags*, published in 1884, she describes how she mounted an impromptu exhibition of her work, hanging approximately fifty watercolours (twenty-five finished, twenty-five partially completed) on sheets around the wooden verandah of her lodgings. The exhibition, the first to be held at Yosemite, was well-received by local residents, particularly the guides, who appreciated her commitment to accurate representation rather than artistic licence, with one guide taking on the role of enthusiastic docent, 'descanting on every drawing', *Granite Crags*, pp. 282-283.

As she prepared to leave, she wrote poignantly of her attachment to 'each mighty crag...each flowery bed in the sunny meadows, and all the green glades in the pine-forests,' describing how these natural features had become 'individual friends' who had 'whispered messages of peace, and gladdened me with their beauty for so many weeks,' *Granite Crags*, p. 284.

***Entrance to the Yosemite Valley***

Inscribed l.l.: *Entrance to the Yosemite Valley. / (5000 ft above the sea. / El Capitan/3300 above valley/ (Cloud's Rest. South Dome/Sentinel Dome. Sentinel Peak/ (4125 feet. 3100 feet., watercolour over pencil the paper watermarked J. WHATMAN 1875 49 x 58 cm.; 19 1/4 x 22 3/4 inches*

The watercolour depicts the entrance to Yosemite Valley and captures the remarkable grandeur of the rock formations. An intrepid mountaineer with a great interest in both mountain climbing and geology, the artist has included details of the comparative heights of each massive rock formation. El Capitan, the iconic granite monolith, is described as 'a massive face of smooth cream-coloured granite, half a mile long, half a mile wide, three-fifths of a mile high. Its actual height is 3300 feet.' *Granite Crags*, p. 95.





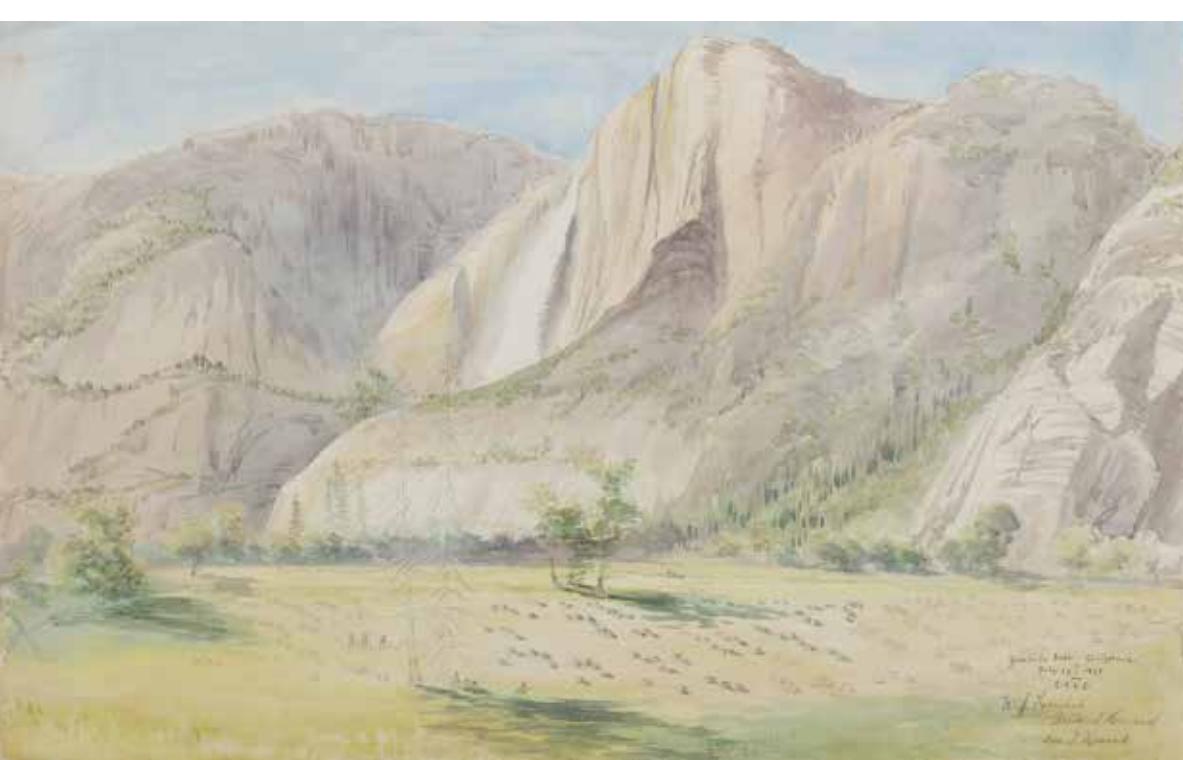
84

***The Three Brothers, Merced River,  
Yosemite, California***

Signed with initials, inscribed and dated and further signed I.I.: *The Three Brothers/Merced Rivr. Yosemite./California/C.F.G.C./May 1878 J/Wehter*, watercolour over pencil heightened with white

50 x 34.2 cm.; 19 5/8 x 13 3/8 inches

'The river Merced...flows through this green level valley so peacefully, as if it was thankful for this quiet interval in the course of its restless life', *Granite Crags*, p. 99. The artist had a keen interest in Native American practices and histories, and recorded that, 'On the left, three rounded mountains which the Indians call Pompompasus—that is, the Leaping-Frog Rocks. They rise in steps, forming a triple mountain 3830 feet high. Tall frogs these, even for California', *Granite Crags*, p. 97.

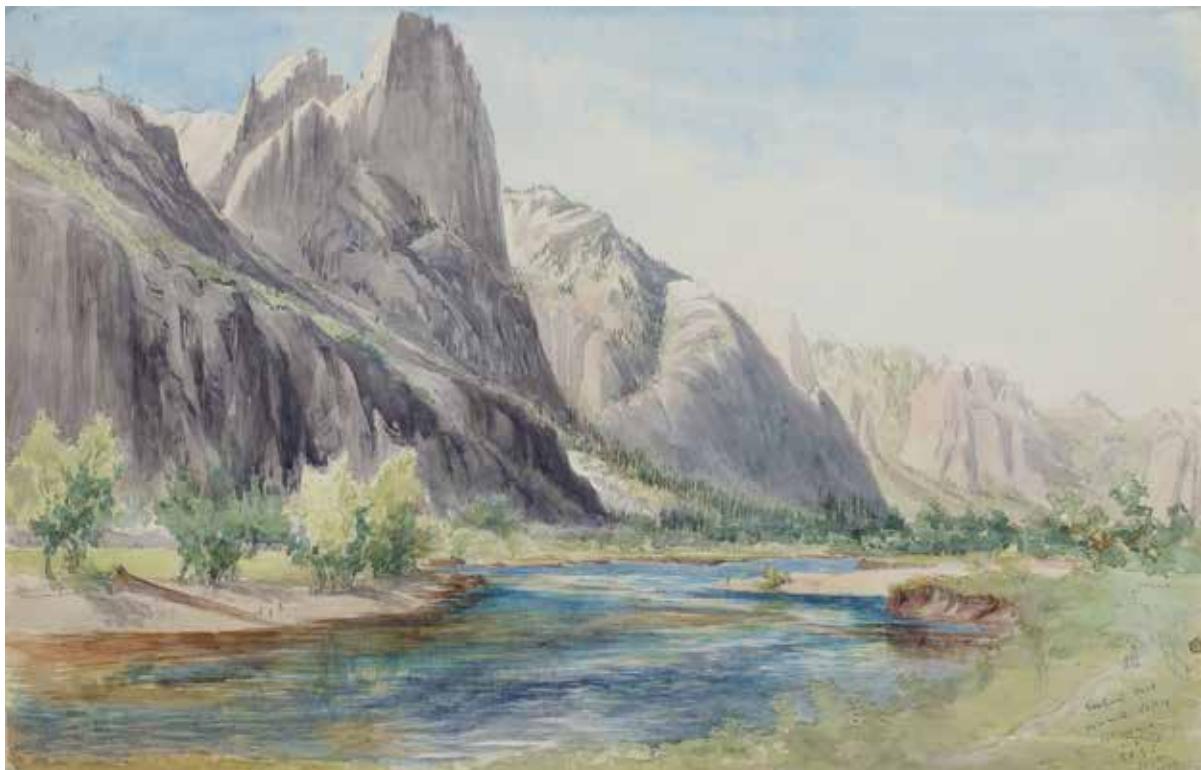


***Yosemite Fall, California***

Signed with initials, inscribed and dated and signed by others l.r.: *Yosemite Fall. California./July 19.<sup>th</sup> 1878./C.F.G.C./W.J.?* Belle J Howard/Ida J. Howard., watercolour over pencil  
 34 x 54 cm.; 13 3/8 x 21 1/4 inches

The artist, not usually that impressed by waterfalls, was overwhelmed by Yosemite Falls, 'I had never dreamt of anything so lovely.. It is a splendid bouquet of glistening rockets.. Like myriad falling stars they flash', *Granite Crags*, pp. 109-110.

The watercolour is signed by members of a Californian family living on the edge of the lake who rented boats to tourists. The daughter Ida Howard accompanied the artist to the waterfall, the artist describing her as 'a true child of the valley,' involved in farm work while educating herself and helping raise a large brood of siblings. *Granite Crags*, p. 243.

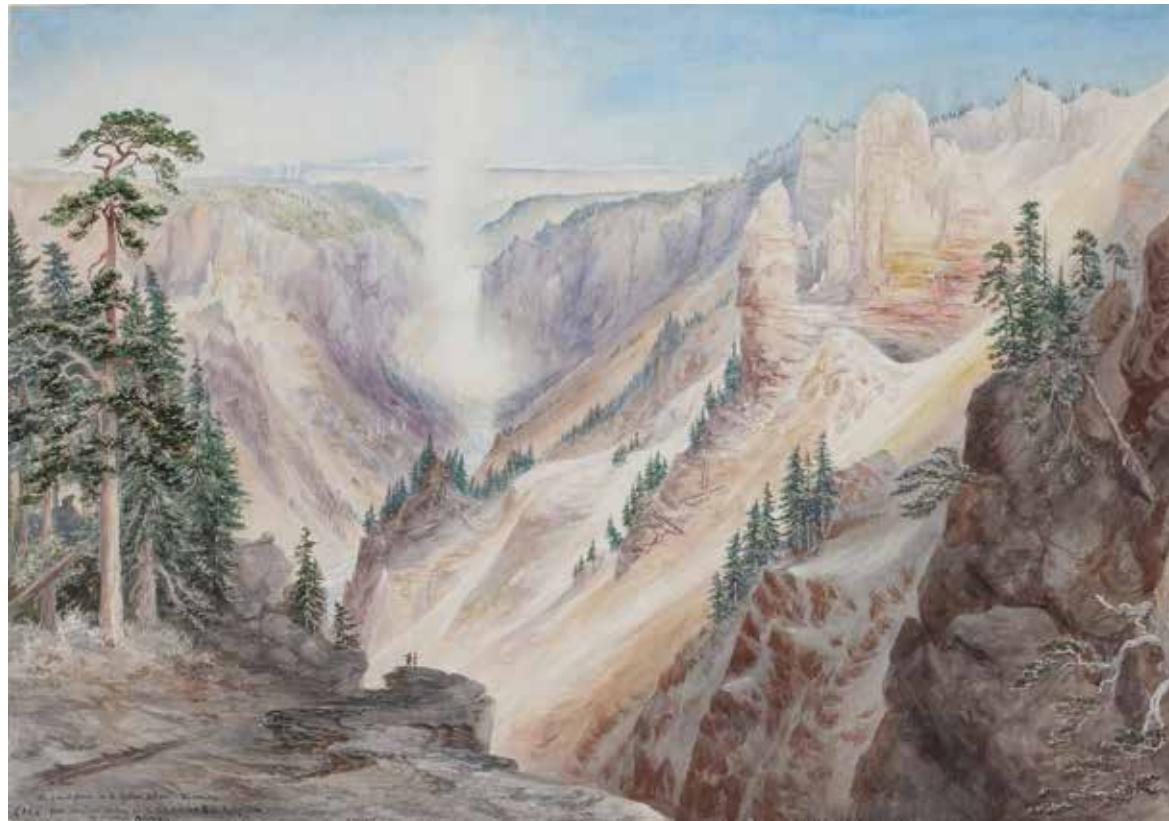


86

***Sentinel Rock, Yosemite Valley  
California***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.r.:  
*Sentinel Rock/Yosemite Valley/California./C.F.G.C./July 20<sup>th</sup>./1878*, water-colour over pencil  
34 x 54 cm.; 13 3/8 x 21 1/4 inches

This sweeping view captures the impressive Sentinel Rock, which the artist described as 'a truly imposing rock-needle, which has been well named 'The Sentinel.' It is an obelisk 1000 feet in height, rising from the great rock-wall, which forms a pedestal of 2000 more', *Granite Crags*, p. 97. The Merced River dominates the foreground, which 'glides on a dead level from the moment it enters the valley till it departs thence', p. 177. The artist's keen eye for geological formations is evident in her depiction of what she called 'hard angular masses, which show no symptom of weathering-those jagged pinnacles, which cut so sharp and clean against the cold blue sky', p. 173.



87

**After Thomas Moran**

The Grand Canyon on the Yellow Stone, Wyoming

Signed and inscribed l.l.: *The Grand Canyon on the Yellow Stone.. Wyoming/from the Great Picture in the Capitol at Washington/by Thomas Moran/C.F.G.C. and further inscribed with notes, watercolour over pencil with touches of bodycolour, the paper watermarked J WHATMAN 1872*

48.5 x 69.3 cm.; 19 1/8 x 27 1/4 inches

The famous large painting by Thomas Moran, 'Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone', 1872, (Smithsonian American Art Museum) was the artist's first large scale painting of the American West. He accompanied the first geological survey of the area.



The artist visited the Calaveras Grove and was amazed by the *Sequoia Gigantea*, recording her experience in *Granite Crags*, 'We have spent a long day of delight in the most magnificent forest that it is possible to imagine; and I have realised an altogether new sensation, for I have seen the Big trees of California, and have walked round about them, and inside their cavernous hollows, and have done homage as beseems a most reverent tree-worshipper. They are wonderful-they are stupendous!', pp. 77-8. The

Calaveras Grove contained '90 trees upwards of fifteen feet in diameter, and many had been hollowed by fire, creating spaces large enough that 'two horsemen can ride abreast inside the tree'.

The artist has included a self-portrait sitting at the base of one the trees holding a bunch of flowers, perhaps influenced by Moran's inclusion of himself in his painting of the Grand Canyon.

88

***Sequoia Gigantea, South Grove,  
Calaveras***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.:  
*Sequoia Gigantea and/tall sugar pine/-  
South Grove Calaveras/C.F.Gordon  
Cumming/Aug 3rd 1878/Cyclops (In  
wh seventeen horsemen can take  
shelter, watercolour over pencil with  
touches of bodycolour*  
 49 x 67.5 cm.; 19 1/4 x 26 1/2 inches

## HAWAII



The artist spent two interesting months in the Hawaiian Isles from October 1879. She spent time with the King and Queen, his sisters, the Dowager Queen and many American missionaries, notably Luther Severance, the Hawaiian Consul at Hilo, with whom she stayed. Her watercolours bear the signatures of several members of the Severance family, and members of the prominent Lyman family who were amongst Hawaii's earliest settlers. The works are also signed by Jane Reed, Titus Coan and members of his family and Wetmore and Bingham settlers. She also got to know Father Bailey and the Alexander family. Gordon-Cumming was particularly interested in volcanoes which she drew extensively while in Hawaii. She published her two volume book *Fire Fountains: The Kingdom of Hawaii* in 1883.



This watercolour depicts the settlement of Hilo on the east coast of Hawaii, with the imposing Mauna Kea, a dormant volcano and the island's highest point, rising in the background. The work blends local details such as the Wai, a traditional boat, with evidence of the Christian missions' success in Hawaii, represented by the four churches visible in the town. The image aligns with the artist's description of Hilo as a village 'embowered in delicious shrubbery.' *Fire Fountains*, p. 94. The artist records watching the sunrise from this viewpoint, 'We started and rode along the

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***Hilo looking to Mauna Kea from Wai-akea, Hawaii***

Signed, inscribed and dated I.l.: *Hilo looking to Mauna Kea from Wai-akea/Hawaii Sunrise/C.F. Gordon Cumming/Oct. 1879* and further signed by many others including: Luther Severance, Lucinda M. Severance, Anna Severance, Bella C. Lyman, Jane S. Reed, Titus Coan, Lydia Bingham Loan, K. Bingham, D.B. Lyman, S.J. Lyman, Maria J. Forbes, Emma Clark, Lizzie Chapman, Charles Wetmore, Lucy Wetmore, Kate Wetmore, watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour

49.6 x 67.5 cm.; 19 ½ x 26 ½ inches

crescent-shaped beach in time to look back at Hilo while the broad slopes of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa still glowed like vermillion in the light of the rising sun... the point we had reached proved so inviting for a general view of the village that I decided to remain there and sketch.' *Fire Fountains*, pp. 91-92. The watercolour is signed by members of several significant missionary families in Hilo, including the Lymans, Father Coan and his family, Dr. Charles Wetmore, the Binghams, the Severances and other missionaries who made their homes in Hilo.

***Hilo, Banks of the Wailuku, Hawaii***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.: *Hilo.*  
*Banks of the Wailuku/Hawaii./Nov.*  
*18th 1879./C.F Gordon Cumming* and  
further signed by several others  
including D. M. Lyman, D.B. Lyman,  
Titus Loan, Lydian Bingham Loan,  
watercolour over pencil heightened  
with bodycolour

46.4 x 70.3 cm.; 18 1/4 x 27 3/4 inches

This watercolour depicts the Wailuku River, one of the two major rivers flanking Hilo. The artist vividly describes this view, noting the river's dramatic course 'rushing down from the mountain to the sea, just behind this house, only a field intervening' and '...bright sparkling river, its clear waters leaping joyously over ferny caves formed by lava-bubbles, racing and rippling over shallows strewn with great boulders', *Fire Fountains*, p.203. The signatures of notable Hilo residents, including members of the Lyman and Coan families are included on this work.



This delicate watercolour depicts the Wailuku Valley which the artist attempted to visit but was thwarted by floods, 'even what I did see of the valley was very lovely, but I was assured that it did not begin to be beautiful till we passed the third ford, where vegetation seems to float in hanging mists of greenery, amid rock-castles and pinnacles of endless variety and grandeur', *Fire Fountains*, p. 293. The painting shows the dramatic mountain scenery she describes, with the river flowing through the valley that she was so disappointed not to fully explore: 'I was the more sorry to have failed in this expedition, as I

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***Wailuku Valley, West Maui,  
Hawaiian Isles***

Signed, inscribed and dated l.l.:  
*Maui-Hawaiian Isles./Wailuku  
Valley./C.F. Gordon Cumming/Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>  
79 and signed by : May Alexander/E  
Bailey/John A Baistow (?), further signed  
and inscribed l.r.: Hawaiian Isles./Wailu-  
ku Valley./West Maui./C.F. Gordon  
Cumming, watercolour over pencil  
34 x 51.2 cm.; 13 3/8 x 20 1/8 inches*

was anxious to see for myself whether any of the scenery in these Hawaiian isles really can bear comparison with that of the South Seas.' p. 294.

The work is signed by more significant missionaries, the Alexanders and the Baileys. E. Bailey is 'Father Bailey,' who also an artist, whom she describes visiting with his wife: 'where I was greatly interested in seeing some most faithful oil-paintings of Haleakala and other scenes in these isles, the handiwork of Father Bailey' p. 273.



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***Halema'uma'u crater of Kīlauea volcano, Hawaii***

Watercolour over pencil heightened with white

33 x 53 cm.; 13 x 20  $\frac{7}{8}$  inches

This dramatic watercolour shows the lava erupting inside the crater of Kīlauea volcano, with the base of the mountain Mauna Loa to the right.

A similar image entitled 'Eruption in the Outer Crater. Night-Scene' is illustrated in the artist's book *Fire Fountains* between pages 210 and 211 and is located near the site of this watercolour.



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***The crater of a volcano***

Watercolour over pencil

34 x 51 cm.; 13 3/8 x 20 inches

It has not been possible to firmly identify this volcanic crater, but it seems likely that it is in the area around Kilauea in Hawaii, about which the artist wrote in *Fire Fountains*.

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## KAREN TAYLOR



Karen Taylor has been working with paintings and drawings for over thirty years. She works as a fine art agent and dealer, offering independent, impartial advice to collectors and museums all over the world on buying, selling and all areas of collection management.

After graduating from Brasenose College, Oxford, where she read history, she joined Sotheby's British Paintings department and spent nearly ten years there. She ran the British drawings and watercolours auctions and also specialized in topographical and travel picture sales, where she built up the Greek and Turkish areas.

In 1993 she joined Spink's picture department. Here she expanded her interest in Oriental, Indian and Far Eastern art and organised exhibitions of Orientalist pictures and twentieth century British paintings and contemporary artists. She also represented Spink at international art fairs in Basel, Maastricht, New York, Hong Kong and Singapore, amongst other places, and served on the prestigious Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair picture vetting committee.

Based in Sydney for several years, where she renewed her interest in Australian art, Karen headed up Spink Australia before returning to London. Since 2001 she has been running her fine art consultancy, handling British paintings and drawings of all periods, typically placing pieces privately and working with many of the world's major museums. She exhibits regularly at London fairs and holds exhibitions in St James's.

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