

Edward Lear



Hardwar, India

Reference: 11051

Dimensions:

Height: 25.50 cm / 10 in

Width: 39.70 cm / 15⁵/₈ in

KT486

Signed with monogram I.L. and dated 1875, watercolour over pencil heightened with white

25.5 x 39.7 cm.; 10 x 15 ³/₄ inches

Provenance

Lady d'Avigdor Goldsmid;

Caroline Stroude;

Francis Sitwell (1935-2004);

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

By descent at Weston Hall, Northamptonshire until 2021

Hardwar, also called Gange-dward, the Ganges Gate, lies on the right bank of the Ganges, where the Ganges exits the Himalayan foothills North-East of Delhi. It is one of the seven sacred cities of the Hindu and an important pilgrimage site, which hosts the Kumbh Mela festival once every twelve years. A dip in the river Ganges here is believed to wash away one's sins and according to Hindu mythology, it is one of the four places where the drops of elixir ('Amrit') were accidentally spilled by the celestial bird Garuda.

Lear arrived there on 2 April 1874 and stayed with Mr Jenkinson, a relative of his friend the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, who had invited him to visit India. Lear was enchanted by the city, and wrote in his 'Indian Journal', ed. Ray Murphy, 1953, p. 113:

"The beauty of the pagodas and shrines and houses here is indescribable, and the whole scene is perhaps the most beautiful I have seen anywhere in India'.

On 5 April Lear drew the ghats (op. cit. p. 114):

"The tall silver gray temples in shade, a side bit here and there catching bright light, are really beautiful, often half seen through a veil of light green or yellow foliage. ...The colours of dresses amazing, women in apricot coloured shawls, rose coloured, scarlet, brown, all throwing flowers into the river.'....the mountains came out comparatively clear before lunch, so that I could really get an outline of the upper range, snows and all.' He and his manservant Giorgio left Hardwar on 6 April.

Francis Sitwell, the businessman and publicist, was the son of Sir Sacheverell Sitwell, 6th Bt and his wife Georgia.