

William Page



SOLD

A camel train at the Temple of Cybele, Sardis

Reference: 11111

Dimensions:

Height: 36 cm / 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ in

Width: 56.50 cm / 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ in

Inscribed verso: Temple of Cybele. Sardis, watercolour over traces of graphite on paper watermarked JWHATMAN TURKEY MILL 1828

36 x 56.5 cm

This is a view of the temple from the east, with the Sardis acropolis in the background.

Sardis was the capital of the Lydian Empire of the eighth century BC. It was a trading centre between the Greeks and the Persians, as the camel train in the drawing reflects, and became a Greek city state after 282 BC. The site is near the present-day village of Sart in the Manisa province of Turkey, about 45 miles east of Izmir. Cybele was the patron goddess of the city, and the temple is one of the earliest representations of the Ionic style.

KAREN TAYLOR

FINE ART

This watercolour is very faithful to the original topography of Sardis, without the dramatisation of the landscape usually found in eighteenth and nineteenth century views of the site. The contours and proportions of the city's acropolis are perfectly observed, including a small salient on the left that is still called the 'flying towers', as are those of the range of Tmolos mountains to the right in the distance. Also drawn accurately is the small hill just behind the temple on which the archaeologist H. C. Butler built the excavation house in 1911, and which is still prominent today.

By the time Page could have visited Sardis there were only three columns standing, as recorded by Cockerell who visited the site in 1812. Page may have copied the work of an earlier visitor in the eighteenth century, when Chandler records five standing columns. Cockerell records that the other two were blown up by a Greek who thought he might find gold in them.