FREDERIC CHURCH IN JAMAICA

LARGE PRINT LABELS

COOPER HEWITT

Smithsonian Design Museum

Church in Jamaica

In April 1865, at the end of the US Civil War, the American painter Frederic Church (1826–1900) traveled to Jamaica. At thirty-nine years old, Church was acclaimed in the United States for his monumental and astonishingly detailed landscape paintings. He was an intrepid traveler, regularly journeying around the globe in search of inspiration for his pictures. But his trip to Jamaica was different.

Church in Jamaica

Grieving the recent deaths of his two young children from diphtheria, Church and his wife, Isabel, sailed to the Caribbean seeking respite.

While Church sought personal solace in observing the majestic Jamaican landscape, Black Jamaicans lived in extreme poverty under British colonial rule. Every day for five months, Church trekked on foot and by horse to sketch plants and capture wondrous atmospheric effects from mountain peaks.

Church in Jamaica

Whether executed in moments or over the course of hours, these sketches reveal Church's extraordinary artistic range. Yet, absent from these breathtaking studies is both the artist's private anguish and the public turmoil engulfing the country. Instead, it is his passion for nature that is felt through the intensity with which he captures the fleeting light of the sunset and his meticulously accurate botanical studies of indigenous vegetation.

Church in Jamaica

Celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of Frederic Church's birth, this exhibition draws from Cooper Hewitt's holdings of over two thousand of the artists' oil and graphite sketches, the largest collection of Church works in the world. These sketches offer a window into the process of one of America's most influential artists. Shown together, they serve as a reminder of the expressive and healing power of drawing from nature and the complexity of memory imbued in the land.

A Lizard

June 1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-712-b



A Lizard

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of a bright green lizard with yellow eyes climbing a lightly sketched brown and grey background. The lizard is seen from above with outstretched limbs and a raised head. The lizard's color is vivid with fine details, a raised dark green line of dots down its back, white horizontal strips wrapping its torso, and long dark grey nails, make it stand out against the backdrop. Near the bottom of the painting the text "Jamaica June 65" is written in dark brown paint.

Coconut Palm with Figure

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-743-a

Church rarely sketched people, and only a handful of his studies from Jamaica show figures. Here he depicts a Jamaican laborer standing beneath a towering coconut palm. Shown from the back, the man appears to contemplate the natural scene. His tattered shirt hints at the poverty experienced by most Black Jamaicans.

Coconut Palm with Figure



Image Description:
Detailed painted sketch of a dark skinned person on the lower right hand corner looking up at two palm trees. The person wears a tan hat and a white shirt with a large hole in the back. They are hold a lighted sketched white rectangle with bright pink stripes.

Coconut Palm with Figure

Image Description (Continued): One of the palms has a white striped trunk that curves upwards into lush green feathered leaves. The other is straight and tall, the top not visible in this sketch, with green vines crawling up the trunk. There is other vegetation that completes the scene, a large bush that stands twice as tall as the person, and sparing small brushstrokes of varying browns, yellows, and greens that indicate grasses. In the bottom right corner in dark brown paint is written "Jamaica 1865"

Tree Fern

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-674-a

“Jamaica presents the most rich and attractive display of tropical vegetation I ever saw,” Church wrote to a friend in 1894, decades after his visit to the island. Despite his extensive global travels, the biodiversity of Jamaica remained unparalleled.

Tree Fern

Ferns also captured the imagination of Church's wife, Isabel. As she mourned the deaths of her children, she collected fern specimens and pressed them into an album and onto loose sheets.



Tree Fern

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of a short tree fern. Dominating the composition at center, the tree has a relatively thick, scaly brown trunk and topped with yellowish green fronds that emanate in all directions. The lower fronds are pale and wilted, dead. The scaly trunk is covered in a warm colored fibrous hair. Short green foliage grow around the base. Arolling and densely wooded hillside descends into the right background. Above, dense, rosy, and cream colored clouds break, revealing a deep,rich blue sky.

Tree Fern: Label Image



Pressed Ferns in an Herbarium, 1865

Isabel M. Carnes Church, (American, born France, 1836 – 1899)

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York 1865

Tree Fern: Label Image

Image Description:

Overlapping pressed leaves of a variety of ferns on white paper. Each fern has long pointed leaves that stem from the main branch. The sizes and density of the stemmed leaves differentiates the ferns. The leaves are a variety of faded green colors.

Map

Jamaica was divided into twenty-two administrative parishes by the British.
The parishes served as the primary form of local colonial governance and were often named after British figures or places. Church did not fully document his tours across the island, but his known path of travel is reconstructed here in orange.

Map



Image Description:
Illustrated map of Jamaica. The island is green with topographical details created by shading. The parishes of Jamaica are outlined and labeled in a light yellowish white text. The parishes to the West are larger and sprawling while the parishes to the East are smaller and clustered.

Map

Image Description (cont.):
Church has three documented paths of travel, all starting from Kingston, in the south east part of the island, noted in an orange line. The cities are marked by a black dot outlined in white. The longest path goes Northwest, from Kingston to Linstead to Moneague. Another goes directly North to Bellevue. The last goes Northeast to Galloway Hill & Flamstead. Port Royal, a peninsula city soutwest of Kingston, and Morant Bay, South east of Kingston, are also marked.

Blue Mountains near Kingston

May 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-354-c

When they departed for Jamaica, Church and his wife had just lost their two-year-old son Herbert and infant daughter Emma to diphtheria. Isabel rested with companions and spoke openly of her sorrow, while a devastated Church threw himself into his work.

Blue Mountains near Kingston

Horace Robbins, a young American artist who traveled to the island with him, observed, “He works away as if for dear life—& seems to be trying to forget his trouble by always keeping himself occupied.”



Blue Mountains near Kingston

Image Description:
Painted sketch with a blue tint of bright sunny mountainous landscape. In the foreground is a line of dense green treetops ranging in hue. The foreground gives way to lower elevation ridges and hillsides dotted with trees that extend into the distance. Blue Mountain Peak is visible in the background at left, its tall peak shrouded by white wispy clouds.

As the clouds extend to the right, above the mountainous horizon line, they turn grey and stormy. In the bottom right is "Jamaica May 65" written in brown paint.

The Blue Mountains

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-351-a

Church traveled by horse through Jamaica's mountains to reach spots with dramatic vistas for sketching. The weather was constantly changing, and he delighted in the opportunity to capture the stunning atmospheric effects.

The Blue Mountains

Rainstorms were daily occurrences but rarely lasted more than thirty minutes, moving quickly across the island. Fellow artist Horace Robbins remarked in a letter to his mother that swarms of mosquitoes were a constant presence, but that Church appeared to be entirely unaffected.



The Blue Mountains

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of steep mountain landscape. In the left foreground, tall steep green hill slope off to the right. Further back, uneven mountain terrain gets hazy, covered by thick billowing clouds interspersed with rays of bright sunlight. On the right in the background, rain falls from the clouds in a concentrated area. In the bottom right corner, "Jamaica" is written in dark green paint.

Storm in the Mountains

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-351-c



Storm in the Mountains

Image Description:

Painted landscape sketch of brown rolling mountains under billowy storm clouds. In the foreground, dark grey clouds cover a rocky brown hilltop. The clouds give way to bright sun in the distance, shining on the distant rolling brown mountain peaks. The sketch has a hazy appearance, as if the sunlight provides a cover across the scene.

Mountainous Landscape

May 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-354-b



Mountainous Landscape

Image Description:

Painted sketch of stormy valley landscape. In the foreground, small hills covered in vegetation are in shadow. Behind them is a brown valley, lit by a break of sunlight. Valley slopes up into 4 hills further into the background. Dark storm clouds loom over the scene, particularly dark on the left corner. The clouds are shaded with vertical strokes, appearing to rain down on the background portion of the landscape. "Jamaica May 65" is written in brown paint on the bottom right.

Seated Boy

July 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-353-a



Seated Boy

Image Description:

Sketch-style painting of a young boy with dark skin sitting on the grey ground surrounded by whisps of tall green and yellow grass. The boy faces away from us, to the left, so his face is not visible. He is dressed in loose white clothing and wears a cap-like hat made out of straw. He his right hand is held up to his right cheek, the hand itself out of sight. His left hand rests on his left thigh, pointed out as if sitting cross-legged. The squarish scene takes up the majority of the middle of the brownish yellow page. "July.65/Jamaica" written in greyish green paint on the bottom.

Moonlight Bamboo and Figure Sketches, Kingston

July 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-684



Moonlight Bamboo and Figure Sketches, Kingston

Image Description:

Loosely sketched drawing of nighttime scene with a cluster of bamboo trees on left, and figure studies on the right. Tree tops are full in fluffy, plume shapes. Above, on the right, is a full moon. Loose diagonal strokes shade in the trees. Figure studies fill the right side of the page neatly arranged in rows. Most of the figures have dark skin and are standing with their backs turned wearing trousers, dresses, headscarves and brimmed hats. Below written in cursive is "Kingston" and "Moonlight Bamboo Jamaica July 65".

Figures and Thatched Hut, Jamaica

ca. 1860-80

Unidentified photograph

Stereograph (facsimile)

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York

Most photographs printed in Jamaica during the mid-nineteenth century were produced for tourists. Alongside picturesque seascapes and dramatic plant life, there was a market for staged photos of impoverished Black Jamaicans in the countryside.

Figures and Thatched Hut, Jamaica

This is one such example found in Church's personal collection. Unlike pictures of white Jamaican residents from this period, photos of Black Jamaicans in their rural villages were given only generalized titles, reducing their subjects to stereotyped depictions of poverty.



Figures and Thatched Hut, Jamaica

Image Description:

Two copies of a sepia toned photograph side by side on a single paper. The photograph captures five Black Jamaican men outside a thatched hut, about twice their size. The men are dressed in nice dress pants, collared shirts, and each wears a different variation of a top hat. Four of the men stand outside hut, while the fifth sits against a wooden fence in the foreground. The square hut has vertically woven walls and a roof of thatched grasses. Covering the top of the image is a looming palm leaf that slipped into frame.

Comb Case with Wig Comb

1671

Painted tortoiseshell

Gift of Kit Robbins,
1980-19-2-a/c

This tortoiseshell comb was likely produced for a European as a souvenir to commemorate their travels in Jamaica. The tortoiseshell was a distinctly Caribbean commodity.

Comb Case with Wig Comb

Adorned with Jamaican flora, this European form was a fitting symbol for Britons who traveled to the Caribbean to make their fortunes and returned as members of an emerging wealthy elite.



Comb Case with Wig Comb

Image Description:

Vertically rectangular brown tortoiseshell box with carved decorations. As a border around the edges are flowers with vines daintily engraved and topped with white pigment. Under the border on the top is the word "Jamaica" in stylized all caps with orange pigment. Below that in the center of the box is a coat of arms with similar vines. Within the shield there are two flowers in the top corners and another on the center bottom, with a decorated triangle rises above the bottom flower to separate it.

Jamaica in 1850 or, The Effects of Sixteen Years of Freedom on a Slave Colony

1851

Written by John Bigelow (American, 1817-1911)

New York and London: G. P. Putnam

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

John Bigelow, an editor at the New-York Evening Post and author of this antislavery book, visited Jamaica for three weeks to observe economic conditions there. He profiled emancipated Jamaicans

who were succeeding as small-scale farmers while detailing the brutal fallout of the post-plantation system. At the time of his writing, 90 percent of Jamaica's land was owned by absentee landlords, many of whom had abandoned their sugar and coffee plantations in the wake of emancipation.



Jamaica in 1850 or, The Effects of Sixteen Years of Freedom on a Slave Colony

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Image Description:

Open book with faded and stained sepia toned paper. The book is open to pages full of paragraphs of writing. Across the top of the pages reads "55 Estates Abandoned" (left) and "Diminution of Exports" (right). the right page has a chart in the bottom half of the page. The sections include various exports and the year they were exported with the aggregate diminution at the bottom.

Kitchen of Flamstead Cottage

July 1865

Graphite and gouache on paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-411

For much of his stay in Jamaica, Church resided at Galloway Hill. This was just down the road from Flamstead Great House, home of British Governor Edward John Eyre., who, months later, brutally suppressed Black Jamaicans protesting abject living conditions.

Kitchen of Flamstead Cottage

From Flamstead, one could take in panoramic views of Kingston Harbour and Liguanea Plain. The homes were built on a historic Taíno lookout point nestled within the Blue Mountains. Church met Eyre during his stay, as did another artist member of his traveling party, Danish painter Fritz Melbye.



Kitchen of Flamstead Cottage

Image Description:

Pencil sketch of one end of a building viewed from its side with brick or stone walls and a shingled roof. At the top of the shingled roof is a dome-like vent. Textures are details of the roof are shown by its individual darker pencil outlines. Below the surface of the roof and towards the base of the building is colored in white with an uneven and textured surface. The door and window on the left is open. A faint sketch of trees appears on the background towards the left side. On the bottom in cursive is "Kitchen of Homestead Cottages" and "Jamaica July / 65"

Paul Bogle

Date unknown

Unidentified Photographer

Photograph (facsimile)

Courtesy of National Library of Jamaica

Jamaican Baptist deacon Paul Bogle (1822–1865) worked to draw attention to the plight of Black Jamaicans. He was instrumental in leading the protest march that devolved into violence and became known as the Morant Bay Rebellion.

Paul Bogle

This photograph has long been considered a portrait of Bogle, although the sitter's identity is still unknown for certain.



Paul Bogle

Image Description:

Sepia toned photograph speckled with age of a seated and posed Black man wearing semi-formal clothes with a straight-faced expression. His hair is cut into a short afro. He wears a jacket, buttoned only at the top, with a fitted vest and decorative collar undershirt. His vest and jacket have decorative links, similar to those of a pocket watch. He wears a pinky ring on this left hand. He sits on an upholstered chair with tassels on the armrests against a plain photograph studio background. He looks out, just off camera.

George William Gordon

He was accused of treason and executed in the aftermath of the Morant Bay Rebellion.



George William Gordon

Image Description:

Sepia toned photograph speckled with age of a seated and posed biracial man wearing a three piece suit with a straight-faced expression. His hair is parted on his right, light waves curling down to his ears with mutton chops. He wears glasses with small oval lenses. His suit jacket is open, revealing his vest and white dress shirt with a tall collar. His hands rest in light fists on this lap. On the bottom, written in cursive, it reads "G. Gordon. Hung at Morant Bay. 23rd October 1865."

Morant Bay Rebellion

Although slavery had been abolished in Jamaica in 1838, most Black Jamaicans still lived in extreme poverty under British colonial rule. High unemployment, resource exploitation, slavery-like conditions, and starvation were systemic. By early 1865, a group of civic leaders and the heads of the Native Baptist church organized Black Jamaicans to petition the British colonial government for livable wages, reasonable taxation, and access to land for

cultivation. In response, the government removed several of their powerful allies from public office, including George William Gordon, an assemblyman and head of the Native Baptist church.

On October 11, 1865, several hundred Black Jamaicans marched to the capital of St. Thomas parish to protest the arrest warrant issued for Paul Bogle, an activist and deacon. After the protestors removed weapons from the

local police station, a fight broke out that resulted in the deaths of eighteen militiamen and seven protestors. In the ensuing days, the British colonial government indiscriminately killed nearly five hundred Black Jamaicans and flogged six hundred more. More than a thousand homes were destroyed. Mass executions were ordered, and Bogle and Gordon were among those accused of treason and executed.

Petition of Stony Gut, St. Thomas in the East Residents

October 10, 1865

On October 10, 1865, Baptist deacon Paul Bogle, George Gordon, and other residents of Stony Gut, St. Thomas in the East, sent a letter to British Governor Edward John Eyre protesting the dire and exploitative conditions experienced by Black Jamaicans, and specifically a recent "outrageous assault" perpetrated by British parish police. The letter makes clear that the authors seek to peacefully protest their oppression, violent treatment, and violations of rights.

Petition of Stony Gut, St. Thomas in the East Residents

Transcript of Petition:

To His Excellency

E.J. Eyer Esquire

Captain General and Governor in Chief of this Her Majesty's Island of Jamaica.

We the petitioners of St Thomas in the East do send to inform your Excellency of the mean advantages that has been taken of us from time to time and more especially this present time. When on Saturday of this month and outrageous assault was committed upon Us by the policeman of this parish by order of

Petition of Stony Gut, St. Thomas in the East Residents

Transcript of Petition:

the justices which occasion and outbreaking for which warrants have been issued against innocent persons of which we were compelled to resist. We therefore call upon your Excellency for protection seeing we are her Majesty's loyal subjects which protection if refused we will be compelled to put our shoulders to the wheels as we have been imposed upon for a period of "27 years" with do obeisance to the laws of our Queen and country and weekend no longer endure the same therefore is our object of

Petition of Stony Gut, St. Thomas in the East Residents

Transcript of Petition:

calling upon your Excellency as Governor and Chief and Captain of our Island and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

Signed,

James Dacres	William Bowie
J.R. Smith	James McLaren
James Bowie	Stephen Cameron
Paul Bogle	Charles Mannie
Joseph Kelly	Alex Badson
Moses Bogle	William Grant
William Forbes	Edward Howell
Archibald Baily	George Gordon
Thomas Grahame	William Anderson
William Bogle	Brisco Paterson

Grave of Eighty Rebels near Morant Bay, Jamaica

1865

Reproduction photograph

Courtesy of Princeton University Library

This photograph, found in an album compiled by a British army officer, purports to show a mass grave of Jamaicans executed in the wake of the Morant Bay Rebellion. The site, located beside a cotton tree at a crossroads, is one of the few photographic records of the horrific violence perpetrated in response to the uprising.

Grave of Eighty Rebels near Morant Bay, Jamaica



Image Description:

Faded sepia toned photograph of the intersection between two neighborhood dirt roads. At the convergence point sits a large tree with scattered leaves. Underneath the tree is a dirt pile that reaches to hip height of two men standing near. On the right, a child stands in front of a carriage pulled by an animal.

Jamaica

1871

Oil on canvas

Wadsworth Atheneum, The Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt Collection, 1905.21

Church used many of the works in these galleries as references to create the monumental painting The Vale of St. Thomas, completed in 1867. Although the Vale of St. Thomas is a real site in Jamaica that Church visited, his painting incorporates all the diverse range of plants and flowers that he sketched at many different sites.

Jamaica

Several years later, Church returned to his Jamaica studies again for reference to paint this smaller picture, which captures the majesty of the mountains against a quiet seaside scene and features Jamaican laborers at work.



Jamaica

Image Description:

Detailed painting of a boat on a lush beach. In the foreground, palm trees, vines, and other diverse greenery give way to patchy grasses then a sandy shoreline. In the middleground, quiet waters of the shore hold a small sailboat. Two people are in the boat. Another two gather items from the shore and are waded in the water. In the background, white buildings minimized by distance sit in front of a looming mountain range. The mountains are covered in lush greenery and red rock. The baby blue sky turns to pink on the right.

Sunset over Hilltops

August 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-418-a



Sunset over Hilltops

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of a monumental, billowing cloud illuminated in vivid hues of bright pink and red. Two mountain peaks take up the bottom half of the sketch, forming a V-shape. The peak at left is brown and rocky, while the peak at right is covered in green tree tops and dappled with fauna that reflects the pink brilliance of the sunset. The v-shape frames a smaller, muted green mountain peak in the distance, directly above which is the mammoth-sized cloud.

Sunset over Hilltops

Image Description (Continued):

The cloud itself is shaped vaguely like a mountain, with its steep triangular peak at its top, the cloud reflects a just-set sun’s brilliant pink and orange hues. The rest of the sky is muted blue and dotted with darker, grey-pink clouds. In the bottom right of the painting is "Aug 65"written in black paint.

Sunset and Mountains

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-682-b



Sunset and Mountains

Image Description:

Loose, painted sketch of a muted sunset over mountains. Rounded, sloping, dark green ridge at bottom right gives way to higher elevation ridges that quickly become muted purple as they extend into the distance. A strip of clouds, also in muted purple, reach into the sky from the top right, dappled with fiery red-orange and yellow that reflect a low sun just under the most distant ridge at the horizon line. The rest of the sky is a pleasant blue and green. Water marks in varying sizes of droplets decorate the sketch throughout.

Clouds at Sunset

August 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-409-b



Clouds at Sunset

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of the setting sun's brilliant golden-orange light piercing a billowing cloud bank and warmly coloring other clouds. A rolling series of rough and brambly green hills stretch across the bottom of the painting and extend into the background, turning to muted colors of purple and blue as they recede toward the horizon. Above, the horizon line consists of a multi-peaked white, billowy stretch of clouds that frame the vivid golden orange sun as it radiates brilliant sunset light into the sky.

Cloudy Sunset

August 1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-408-b



Cloudy Sunset

Image Description:

Lightly sketched painting of a vivid patch of sunset light in a cloudy sky above shaded mountains. Swirled tree-like olive green at bottom left foreground sits in front of a loose rendering of a mountain that stretches across the remaining bottom of the sketch. Above the mountain, a dramatic sunset begins with layer of billowy clouds that give way to a brilliant yellowish light in the sketch's center. Visible brushstrokes of cloudy blue and dark greyish purple fill the top of the sketch. The words "Jamaica Aug -65" are painted in black at the bottom left.

Hilltop at Sunset

July 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-352-c

Church never tired of painting the sunset during his time on the island. Although known for his detailed renderings of landscapes, in his *en plein air* (open air) sketches we glimpse the immediacy with which he captured fleeting scenes. The Jamaican sunsets, he wrote to his father, were “so extraordinary that I might not see similar again.”

Hilltop at Sunset



Image Description:

Painted sketch of a hilltop under a pink and orange sunset. At the left foreground of the landscape is a brown hill made of visible brushstrokes, giving direction and texture to the hillside. Light from the pink and orange sunset glows throughout. The sun is hidden under a long, thin stretch of grey clouds. On the right, distanced hills glow pink to match the dramatic sky.

The Red Hills Near Kingston

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-385-a



The Red Hills near Kingston

Image Description:

Detailed painting of brown mountains stretching across low-lying grasslands. At bottom right, a lush thicket of finely detailed trees, bushes, tall grass, and wildflowers reaches up then extends down across the foreground. Extending into the middle distance are lush patches of low-lying farmland, sectioned off in rectangles by lines of trees, which sit at the bottom of a warm brown series of mountain ridges. Above, a muted grey sky holds a fuzzy band of storm clouds. In the bottom right corner written in paint is "E.F. Church Jamaica 65"

Blue Mountains and Gray Clouds

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-682-a



Blue Mountains and Gray Clouds

Image Description:

Painted landscape sketch of rolling mountains under grey clouds. In the foreground, the hills start relatively flat, becoming more and more steep as they layer on top of each other extending into the background. They are all a marbled assortment of rich brown, green, and yellow hues. Above them, the swath of grey clouds shrouds some of the taller peaks of the hills, covering the entire sky save for a small patch of blue at top right. Freckled throughout the sketch are small etches of darker paint, adding dimension.

Steep Hillside

July 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-352-b



Steep Hillside

Image Description:

Painted landscape sketch with a view from the bottom of a tall tree-dotted hillside. The steep hillside is wonderfully lush, filled with multi-hued billowy green and red tree tops and brownish wild grasslands dotted with green and yellow fauna. Some areas of the painting are lightly sketched with loose brushstrokes while others have extremely fine details, such as layers of leaves on trees and individual trunks of one area on the slope. A small section of muted blue sky peaks out the top. Written in brown paint in the bottom right is "Jamaica July 65"

Woodland Path

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-1351



Woodland Path

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of a dirt path in the Jamaica woodlands. A rocky cliff side dominates right portion of composition, with rich red and grey creating a towering boulderous wall. At left, the dirt path extends into the middle distance and curves to the right, behind a lush slope. Abundant green vegetation visible all around. Light reflects and highlights the many details of the sketch, including small vegetation along the bath, the boulders, and the distanced trees.

Red Hills

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-355-b

Jamaica was experiencing a historic drought when Church arrived. In a letter to his farm manager back home, he wrote that “the greater part of Jamaica has had abundant rains and the contrast between the gorgeous verdure of the one part and the parched aridity of the other is striking.

Red Hills

The line between, in some places is very marked—I have stood on dry parched ground and overlooked valleys intensely green and luxuriant.”



Red Hills

Image Description:

Painted sketch of succeeding mountain ridges extending to the horizon, rendered in a reddish-brown. Behind the distanced mountains are white clouds and a hazy yellow-blue sky indicating a rising or setting sun. A small whisp of white smoke of a fire rises in the distance along the slope to the right right. A cultivated green valley comprises the middle distance. In the immediate foreground on the left, the upper branches of a nearby tree are visible.

Cloudy Skies

August 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-409-a



Cloudy Skies

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a mountainous landscape underneath a dramatic sky of billowing clouds cut by emanating rays of light. The brown mountains in the distance have a rocky terrain while the green hills the in the foreground are covered in vegetation. In the bottom right corner written in black paint reads "Jamaica Aug 65"

Mountain Valley

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-342-b



Mountain Valley

Image Description:

Highly detailed painted sketch of a mountain valley in Jamaica. In the immediate foreground, a rounded green, wooded hillside gives way to farm land and plains in the valley beyond. At left, a nearby rocky hillside bounds the valley. In the distance, taller, more rugged mountains climb into the sky--hazily rendered due to atmospheric perspective. Above, puffy clouds travel across a hazy sky.

Among the Blue Mountains

July 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-680-a



Among the Blue Mountains

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch showing expansive, rugged mountains. Shaded, sloping ridge at left gives way to lower elevation ridges and hillsides that extend into the distance. Blue Mountain Peak visible in background at left. Sky is mostly concealed behind gray and white puffy clouds.

Clouds over Hills

August 1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-408-a



Clouds over Hills

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a billowing, storm cloud in the distance. The left portion of the landscape has looming grey clouds in a c shape, creating a viewpoint to the billowing clouds even further in the distance. Patches of blue sky cut through the grey. The bottom quarter of the landscape is a dark brown terrain consisting of rolling hills surrounded by barren, dry land. The terrain becomes greener with vegetation such as groves of trees and grassland becoming the dominant features in the foreground.

Sunset

1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-755-c



Sunset

Image Description:

Loosely sketched painted of a landscape in front of a dramatic sky. The clouds are dark blueish purple on the left and bright pinkish orange on the right. White brushstrokes are speckled throughout the right sky. They hover above a series of hills covered by green strokes that indicate vegetation. The sketch is unfinished at the bottom, leaving plain yellowish paper blank. Written in pencil on the blank paper is "Jamaica"

View of the Palisadoes near Kingston

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-394-b

From a high vantage point, Church sketches the long tidal coastline extending into the distance. With quick, brushy strokes, he captures the ridges of the mountains in the foreground and the delicate effects of light reflecting on the water below the horizon line.

View of the Palisadoes near Kingston

The albumen print seen below, which he acquired during his trip to the island, shows the accuracy with which he rendered the sand spit that encloses Kingston Harbour.



View of the Palisadoes near Kingston

Image Description:
Painted sketch of a grassy hilltop overlooking a serene coastline. The rocky hills in the foreground are made of loose visible brushstrokes that become more neat as the terrain gets rockier further down the hill. At the base of the hilltop there is a zig-zagging pathway going across a body of water that ends before reaching the landmass in the distance. Sky is hazy with grey streaks with patches of blue scattered throughout it. The water matches the sky, with streaks of dreamy pinks, whites, and purples.

View of the Palisadoes near Kingston: Label Image

The albumen print seen below, which he acquired during his trip to the island, shows the accuracy with which he rendered the sand spit that encloses Kingston Harbour.



View of the Palisadoes near Kingston: Label Image

Shore with Isthmus

ca. 1860s

Unidentified photographer

Albumen print

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York

Image Description:

Sepia toned image of rocky hills in the foreground. In the distance, at the base of the hilltop, there is a zig-zagging pathway going across a body of water that ends before reaching the landmass in the distance.

Sketching from Nature

Church's drawings and oil studies reflect his aspiration to accurately record details of light, color, and form, but also the emotional experience of a place or scene. Church sometimes balanced his desire for botanical accuracy with a desire to represent the overwhelming abundance of foliage and the shapes of the mountains. His graphite sketches are frequently annotated with brief notations that are both informative and poetic.

Fig Tree and Wild Philodendron

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-393-a



Fig Tree and Wild Philodendron

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of the base of fig tree. The trunk of the tree, with its countless vines, grows out of rocky terrain. The vines have a variety of different shaped and colored leaves and stems. Some are small and thin while others are broad curved leaves on hearty green stems. Another tree visible in middle distance at left. In background, pinkish, puffy clouds backdrop a rolling landscape.

Thatch Palm

May 1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-672-a



Thatch Palm

Image Description:

Painted detail sketch of a short palm tree centered against a brown toned interior of a jungle. The green fronds of the tree fan out in all directions giving it the rounded shaped of a bush. The brown trunk is short and stout. The vegetation around it, short grasses in the foreground and tall trees in the background, are brown-tone and less detailed so the focus is on the palm in the center.

Mountains

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-381-b



Mountains

Image Description:

Loosely painted sketch of a valley showing the changing topography of mountains. The foregrounded valley has hills covered in lush green vegetation. The hills give way to rolling darker brown mountains that extend into the distance. The sky is mostly concealed behind gray and white puffy clouds with the sun emanating rays of light through the clouds.

Jungle Foliage, Jamaica

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-743-b



Jungle Foliage, Jamaica

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of tree ferns and other vegetation in dense rain forest. At center there is a tall tree fern with a broad, arching canopy. Large fanned leaves splay over each other into an umbrella shape. At right, two other tree ferns are surrounded by thick foliage, while at left, similarly lush greenery frames the view. Individual leaves and branches are highlighted throughout the sketch, providing depth to the various hues of greenery. Above, blue sky is visible through a break in the jungle canopy.

Palm Trees

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-743-c



Palm Trees

Image Description:

Very detailed painted botanical sketch of three palm trees growing on a steep hillside in Jamaica. At right, the coarse, scaly trunks of two palm trees are shown situated on a hilltop with mixed vegetation growing at their bases. The fronds of these trees are minimally shown at upper right, largely cut out of the frame. At left, the top of another palm tree with a lush crown of fronds, individually rendered, bending softly in the breeze. Ferns grow from the crevices of each tree's scaly trunk. Behind, clear, open sky has a gray-green horizon and light blue sky at top.

Thunder Clouds

1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-407-b



Thunder Clouds

Image Description:

Detailed landscape painting of a lively canopy of treetops underneath a vast sky with towering billowed clouds. The brushstrokes are directional such that the sketch of different tropical and deciduous trees seem to sway and blow with the wind from the coming thunderclouds. The clouds roll and churn overhead into a colossal mountain shape, the clouds and the sky both pleasantly blue gray and pink.

Valley and Mountain View

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-680-c



Valley and Mountain View

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a lush green mountain landscape. On the left, the hill rolls down into a valley and back up into a hilly mountain scene extending far into the background. The top of the hill is much darker than the rest of the sketch, shaded by a cloud. On the right, there is a solitary tree with its branches bent toward the left pointing toward the horizon which a mountain range in the distance. Sky is mostly clear with a line of gray and white puffy clouds positioned right above the mountains.

Rainforest

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-678-b



Rainforest

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch showing a view of a large, diagonally-growing tree in a dense rainforest. Prominently situated at center, the nearly horizontal trunk of a thick tree leans from the lower left to the upper right. Two large branches grow vertically out of the trunk, which itself is covered in moss, ferns, and other foliage. Other smaller trees frame the scene, which is otherwise filled with diverse and loosely rendered vegetation. Above, pale blue sky is visible through the dense forest canopy.

Bamboo Grove

May 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-678-a



Bamboo Grove

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of a sandy bamboo grove. In the foreground at right, a stand of densely packed bamboo plants is shown, with another in the middle distance at center. These groves grow on a dirt or sand slope that gently descends to the right. A curtain of bamboo plants backdrops the scene, while a patch of blue sky peeks through a break in the foliage at upper left.

Wooded Vale

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-351-b



Wooded Vale

Image Description:

Painted sketch of series of hills covered in lush green vegetation. The trees and other greenery are loosely defined by fluffy brushstrokes and loosely blended shades of green and brown. The hills extend into the distance, with the most distanced hill blurred dark. The sky is cloudy with gray clouds dominating the background.

Trees

July 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-673-a



Trees

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of a grassy path through tall skinny trees. Majority of the trees are short in stature but there are several that are taller with branches stretching up toward the sky. Some have bushy tops while others have slim leaf coverings. Each tree is detailed, some with individual leaves shaded. Others have detailed trunks and defined branches. The sky is clear with tones of blue and white. Next to the path, on the right side, is writing in black paint which reads "Jamaica July 65"

'Jamaica': Jungle Hillside

Date unknown

Unidentified photographer

Photographic print (facsimile)

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York



'Jamaica': Jungle Hillside

Image Description:

Sepia toned photograph of a mountainous hillside. The foreground is distanced, comprised of rolling hills covered in lush foliage. The thatched roofs of buildings peak out among the treetops. The background is nearly there and very faded, either from distance or image quality. More lush mountains roll in background.

Isabel Carnes Church

1865

Freeman Studio

Tintype (facsimile)

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York



Isabel Carnes Church

Image Description:

Oval black and white photograph portrait of a white woman with slim face and a straight-faced expression. She wears a light colored rounded top hat with a large dark colored bow on the left side. Her hair is pull back behind her. She wears ornamental earrings that dangle into flowered branches. She wears a laced shawl, a white button up shirt, and a ribbon tied into a bow around her collar.

Frederic Edwin Church

1865

Freeman Studio

Tintype (facsimile)

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York



Frederic Edwin Church

Image Description:

Oval black and white photograph portrait of a white man with slim face and a straight-faced expression. The man has a balding hairline and a tidy straight-hair haircut. He has long mutton-chop sideburns. He is shown from the chest-up, wearing a light suit, white collared shirt, and dark bow-tie. He looks out to the right, just off camera.

Tropical Waterfall, Jamaica

Date unknown

Unidentified photographer

Photographic print (facsimile)

Courtesy of Olana State Historic Site, New York



Tropical Waterfall, Jamaica

Image Description:

Sepia toned photograph of a waterfall. Giant bare rocks pile in the foreground and give way to a cliff with a skinny stream of water pouring over its side. On either side of the photograph, lush foliage fills the composition. On top of the cliff, distanced by perspective, palm trees grow behind the waterfall.

Botanical Sketches of Ferns and Bamboo

1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-697



Botanical Sketches of Ferns and Bamboo

Image Description:

Pencil sketches of ferns with long, triangular leaves on the left and a bamboo grove on the right. There are two paragraphs of notes written on an angle from the center bottom angled up to the mid right.

Blossoms of the Bromelia Pinguin

August 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-434-b



Blossoms of the Bromelia Pinguin

Image Description:

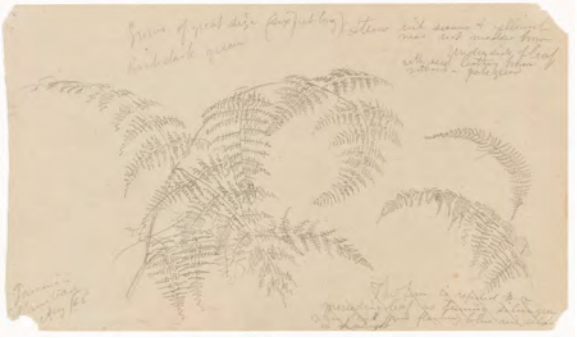
Simple pencil sketch of flower blossoms. The flowers have 6 rounded leaves and centered pollen sticks. The blooms open downwards, emphasizes their domed shape. Handwritten notes are in the top right corner.

Botanical Sketch of Ferns

August 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-431-b



Botanical Sketch of Ferns

Image Description:

Detailed pencil sketch of a fern leaves, the studies overlapping one another to create a cluster. The leaves have a broad, elongated triangle shape. A main stem connects smaller stems that veer off perpendicularly. Each small stem has little individual leaves. The shape of the small stem mimics the broad triangle shape of the main leaf. Two leaves are separated on the right side of the page, showing a profile view. Notes handwritten in cursive are on the top and bottom right of the page.

Ant's Nest on Tree Trunk

1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-607-b



Ant's Nest on Tree Trunk

Image Description:

Very light botanical sketch of a plant growing from a tree trunk. The tree trunk is positioned on the left side of the drawing. There are short leaves sprouting from the right side of the trunk. A rounded nest rests at the lower portion of the tree trunk.

Coconut Palm

June 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-5



Coconut Palm

Image Description:

Sketch drawing of a trunk of a coconut palm tree. The trunk of the tree is off center and made up of thin, detailed lines creating a woven pattern. Various palm tree leaves have flopped over and lay on the side of the palm tree trunk. A few strands of leaves are popping up from the top. There is handwritten notes on the right side of the page with a small detail sketch of a leaf above.

Coconut Palm

June 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-6-a



Coconut Palm

Image Description:

Sketch drawing of a trunk of a coconut palm tree, focused on the midsection of the tree, where the trunk starts to grow leaves. The trunk is smooth with ridges down the sides. Leaf fronds stick up in a crown-like formation. In the bottom right is a detail sketch of the tree's roots. In the bottom left written in cursive is "Coconut palm Jamaica June 65"

Botanical Sketches

July 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-691



Botanical Sketches

Image Description:

Three light sketches with notes. On the left, a long skinny tree with with leaves handing down from a side branch. In the middle, the top of a coconut palm with all the fronds splayed. On the right, tall trees sticking out from a sloping hill landscape. Detailed notes are written in the bottom right.

Botanical Sketches

July 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-413



Botanical Sketches

Image Description:

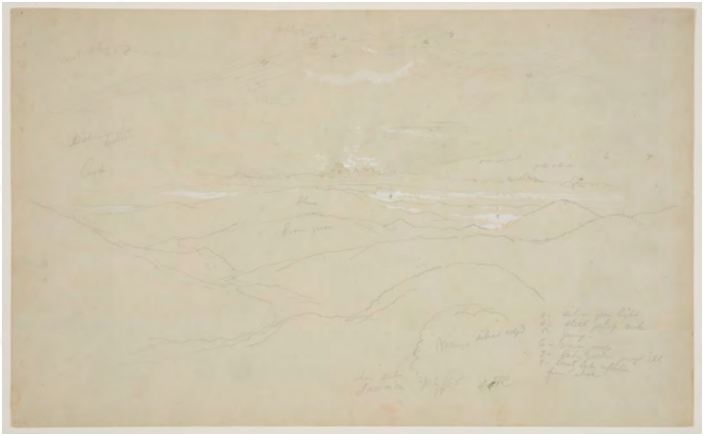
Botanical study sketches showing views of four different plants in Jamaica. At left, a palm-like plant with a long stem. At center, a thin tree with fanned leaves. At right, the moss-covered trunk of a tree. Completely to the edge of the page at right is a detail of a small plant with a narrow stem and long leaves. Each sketch has a label and notes written near it.

Sunset

July 1865

Graphite and gouache on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-690



Sunset

Image Description:

Lightly outlined sunset over mountains. Lines map the general composition with notes about colors written in blank spaces. In the foreground, a mango tree gives way to successive lush mountain ridges that extend into the horizon. A colorful sky is labeled with numbers for colors. White pencil provides some dimension to the sketch, highlighting clouds. In the bottom right corner, there is a handwritten numbered list that provides a key for the numbers scattered throughout the page. Notes are illegible.

Wooded Vale

July 1865

Graphite and gouache on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-12-a



Wooded Vale

Image Description:

Lightly sketched heavily wooded sloping mountainside, with a lone tree visible at far right. Individual tree details are scattered across the hillside. In the foreground, a banana plant is visible at lower left, as well as a bamboo grove at lower right. In the middle distance, a hill sloping down to the right is visible, where a yam farm can be seen at center left. A man-made structure is positioned above the farm atop the hill, highlighted in white gouache. A view of mountains extends to the horizon beyond the hill.

Recollection of Roots, Galloway Hill

August 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-434-a



Recollection of Roots, Galloway Hill

Image Description:

Pencil sketch of long, interwoven, tendril-like exposed tree roots. A handwritten description is written in the bottom right corner.

Century Plant

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-675-b

Church frequently encountered this species of agave in Jamaica. It was given the name “century plant” because it blooms so infrequently that some mistakenly thought it happened every hundred years. The rare event actually takes place every ten to thirty years, and the blooming stalk can

Century Plant

grow up to thirty feet tall. Church was lucky enough to observe one of these blooms, as his graphite and gouache sketch elsewhere in this gallery shows.



Century Plant

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a bush-like plant growing close to the ground. Long, green, triangular pointed leaves radiate outwards in all directions from a central point. It has varying shades of green with some areas highlighted and some shadowed from a light source coming from the left. Tiny leaves from other small plants appear in the near soil with one tiny stem on the right protruding upwards. The background is in a brown, earthy tone with specks of dark green leaves that appear small in the background.

Philodendron Vines

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-679-b



Philodendron Vines

Image Description:

Sketched painting of dense vine-like greenery crawling up an unfinished surface. Various shades of green dominate where the leaves and other small foliage overlap with one another. Hints of white, red dot the canvas indicating small flowers in bloom. Large brushstrokes are visible for its brown background while the leaves display more fine strokes.

Bromelia pinguin in Bloom

August 1865

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-676-c



Bromelia pinguin in Bloom

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a flowering plant with a trunk-like stem emerging from the bush-like base. Its base long green spiky leaves fan out in all directions to created a generally rounded look. The stem is topped by a cluster of bell-shaped white flowers in a softened diamond shape. The flowers open downwards, with small branch-like stems occasionally visible emerging from the base stalk. The background is simple, plain brown with visible brushstrokes. The subtle text "Pinguin Jamaica Aug 65" is written in the lower right.

Trumpet Trees

May 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-676-a



Trumpet Trees

Image Description:

Painted detail sketch of plants with thin stems and leaves concentrated like an umbrella at the top of the trunk. The leaves are long and rounded with lots of white highlight, giving the appearance of being very smooth and shiny. Smaller, shorter shrubs, grasses, and weeds grow below, low to the ground with fine details. The rocks on the soil are in a pinkish orange color, slowly blending into the brown soil as it moves downwards. The background is not detailed, abstract visible brownish green brushstrokes. The text "Jamaica 65" is written in the lower right.

Cardamom

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-676-b



Cardamom

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a bright white flower set against a green leafy background. The flower is a partly blossoming cardamom with lots of closed buds, shaped like a bunch of grapes, an inverted tear-drop. The outer leaves of the buds are primarily white with hits of pink on its tips. The opening flowers are red and bright yellow inside. The flower plant leaves and general background share a similar green color but are distinguished by texture and detail. “Jamaica, June” is written on the lower left and below it, written on top of a leaf, is “cardamom”

Botanical Sketches

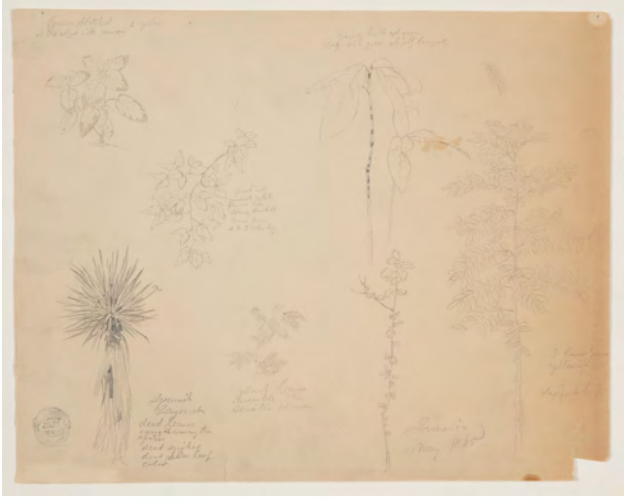
May 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-340

Much of the indigenous Jamaican landscape was ravaged under British rule by the development of sugarcane plantations, yet Church still found beauty in the wild sugarcane grasses that he encountered. He also made meticulous graphite sketches and detailed notes of many

other species he came across. These materials helped him to paint the flora accurately upon his return to his studio in New York.



Botanical Sketches

Image Description:

Lightly sketched botanical drawings of seven different plants and trees. Each composition is scattered around the page. One sketch of a fanned in the bottom left corner is dark and detailed. The other sketches are light, some barely visible. Each sketch has a short handwritten in cursive description, labeling the plant.

Strangler Fig and Its Host

June 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-6-b



Strangler Fig and Its Host

Image Description:

Sketched botanical study of tree ensnared by parasitic vines. The thin trunk fills the length of the page vertically, in the center. The branches stretch out beyond the page. Two base vines have long, thick, snakelike forms that wrap up from the ground in alternating directions and overlapping around height the trunk and branches. The branches at the top are bare except three sprigs of leaves on a left branch. Written in cursive on the bottom is "Parasite, Jamaica June 1865"

Wild Sugar Cane

August 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-677



Wild Sugar Cane

Image Description:

Painted sketch of a lush valley that transitions to a rounded mountain in the distance. Three thin stalks of sugar cane grow tall, slightly swayed. The sugarcane line the grey dirt path in the bottom foreground amongst other, shorter fauna. As the path rounds the mountainside into the middleground, a valley of trees on either side tower alongside into the distance. Beyond the valley sits a gargantuan, blunt mountain peak, brown and dotted with trees as it perches under a muted cloud-filled blue-gray sky.

Wild Plantain, 20 Feet High

June 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-339-a



Wild Plantain, 20 Feet High

Image Description:

Detailed painted sketch of several tall plants with think stalks and wide, elongated, green leaves that gently bend downward. It is set against a dim brown undetailed background. In the middle of the image, slightly towards the right, is an orange flowering plant. It is brighter than the surrounding pigments. There are faintly painted text towards the bottom; one reads "Jamaica June 65" with the text in black or dark grey and the other to the right reads "Plaintain 20 Feet High" in green.

Tree with Vines

May 1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-342-a

Church studiously observed the close relationships between flora, in particular the ways in which one species depends on another. He was especially captivated by “strangler figs,” types of ficus that compete for sunlight in dark tropical environments by engulfing trees. Years later, he would recall the parasitic plants as “unusually ferocious monsters.”

Tree with Vines

Their “juicy fat leaves,” he wrote, “seemed to clap their hands in fiendish joy.”



Tree with Vines

Image Description:

Painted sketch of the trunk of a lone and the leaves and vines that adorn it. The winding brown and leafy green vines snake around the trunk, sprouting off at times into twiggy sprigs of smaller leaves and veiny branches. The trunk appears thick sturdy extending with very thick roots from the rocky, grass-dappled earth at the bottom of the drawing. A billowing green bush extending from the right gives way to sloping grasslands. A high elevation mountain ridge in a muted dark blue marbled with warm brown is partly hidden underneath grey clouds.

Trees and Undergrowth

1865

Oil and graphite on paperboard

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-393-b



Trees and Undergrowth

Image Description:

Painted sketch of tall, skinny trees in a thick atmospheric forest scene. Two foregrounded trunks are detailed, while the other parts of the scene are loosely sketched. The tree on the right splits into two skinny trunks about halfway up the main stalk. Two sprawling fern leaves grow out of the area where the trunk splits. The tree on the right has a vine that twists upwards around it, creating a braided appearance. An orchid plant with long leaves sits towards the top of the trunk. The background is muted and blended, almost foggy.

Parasite Vine and Palm Plant

June 1865

Oil and gouache on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-11-a



Parasite Vine and Palm Plant

Image Description:

Detailed graphic sketch drawing of tree ensnared in a parasitic vine. The view of the tree is from below, the trunk tilted from the lower left to toward the upper right. Branches fill the top width of the page. The vines have a treeroot-like form that sit vertically among the branches with thin snakelike tendrils. These tendrils extend from the main structure that wrap tightly around the trunk and branches. To the lower right is a smaller palm plant with thin long stalks and wide round palm leaves. On the left is written "Jamaica June 1865"

Cotton Tree

May 1865

Graphite and gouache on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-339-c



Cotton Tree

Image Description:

Line drawing detail sketch of the bottom of a cotton tree with raised, exposed roots. The lower portion of the trunk slants slightly to the left in the upper right corner. At the bottom of the trunk the roots jut out from the sides and snakes diagonally towards the lower left. The root most in the foreground fans out into thin tendrils. These roots have ragged surfaces that contrasts with the straight smooth trunk at the top. Text in the lower right label the tree type and date the sketch.

Flora of Jamaica

1837

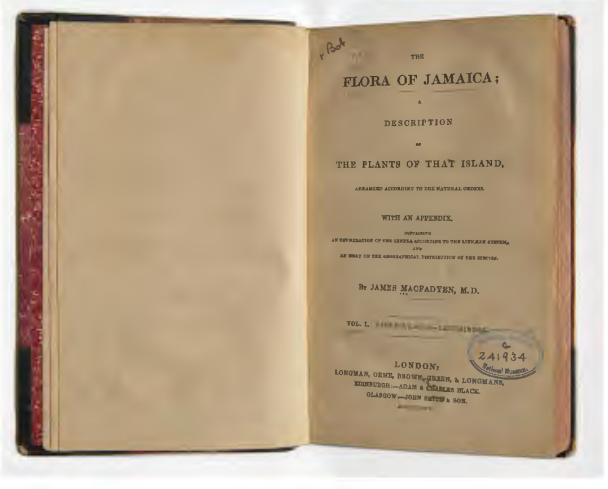
Written by James Macfadyen (Scottish, 1798-1850)

London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown & Green

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

James Macfadyen, a Scottish medical doctor, traveled to Jamaica in 1825 with the aim of studying and cataloging Jamaican botany. The first edition of his comprehensive study more than doubled the number of indigenous

plant species previously identified. Although he was not the first British or Jamaican person to study the island's plant life, his publication was a formative text in the field.


THE

FLORA OF JAMAICA;

A

DESCRIPTION

OF

THE PLANTS OF THAT ISLAND,

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE NATURAL ORDERS.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

AN ENUMERATION OF THE GENERA ACCORDING TO THE LINNEAN SYSTEM;

AND

AN ESSAY ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE SPECIES.

By JAMES MACFADYEN, M.D.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMANS,

EDINBURGH:—ADAM & CHARLES BLACK.

GLASGOW:—JOHN SMITH & SON.

241934
Natural History

Flora of Jamaica

Image Description:

Open book with faded and stained sepia toned paper. The left side page is blank, with a few brown splotches of stain. The right side says "The Flora of Jamaica: Description of the Plants of that Island, arranged according to the natural orders. With an appendix, containing an enumeration of the genera according to the linnaean system, an essay on the geographical distribution of the species. By James Macfadyen, M.D." In the bottom right, there is an oval blue stamp that says "Smithsonian Institution National Museum"

Small Fan Palm

June 14, 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-6-c



Small Fan Palm

Image Description:

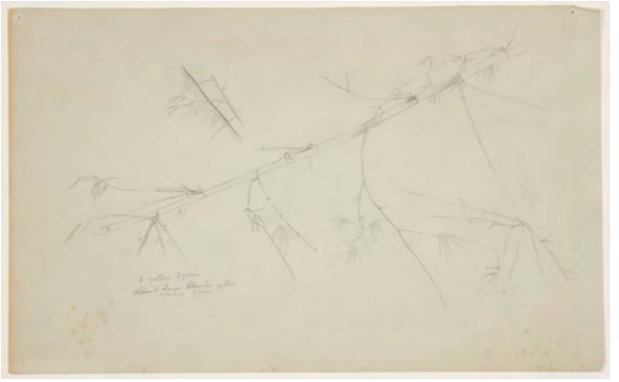
Line sketch drawing of a fan palm tree with thin trunk that transitions from a smooth surface below into layers of cross-crossed or woven pointy triangles, with a spikey crest on top. Two long thin stalks bend down from the top to the right in an arch with large palm leaves at the ends. Each palm leaf has long thin fronds that fan outwards. Notes about the color of that tree are written on the right that read "dead leaves finnish yellow." On the bottom right are written notes that say "Small Fan Palm. Hamaica June 14 1-/65."

Bamboo

1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church,
1917-4-955-b



Bamboo

Image Description:

Lightly sketched drawing of a thin, bamboo stalk slanted horizontally, downwards toward the lower left. The length of the stalk is broken into small sections with vertical, segmentation lines like long tubular beads strung together. Thin, wispy, branches jut out from the intersection points with long, pointy leaves at the end, almost like fingers. To the center right above the stalk is a small study of the branch. To the bottom right are written notes about the colors, "larger branches yellow," and "younger green"

Century Plant in Bloom

June 14, 1865

Graphite and gouache on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-20



Century Plant in Bloom

Image Description:

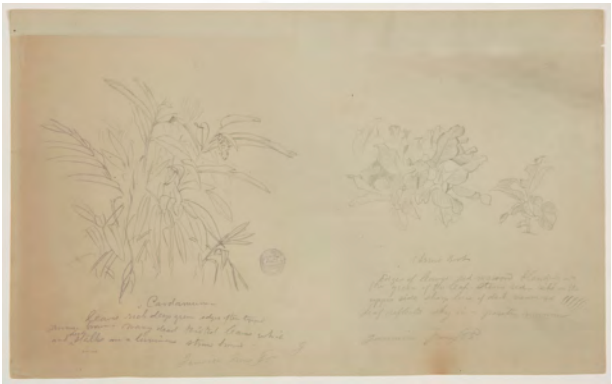
Line drawing of a century plant in dramatic bloom. The plant's base is made from long fonds clustered together like a bush centered at the bottom. A treelike stalk shoots up for the base to the top of the page. This stalk is in bloom with branches topped with fluffy clusters of blossoms. Covering the stalk's trunk are spaced out rows of pointed scale leaves. To the right is a close up measurement study of the scale leaves. On the bottom right are lightly handwritten notes in cursive.

Cardamom and Arrowroot

June 1865

Graphite on wove paper

Gift of Louis P. Church, 1917-4-8



Cardamom and Arrowroot

Image Description:

Two line-drawing botanical studies of a cardamon plant on the left, and an arrowroot plant on the right. The cardamon plant has a group of thin, long leaves in alternating directions with a flower cluster dangling on the top right. The flower is a long pinecone shape covered with tiny round petals. The arrowroot plant has larger, wide leaves with detailed fanned veins, and wavy edges. These leaves are bunched together with a larger grouping on the left and a smaller version on the right. Notes about the colors are handwritten in cursive below.

Flora of Jamaica

1837

Written by James Macfadyen (Scottish, 1798-1850)

London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown & Green

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

James Macfadyen, a Scottish medical doctor, traveled to Jamaica in 1825 with the aim of studying and cataloging Jamaican botany. The first edition of his comprehensive study more than doubled the number of indigenous

Referenda for Jamaica (left)

1844

Written by Phillip Henry Gosse (British, 1810-1888)

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives



Referenda for Jamaica (left)

Image Description:

Open book with faded and stained sepia toned paper. The left side page is blank, with a few brown splotches of stain. The right side is filled with pencil sketches of various flowers and flora. Some sketches have color pencil to showcase the bright tropical colors or varying shades throughout the plant. Others are simple line sketches.

A Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica (right)

1851

Written by Phillip Henry Gosse (British, 1810-1888) and Richard Hill (Jamaican, 1795-1872)

London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives



A Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica (right)

Image Description:

Open book with faded and stained sepia toned paper. The left side page is a vertically oriented etching print of a house. A two story long barn-like house sits in the center of the etch. A winding path leads from the foreground through a manicured lawn to the building. Rolling hills covered by lush vegetation surround the scene. The right side is a title page that reads "A naturalists sojourn in Jamaica. By Phillip Henry Gosse, A.L.S. &c. Assisted by Richard Hill, Esq. Cos. M.Z.S. Lond."

Richard Hill

Richard Hill, a biracial Jamaican lawyer and magistrate, spent most of his career working to advance the abolition of slavery and the civil rights of Black Jamaicans. He was also Jamaica's leading naturalist. Together with British naturalist Philip Henry Gosse and Samuel Campbell, Gosse's young Jamaican assistant, they collected species for eighteen months. Gosse's original sketchbook is on the left, and on the right is Gosse and Hill's final publication, a unique travelogue.

Richard Hill



The Honorable Richard Hill

Date unknown

Unidentified photographer

Photograph

Courtesy of the National Library of Jamaica

Richard Hill

Image Description:

Sepia toned photograph speckled with age of an older man in an oval-shaped paper frame. The man has wavy white hair that curls around his ears. He sits at an angle, with his arm on a table so that his hand lightly supports his chin. He has a straight-faced expression. He wears a suit that has been blocked from view by damage to the photograph. A white splotch covers the majority of the bottom half of the image. Above the image's oval frame, is "Hon. Richard hill" handwritten.

Exhibition Credits

Frederic Church in Jamaica is made possible by the generous support of the Henry Luce Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Robert Lehman Foundation, The Lunder Foundation, The Felicia Fund, and the HRBT Foundation.

This exhibition is organized by Caitlin Condell, Curator and Head of Drawings, Prints & Graphic Design, with Mackenzie Jones, Collections Assistant.