

Karnak on the Nile, Egypt

Edward Lear

Sold



Description

Edward Lear (1812-1888)
Karnak on the Nile, Egypt

Inscribed lower right: El Karnak/16 Feb.y 1854 (3) and extensively inscribed with notes
Pen and brown ink and watercolour over pencil heightened with touches of white
13.3 by 43.3 cm., 5 ¼ by 17 in.

This drawing dates from Lear's second trip to Egypt in the winter of 1853-54. He arrived in Cairo in December and met his fellow artist Thomas Seddon (1821-1856) who was already there. He had planned to travel on the Nile with William Holman Hunt who was expected shortly but Lear was offered a berth on a boat just after Christmas and left immediately without either artist. He spent ten weeks on the river visiting Assiout, Thebes, Karnak and Philae, sketching furiously, before returning to England in April. A small watercolour of Karnak dated 17th February 1854 was sold on Sotheby's on 19th October 1994, lot 212.

This view of Karnak shows the Precinct of Montu, one of the four main temples that make up the Karnak complex. In the distance is the famous Gateway of Ptolemy III, also known as Bab el'Adb. This monumental entranceway still dominates the Karnak site today.