

In Full Bloom: Botanical Art and Flower Painting by Women in 1880s New Zealand

by

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Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
I Introduction	1
II Botanical Culture in New Zealand	16
III Exhibitions	35
IV Botanical/Floral Publications	54
V Conclusion	71
List of plates	76
Plates	81
Appendix 1 – Exhibitions: Harris, Hetley, Rowan	118
Appendix 2 – Collections of Works	127
Bibliography	130

Abstract

This thesis examines the field of botanical art and flower painting with regard to five women artists who worked in New Zealand during the 1880s: Georgina Hetley (1832-1898), Emily Harris (1836/37?-1925), Sarah Featon (1848?-1927), Ellis Rowan (1848-1922) and Marianne North (1830-1890). The lives, works and career opportunities of these women are situated within a framework of exhibitions and botanical/floral publications, in which inter-related issues such as gender, categorisation and professional status are considered. The chapter on exhibitions considers the classification and reception of items exhibited in Art Society shows and international exhibitions, where exhibits ranged from watercolour and oil paintings on paper to 'decorative' items, including hand-painted fans and decorated mantle drapes.

The dichotomy of art and science is explored, as are the terms 'botanical illustration' and 'flower painting' which have been used conventionally to describe works as belonging either to the sphere of 'art' or 'science'. This thesis uses the term 'botanical/flower painting' to describe works which occupy the middle ground between art and science; the publications produced by Hetley, Featon and Harris clearly reflect this blurring of boundaries. Other dichotomies are also considered, including male/female, art/craft, professional/amateur and private/public, but it is often the space located between the binaries, the 'middle ground', which best illuminates the lives, works and working practices of the women.

This study focuses on the ways in which the five women participated in and shaped Victorian culture in New Zealand during the 1880s. The women are revealed as active participants within New Zealand's botanical culture as they undertook botanical excursions, corresponded with eminent botanists and recorded the native flora. Ultimately, as this thesis suggests, these women were remarkable in 'working the system' to make a living from exhibiting and selling their works.

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I Introduction

This thesis examines the botanical depictions made by five women who worked in New Zealand during the 1880s, situating them within the colonial contexts of exhibitions and botanical/floral publications. By focusing on these two areas of interest within a particular timeframe, the 1880s, this thesis aims to complicate the survey approach and go beyond the contributions that revisionist texts now acknowledge. The lives, works and career opportunities of Georgina Hetley (1832-1898), Emily Harris (1836/37?-1925), Sarah Featon (1848?-1927), Ellis Rowan (1848-1922) and Marianne North (1830-1890) will be examined and placed within a framework that considers the inter-related issues of gender, categorisation and classification, and professional status.

During the late nineteenth century, New Zealand witnessed a myriad of botanical art practices. These have been largely ignored by standard art-historical scholarship, however, and it is only in the last two decades that interest in botanical art has grown. Moreover, there has been a particular resurgence of interest in the botanical works produced by women. The ‘overriding enthusiasm’ for landscape painting almost completely obscured botanical art in New Zealand, which is why scholarship initially focused on researching women who had been overlooked, and assessing their contributions to New Zealand’s artistic and cultural history.¹

F. Bruce Sampson’s pioneering *Early New Zealand botanical art* (1985) was the first book to present a survey of New Zealand botanical artists, complete with forty-eight colour plates. Sampson, an academic botanist, presents a structured, chronological history of botanical illustration, focusing on some of the ‘big names’ in botanical art history, including Sydney Parkinson and John Buchanan, and devoting several chapters to colonial women artists. In addition to providing

¹Ann Elias, ‘New Zealand still life and flower painting 1880-1940’, PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 1991, p. xi.

biographical information about Martha King, Sarah Featon, Georgina Hetley, Emily Harris and Fanny Osborne, Sampson briefly analyses their botanical illustrations; yet he separates these from the category of scientific botanical illustrations and states that they offer more as works of ‘art’:

Although most of the best-known botanical artists of the time were men, flower painting, like piano playing, was considered a very desirable accomplishment for a fashionable young lady. Many popular flower books of the nineteenth century were of a sentimental rather than a scientific nature. Pictures were not always very accurate, and sometimes the beauties of a particular plant were praised in ‘delightfully awful’ verse.²

Sampson’s statement draws attention to the issues surrounding the classification of botanical artworks. He clearly criticizes the ‘less accurate’ works produced by women during the nineteenth century and does not consider them to meet the requirements of scientific botanical illustration. ‘Flower painting’ is distinguished from ‘scientific botanical illustration’ by reference to inaccuracies in the former, but the separation is also determined by the gender of the artist. The separation between the two is further reinforced by the observation that flower painting is ‘sentimental’, while botanical painting is classified as scientific and therefore ‘objective’. As Ann Elias has also pointed out in her thesis, Sampson’s distinction between ‘flower painting’ and ‘botanical painting’ is somewhat contradictory, as the title of his book is *Early New Zealand botanical art* and his criticisms focus on issues of representation, which fall within an artistic framework.³ Issues such as these are central to this thesis, and will be examined in greater detail later in this chapter.

Several periodical articles have also addressed the contributions of women artists in New Zealand who painted botanical subjects. Janet Paul’s article ‘Botanical illustrations’, published in *New Zealand’s Nature Heritage* (1975), offers a chronology that begins in 1769 with Joseph Banks and ends with Nancy Adams in the 1960s. The works of colonial women, however, are relegated to a few paragraphs. Another article by Paul, ‘Women artists in New Zealand’, published in *Women in New Zealand society* (1980), presents a brief assessment of three female colonial artists, and includes a paragraph on Emily Harris, comprised

²F. Bruce Sampson, *Early New Zealand botanical art*, Auckland: Reed Methuen, 1985, p. 10.

³In a public talk given at the Adam Art Gallery on Friday 14 September 2001, Dr Sampson stated that the original title of the publication was to be ‘Early New Zealand botanical illustration’, but his publisher suggested the title be changed to ‘Early New Zealand botanical art’.

largely of quotes from Harris's diary, a copy of which resides in the Alexander Turnbull Library.⁴

Harris's diary also forms the basis of Jeanine Graham's article 'Emily Harris: the artist as social commentator', published in *Historical News* (1979). The diary offers many glimpses into colonial life and Graham concentrates on bringing to light the financial hardships that Emily Harris experienced and her perceptions of memorable nineteenth-century events, such as the Tarawera eruption.⁵ Moira Long's article 'Martha King botanical artist' in *The summer book 2: a miscellany* (1983) is still the richest source of information on New Zealand's first resident botanical artist, Martha King. Long pieced together biographical information about King and her set of forty watercolours now housed at the Alexander Turnbull Library, identifying her as a talented botanical artist whose watercolours were painted with a '... pleasingly spare and economical approach [combining] a graceful and balanced composition with the direct and accurate observation of the flora of a new land.'⁶

Another useful survey is Anne Kirker's *New Zealand women artists: a survey of 150 years* (third edition, 1993). Kirker considers the lives and works of colonial artists Martha King and Emily Harris in the chapter 'The pioneers', while Dorothy Kate Richmond's flower studies and Margaret Stoddart's paintings are discussed in the chapter 'Towards a professional status'. More often than not, women botanical/floral artists in New Zealand are presented in this way, situated within a chronological history. This survey approach has been employed most recently by Bee Dawson in *Lady painters: the flower painters of Early New Zealand* (1999), a book which took the subject of New Zealand women botanical/flower painters to a wider public. While the book does contain accurate biographical information, it is a 'coffee table' publication rather than an academic text; several of the plates are cropped for the design elements of the publication and although Dawson offers a bibliographical list at the end of each chapter, she does not provide sources for any of her quotes.

⁴The original diaries are held in Puke Ariki, which encompasses the former Taranaki Museum.

⁵Jeanine Graham, 'Emily Harris: the artist as social commentator', *Historical News*, no. 39, October, 1979, p. 6.

⁶Moira Long, 'Martha King botanical artist', Bridget Williams, Roy Parsons and Lindsay Missens (eds), *The summer book 2: a New Zealand miscellany*, Wellington: Port Nicholson Press, 1983, pp. 64-65.

A more nuanced examination is Julie King's 'Flower hunters in the colonial landscape: contexts and connections', published in the *Bulletin of New Zealand Art History* (1996). King considers the excursions and botanical expeditions undertaken by Marianne North, Ellis Rowan and Margaret Stoddart and the connections between these women in the nineteenth-century botanical world. King argues that by working within the 'feminine' genres of travel writing and botanical/flower painting, these Victorian women were afforded a certain freedom and were provided with the opportunity to travel:

The plant collecting expedition by Margaret Stoddart reveals how issues of gender intersect with colonialism in the flowering landscape and reinforces the point of considering how women artists' experience of travel and relation to place was mediated frequently through botanical painting.⁷

It is interesting to note that King uses the terms 'flower painter' and 'botanical painter' interchangeably. For the most part, King refers to the women as 'flower painters', although she does not define the term.

Another recent publication that examines an even more hidden facet of botanical art is Ann Calhoun's *The art and crafts movement in New Zealand 1870-1940: women make their mark* (2000). Calhoun presents a remarkable chapter on 'Nature-based Designs' and undertakes an excellent analysis of the relationship between women and botanical illustration in New Zealand. She also devotes a chapter to the botanical 'decorative manufactures' that were exhibited at New Zealand art and industrial displays; items that previous scholarship had almost completely overlooked. Calhoun distinguishes between the 'flower painter' and 'botanical painter', noting that the distinction between the two had become formal by the end of the nineteenth century. She prefers to use the term 'botanical/flower painting', as coined by Ann Elias, stating that it better describes the 'indeterminate world' in which the women operated.⁸

Two PhD theses have also explored the subject of New Zealand botanical and floral art. In 'The art of the untrained artist' (Victoria University of Wellington, 1992), Jane Clendon briefly examines several key women artists who depicted botanical subjects: Martha King, Emily Harris, Georgina Hetley, Sarah Featon

⁷Julie King, 'Flower hunters in the colonial landscape: contexts and connections', *Bulletin of New Zealand Art History*, no. 17, 1996, p. 16.

⁸Ann Calhoun, *The arts and crafts movement in New Zealand 1870-1940: women make their mark*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000, p. 29.

and Ellis Rowan, citing F. Bruce Sampson's book as her main source of information. By incorporating the women into her thesis, Clendon accords them the status of 'untrained artists', arguing that:

Almost all women artists in New Zealand in the nineteenth century were nonprofessional and untrained ... Nineteenth century women artists were not as well versed in the conventions of High Art as their male counterparts, including the untrained male artists, and they did not even have the men's educational opportunities.⁹

Clendon presents a thorough analysis of social and working conditions for women in nineteenth-century New Zealand but she states, incorrectly, that Martha King was the only colonial woman to sell her work:

The one New Zealand colonial woman artist who is documented as having sold some of her art, Martha King, was a botanical painter, as were earlier European women artists associated with New Zealand.¹⁰

She asserts this in the face of ample evidence that Emily Harris, Georgina Hetley and Ellis Rowan sold their works during the late nineteenth century. Clendon also displays an awareness of Ann Elias' thesis in her text, stating that: 'Most paintings done in New Zealand between 1920 and 1940, for instance, were still life and flower paintings, most of which were by women (Elias 76).'¹¹ While Clendon argues that botanical illustration is an 'off shoot of flower still life painting' and that the 'contribution [the women made] to New Zealand botanical art is recognised by their inclusion in Sampson's book', she proceeds to use the terms 'botanical art' and 'flower painter' interchangeably, without addressing or questioning the problematic terms.¹²

Ann Elias's 1991 PhD thesis 'New Zealand still-life and flower painting 1880-1940', is the most comprehensive survey of New Zealand botanical and floral art and still life produced by women. Elias undertook her research in order to compile the first history of New Zealand still life and flower painting and thereby fill a significant gap in New Zealand's art history. Divided into six main chapters, the thesis presents a theoretical and historical framework in which to consider the topic and

⁹Jane Clendon, 'The art of the untrained artist in colonial New Zealand: a survey of the untrained artist in New Zealand between 1840 and 1880 and an assessment of its contribution to New Zealand cultural history', PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1992, p. 319.

¹⁰*ibid.*, p. 251.

¹¹*ibid.*

¹²*ibid.*, pp. 319-320.

includes chapters on floriculture, art societies in Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin, the diary of Emily Harris and an analysis of individual works of art. The chapter on 'floriculture' is particularly fascinating, as it describes a range of nineteenth-century cultural activities surrounding flowers, which included eating them, exhibiting them and naming daughters after them. Sourced entirely from newspaper references, this chapter illuminates a vibrant and previously overlooked area of botanical culture in colonial New Zealand. Elias also explores the issue of terminology and carefully considers the intersection of botany and art. Demonstrating that different cultural values are assigned to the categories of 'art' and 'science', Elias coins her own term:

'Botanical/flower painting' is a term used in this thesis to refer to work that has affinities with academic flower paintings as well as botanical flower paintings.¹³

Following on from the work of Elias, the present thesis is concerned with examining the role of women and art in nineteenth-century society, with gender issues forming an integral part of my inquiry. It is important, therefore, to establish my position with regards to feminist theory, and reference the modes of inquiry that I will be employing.

Feminist art historians in the 1970s were primarily concerned with pointing out the discrimination against women in art history and redressing their omission, by reinserting them into the male-dominated canon of art. The realisation that this process inserted women back into a history that had already excluded them, however, prompted differing feminist approaches during the 1980s. As Griselda Pollock has identified, the re-insertion of women into art history resulted in a limited and negative outcome, as it established male standards as the norm.¹⁴ Issues such as these were initially raised by Linda Nochlin in her ground-breaking article 'Why have there been no great women artists?' (1971), where she stated that once it had been established that there had been women artists, there was no point in looking for 'great' female artists, as the criteria for greatness had already been laid down by men. Instead, Nochlin called for a feminist critique of the

¹³Ann Elias, 'New Zealand still-life and flower painting 1880-1940', p. 67.

¹⁴Griselda Pollock, 'Feminist interventions in the history of art', *Vision and difference: femininity, feminism and the histories of art*, London; New York: Routledge, 1988, pp. 1-17, reproduced in Eric Fernie (ed.), *Art history and its methods: a critical anthology*, London: Phaidon Press, 1995, p. 300.

modes and structures which have perpetuated gender as a hierarchy and ‘naturalised’ it over time.¹⁵

This alternative approach concentrates on examining the extent to which sexual difference is produced by social forms, in order to reveal the gendered coding and conventions within culture and society, and to scrutinise the patriarchal and ‘unnatural’ structural hierarchies. As Pollock and Rozsika Parker concluded in *Old mistresses: women, art and ideology*:

We can now recognise the reasons for and political importance of the persistent feminine stereotype within the structure of art history’s ideological practices. In this stereotype women are presented negatively, as lacking in creativity, with nothing significant to contribute, and as having no influence on the course of art . . . Women’s practice in art has never been absolutely forbidden, discouraged or refused, but rather contained and limited in its function as the means by which masculinity gains and sustains its supremacy in the important sphere of cultural production.¹⁶

Rather than attempt to ‘rediscover’ a handful of middle-class women artists working in New Zealand during the late nineteenth century, this thesis aims to follow in the footsteps of Parker and Pollock and examine how women such as Georgina Hetley and Emily Harris worked within a particular framework. The focus is not on how these women were marginalised, but rather on the ways in which they participated in and shaped Victorian culture in New Zealand during the 1880s. The available primary material in part influenced this approach, as upon analysis it became apparent that the social history in question was shaped by certain social constructions pertaining to gender and the Victorian ideology of femininity. It also needs to be stressed that, although this thesis refers to Victorian ‘women’, it is a specific reference to white, middle-class British and colonial New Zealand women; the term ‘woman’ is not a homogeneous historical category, as persons of the female sex did not share unified social, economic or cultural backgrounds during the nineteenth century.¹⁷

During the Victorian period, middle-class women were meant to be ‘mothers and domestic angels who did not work and certainly did not earn any money’, in

¹⁵Linda Nochlin, ‘Why have there been no great women artists?’, *ArtNews*, January 1971, p. 24.

¹⁶Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker, *Old mistresses: women, art and ideology*, London: Pandora Press, 1981, pp. 169-170.

¹⁷Clarissa Campbell Orr discusses the varied nature of the category of ‘woman’ in *Women in the Victorian art world*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995, p. 1.

accordance with the requirements of femininity.¹⁸ The pursuit of botany was especially popular among lady ‘amateurs’; painting and drawing specimens and reading botanical publications were viewed as desirable and fashionable accomplishments. Women were expected to develop artistic accomplishments, but not advance them beyond their status as ‘ladies’:

To be able to draw Flowers botanically and fruit horticulturally ... is one of the most useful accomplishments of your ladies of leisure, living in the country.¹⁹

This thesis takes the position that femininity and the concept of an innate feminine sensibility are both cultural constructs, rather than natural categories. During the Victorian period, femininity was presented as a ‘natural’ concept, and women were believed to have an innate connection to nature and flowers, an issue which is explored in greater detail in Chapter II. An analysis of the modes which established these constructs helps to explain why women, and not men, were the main practitioners of floral artworks in Britain, as well as in colonial outposts such as New Zealand, during the 1880s. Sexual difference was reinforced by the Victorian division of the male and female spheres, where women were supposed to keep within the private domestic sphere of home and family, while men were empowered within the ‘public’ spheres of politics and employment.²⁰ The notion of separate male and female spheres was grounded in biological beliefs about the female body and the menstrual cycle, which positioned women as being closer to nature than men, but rendered them with a ‘defective’ or ‘sick’ nature.²¹ During her examination of nineteenth-century gender constructs, Jennifer Shaw draws on the influential French historian Jules Michelet and quotes a passage from his book on medicine and morality, *L’Amour* (1858), in which he describes the ‘condition’ of women:

She is generally ill at least one week in four. The week that precedes that of the crisis is already troubled. And in the eight or ten days that follow this painful week, there continues a languor, a weakness, that one does not know how to define ... It’s the scarring of an interior wound, that, fundamentally

¹⁸Griselda Pollock, ‘Feminist interventions in the history of art’, p. 307.

¹⁹John Loudon, *Gardeners’ magazine* (1831), referenced in Richard Mabey, *The flowering of Kew: 200 years of flower paintings from the Royal Botanic Gardens*, London: Century, 1988, p. 40.

²⁰Clarissa Campbell Orr (ed.), *Women in the Victorian art world*, p. 3.

²¹Elias also discusses this issue in her thesis, stating that the biological function of childbirth was believed to position women closer to nature than men, which is why women were considered to have a closer proximity to flowers, p. 57.

causes this drama. Such that in reality, 15 or 20 days in 28 (one could say almost always) woman is not only a sick person but a wounded person. She incessantly suffers the eternal wound of love.²²

Thus, it was rationalised that women needed the protection of their husbands and that woman's sickly nature was not suited to the workforce. Instead, women were exhorted to devote their time to charitable causes, educate their children at home and pursue activities which contributed to the ideology of femininity; painting flowers and plants was an ideal activity, as it could be carried out within the private confines of the home. These biological beliefs also reinforced the notion that women could not possibly be creative; indeed, it was argued that mental activity reduced women's femininity. John Ruskin, the influential British cultural theorist and artist, also based his writings on beliefs about gender and biological association. Ann Elias quotes a passage from Ruskin's book *Sesame and lilies* (1865), where he states:

The man's power is active, progressive and defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer. His intellect is for invention and speculation. But the woman's intellect is not for invention or creation but sweet ordering, arrangement and decision.²³

In another passage from the same essay, Ruskin also states:

And wherever a true wife comes, this home is always round her. The stars only may be over her head; the glowworm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot: but home is yet wherever she is; and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, better than ceiled with cedar, or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light far, for those who else were homeless. This, then I believe to be, – will you not admit it to be ? – the woman's true place and power.²⁴

Such were the limits imposed upon middle-class women by the dominant ideology of 'femininity'. Nevertheless, as my investigation of the Victorian period has revealed, the demarcations between male and female, and the private and public spheres, were not always clear cut. Even though there were prescriptive notions

²²Jules Michelet, *L'Amour* (1858), quoted in Jennifer Shaw, 'The figure of Venus: rhetoric of the ideal and the Salon of 1863', Caroline Arscott and Katie Scott (eds), *Manifestations of Venus: art and sexuality*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, p. 97.

²³John Ruskin, 'Of Queen's gardens', *Sesame and lilies* (1865), quoted in Ann Elias, 'New Zealand still life and flower painting 1880-1940', pp. 132-133.

²⁴John Ruskin, 'Of Queen's gardens', *Sesame and lilies* (1865), E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds), *The works of John Ruskin*, London: George Allen, 1903-12, pp. 122-123.

concerning femininity, women sometimes operated beyond the boundaries of these prescribed roles and occupied a sort of ‘middle ground’, an issue that will be explored with regards to travel and income in Chapter II. Throughout this thesis, a range of issues related to the ideology of femininity will be considered, including the degree to which gender determined the limits imposed upon art practices, and how prescribed notions of femininity affected women practitioners.

Reception issues also form an important part of this thesis, intertwined with notions about gender and the hierarchies of art. An examination of the field of reception reveals nineteenth-century value judgements about works of art, and can offer observations as to why floral artworks by women have tended to be overlooked in the history of art, as well as why a great deal of it has not survived. Because flower painting was predominantly identified as a hobby and a feminine pursuit, there was a distinct lack of contemporary art critique and theorising. For the purposes of this thesis, material relating to reception has been primarily sourced from newspaper reviews concerning exhibitions and responses to the women’s botanical publications. These reviews represent the public voice of the art critic, which in most cases can be identified as male.

Value judgements about works of art were based on the gender of the practitioner, so that codes of femininity come into play, but the genre of an artwork was also a determining factor with regards to reception. Pamela Gerrish Nunn summed up the position of flower painting by stating that it was ‘a sub-category of the lowest genre in the hierarchy [of art], still life.’²⁵ History, figure and landscape painting occupied the highest branches of art, while floral and botanical works of art were relegated to the lower reaches. Women were excluded from attending art academies, and accordingly were not taught to draw or paint the prestigious history paintings. In colonial New Zealand, the genre of landscape came to be favoured more highly than history paintings and portraiture, an element that Elias attributed to New Zealand’s ‘isolation from the models of history and figure painting’, and the popularity of the landscape genre in nineteenth-century Europe and Britain.²⁶ Indeed, the popularity of the landscape genre among New Zealand artists is evident in local and international exhibition catalogues during the 1880s. Consequently, by painting and drawing flora, the women considered in this thesis

²⁵Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Problem pictures: women and men in Victorian painting*, Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1995, p. 29.

²⁶Ann Elias, ‘New Zealand still-life and flower painting 1880-1940’, p. 10.

were relegated to the bottom of the art hierarchy where they remained almost invisible.

This thesis initially began as an enquiry into the botanical and floral paintings produced by five women working in colonial New Zealand, but upon investigation it became apparent that a range of works rendered in alternative media also needed to be addressed. Research into exhibition catalogues and newspapers revealed botanical and floral works of art made out of such diverse materials as wool, shells, wax and embroidery, items predominantly made by women. In an 1885 diary entry, Emily Harris documented some of the decorative art works she had prepared for the New Zealand Industrial Exhibition in Wellington:

We got all the other things arranged in the drawing room, viz, a three fold screen, white flowers painted on black satin ... a small table screen, "Spring Flowers" that had been painted some time, a fan, which had been to the Auckland Art Students Ex. last year, a mantlepiece drape ... the drape had wreaths of Kowhai flowers worked in silks from my paintings, it won a third prize in Auckland ... ²⁷

Works such as these were exhibited in art exhibitions, but they were regarded as beautiful and exquisite examples of 'ladies' work' rather than as works of art. Consequently, there was no fixed category in which to place decorative exhibits, which were sometimes classified as watercolour and oil paintings or else placed in the 'Miscellaneous' category in Art Society exhibitions. The range of items exhibited and the manner in which they were categorised will be examined in Chapter III. In her thesis, Elias's chapter on exhibitions centred around a discussion of floral and botanical works exhibited at Society of Arts exhibitions. This thesis also considers the Art Society shows, but takes a wider view through the investigation of international exhibitions; working within this larger framework allows for a closer examination of the women's exhibiting practices.

In addition to examining systems of classification and categorisation, it is also important to draw attention to the terminology relating to 'flower painting' and 'botanical painting' as these terms are often used interchangeably. Traditionally, classifications of 'flower paintings' and 'botanical paintings' are separated on the basis of the former's alignment with art and the latter's with science. Nevertheless,

²⁷'2 August 1885', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), MS-Papers-1284-01, ATL, part I, p. 2.

there is often a meeting of art and science and this crossover, or intersection, can be found in many of the women's works of art researched in this thesis.

The standard model of scientific botanical illustration, employed since the mid-eighteenth century, utilises certain conventions in order to convey an accurate and 'truthful' depiction of plants. Specimens are drawn or painted against a plain white background, 'cleanly' rendered with details, such as sepals, stamens and cross-sections of plants, often included (plates 1-6). Botanical illustrations are perceived to be detached, objective and truthful in their representation, in order to convey useful information about the plant depicted; as Wilfrid Blunt and William Stearn commented, the best botanical artists have been those who have 'found beauty in truth; who have understood plants scientifically, but who have yet seen and described them with the eye and the hand of the artist.'²⁸ The practice of botanical illustration dates back to medieval herbals and manuscripts that described the medicinal properties of plants; accurate depictions of botanical specimens were required in order to enable identification. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, botanical illustration in Europe reached new heights, as the discovery of new lands resulted in the discovery of new plants that needed to be classified, documented and illustrated. Linnaeus's binomial system played a fundamentally important role in the classification of botanical material, as it described each plant by two names and required the structures of the flowers and fruit to be illustrated, again to enable clear identification.

The influential scientific botanical illustrator, Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759-1840), produced several publications of botanical illustrations, including *Les lilacées* and *Les roses*, which were sponsored by the Empress Joséphine Bonaparte. Redouté's best-known publication, *Les roses*, exemplifies the tradition of botanical illustration and contains skilful illustrations which create a visually appealing and scientifically accurate work (plate 3). Sydney Parkinson's drawings made during his voyage on board the *Endeavour* (1768-71) are botanical illustrations, because they clearly and accurately render plant specimens. The illustrations made by New Zealand's first resident botanical artist, Martha King (1802/1803?- 1897), can also be classified as 'botanical' illustrations, likewise on the basis of the information they convey (plate 1). Yet Martha King was also an exception, working within a culture dominated by men. During the mid to late nineteenth century in New

²⁸Wilfrid Blunt and William T. Stearn, *The art of botanical illustration*, London: Collins, 1951, second edition, p. 26.

Zealand, influential botanists such as James Hector, Thomas Kirk and John Buchanan contributed to the tradition of botanical illustration by publishing Government-sponsored botanical volumes. With the exception of Martha King, this botanical tradition appeared to be the preserve of the professional, male botanist. Even though Emily Harris, Georgina Hetley and Sarah Featon were also involved in the production of botanical publications, their volumes occupy a niche between the realms of scientific botanical illustration and art. Throughout the course of this thesis, numerous binary oppositions present themselves, including male/female, art/craft, art/science, professional/amateur and private/public, but as this thesis will argue, it is often the space located between the binaries, the ‘middle ground’, which best illuminates the lives and works of the women.

The five women examined in this thesis are significant and interesting for the differing insights they offer into the realms of exhibitions and publishing. As contemporaries, the women reveal an awareness of each other’s work, thereby demonstrating the interconnected nature of the botanical world and the diverse personalities within it.

A financially and socially secure widow of independent means, Georgina Hetley is best remembered for her sumptuous book *The native flowers of New Zealand*, which was published in London in 1887-88. Born in England in 1832, Hetley’s family moved to Madeira when she was ten, later emigrating to New Zealand, where they settled in Taranaki.²⁹ Hetley married in 1856, but her husband died of a brain haemorrhage nine days before their first wedding anniversary, leaving Hetley with a seven-week-old son.³⁰ By 1879 Hetley had moved to Auckland, where she became actively involved with the Auckland Society of Arts, showing her paintings at their annual exhibitions and establishing a reputation as a painter of botanical subjects. In addition to examining Hetley’s botanical/floral publication and the processes involved in its production, this thesis will consider Hetley’s considerable exhibiting career and her involvement with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in England.

Emily Harris lived and worked in Nelson, and attempted to make a living by teaching art and selling her works. In contrast to Hetley, Harris never married and

²⁹June Starke, ‘Hetley, Georgina Burne 1832-1898’, Claudia Orange (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume two, 1870-1900*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books; Department of Internal Affairs, 1993, p. 211.

³⁰ibid.

lived a life of ‘genteel poverty’, supporting her elderly father and invalid sister. Considering her precarious financial situation, Harris was remarkable in that she exhibited widely and locally published three small botanical volumes in 1890, *New Zealand flowers*, *New Zealand berries* and *New Zealand ferns*. Harris is a particularly useful figure for this study, as she kept diaries over the period 1885-1891 which offer a rich first-hand account of life in colonial New Zealand. The colourful diaries record in detail Harris’s preparations for art exhibitions and they reveal her determination to succeed, in addition to documenting the daily struggles she faced in trying to eke out a living as a female artist working in New Zealand.³¹

This thesis will consider the watercolour illustrations of New Zealand’s native flora produced by Sarah Featon for the *Art album of New Zealand flora*. Published in Wellington in 1889, a year after Hetley’s publication, the *Art album* contains forty chromolithographic plates based on Featon’s paintings and was the first full-colour art book to be published in New Zealand. As Featon does not appear ever to have exhibited her works, she will be examined with regard to publications in chapter IV.

Ellis Rowan and Marianne North also feature in this study, because they were two travelling artists who visited New Zealand during the 1880s. Both women were exceptional for their time, as they undertook excursions around the world to collect and paint the world’s flora. Although she was primarily based in Australia, Ellis Rowan exhibited many of her paintings at the same exhibitions as Harris and Hetley, and her exhibiting career will be examined closely, as will the images she produced for the *Picturesque atlas of Australasia*. Rowan was greatly influenced by the intrepid English traveller and painter Marianne North, and the connection between the two artists will be explored in chapter II. North also presents an interesting figure, as she established a public gallery of paintings at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, which functions as a unique public exhibition forum.

The timeframe considered is the 1880s and the very early 1890s, when the interest in New Zealand botany and the production of botanical/floral artworks was at its peak. This concentrated timeframe allows for an in-depth analysis of exhibition

³¹Harris’s diaries are in two parts, 2 August 1885-20 November 1886, and 20 August 1888-26 February 1891. The original diaries are held in Puke Ariki, which encompasses the former Taranaki Museum, but the typescript held in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington (ATL) was used for this thesis. The typescript was transcribed by Jeanne Goulding in 1979. Harris often wrote entries in the diary without including dates and her punctuation is sometimes erratic; entries reproduced in this thesis follow the format of Goulding’s typescript.

practices, botanical publications and the social contexts of the women. It would be inadequate and restrictive to label some of the works produced by the women in this thesis as either ‘flower paintings’ or ‘botanical paintings’, as many of the works they produced depicted a range of plant material and do not fit easily into the categories; they inhabit a space between the two genres. Thus, the term ‘botanical/flower painting’ as coined by Elias will also be used in this thesis, where appropriate. Before examining the range of works produced by the women, it is necessary to foreground the botanical culture of 1880s New Zealand, in order to offer a context in which to situate the women and their artistic practices. An examination of New Zealand’s botanical culture also illuminates the links between the women and eminent botanists in New Zealand and overseas and the impact that scientific botany had upon their artistic practices.

II Botanical Culture in New Zealand

During the mid 1800s, New Zealand's botanical culture was stimulated by the activities of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in England, which acted as a depot for the international exchange of plant materials throughout the British Empire. Botanical gardens, based on the model of Kew, were established in colonial outposts, such as the Wellington Botanic Garden in New Zealand and the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew were originally founded during the seventeenth century, as part of the royal estates, but were made a public garden in 1841.

After its public inception, Kew was destined to become a recreational garden. In the three decades from 1841, however, successive directors Sir William Jackson Hooker (1785-1865) and his son Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911) transformed Kew into a popular visiting and touring site as well as a premier institution for scientific research. This transformation, and the impact it had upon other countries within the Empire, needs to be examined within the context of imperial expansion. By the 1870s, Kew functioned as the centre of a global network of plant collecting and transfers, enjoying a close relationship with the royal family and influential men in cabinet and parliament.³² The gardens were also very closely aligned to the government's interest in science and expansion, hence its focus on extending the knowledge of world flora and exploring the applications of economic botany.

Sir William Jackson Hooker, a distinguished botanist, was appointed the first official director of Kew in 1841. Prior to his appointment, Hooker was the Regius Professor of Botany at Glasgow University, director of Glasgow Botanic Garden and the founder and editor of several botanical journals, including *Curtis's botanical magazine*. Hooker was one of few professional botanists during this time,

³²Lucille Brockway, *Science and colonial expansion: the role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens*, New York: Academic Press, 1979, p. 77.

and his position as the director of Kew helped to cement the perception of botany as a serious branch of science. Before 1840, botany was still perceived to be the pursuit of the amateur naturalist and gentleman.³³ As noted by Richard Drayton in *Nature's government: science, imperial Britain and the 'improvement' of the world*, with the development of botany as a serious science and Britain's expansion into new territories came the realization that scientific expertise and knowledge were valuable commodities.³⁴

Hooker established numerous ties with individuals and societies throughout Britain and the colonies, and made arrangements with the navy and colonial offices to collect and bring back new plant specimens to Kew. From as early as 1849, there is a record of a donation to Kew from William Colenso in New Zealand, and in 1854 a botanical exchange took place between Hooker and Sir George Grey in New Zealand.³⁵ As the Empire's most important botanical garden, Kew received thousands of plant donations. Large-scale international voyages of discovery also meant that tens of thousands of new and exotic plant specimens were brought to Kew, all of which needed to be examined and classified. In accordance with the imperatives of the Empire, these specimens were scrutinised for their economic potential, as this was a time of 'economic botany', in which each and every plant was examined for its potential use as a food source, dye, medicine or building material. Rubber plantations in Malaya proved to be extremely economically viable, while coffee from Ceylon, sugar from the Caribbean, cocoa from Trinidad, and oranges from Asia also proved to be profitable. In 1848, Hooker and John Stevens Henslow established the Museum of Economic Botany at Kew, where plants with economic potential were propagated in the greenhouses at Kew and studied for their potential uses for Britain's industrial civilisation.³⁶ In the volume *Flora Novae Zelandiae* from *The botany of the Antarctic voyage*, Sir William Hooker's son Joseph Dalton Hooker noted that 'upwards of twenty thousand species of plants from all quarters of the globe' had been cultivated at Kew.³⁷ By 1864, Kew gardens had obtained 53 species of ferns

³³Richard Drayton, *Nature's government: science, imperial Britain and the 'improvement' of the world*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 177.

³⁴*ibid.*, p. 172.

³⁵Winsome Shepherd and Walter Cook, *The Botanic Garden Wellington: a New Zealand history 1840-1987*, Wellington: Millwood Press, 1988, p. 147.

³⁶Richard Drayton, *Nature's government*, p. 193.

³⁷Joseph Dalton Hooker, *The botany of the Antarctic voyage of H.M. Discovery Ships Erebus and Terror in the years 1839-1843, under the command of Captain Sir James Clark Ross, volume IV, Flora Novae Zelandiae – flowerless plants*, London: Reeve, 1851-53, p. xvi.

and 83 seed plants from New Zealand.³⁸

The interest in economic applications flowed along the botanical network to the peripheries and returned along the network to the centre. During his expeditions around New Zealand during 1839 to 1844, Edward Jerningham Wakefield made notes on several species of native flora, which he published in *Adventure to New Zealand* in 1845. Wakefield enthusiastically noted whether plants were poisonous or edible and whether they possessed any potential economic benefits. He was particularly enamoured of New Zealand flax and concentrated on the fibre that could be produced from it through various processes:

In order to get the fibre which has undergone the first scrape into that clean and silky condition in which the natives work it up into mats, they pass it through many long and laborious processes. It is soaked in water, beaten and twisted, and dried, over and over again.³⁹

The practical applications of the titoki tree were also explored by Wakefield, who noted that ‘the natives draw a very fine oil from [the berries]; and a small quantity, which was sent to England as a sample, has been described as of great value for the finer parts of machinery’⁴⁰ while the rata was ... ‘highly valued by ship-builders for knees and timbers’ because of its resemblance to oak.⁴¹ William Colenso’s essay ‘On the botany of the North Island of New Zealand’, published in the first volume of the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* in 1869, also contains a lengthy section on economic botany. Like Wakefield, Colenso described the oil that could be extracted from the titoki seeds and notes that in 1849 he sent two bottles of the oil to the Museum of Economic Botany at Kew.⁴² In addition to making notes on timber, food and medical properties of native plants, Colenso also made the following interesting observations:

Other indigenous vegetable substances, which have been both successfully used and brought to market, are, – the Kareo, or Supplejack creeper (*Rhipogonum parviflorum*), as coarse Basket and Wicker work; Brooms, for

³⁸R.C. Cooper and R.C. Cambie, *New Zealand’s economic plants*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 28.

³⁹Edward Jerningham Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand from 1838 to 1844: with some account of the beginning of the British colonization of the islands*, volume II, London: John Murray, 1845, p. 283.

⁴⁰*ibid.*, p. 317.

⁴¹*ibid.*, p. 336.

⁴²William Colenso, ‘On the botany of the North Island of New Zealand’, James Hector (ed.), *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, volume I, Wellington: James Hughes, 1869, p. 51.

ship and domestic purposes, made of the twiggy Manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*), the woody stems of the white Mangrove (*Avicennia officinalis*); the downy *pappus* Hune from the fruiting heads of the large Bulrush, (*Typha angustifolia*), for beds, bolsters and pillows; and Honey; – since the introduction of Bees and their becoming wild.⁴³

Sir William Hooker's implementation of the 'Colonial Floras' scheme also had a profound impact upon colonial outposts such as New Zealand. In the 1850s, Hooker was able to persuade the British government to support a series of published floras of countries such including Hong Kong, the British West Indies, the Cape, Australia and New Zealand. This project contributed to the vast body of imperial knowledge, by systematically surveying the new territories under British rule.⁴⁴ In 1862, as part of the scheme, the New Zealand Government invited Hooker's son Joseph Dalton to compile a flora of New Zealand and voted £500 to publish the work. The government also guaranteed to purchase 100 copies and Joseph Dalton was paid an author's fee of £100.⁴⁵

A well-seasoned traveller and collector of foreign plant materials for Kew, Joseph Dalton Hooker's area of botanical expertise covered the floras of Asia, Australia and New Zealand. J.D. Hooker followed closely in his father's footsteps and became the director of the gardens in 1865. His earlier publication *The botany of the Antarctic voyage* comprised three illustrated volumes: *Flora Antarctica* (1844-47), *Flora Novae Zelandiae*, (1851-53) and *Flora Tasmaniae* (1853-59). These were published upon his return from the *Erebus* voyage to Antarctica and consolidated his reputation as a botanist of the South Pacific, a reputation that was further enhanced by the publication of his *Handbook of New Zealand flora* (unillustrated) in 1864. Measuring 15 x 22cm, the *Handbook* was a portable manual for both the amateur and professional botanist. It contained detailed descriptions of New Zealand's flora and was considered to be the authoritative text on New Zealand flora until the publication of Thomas Cheeseman's *Manual of the New Zealand flora* in 1906.

By 1885 the *Handbook* was out of print in New Zealand and several new plant species had been discovered, yet J.D. Hooker was still regarded as the pre-eminent

⁴³ibid., pp. 49-50.

⁴⁴Richard Drayton, *Nature's government*, p. 204.

⁴⁵Ray Desmond, *Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker: traveller and plant collector*, Suffolk: Antique Collector's Club with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 1999, p. 216.

authority on the flora of New Zealand. When it was suggested that a new New Zealand flora should be compiled, the following entry appeared in the *New Zealand Journal of Science* in 1885:

It is unnecessary to insist on Sir Joseph Hooker's preeminent fitness for undertaking the task of preparing the new Flora. His past labours in the same field, his ready access to most of the types, and his extensive and accurate knowledge of the widely distributed natural orders and genera in which our native plants are ranged are too well known to require more than bare statement. If the work is placed in his hands, the scientific world will regard its execution with a degree of confidence which no local name can call forth.⁴⁶

Both Sir William and Joseph Dalton were held in high regard by botanists in the colony, and there was a constant exchange of letters and plant materials between the two countries. Dr James Hector (1834-1907) was one of New Zealand's most prolific correspondents and he established a firm friendship with J.D. Hooker. Born and educated in Scotland, Hector graduated in medicine from the University of Edinburgh in 1856. His keen interest in science led him to New Zealand in 1861 where he was appointed the Director of the Geological Survey of Otago. Hector became involved in a staggering number of colonial projects; he oversaw the 1865 New Zealand Exhibition, was appointed the Director of the Geological Survey and Colonial Museum in Wellington in 1865, managed the New Zealand Institute from its inception in 1867 until 1903 and was the Government's main advisor on scientific matters.⁴⁷

The New Zealand Institute was established by the New Zealand Institute Act of 1867. This piece of legislation was enacted due to the success of the 1865 New Zealand exhibition in Dunedin, which generated interest and support for a national scientific institution.⁴⁸ As the leading scientific body in New Zealand, the Institute was a society firmly grounded within the colonial mindset of exploration and discovery. Delivering the inaugural address to the Institute in 1868, Governor George Bowen outlined its objectives and character, stating: 'it is also expedient,

⁴⁶D.P. 'A new New Zealand flora', *The New Zealand Journal of Science: devoted to the furtherance of pure and applied science throughout the colony*, volume II, no. 12, November 1885, Dunedin: Wise, Caffin & Co., p. 564.

⁴⁷R.K. Dell, 'Hector, James 1834-1907', W.H. Oliver (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume one, 1769-1869*, Wellington: Allen and Unwin; Department of Internal Affairs, 1990, pp. 183-184.

⁴⁸Winsome and Cook, *The Botanic Garden Wellington*, p. 36.

by means of lectures, classes, and otherwise, to promote the general study and cultivation of the various branches and departments of art, science, literature and philosophy.’⁴⁹ The Institute was also founded to ‘provide guidance and aid for the people of New Zealand in subduing and replenishing the earth, in the ‘heroic work’ of colonization.’⁵⁰ With regards to botany, this ‘heroic work’ involved meeting certain economic needs: assessing different types of New Zealand timbers, ‘ascertaining the qualities of the fibre-bearing plants of our valleys’ and introducing ‘ornamental fruit trees, plants, grasses, and flowers of other countries.’⁵¹ Results and findings were presented as addresses to Institute members and the public and written up in scientific papers, which were published as the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*. Lectures on botany presented during the 1880s were diverse in topic, and ranged from the discovery of new specimens of native flora to comparisons between the indigenous flora of New Zealand and Britain.

Given Hector’s particular passion for botany, and his position as Manager of the Institute, it is not altogether surprising that he became entwined in the development of botany in the colony. In addition to contributing 45 scientific papers on geology, botany and zoology to the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, Hector was appointed chairman of the New Zealand Flax Committee in 1870, a position which required him to examine the industrial potentials of the fibre extracted from *Phormium tenax*, and he also played a major role in the formation and running of the Wellington Botanic Garden.

Botanical gardens in colonial outposts, such as New Zealand, served several purposes. They provided a recreational space and introduced familiar English plants into the foreign surroundings, but they were also concerned with assessing the economic potential of native and introduced plants. Thus, colonial gardens world-wide mirrored activities at Kew. As the Manager of the Wellington Botanic Garden, sometimes referred to as the Colonial Botanic Garden, Hector pursued his particular scientific interests. He was primarily concerned with introducing plants which had practical applications and those which could function as the base for economic industry. By the 1870s, the New Zealand Government had established a Colonial Industries Committee to investigate the economic potential of a range of

⁴⁹Sir George Ferguson Bowen, ‘Inaugural address’, 4 August 1868, James Hector (ed.), *Transactions and Proceedings*, volume 1, p. 3.

⁵⁰*ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵¹*ibid.*, p. 6.

plant species, and several plant trials were established in the garden, including flax, mulberry, cork, oak, sugar beet, sorghum and olive trees.⁵² Hector was responsible for introducing pines into the garden, in order to attempt to establish a system for forest propagation, and distributing conifer seed nationwide via Acclimatisation Societies.⁵³

Hector also received packets of seed and plant materials from Kew, Melbourne Botanic Gardens and overseas nurserymen, which he then distributed to provinces, Acclimatisation Societies, individual botanists and other gardens in New Zealand. Emulating British models, acclimatisation experiments were instigated from the earliest settlement days of the colonies, and were established in order to introduce plants and animals thought to be beautiful, useful and of value to the settlers. Sheep, cattle, and fruit orchards were introduced as sources of food by the early settlers while other mammals such as rabbits, hares, pheasants and kangaroos were introduced nationwide for sport and fur.⁵⁴ Many settlers believed that the native plant and animal life was doomed to extinction because of the impact of the European settlers, and consequently they deemed it prudent to replace it with the flora and fauna of England. As early as 1868, Governor George Bowen made the statement before the New Zealand Institute that ‘the indigenous vegetation is fast disappearing before the progress of settlement, and it is alike the interest and the duty to their successors of the present generation to replace it by a new and remunerative growth.’⁵⁵ The Canterbury Acclimatisation Society became renowned for its introduction of trout, red deer, pheasants and bumblebees and for its planting of a variety of English trees in Hagley Park, including beech, elm, chestnut, pine and oak.⁵⁶ Emus, monkeys, pheasants and fowl were among the animals introduced to the Wellington Botanic Garden, by the Wellington Acclimatisation Society, while the Hawke’s Bay Society introduced game birds, trout, salmon and vine cuttings.⁵⁷ Newspaper articles from this period contain numerous entries about acclimatisation experiments and listed the types of animals and plants that were to be introduced and where they were to be ‘liberated’, while others enthusiastically recorded species that had already been

⁵²Winsome and Cook, *The Botanic Garden Wellington*, p. 85.

⁵³*ibid.*, p. 95

⁵⁴K.A. Wodzicki, *Introduced mammals of New Zealand: an ecological and economic survey*, Wellington: DSIR, 1950, appendix A.

⁵⁵Sir George Ferguson Bowen, ‘Inaugural address’, James Hector (ed.), *Transactions and Proceedings*, volume I, p. 3.

⁵⁶Joan Druett, *Exotic intruders: the introduction of plants and animals into New Zealand*, Auckland: Heinemann, 1983, p. 90.

⁵⁷*ibid.*

successfully acclimatised:

One of the most beautiful and extraordinary specimens of floriculture perhaps ever grown in the colony is at present exhibited in the window of Messrs France Bros. It is that of a Japanese Lily, a cutting or slip of which was imported direct from Japan by Mr F.J. France and matured in his garden in Boulcott Street. The plant has thrived wonderfully in its Wellington home, and bears on one and the same stalk no fewer than 120 flowers of the most exquisite and variegated colors.⁵⁸

Several other personalities dominated the botanical landscape in New Zealand, including John Buchanan (1819-1898), Thomas Kirk (1828-1898), and Thomas Cheeseman (1845-1923). All three were members of the New Zealand Institute and published Government-sponsored 'scientific' botanical publications. Both Kirk and Buchanan are also recorded as having made plant donations to the Wellington Botanic Garden.⁵⁹ John Buchanan, a printer and draughtsman, emigrated to New Zealand from Scotland in 1852. Upon the recommendation of J.D. Hooker, Buchanan was employed by Hector on the Otago Geological Survey in 1862, where he took up the position of draughtsman and botanist and accompanied Hector on geological expeditions.⁶⁰ Buchanan followed Hector to Wellington and drew numerous botanical illustrations to accompany papers published in the *Transactions and Proceedings*, in addition to publishing his own scientific papers. Buchanan's publication *The indigenous grasses of New Zealand* was sponsored by the New Zealand government and was published in three illustrated volumes (1878-80). Buchanan's work contained extraordinary lifelike illustrations, achieved by employing a technique called 'nature printing', where to '... ensure accuracy of form, the specimens of the various grasses were lightly inked and faintly impressed upon the lithographic stone ... the details were filled in by hand.'⁶¹ (plate 4).

Professor Thomas Kirk and Thomas Cheeseman, also prominent members of the New Zealand Institute, each held the position of Curator and Secretary of the Auckland Institute and Museum; Kirk from 1868-1874 and Cheeseman from 1874-1923.⁶² Kirk lectured in natural sciences at Wellington College and later

⁵⁸'Town & Country', *New Zealand Mail*, 11 April 1884, p. 17.

⁵⁹Winsome and Cook, *The Botanic Garden Wellington*, p. 141.

⁶⁰Nancy Adams, 'Buchanan, John 1819-1898', W.H. Oliver (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume one, 1769-1869*, pp. 49-50.

⁶¹James Hector quoted in John Buchanan, *The indigenous grasses of New Zealand*, Wellington: George Didsbury, 1878-80, preface.

⁶²Oliver Stead (ed.), *150 treasures*, Auckland: David Bateman, 2001, p. 11.

taught at Lincoln Agricultural College. In 1884 the Government engaged him to report on the country's indigenous forests and he was appointed Chief Conservator of Forests in 1885. In 1899 Kirk published *Forest flora of New Zealand*, a publication which contains 159 lithographic plates and although he did not prepare the illustrations for the book himself, he oversaw their production. The drawings were prepared by several different artists and therefore differ stylistically, but they adhere to the conventions of scientific botanical illustration; specimens are cleanly drawn against a plain white background, and details such as seeds and sepals are illustrated. Thomas Cheeseman moved to New Zealand from England in 1854. He possessed a keen interest in botany, and owned a copy of Joseph Hooker's *Handbook of New Zealand flora*, but as there was no University training yet available in Auckland, he educated himself.⁶³ Like Hector, Cheeseman corresponded with Joseph Hooker at Kew and in 1867 he sent a native orchid to Hooker for identification. Hooker named the orchid species *Corysanthes cheesemanii*.⁶⁴ Cheeseman published two botanical volumes, *The manual of New Zealand flora* (unillustrated) in 1906 and *Illustrations of New Zealand flora*, which was published in 1914. Like Kirk, Cheeseman did not prepare the illustrations himself; instead they were drawn by Joseph Dalton Hooker's cousin Matilda Smith, who worked as a botanical illustrator at Kew.

Although the New Zealand Institute was the main scientific organisation, the 'amateur' botanist could pursue botanical interests in smaller, less formal societies. The Auckland Naturalists' Field Club was formed in November 1882, 'to provide the opportunities for the actual study of nature by visits into the country.'⁶⁵ The club attracted ladies and gentlemen who were interested in the study of natural history and undertook excursions to parts of Auckland, where members could collect, draw and paint specimens of natural history. Thomas Cheeseman was the secretary of the club and his sisters featured among its female members. In April 1883, the club made an excursion to Rakino and Otatou Islands. Under the supervision of 'Mr. Cheeseman', the excursionists enjoyed a trip on the steamer and made several successful discoveries:

Some rare ferns were obtained, two of a kind not hitherto found south of the Hen and Chickens ... Mr. Pond also obtained some geological specimens.

⁶³Jeanne H. Goulding, 'Cheeseman, Thomas Frederick 1845-1923', Claudia Orange (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume three, 1901-1920*, Auckland: Auckland University Press; Bridget Williams; Department of Internal Affairs, 1996, p. 95.

⁶⁴Oliver Stead (ed.), *150 treasures*, p. 11.

⁶⁵*New Zealand Herald*, 11 November 1882, p. 4.

Messrs. A. Sharpe, T.L. Drummond, and Miss Cheeseman devoted themselves to sketching, others to collect shells, sea urchins, anemones &c., some went shooting, while the more Utilitarian portion of the excursionists who were not studying Art or Natural History, went in for oysters ...⁶⁶

The following year, the club recorded the seven excursions it had undertaken during the past session: 'to the Rakino Island on November 9, to the seaward side of Rangitoto on November 30, to Huia Bay on December 26, to Lake Takapuna on February 10, to Northcote on February 24, to the South Head of the Manukaus on March 17, to Waiheke Island on April 14', all of which were deemed to be highly successful.⁶⁷

The marked distinction between the formal scientific world and the world of the 'amateur' botanist meant that although women made up the numbers of smaller, enthusiast-based societies, scientific botany was the exclusive preserve of males in New Zealand. There is no evidence of women lecturers in the Institute's published records, nor is there any evidence of women presenting botanical research papers. Women's botanical activities were configured by gender and social roles, meaning they were most visible for their artistic work in botanical culture. Nevertheless, although they were set apart from the professional scientific community, women did attend the Institute's lectures and several women artists corresponded with botanists such as Cheeseman and Buchanan. Georgina Hetley was first inspired to paint botanical specimens after she attended a lecture given by Thomas Cheeseman in Auckland in 1881:

It was on hearing a lecture from Mr Cheeseman, in Auckland, after his return from an expedition to the mountains about Nelson, and to Arthur's Pass and the Otira Gorge, Canterbury, when he showed us dried specimens of beautiful flowers of different colours, and described how lovely they looked growing in their native state, that I first thought, what a pity it was that they were not painted.⁶⁸

Georgina Hetley, Emily Harris and Sarah Featon numbered among hundreds of women in New Zealand who collected, painted and exhibited botanical specimens. The ladies' and society pages in newspapers from the 1880s are filled with articles about botany in its various forms, such as the preparation of skeleton leaves, hints

⁶⁶'Auckland Naturalists' Field Club', *New Zealand Herald*, 9 April 1883, p. 5.

⁶⁷'Field Naturalists' Club', *New Zealand Herald*, 23 October 1884, p. 6.

⁶⁸Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1887-88, p. 1.

about winter flower baskets and the popularity of flower decorations at the dinner table.⁶⁹

Thus, instead of the massive epergnes, of which our eyes got weary since we saw them in a more or less gorgeous style in every house we dined at, now we really feast ourselves on masses of delicious flowers . . . Happily we can see for ourselves that the love of flowers is spreading . . . Any person who knows London cannot fail to note the enormous increase in flower shops which has come about in late years.⁷⁰

Reports on horticultural and flower shows are also scattered throughout newspapers and magazines from this period, as they had become immensely popular by the late nineteenth century, in all parts of the country.⁷¹ Newly acclimatised plants and produce, including begonias, geraniums, peaches and grapes, were exhibited together with floral artworks, which ranged from oil paintings to flower arrangements and decorated lamps. At the 1898 grand floral fete at Hakuru, prizes were awarded for the best dressed horse and girl rider, best decorated lamp, best buttonhole, decorated umbrella and basket of flowers.⁷² Flower shows sometimes concentrated on a particular species of flower, such as the chrysanthemum, which proved to be a popular exhibit: ‘ . . . We have, in the first chrysanthemum show of the Wellington Horticultural Society, practical demonstration of the fact that exhibitions of one species are as likely to prove genuine in success as the regular horticultural shows.’⁷³ A similar show in Auckland was recorded in the *New Zealand Graphic and Ladies’ Journal* in 1892, :

The Chrysanthemum Show in Auckland has been a great success. Indeed, floral exhibitions of this kind are becoming more popular every year . . . The exhibits were set off to the best possible advantage by a tasteful dispersion of green foliage. Clusters of ferns, nikau, or pampas grass reared themselves proudly aloft over arches, doorways, and in every available corner, as though endeavouring to outvie in their native grace and beauty, the flowers that

⁶⁹‘Ladies’ page, preparing skeleton leaves’, *New Zealand Mail*, 18 April 1884, p. 3; ‘Ladies’ page, hints about flower baskets for winter decorations’, *New Zealand Mail*, 13 May 1882, p. 3.

⁷⁰‘Ladies’ page, flowers’, *New Zealand Mail*, 20 June 1884, p. 6.

⁷¹Examples include: ‘The garden; Horticultural and Florists’ Society Spring Show’, *New Zealand Mail*, 29 November 1889, p. 18; ‘Masterton Horticultural Show’, *New Zealand Mail*, 29 November 1889, p. 20; ‘Motueka Horticultural Show’, *Nelson Evening Mail*, 28 November 1889, p. 2; ‘Society gossip, Blenheim’, *New Zealand Graphic and Ladies’ Journal*, 18 March 1893, p. 259.

⁷²‘Grand Floral Fete at Hakuru’, *Auckland Weekly News*, 11 November 1898, p. 44.

⁷³‘Chrysanthemum show’, *New Zealand Mail*, 9 May 1884, p. 16.

owed their existence to man's care and cultivation.⁷⁴

Although the cut flower exhibits were entered by males and females alike, the floral artworks were almost exclusively entered by women.

Domestic productions such as sewing, collecting and preparing albums, and decorating objects with plant motifs were not usually accorded an artistic status; instead they were viewed as desirable skills in keeping with the display of femininity. Georgina Hetley exhibited the following items at the 1881 Auckland Society of Arts Exhibition:

360 Madeira knitting, hand-made

374 Doilies of New Zealand Ferns and Mosses

375 Bouquet of Autumn Flowers and Ferns, in Cloth.⁷⁵

Yet, even though works such as these were exhibited in an art forum, they were perceived to be 'fashionable accomplishments':

There will be found under the head 'Miscellaneous', three or four other forms of painting suited to the tastes of ladies, which are worthy of study. These are paintings on terra cotta, painting on satin, etching on china, etching on enamelled tiles. Proficiency in this branch of art is becoming a fashionable accomplishment.⁷⁶

Flowers and notions of femininity were linked in the Victorian mind; women were personified by the deity Flora, they were given names after flowers – Rose, Lily, Daisy, and they were described as flowers – 'the downtrodden violet', 'sweet as a rose', the woman 'blooming'.⁷⁷ Botany was not seen to be at odds with the gendered roles of women; indeed, the association between women and flowers was strengthened and nourished by comments made about the nature of femininity in magazines and books:

That the mental constitution of the fair sex is such as to render them peculiarly susceptible of whatever is delicate, lovely, and beautiful in nature

⁷⁴'Topics of the week, society's sayings and doings', *New Zealand Graphic and Ladies' Journal*, 20 April 1892, p. 441, cited in Ann Elias, 'New Zealand still life and flower painting 1880-1940', p. 125.

⁷⁵Auckland 1881, Society of Arts Exhibition, *Catalogue*, Auckland: Wilson and Horton, 1881, pp. 18-19.

⁷⁶'Auckland Society of Arts Exhibition', *New Zealand Herald*, 9 April 1881, p. 5.

⁷⁷The link between women, flowers and language is examined in greater detail by Pamela Gerrish Nunn in *Problem pictures*, pp. 29-30, and by Elias in 'New Zealand still life and flower painting 1880-1940', pp. 134-135.

and art cannot, we think be controverted; we are not, therefore, surprised that Botany receives more of their attention than any other science.⁷⁸

The association between women and flowers easily translated to a link between women and the province of flower-painting, on an ideological and a practical level. Within the domestic environment, women applied their artistic talents to a range of domestic manufactures, including flower arrangements, wax and paper flowers, decorated household items such as fans and drapes, and tabletops with floral designs. Flower specimens were also collected, drawn and painted by women; in her diary, Emily Harris mentions several occasions when her friends brought plant specimens for her to sketch.⁷⁹

Yet women's involvement in New Zealand's botanical culture was not just restricted to painting or drawing flowers. The Victorian craze for ferns, Pteridomania, was at its height in Britain during the 1850s and filtered down to New Zealand, where it was embraced on an aesthetic, scientific and enthusiast level. A culture of commerce developed around the fern, as specimens were collected, traded, grown, pressed, drawn and displayed in purpose built conservatories and greenhouses. Georgina Hetley had a particular affinity for ferns, as she recorded in a letter to Alexander Turnbull:

I forgot to mention the other evening that I have a splendid collection of New Zealand ferns, the best private collection there is, it contains the newly discovered varieties . . . The specimens are unusually large and perfect as I was working for the Melanesian mission making up sets of ferns, for seven years, and put aside good ones for my own collection – Many botanists have been to see it abroad – ⁸⁰

Emily Harris also expressed an interest in ferns and noted in her diary: ' . . . I went ferning with Mr Kempthorne, he having offered to take the plants into town with him.'⁸¹ During this period, several books on New Zealand ferns were published. In 1882, George M. Thomson wrote *The ferns and fern allies of New*

⁷⁸Preface to *The young lady's book of botany* (London 1838), reproduced in Ann B. Shteir, *Cultivating women, cultivating science: Flora's daughters and botany in England 1760 to 1860*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 173.

⁷⁹Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript): '28 April 1886', 'Mrs Gilliam brought me some pieces of nikau berries . . . ', part I, p. 17; '17 November 1886', ' . . . on Monday morning [the Bishop] sent me a large piece [of palm blossom]', part I, p. 27; '1888, Thursday', 'Miss Gascaigne brought me one flower of the Mount Cook Lily . . . it is far better than having only pressed specimens to paint from.', part II, p. 2.

⁸⁰Georgina Hetley, letter to A. Turnbull, 26 September 1889, MS-Papers-0057-036, ATL.

⁸¹'New Years Day 1889', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1893 (typescript), part II, p. 11.

Zealand, which contained eight lithographic plates. Eight years later, Henry Field wrote *The ferns of New Zealand and its immediate dependencies*, which contained twenty-nine lithographs (plate 5). A particularly intriguing volume published during a similar timeframe is Mrs C.C. Armstrong's book *The South Pacific fern album*, which was based on Hooker's *Handbook* and George Thomson's book on ferns. The large album contains actual mounted specimens on 20 leaves, arranged in symmetrical compositions. Mrs Armstrong shied away from presenting her publication as a scientific botanical production, instead intending it for 'those who admire the beauty of nature's productions than for all those skilled in botany', therefore 'nearly all technical terms, and the usual botanical descriptions, have been avoided ...'⁸² This is reinforced in the title, as the use of the word 'album' aligns it with the realm of art, as opposed to science, an aspect also prevalent in the frontispiece which points out that Mrs Armstrong had won first prize for New Zealand ferns in the 1879-80 Sydney International Exhibition, and prizes at the 1882 Melbourne Exhibition, the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition and the 1888-89 Centennial International Exhibition in Melbourne. But the author also intended the publication to serve some practical purpose, for the book states:

By sharply tapping the card on which the fronds are mounted, may be obtained a quantity of the fine brown dust, which, when placed under favourable conditions in regard to moisture and temperature, germinate.⁸³

Although there were prescribed gender and social codes, women did act outside the private sphere, as women in colonial outposts were able to use their artistic endeavours as a means of social agency. The field tradition of botany saw women undertaking botanical excursions in search of botanical specimens, thus stretching conventional boundaries as they ventured beyond their usual terrain.⁸⁴ Yet they were always chaperoned, or travelled in groups, so they did not openly flout the social codes. Emily Harris's diary records several occasions when she undertook botanical excursions with friends and family to collect and sketch the native plant life, including a small-scale expedition in 1885: 'Went with Frances & three other ladies up Brookstreet Valley on a ferning expedition ... We got a lovely spot where thousands of Maiden hair ferns grew on the banks over-hanging the river ...'⁸⁵

⁸²Mrs C.C. Armstrong (arranged by), Twomey, J (ed.), *The South Pacific fern album: New Zealand section, containing fronds of ferns collected throughout the islands by the New Zealand Fern Company*, Melbourne: J. Twomey, [1889], p. 27.

⁸³*ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

⁸⁴Ann B. Shteir lists a number of British women colonial travellers who journeyed to India, Ceylon and Canada in *Cultivating women, cultivating science*, pp. 191-192.

⁸⁵'August 8th 1885', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1893 (typescript), part I, p. 5.

Georgina Hetley's botanical excursioning saw her traverse the North and South Islands of New Zealand with her niece, collecting and sketching native flowers in preparation for her publication *The native flowers of New Zealand*. In the preface to her book, Hetley describes her travels and the places she visited, which included Auckland, Taranaki, Wellington, Nelson, Lake Rotoiti, Buller River, Greymouth, Hokitika, Otira Gorge, Arthur's Pass, Christchurch and Dunedin. Hetley clearly enjoyed travelling, and noted enthusiastically in the preface:

It was a serious undertaking, for I had to travel by sea and land, coaching over rough and dangerous roads, and at great expense, risk and fatigue. But it was a labour of love. Every new flower was a delight and wonder; and the scenery, which I might otherwise have never seen, and the delightful excursions with kind friends to help to get flowers for 'The Book', was enough to repay all my fatigue.⁸⁶

During her travels, Hetley wrote several letters of introduction to John Enys, a naturalist based on a station in Canterbury, asking to be received for accommodation. She was also evidently aware of fellow artist Marianne North's visit to New Zealand, as in one of the letters to Enys she wrote: '... I have heard so much of your cousin Miss North's paintings, which were taken at your place ...'⁸⁷ Following her journey around New Zealand, Hetley travelled abroad to England in 1886, in search of a publisher for her book, and to study at the Herbarium at Kew Gardens with Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker.⁸⁸

Marianne North's extended travels round the world rendered her a remarkable figure and afforded her a certain freedom that extended well beyond the domestic sphere. Unmarried, yet financially independent, North travelled the globe, painting the world's flora in order to build up a collection of paintings for her gallery at Kew Gardens.⁸⁹ North had written to Sir Joseph Hooker, asking if he would accept her collection of paintings and if it was possible for her to finance a gallery for their display, a suggestion that Hooker responded to favourably.⁹⁰ It was on

⁸⁶Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, p. 1.

⁸⁷Georgina Hetley, letter to J.D. Enys, 8 February 1886, MS-Papers-0670:3, ATL.

⁸⁸Hetley also travelled around Australia and Madeira sketching the native flora and the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington holds the collection of these paintings: B-073-001/015.

⁸⁹North's gallery contains 832 paintings of the world's flora, and a dado which comprises 246 different types of woods; among these are some specimens of New Zealand woods which North mentioned in a letter to her cousin: J.D. Enys, 11 July 1881, MS-Papers-0670-3, ATL.

⁹⁰Marianne North, *Recollections of a happy life, being the autobiography of Marianne North, edited by her sister Mrs John Addington Symonds*, volume II, London; New York: Macmillan, 1892, second edition, p. 86.

Charles Darwin's advice that North travelled to Australia and New Zealand, as he stated that she 'ought not to attempt any representation of the world until I had seen and painted the Australian, which was so unlike that of any other country.'⁹¹ North's travels took her to Brazil, India, Ceylon, Sarawak, Jamaica and the North American continent, as she collected and painted flower specimens. Julie King has closely examined the issues of Victorian travel and botanical/flower painting, and draws attention to the connections between the women painters and the 'wider Victorian world'.⁹² Such connections are evident in North's travels, as she had letters of introduction to New Zealand's most eminent botanists, including James Hector, who took her on a tour of the Wellington Botanic Garden: 'Dr. Hector gave me a delightful walk in the Botanical Garden. I saw one fern-tree forty feet high there; and he showed me the entrance to a tunnel made in a tree by some grub . . . '⁹³ During her trip to Australia, North also met with fellow artist Ellis Rowan twice, who introduced her several species of native Australian flowers:

The difficulty was to choose the flowers. One was tempted to bring home so many, and as they were small and delicate, it was not possible to paint half of them. Mrs. R. did it most exquisitely in a peculiar way of her own on gray paper.⁹⁴

Like North, Ellis Rowan travelled extensively, initially accompanying her husband on business trips around Australia. After meeting Marianne North in Australia, Rowan became determined to follow in her footsteps:

I became her devoted admirer, and she became the pioneer of my ambition. A world-wide traveller in search of specimens, her description of her adventures was so vivid, so graphic, so thrilling in its prospects of wider fields that I became infected, stimulated by an example and a result beyond dreams successful . . . I resolved to do as she had done. I would travel the world in search of flowers rare and wonderful, travel countries inaccessible, as well as those which offered difficulties only imaginary.⁹⁵

Marianne North is also thought to have schooled Rowan in the art of oil painting during this time, and Rowan's ability in this medium was fully realised at the 1888

⁹¹ibid., p. 87.

⁹²Julie King, 'Flower hunters in the colonial landscape: contexts and connections', p. 18.

⁹³Marianne North quoted in Helen Vellacott (ed.), *Some recollections of a happy life: Marianne North in Australia and New Zealand*, Melbourne: Edward Arnold Australia, 1986, p. 114.

⁹⁴Marianne North, *Recollections of a happy life*, p. 149.

⁹⁵Ellis Rowan, 'An Australian artist's adventures', *New Idea*, 6 February 1905, quoted in Judith McKay, *Ellis Rowan: a flower-hunter in Queensland*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1990, p. 2.

Centennial Exhibition, in Melbourne, where she received the supreme gold medal for her oil painting of ‘Chrysanthemums.’⁹⁶ Judith McKay observed that Rowan’s transition from ‘wife and society hostess to world-travelling artist’ was quite unheard of in Victorian society.⁹⁷ Indeed, Rowan’s travels took her all over Australia, to India, Europe, New Zealand, the West Indies and the United States of America, and she was internationally renowned; while in England during the 1890s, she presented three paintings to Queen Victoria, who had them made into a screen for her room.⁹⁸

In addition to travelling, the pursuit of botanical/floral art also afforded certain social and economic opportunities, as many women were able to earn a living from it, or supplement their income. One of the earliest examples is New Zealand’s first botanical artist, Martha King, who was commissioned by the Wellington Horticultural and Botanical Society to produce drawings of native New Zealand plants in 1843:

That a sum not exceeding £10 be devoted for the purposes of preparing two sets of drawings of the most interesting indigenous botanical specimens and specimens of native woods, and that one be forwarded to the Directors of the New Zealand Company and the others to the London Horticultural Society.⁹⁹

Emily Harris and Georgina Hetley both placed their works for sale at national and international exhibitions (price details are recorded in appendix 1). Harris also sold her works at the personal exhibitions she staged in Nelson, New Plymouth, Stratford and Wellington and she recorded the prices that certain works sold for in her diary, such as: ‘3 cards 6/- . study of fruit £1, mountain flowers to be copied 7/- ’ at her 1890 exhibition in Stratford.¹⁰⁰ Exhibitions were a popular forum for selling artworks, as the following selected entries from an 1881 Art Society catalogue indicate:

18 Azaleas (Water Colours) Mrs. Burcher £6 6s
67 Bouquet of Roses Miss Cheeseman £1 0s
160 Kowhai Miss Ridings £1 1s

⁹⁶Margaret Hazzard, *Australia’s brilliant daughter: Ellis Rowan, artist, naturalist, explorer, 1848-1922*, Richmond, VIC: Greenhouse Publications, 1984, p. 55.

⁹⁷Judith McKay, *Ellis Rowan: a flower-hunter in Queensland*, p. 3.

⁹⁸*ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹⁹*New Zealand Colonist*, 9 September 1843, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰‘Jan. 8th. (from Ellen’s letter)’, Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1893, (typescript), part II, p. 44.

- 167 New Zealand Berries Miss C.W. Horne £3 3s
 169 New Zealand Flax Miss C.W. Horne £6 6s
 185 Manuka and Kohekohe Miss Ridings £1 1s
 186 Pohue Miss Ridings £1 1s
 189 Group of Yellow Kowhai Flowers Miss Cheeseman £2 10s
 192 Group of Red Kowhai Flowers Miss Cheeseman £2 10s
 195 Titoki and Turutu Miss Ridings £1 1s
 196 Clematis Miss Ridings £1 0s
 321 Bracket Drape of Spray of Fuschias Miss A. Seaman £0 8s¹⁰¹

Ellis Rowan established herself as a highly successful ‘flower painter’, and in addition to having works commissioned, she sold numerous paintings in Australia and overseas, often making multiple copies of her best-sellers.¹⁰² Judith McKay records how Rowan made a considerable profit after selling several of her works to the Princess Mary, Duchess of Teck (the mother of Queen Mary).¹⁰³ Rowan also successfully sold her paintings at the private exhibitions she held in London, Sydney and New York, and her final exhibition at Anthony Horderns Fine Art Gallery in 1920 was said to have made £2000.¹⁰⁴

The fact that some women were able to earn an income from the sale of their works raises the question of status: were they ‘lady amateurs’ or ‘professional’ artists? Deborah Cherry writes that in the context of the nineteenth century, the realm of the professional was almost wholly male defined, influenced by gender and the hierarchy of art genres, but that ‘definitions of masculinity and femininity were by no means consistent’.¹⁰⁵ The term ‘amateur’ is indicative of works less likely to be taken seriously, while the label ‘professional’ denotes someone who makes a living through their artistic practice and it is also used to accord a higher value to a work. As Elias has identified, the definition of ‘professional’ changes in different contexts, as it can also indicate a serious approach to work. In the Victorian context, the ideology of femininity worked to disassociate women from professionalism, as embroidered mantle drapes and screens decorated with painted flowers could not compete with history and landscape paintings, or portraiture. Women were usually regarded as ‘amateur’, because of the subjects they painted,

¹⁰¹ Auckland 1881, Society of Arts Exhibition, *Catalogue*, Auckland: Wilson and Horton, 1881.

¹⁰² Judith McKay, *Ellis Rowan: a flower hunter in Queensland*, p. 58.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Joan Kerr (ed.), *Heritage: the national women's art book*, East Roseville, NSW: Craftsman House, 1995, p. 442.

¹⁰⁵ Deborah Cherry, *Painting women: Victorian women artists*, London; New York: Routledge, 1993, p. 9.

and also because they largely painted in watercolours, a medium which was considered to be ‘lady-like’.¹⁰⁶ Yet it can be argued that Hetley, Harris and Rowan were, in a sense, professionals, as they exhibited and sold their works at numerous exhibitions, used the exhibition forum as a means to advertise their botanical publications and painted botanical/floral works in watercolour and oil paints. Harris’s personal exhibitions can certainly be identified within this context and will be examined in chapter III. Affiliations with professional botanists also impacted upon the notion of ‘professionalism’ and, as nearly all of the women in this study collaborated with eminent botanists, this link will be explored further in the chapter on botanical publications.

¹⁰⁶Francina Irwin, ‘Amusement or instruction? Watercolour manuals and the woman amateur’, Clarissa Campbell Orr (ed.), *Women in the Victorian art world*, p. 151.

III Exhibitions

The Colonials are being feted & made much of just now. Why I am not among them, it is just the time that I should have been in England & to think that I could not go, it makes me wild to think about it, such a time never comes twice, the tide which has not been taken at the flood will ebb lower and lower, until the shoals and quicksands of ill health & old age will cast me aside for ever.¹⁰⁷

This 1886 diary entry by Emily Harris reveals much about her life as an artist and exhibitor in colonial New Zealand. Born in Plymouth, Devonshire in England in 1836 or 1837, Harris emigrated to New Zealand with her family in 1840.¹⁰⁸ When the Taranaki wars broke out in 1860 she was sent to Hobart in Australia to study art and returned a few years later to Nelson, where she established a primary school with her sisters.¹⁰⁹ Despite her strained finances, Harris keenly exhibited her works whenever the opportunity arose and her determination to succeed as an artist is evident in the sheer number of exhibitions she took part in from 1879-1899. Harris participated in at least 19 exhibitions over this period, which included large-scale international shows in Sydney, London and Melbourne. Exhibitions rendered Harris's achievements as an artist public by awarding prizes and medals. Moreover, they also afforded an opportunity to sell works of art and supplement her meagre income as a primary-school teacher, as well as attract pupils to her school.

To her intense disappointment, Harris had to remain in New Zealand for the duration of the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition because of the prohibitive cost of travel. She recorded her failure to win any prizes at the exhibition with a certain degree of resignation:

¹⁰⁷'30 May 1886', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-91 (typescript), part I, pp. 25-26.

¹⁰⁸Moirra Long, 'Harris, Emily Cumming 1836/37?-1925', Claudia Orange (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume two, 1870-1900*, p. 197.

¹⁰⁹*ibid.*

I do not know why I have never written anything about the Colonial and Indian Exhibition my things are admired and noticed very much evidently, but I seem to derive no benefit from it, so it has a dash of disappointment in it.¹¹⁰

Popularly referred to as ‘the Colinderies’, the 1886 exhibition was the most significant and ambitious exhibition of the 1880s, in terms of its enormous size and scope. Running from the 4th of May to the 10th of November, its objective was to demonstrate the Empire’s expansion and display the wealth and industrial applications of England and all its colonies. As with the Great Exhibition of 1851 which was also held in London, the Empire put itself on display. Each colony had its own gallery, or court, to display its own works and exhibits ranged from raw manufactures, geological specimens, items of furniture and clothing, to machinery, botanical specimens and works of art. The two principal and crowd-attracting features in the New Zealand Court were Walter Buller’s Maori collection and the New Zealand fernery, which comprised 100 tree ferns and 400 other ferns.¹¹¹ Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker agreed to assist the New Zealand exhibition commissioner, Julius von Haast (1822-1887), in the formation of the fernery, and lent several specimens from Kew’s collection. Raw minerals such as coal, gold, wood, iron ore and various types of stone, all of which possessed great commercial value, were also placed in prominent positions and a gold trophy was erected to show in bulk the value of the gold obtained in the colony.¹¹² In October, the exhibition reviewer for the *New Zealand Mail* noted that nearly 3 million people had attended the exhibition.¹¹³

Emily Harris exhibited a range of painted items within the ‘Works of Art’ section of the exhibition:

Two Painted Screens
 Painted Fan
 Two Table-tops, painted with flowers
 Screen painted with New Zealand Flowers
 Mantle Drape worked in Silk¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰‘27 September 1886’, Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-91 (typescript), part I, p. 25.

¹¹¹‘Colonial and Indian Exhibition’, *Nelson Evening Mail*, 8 May 1886, p. 4.

¹¹²‘The New Zealand Court’, *New Zealand Mail*, 27 October 1886, p. 27.

¹¹³ibid.

¹¹⁴London 1886, Colonial and Indian Exhibition, *Catalogue of New Zealand exhibits*, London: William Clowes & Sons, 1886, p. 3, p. 10, p. 61.

It is interesting to note that all of Harris's works, except the mantle drape, were classified in the conventional art categories of 'oil paintings' and 'various paintings and drawings', as decorated items such as these were not usually accorded an artistic status. Throughout the exhibition, the majority of pictures, drawings and photographs were physically separated from the various colonial courts and placed on display in the Royal Albert Hall. This separation was not popular with visitors, and was widely criticised in the media. The reviewer for the *New Zealand Mail* noted that it was '... an error of judgement to place them out of the way up here, and hardly fair to the owners and artists who exhibited them' while the *New Zealand Herald* concluded that '... many visitors fail to learn that there are many pictures on view at all in a locality so remote from the principal centres of interest.'¹¹⁵ Harris's works were not displayed in the Royal Albert Hall, they remained in the New Zealand Court alongside works by other women artists, which included decorated screens and several paintings on terracotta; Miss Isa Outhwaite, from Auckland, exhibited 'Scenes in the Island of Kawau', and 'Pen and Ink Etchings: Vignettes of New Zealand Scenery' which were placed in the Royal Albert Hall, while her 'One Pair of Painted Shells' remained in the New Zealand Court.¹¹⁶ A decision was clearly made by the commissioners to only display works on paper in the Royal Albert Hall, which meant that the decorative works left in the New Zealand Court received very little press attention as 'fine art' objects. Harris's works were mentioned in one *New Zealand Herald* review, under the heading 'Fancy Work', which was described as '... a branch of art which requires a delicate training of the eye, and an equally careful manipulation of the hand':

... In the same case there is a mantel drape with scarlet kowhai flowers most artistically designed and worked in silk by Miss Emily C. Harris, of Nelson, and a pair of painted shells by Miss Isa Outhwaite, of Auckland ... Much taste and artistic merit is shown in all the three separate exhibits, and they have a distinct New Zealand character about them from the fact that the flora and fauna and scenery of the country have been brought into play in three separate branches of art which the fair daughters of New Zealand would do well to study and develop in their highest grade.¹¹⁷

Harris's works do not appear to have been reviewed in any other fine art forums, in contrast to the paintings of flowers on paper by contemporaries such as

¹¹⁵'The New Zealand Court', *New Zealand Mail*, 27 October 1886, p. 27 and 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition', *New Zealand Herald*, 27 July 1886, p. 6.

¹¹⁶London 1886, Colonial and Indian Exhibition, *Catalogue of New Zealand exhibits*, p. 11.

¹¹⁷'Colonial and Indian Exhibition, no. III, the New Zealand Court', *New Zealand Herald*, 21 July 1886, p. 5. I am grateful to Rebecca Rice for this reference.

Georgina Hetley and Margaret Stoddart, which received favourable mention in several newspaper reviews.

Harris's painted screens, fans and table-tops were typical of the types of works produced and exhibited by middle-class women in New Zealand during the 1880s. An examination of the Art Society catalogues for Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin reveals numerous 'decorative' works of art made by women, depicting or representing floral and botanical subjects, such as hand-painted fans, embroidered drapes and floral bouquets manufactured from wax. One of the more unusual items appeared in the 1881 Auckland Society of Arts exhibition: 'There is a very curious and beautiful case of ornamental flowers, made out of the scales of fish, to which we invite attention'.¹¹⁸ 'Decorative' works were almost exclusively made and exhibited by women. Despite the *Auckland Evening Star*'s claim in 1881 that items such as fancy needle-work and wax flowers 'may very properly be termed works of art, as they bear those relations which exist between the different forms which the creative spirit of art assumes', they were not usually treated as works of 'art'.¹¹⁹ Instead, newspaper reviews placed emphasis on the appropriateness of these 'domestic crafts' for women, identifying them as 'fashionable accomplishments' and 'ladies' work':

There are several instances of encaustic work on enamelled tiles, which has also become a feminine accomplishment.¹²⁰

Another beautiful class of exhibits will be found in the hand-painted fans. This is specially ladies' work ...¹²¹

The dismissive attitude towards women's productions was clearly expounded in a review of the 1890 Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition, which was held in Wellington:¹²²

As is usual in colonial exhibitions, there is to be found a large number of decorated plaques and panels, chiefly from the brushes of lady artists. As works of art they possess little or no value, as they simply form a harmless and innocent means of utilising the leisure hours of those who have nothing else to occupy their time ... The panels exhibited show careful work, and

¹¹⁸'Auckland Society of Arts Exhibition', *New Zealand Herald*, 9 April 1881, p. 5.

¹¹⁹'The Auckland Society of Arts Exhibition', *Auckland Evening Star*, 6 April 1881, p. 2.

¹²⁰*ibid.*, p. 5.

¹²¹'Auckland Society of Arts, Choral Hall', *New Zealand Herald*, 13 April 1883, p. 5.

¹²²The Fine Arts Association of New Zealand reformed as the Academy of Fine Arts in 1889.

will no doubt serve their purpose for decorating drawing-rooms for those who appreciate this kind of ornament.¹²³

The terms ‘decorative’ and ‘fancy works’ were applied to items which were not sculptures or paintings, and classified accordingly as ‘minor art works’ or ‘applied art’ objects. As Ann Calhoun has noted, these painted objects were truly characteristic of art produced by women in the Victorian period, as they were domestic objects intended for display in the home.¹²⁴ Fifteen-year-old Mary Hannah Tyler’s bouquet of woollen flowers exhibited at the 1885 Wellington Industrial Exhibition can be seen within this context, as an arrangement that would have been placed in a domestic environment and identified as something innately ‘feminine’. Tyler won a silver medal for her exhibit, which comprised an arrangement of brightly-coloured, embroidered woollen flowers, including passion flowers, fuchsias, forget-me-nots and lilies, set in a turquoise vase (plate 40 and 40a). Decorated and painted objects were usually set apart from conventional paintings and sculptures, and consequently placed in numerous categories in art exhibitions. In the Auckland Society of Art’s 1880s exhibitions, the range of ‘decorative’ items were brought together under the umbrella heading of ‘Miscellaneous’ in the catalogues, yet the newspaper reviews refer to various categories within this broad heading, such as ‘Hand-Painted Fans’ and ‘Plaquets and Terra-Cotta Ware’. For the 1882 New Zealand Exhibition held in Christchurch, Harris’s decorated works were placed in the ‘Ladies’ Court’, yet in the 1883 Fine Arts Association of New Zealand and 1884 Auckland Society of Arts exhibitions, her decorated works were classified separately in categories such as ‘Hand-painted Fans’ and ‘Terracotta Ware’. Because they were not regarded as ‘fine art’ objects, a number of decorative art objects have not survived, including the works of Harris. Yet, as with a number of those that have survived, the identity of the artist is often unknown, such as the decorated table-top that resides within the collection of the Sarjeant Art Gallery in Wanganui (plate 41 and 41a).

Ann Elias states that ‘Women such as Emily Harris who painted flowers on satin screens misunderstood the fact that flower subjects and functional items could never be competitive.’¹²⁵ It would appear, however, that Harris chose not to accept this separation, as throughout her exhibiting career she chose to exhibit

¹²³‘Art Exhibition, final notice, NZ Academy of Fine Arts’, *New Zealand Times*, 21 October 1890, p. 2.

¹²⁴ Ann Calhoun, *The arts and crafts movement in New Zealand 1870-1940*, p. 50.

¹²⁵ Ann Elias, ‘New Zealand still life and flower painting 1880-1940’, p. 46.

‘decorative’ items, often together with watercolour and oil paintings; in the case of the 1886 Colinderies exhibition, she chose to exhibit decorative items over works on paper. It is possible that she favoured exhibiting her ‘decorative’ items because they fetched higher sale prices. Catalogues for the 1882 Auckland Society of Arts and the 1883 Fine Arts Association in Wellington exhibitions recorded the prices of the works on display; Harris’s works on paper ranged from £1 5s to £1 10s. In contrast, the decorative items shown at the 1884 Fine Arts Association Exhibition were advertised at considerably higher prices:

Wild Flowers £2 2s
 3-fold Screen £12 12s
 Chess Table, New Zealand Flowers £5 5s
 Two Door Panels, N.Z. Flowers £3 3s ¹²⁶

Harris was clearly determined that her works on paper and decorated items be received as works of ‘fine art’, and responded indignantly to those who treated them otherwise. She took exception to a review of her screens in the 1885 Industrial Exhibition, held in Wellington, which was printed in the Nelson newspaper *The Colonist*: ‘Emily C. Harris exhibits oil and watercolour painting on satin, all original and very pretty.’¹²⁷ Harris responded tersely to the review in her diary:

I should not have minded it being only a few words, if I liked the words, but ‘pretty’ the writer could not have known anything about Art or he would not have used such a word for either of the screens.¹²⁸

Held in Wellington in 1885, the New Zealand Industrial Exhibition functioned as a precursor to the Colinderies and many of the exhibits were forwarded on to London.¹²⁹ Harris exhibited six items at the Wellington show, and won first prize for her ‘Three-fold Screen, Flowers Painted on Satin’ and third prize for her ‘Table-top, New Zealand flowers’.¹³⁰ A number of Harris’s items listed in the 1885 catalogue share similar titles to those listed in the 1886 exhibition and it is likely that several of her Wellington exhibits went on to the London exhibition (see

¹²⁶Fine Arts Association of New Zealand Second Annual Exhibition, June 1884, *Catalogue of works executed by members of the Association*, Wellington: Lyon & Blair, 1884, pp. 5-7.

¹²⁷‘New Zealand Industrial Exhibition’, *The Colonist*, 7 August 1885, p. 3.

¹²⁸‘8 August 1885’, Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-91 (typescript), part I, p. 5.

¹²⁹H. F. von Haast, *The life and times of Sir Julius von Haast: explorer, geologist, museum builder*, Wellington: H. F. von Haast, 1948, p. 909.

¹³⁰Wellington 1885, New Zealand Industrial Exhibition, *The official record*, Wellington: George Didsbury, 1885, p. 155.

appendix 1). Preparing for exhibitions in New Zealand, and especially overseas, was a costly and often problematic affair. While preparing for the 1885 New Zealand Industrial Exhibition, Harris was disgusted to receive a telegram that mistakenly informed her that her exhibits had not been received, to which she commented ‘What a set of idiots they must be over there.’¹³¹ Her friend and fellow artist John Gully sent his exhibits via a cabin passage to Wellington, but as Harris did not possess similar financial fortune, she could not afford this luxury and the fretwork on one of her screens was damaged in transit.

As a forerunner to the Colinderies, the Industrial Exhibition was an important show to be held in New Zealand, and it provided Harris with the opportunity to display her works to a large audience and earn some extra money to pay for family bills. During his visit to Wellington, the celebrated English author George Augustus Sala noted that, on average, twelve hundred people a day visited the highly-popular show.¹³² Harris’s six exhibits were classified as ‘decorative items’ and received a glowing review in the exhibition catalogue:

As specimens of decorative art a great many hand-painted table-tops, screens, door-panels, plaques, and mirrors have been supplied . . . Three screens, shown by Miss M. E. BENNETT, *Johnsonville*, Miss ADELA MEDLEY, *Wellington*, and Miss EMILY C. HARRIS, *Nelson*, are very handsome, notably the latter, which shows evidence of great originality of design and force of execution.¹³³

Although decorative items were relegated to a low position in the hierarchy of art, there was clearly a commercial market for them, and evidence of popular reception is recorded in Harris’s diary. When one of her screens was displayed in a Nelson shop window prior to the Industrial Exhibition, she noted with satisfaction that ‘Compliments were the order of the day, of course, one curious thing so many people [thought] the lycopodium on the black satin screen was real, stuck on in fact, from the very first when it was in Fleming’s window, & two workmen were heard betting about it. One said it was real, the other that it was painted so they

¹³¹‘23 July 1885’, Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part I, p. 4.

¹³²Sala also noted that ‘. . . in the fine art section of the exhibition I notice a goodly number of hand-painted and gracefully-decorative plaques and vases in terra-cotta and porcelain; the artists being in the majority of instances ladies.’, *Daily Telegraph*, 25 December 1885, in Robert Dingley (ed.), *The land of the golden fleece: George Augustus Sala in Australia and New Zealand in 1885*, Canberra: Mulini Press, 1995, p. 122.

¹³³Wellington 1885, New Zealand Industrial Exhibition, *The official record*, pp. 152-153.

went in to enquire ...¹³⁴ Colonial shop windows were often used as small-scale exhibition forums, showing paintings prior to major exhibitions in other localities or, as Roger Blackley has noted, displaying ‘art unions’ or works to be raffled.¹³⁵ Harry Wrigg exhibited several of his detailed trompe l’oeil drawings in shop windows; when one of his drawings was exhibited in Upton’s window in 1872, it attracted great excitement among the Wellington public.¹³⁶ Similarly, Colonel Branfill, a good friend of Emily Harris, and Mrs Topliss had a number of their oil paintings displayed in the window of Hounsell & Co., a well-known bookseller in Nelson, before they were forwarded to the the New Zealand Fine Art Association’s 1890 exhibition in Wellington.¹³⁷ Booksellers filled a variety of colonial needs as, in addition to selling books and displaying works of art, they also supplied colonial artists with art supplies, including paper and paints. The Nelson bookseller H.D. Jackson, who published Harris’s three books, advertised regularly in Nelson newspapers and offered a range of materials for sale such as ‘fancy work’:

Just unpacked ... Several Cases of New Fancy Goods including New Work Baskets, lined and unlined; Fire Screens, Talk and Japanese Fans, Indian Boxes and Tea Trays, Photo. Albums and Screens ... Also, a nice assortment of New Fancy Work, Wools, Silks, Arrasene, Silk Cord, Pompoms, Indian Drops, &c., &c., &c.¹³⁸

Harris would have purchased her ‘decorative’ items from a bookseller such as Jackson, which she then painted with her botanical and floral motifs.

Harris often exhibited the same works of art at different exhibitions, a practice that is evident early on in her exhibiting career. At the 1879-80 Sydney International Exhibition, Harris entered ‘Twenty-eight Water Colours (drawings of New Zealand wild flowers and berries)’.¹³⁹ It is interesting to note that she perceived these 28 paintings as making up one large work:

When fin. there will be 28 distinct pictures, but forming a whole as illustrating one subj and therefore if looked upon in that light, one exhibited otherwise. Rule 6 only allows four pictures, unless by special permission.

¹³⁴‘2 August 1885’, Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part I, p. 3.

¹³⁵Roger Blackley, *Stray leaves: colonial trompe l’oeil drawings*, Wellington: Adam Art Gallery and Victoria University Press, 2001, p. 4.

¹³⁶‘Bazaar – Mr. Wrigg’s drawing’, *New Zealand Herald*, 29 December 1872, p. 2., cited in Roger Blackley, *Stray leaves: colonial trompe l’oeil drawings*, p. 4.

¹³⁷*Nelson Evening Mail*, 8 October 1890, p. 2.

¹³⁸*Nelson Evening Mail*, 6 August 1888, p. 2.

¹³⁹Sydney 1879-80, *New Zealand Court, International Exhibition Sydney, 1879, official catalogue of exhibits*, Sydney: Foster and Fairfax, 1879, p. 5.

Had I crowded the flowers into 1 or 2 pictures it would have destroyed the interest of the exhibit as in order to paint a good picture only a few would have been shown to advantage. I hardly think that any other plan than that I've adopted would do justice to the subject.¹⁴⁰

In a letter to the commissioners, she included an illustration as to how they might be hung (plate 17). She won a first award for her works, although the *Official record* states that she was awarded a prize for 'Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Flowers', while they were classified as 'Paintings' in the fine arts section of the New Zealand Court catalogue.¹⁴¹ Harris again exhibited 'Twenty-eight Watercolours of New Zealand Wildflowers and Berries' at the 1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition, presumably the same paintings from the previous year's exhibition. In the Melbourne Exhibition the paintings were also classified differently in two different catalogues; in the New Zealand Court catalogue the works were grouped in the 'Horticulture: Plants for Conservatories' category, while in the *Official record* they were classified as 'Various Paintings and Drawings'.¹⁴² Again the complex issue of classification is raised, as the category of 'Horticulture: Plants for Conservatories' relates to 'scientific illustration', while the category of 'Various Paintings and Drawings' relates to 'art'. This illustrates the somewhat fluid boundaries between science and art, and the discrepancies that could occur in the classification of these types of works in formal exhibition forums.

Although the types of works that Harris produced affected her artistic status, in many respects she can be identified as a professional artist. Harris was disadvantaged with regards to her domestic responsibilities and, consequently, she was not able to pursue her artistic career to the full. Yet, despite the hardships, she was able to earn a living from selling her works and teaching art pupils, and exhibited her works at numerous art exhibitions; research undertaken for this thesis found that Harris took part in nineteen exhibitions from 1879-99.¹⁴³ In

¹⁴⁰Emily Cumming Harris, letter to Exhibition Commissioner, 26 April 1879, MU000188, box 1, item 164, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

¹⁴¹*Official record of the Sydney International Exhibition, 1879*, Sydney: Thomas Richards, 1881, p. 1008 and *New Zealand Court, International Exhibition Sydney, 1879, official catalogue of exhibits*, p. 40.

¹⁴²Melbourne 1880-1881, *New Zealand Court, International Exhibition, 1880, Melbourne, catalogue of exhibits*, Melbourne: Mason, Firth & McCutcheon, [1880], p. 82, and *Official record containing introduction, history of exhibition, description of exhibition and exhibits, official awards of commissioners and catalogue of exhibits*, Melbourne: Mason, Firth & McCutcheon, 1882, p. 524.

¹⁴³These nineteen exhibitions have all been documented through exhibition catalogues or newspaper reviews. In a letter to the 1879-80 Sydney International Exhibition commissioners,

addition to showing works at formal art exhibition forums, she held 5 personal exhibitions in Nelson, Wellington, Wanganui, Stratford and New Plymouth between 1889-1899. Harris arranged venues for display, placed advertisements in local newspapers and charged an entry fee (plate 18). The personal shows were prompted by financial motives, as she noted in her diary in November 1889: 'I have added up all our accounts & find we cannot pay all we owe, so I have really decided to have my Exhibition of pictures.'¹⁴⁴ By this time, her reputation as an artist was well established in Nelson and the North Island and the personal exhibitions were well received. Harris also used these shows as an opportunity to advertise and sell copies of her books, *New Zealand flowers*, *New Zealand berries* and *New Zealand ferns*, which were published in 1890.

The first private exhibition was held in the Shelbourne Street school-room in Nelson, late in November 1889, and comprised a collection of Harris's paintings of flora on paper, painted table-tops and screens, as well as a collection of her father's and sister's paintings. The exhibition received four complimentary reviews in the *Nelson Evening Mail*, with the first review concluding that it '... should be visited by all lovers of art, who will see much to admire, and probably will not be satisfied until they have become the owners of one or more of the faithfully executed pictures.'¹⁴⁵ Harris recorded in her diary that fifty tickets had been sold several days before the exhibition, and on days where not as many people attended, 'the want of attendance was made up by what we sold.'¹⁴⁶ The exhibition was so successful that Harris was able to pay all the bills owing, and had enough money to travel to New Plymouth for her second exhibition, which was held in January 1890.

Harris recorded attendance figures for all her exhibitions, noting that in New Plymouth thirty-two people attended the opening day, and that three items were sold. Attendance figures remained fair for the duration of the show and Harris observed the appearance of fellow artist Georgina Hetley, although she did not record Hetley's response to her works. The following exhibitions were held in the

Harris mentions several other exhibitions that she had taken part in, however catalogues do not appear to have survived: 'In 1873 I received a silver medal for flower ptgs at the Nelson Exbn and in the same yr another silver medal for the best ptg of NZ flowers and berries in Hokitika. Since that time I have only exhibited at Wanganui ... a year and a half ago, they did not give any prizes or medals but I have some reason to believe that they liked my pictures', 25 Jan 1879, MU000188, box 1 item 10, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

¹⁴⁴'Nov 10 1889', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 28.

¹⁴⁵*Nelson Evening Mail*, 25 November 1889, p. 2.

¹⁴⁶'Friday Nov 22nd 1889', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 33.

Stratford town hall, the Shelbourne Street School-room in Nelson and Baker Brother's auction mart in Wellington and all received favourable reviews. For the most part attendance figures were high; Harris recorded more than two hundred visitors in the first few days of the second Nelson exhibition, but she was dissatisfied with the Wellington exhibition, as 'Wirth's circus & the elections keep people away. They go by thousands to the circus!'¹⁴⁷ Harris's diary ends with a clipping from the *New Zealand Mail* which reviewed the 1890 Wellington show:

The majority of the subjects are careful studies of some of the rarest and most beautiful foliage and flowers of this Colony, there being almost a complete collection of rare alpine plants and flowers, many of them painted from their natural growth . . . The exhibition taken as a whole, shows remarkable artistic talents, and gives a splendid insight into the really handsome flora of New Zealand.¹⁴⁸

Neither Harris nor Georgina Hetley appear to have exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts or Otago Art Society, as their names do not feature in any of the surviving exhibition catalogues during the 1870s-1890s period. Yet both women chose to show their works at the Auckland Society of Arts (ASA), the New Zealand Art Student's Association, which was also based in Auckland, and the Fine Arts Association of New Zealand in Wellington. By 1879 Georgina Hetley was living in Auckland, where she became a member of the Auckland Society of Artists, exhibiting for the first time that same year.¹⁴⁹ Hetley's art works were not mentioned in the *Auckland Evening Star* or *New Zealand Herald* exhibition reviews for 1879, but the notion that women's depictions of flora were perceived to be 'fashionable' is evident in one of the reviews that appeared in the *New Zealand Herald*:

Of Mrs Harrop's, Miss Keesing's and Miss Eames's drawings of flowers and berries, we can only say that they exhibit all that delicacy of taste of which such subjects are susceptible.¹⁵⁰

In 1880 the Society of Artists reformed as the Auckland Society of Arts and broadened its objectives to include 'Drawing, Paintings, Sculpture, Architecture, Modelling in Clay, Etching, Art Needlework, Wood Carving, Engraving,

¹⁴⁷ibid., p. 52.

¹⁴⁸*New Zealand Mail*, 17 October 1890, p. 25.

¹⁴⁹June Starke, 'Hetley, Georgina Burne 1832-1898', Claudia Orange (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume two, 1870-1900*, p. 211.

¹⁵⁰'Society of Artists' Exhibition', *New Zealand Herald*, 21 November 1879, p. 6.

Photographs, Art Design for Plate, Glass, China etc., Waxwork and Leatherwork.¹⁵¹ This new and expansive scope attracted wide interest and reflected the broad range of art works being produced during this time, including the numerous branches of ‘decorative’ art.¹⁵² As a working member, Hetley exhibited three ‘decorative’ items in the 1881 annual exhibition, and these were placed in the ‘Miscellaneous’ category:

360 Madeira Knitting, hand-made

374 Doilies of New Zealand Ferns and Mosses

375 Bouquet of Autumn Flowers and Ferns, in Cloth ¹⁵³

Hetley’s name featured often in the ASA exhibition catalogues during the 1880s and, like Harris, her early exhibits ranged from ‘decorative’ works to watercolour studies of New Zealand flora. Hetley was awarded a merit certificate for her eight watercolour studies of New Zealand ferns in 1882, while in 1883 she received prizes for her study of foliage, flowers and fruit and exhibit of mantelpiece drapery.¹⁵⁴ From 1884 onwards, however, Hetley concentrated solely on exhibiting her watercolour paintings of New Zealand flora, and appears never to have exhibited ‘decorative’ items again, perhaps in an attempt to distinguish herself as a serious professional painter of botanical subjects. Her name certainly became synonymous with ‘flower painting’ in New Zealand, for which she received favourable reviews:

Mrs Hetley secured the third prize; her ability as a flower painter is well known, having exhibited at previous exhibitions, and also being a prize-taker at the last exhibition. Her exhibit is a pleasing design, of bush-lawyer and supplejack berry.¹⁵⁵

Hetley’s watercolour paintings largely depicted New Zealand’s native flora, a pattern which is evident throughout her exhibiting career. Her paintings of indigenous flora were particularly well suited to the aims of the New Zealand Art Students’ Association, which was also based in Auckland. Established in 1884 with Kennett Watkins as president, the short-lived association aimed to ‘... devote its

¹⁵¹R. Tizard, *The Auckland Society of Arts, 1870-1970: a centennial history*, Auckland: Auckland Society of Arts, [1971], p. 11.

¹⁵²*ibid.*

¹⁵³Auckland 1881, Society of Arts Exhibition, *Catalogue*, Auckland: Wilson and Horton, 1881, pp. 18-19.

¹⁵⁴Auckland 1882, Society of Arts Exhibition, *Catalogue*, Auckland: H. Brett at the ‘Star’ Office, 1882, p. 16 and *Auckland Evening Star*, 12 April 1883, p. 2.

¹⁵⁵‘Auckland Society of Arts, conversazione at the Choral Hall’, *New Zealand Herald*, 6 November 1884, p. 6.

energies to the development of an art distinctive of this country ... ¹⁵⁶ The emphasis placed on indigenous subjects also extended to the decoration of the exhibition hall, which was fancifully decorated with native plants and shrubs; in the centre of the 1884 exhibition an archway was constructed out of nikau palms, toitoi and evergreens.¹⁵⁷ Although the association's exhibition catalogues have not survived, newspaper reviews offer an insight into the two major exhibitions held in 1884 and 1885. As a senior student, Hetley won second prize in 1884 for her study of 'Waiwera' and first prize in 1885, as recorded in the *Auckland Weekly News*: 'The first prize was taken by a study of 'Manuka' by 'Gaultheria' (Mrs Hetley), a prettily arranged and careful water colour painting.'¹⁵⁸ The reviewer for the *New Zealand Herald* noted of her works that she 'should have no difficulty in finding purchasers for them.'¹⁵⁹

Even though her subject matter included native grasses and ferns, as well as flowers, Hetley's works were largely received as 'flower paintings', and as such, specific language was employed to describe her works. Certain words like 'pretty', 'beautiful' and 'tasteful' ascribed gender values to her paintings and added weight to the idea that such works were feminine accomplishments, rather than works of art. Gendered language is evident in the *New Zealand Herald's* 1894 review for the Auckland Society of Arts exhibition:

Mrs Hetley has four studies of flowers painted with her usual taste, delicacy, and artistic ability, for which she has acquired a well-deserved reputation.¹⁶⁰

Feminine values are attributed to the works through the use of the words 'taste' and 'delicacy'. These notions are also present in the review of the same exhibition by the reviewer for the *Auckland Star*:

There are several exhibitors of flower painting. In the first rank stands Mrs Hetley, who has gained renown in various quarters by her skill and taste in this charming department of art.¹⁶¹

Yet the fluid boundaries of botanical and flower painting become apparent in the reviews of Hetley's works as, despite being praised as tasteful and beautiful, they

¹⁵⁶'New Zealand Art Students' Association', *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 October 1884, p. 26.

¹⁵⁷'New Zealand Art Students' Association Exhibition', *Auckland Evening Star*, 22 October 1885, p. 2.

¹⁵⁸'New Zealand Art Students' Association', *Auckland Weekly News*, 24 October 1885, p. 24.

¹⁵⁹'Auckland Society of Arts Christmas card competitions', *New Zealand Herald*, 7 November 1884, p. 5.

¹⁶⁰'Society of Arts Exhibition', *New Zealand Herald*, 8 March 1894, p. 6.

¹⁶¹'Auckland Society of Arts Exhibition', *Auckland Star*, 9 March 1894, p. 3.

were also lauded for their scientific accuracy. Like Emily Harris, Hetley sent several works over to London for the Colonial and Indian exhibition in 1886. Her exhibits comprised eight pictures of New Zealand flowers, which were placed on display alongside other works on paper in the Royal Albert Hall. An article in the *Magazine of Art* noted that:

The majority of the flower-pieces aim less at decorative effect than scientific accuracy . . . Among the watercolour drawings of native flowers there are several by Mrs G. Hetley, Mrs Tizard, Miss Cheeseman, and Miss Ridings, that are very well executed. The 'Nikau Palm', by the first-mentioned lady, may justly be called excellent, even among the large display of this class of work exhibited by colonial ladies.¹⁶²

These same items were available for purchase, and their sale was recorded in the *New Zealand Herald*: 'Mrs G. B. Hetley, of Auckland, received £3 3s for her eight pictures of New Zealand flowers.'¹⁶³

Hetley's affiliation with the ASA remained strong throughout her career, and she never received a negative review for her paintings. Hetley seemed to be taken more seriously as an artist than Harris, perhaps because she only showed works on paper. Her connections with eminent botanists such as Cheeseman, Buchanan and her ties with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew also served to strengthen her position as a serious artist who painted botanical specimens, and who brought to public attention a range of New Zealand flora that was not usually seen by the colonial public. Unlike Harris, Hetley also had the financial means to travel to London during the time of the Colonial and Indian exhibition, and was able to further promote her works at the exhibition by advertising her publication *The native flowers of New Zealand*. Hetley last exhibited with the ASA in 1895, and in the final few exhibitions leading up to this time she exhibited a range of paintings which depicted the flora of New Zealand and Madeira. For her final exhibition with the ASA, Hetley again received a glowing review:

It is hardly necessary to commend Mrs Hetley's flowers. Her work is well known for its invariable excellence, and the four pictures she has on exhibition are quite up to her usual standard.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶²J. A. Blaikie, 'Art in New Zealand', *Magazine of Art*, 1887, p. 36.

¹⁶³'Sale of New Zealand pictures', *New Zealand Herald*, 29 December 1886, p. 6.

¹⁶⁴'Auckland Society of Arts Exhibition', *Auckland Star*, 10 April 1895, p. 5.

One of Hetley's exhibits listed in the 1885 Industrial Exhibition is titled 'Australian Flowers, after Mrs Rowan'.¹⁶⁵ Hetley clearly demonstrated an awareness of the works produced by Australian-based artist Ellis Rowan. Born in Melbourne on 30 July 1848, Marian Ellis Rowan née Ryan was a prolific exhibitor and determined traveller who shamelessly promoted herself as a 'flower painter'. Although she engaged with the 'feminine' and 'genteel' practice of flower painting, Rowan turned it into an adventurous and highly profitable career, and her reputation preceded her wherever she travelled; Marianne North described Rowan as '... a very pretty fairy-like woman, always over-dressed ... I admired her for her genius and prettiness; she was like a charming spoiled child.'¹⁶⁶ Her celebrity was enhanced by a remarkable exhibiting career, which was littered with a collection of prize-winning medals, beginning with a bronze medal at the 1872 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition, followed by several gold medals at other large-scale international exhibitions, including the 1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition, 1888-89 Melbourne Centennial Exhibition and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, in Chicago.

Like Emily Harris and Georgina Hetley, Rowan produced decorative items such as painted screens (plate 36) and the '4 panels of Victorian Wildflowers' shown at the 1872 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition. She was also commissioned by the Royal Worcester Porcelain Company in England to produce 100 paintings of flowers and birds of paradise for use on items of china; the original paintings are now held in the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew Herbarium.¹⁶⁷ Yet Rowan offers an interesting contrast to the figures of Hetley and Harris, due to her unbounded public success, and her well-established international exhibiting career which saw her show works in Calcutta, Amsterdam, Russia and Denmark. A different pattern also emerges when her exhibition practices are examined closely; Rowan showed large numbers of her works at numerous large-scale international exhibitions, often within different colonial courts at the same exhibitions. This is first apparent in the 1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition, where her works were displayed in three different courts; in the Victorian Court, Rowan exhibited a 'Group of 14

¹⁶⁵ Wellington 1885, New Zealand Industrial Exhibition, *Official record*, p. 141.

¹⁶⁶ Marianne North, *Recollections of a happy life*, p. 149. During her time in America, Rowan underwent a 'face-lift' which involved injections of paraffin wax; one reporter described it as giving Rowan the 'look of a sad monkey in a small childish face', see Margaret Hazzard, *Australia's brilliant daughter, Ellis Rowan*, p. 108. Rowan also died her hair red with henna and took ten years off her birth date.

¹⁶⁷ Patricia Fullerton, *The flower hunter Ellis Rowan*, Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002, p. 13.

Water Colours, on Satin', in the Western Australia Court she entered 'Water Colour Paintings of Groups of the Wild Flowers of Western Australia' and in the New Zealand Court she exhibited 'Thirty Water Colour Drawings of New Zealand Wild Flowers, painted from Nature, by the Exhibitor'. Rowan had spent some time in New Zealand after her marriage to Charles Frederick Rowan in 1873, as she and her husband moved to New Plymouth, during which time Rowan was able to sketch the native flora. The couple returned to Victoria in 1877, and Rowan continued to sketch the wild flowers of the various states of Australia. Consequently, she had several paintings which could be displayed in various courts in the 1880-81 exhibition, as they depicted the native flora of the different regions. Moreover, it was a discerning marketing move on the part of Rowan, as the mass display of works in different courts ensured maximum exposure and publicity. She received complimentary reviews for her exhibits:

On entering the Victorian Gallery Mrs Rowan's four-leaved screen was the most prominent feature of attraction. It consists of beautiful arrangements of native flowers of Victoria, New Zealand and New South Wales, executed in water colours upon black, pale yellow, pale blue and crimson satin. Ten framed groups of Australian wildflowers, also on satin, were exhibited by the same lady.¹⁶⁸

The Melbourne *Age* also praised Rowan's paintings:

The finest feature in the court, however, is a collection of water color paintings of native flowers, by a Victorian lady, Mrs Rowan ... already well known here as an artist. The pictures are on a high toned paper, and each consists of a group of flowers of different species, exquisitely arranged, drawn and colored with perfect correctness and in the highest style of art. The collection represents a large portion, or nearly all, of the most beautiful shrubs and herbaceous plants, in which the flora of Western Australia is rich.¹⁶⁹

Rowan was awarded one of two gold medals for her exhibits in the Victorian Court, which caused an outburst, as several Australian artists indignantly stated that their works had been overlooked. Upon review, the judges awarded another gold medal to Louis Buvelot, whose work had previously been awarded a third-class certificate.¹⁷⁰ The furore that erupted on the part of the Australian artists was

¹⁶⁸Passage taken from the 1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition, *Official catalogue*, reproduced in Margaret Hazzard, *Australia's brilliant daughter*, p. 38.

¹⁶⁹'The Exhibition', *Age* (Melbourne), 15 December 1880, (supp) p. 1.

¹⁷⁰Margaret Hazzard, *Australia's brilliant daughter*, p. 38.

based on the fact that Ellis Rowan was considered to be a ‘female amateur’, and that the gold medal had been bestowed upon a group of ‘flower paintings’.

During the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London, Rowan again ensured maximum exposure for her paintings, by exhibiting ‘Ninety-five watercolour Drawings of Australian Flowers’ in the Victoria Court, as well as a ‘Painting of South Australian Flora’ in the South Australia Court. The pattern emerges again in the 1888-89 Centennial Exhibition, which was held in Melbourne, where Rowan entered exhibits in three different courts: ‘Queensland Flowers’ in the Queensland Court, oil paintings titled ‘Marguerites’ and ‘Chrysanthemum’ in the Victorian Artists’ Gallery, and ‘Twenty water-colour drawings etc. – New Zealand flora’ in the New Zealand Court. Like the Colinderies exhibition two years earlier, the Melbourne exhibition was enormous in scope, designed to show the British Empire in its full glory, and showcasing Melbourne at the centre. Other countries were also invited to take part, including the United States of America, Japan and Germany. Rowan enjoyed unprecedented success at the exhibition, in great contrast to her contemporary Emily Harris, who lamented her lack of success in her diary:

... the worst blow has been the failing to win a prize or to sell anything at the Melbourne Exhibition it has done me so much harm, if I had got a prize, I should no doubt have got pupils again.¹⁷¹

The 1888-89 exhibition marked the pinnacle of Rowan’s exhibiting career, as she was awarded the supreme gold medal for her exhibits; moreover, she was the only Australian painter to receive this distinction.¹⁷² Rowan received first prizes for ‘Chrysanthemums’ and ‘Seventeen flower pieces’ and her collection of New Zealand and Queensland paintings.¹⁷³ In the reports and awards of jurors section of the exhibition catalogue, Rowan’s works received another complimentary review:

Turning now to the art display in the Colonial Courts, the jury have to report that two colonies – Victoria and New Zealand – are represented by large and interesting collections of pictures. Four of the other Colonies – New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania – send small collections of works by local artists but, if we except the flower paintings of Mrs Rowan, none of the works exhibited are of sufficient importance to call

¹⁷¹‘28 April 1889’, Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 13.

¹⁷²Joan Kerr, *Heritage*, p. 442.

¹⁷³Melbourne 1888-89, Centennial International Exhibition, *Official record*, Melbourne: Sands & McDougall, 1890, p. 679.

for special comment. Mrs Rowan is an exhibitor in three of the Colonial Courts – Victoria, New Zealand and Queensland. Her masterly delineations of the Australian and New Zealand flora have excited general admiration, and have secured for her the highest honours.¹⁷⁴

The Victorian Society of Artists, however, was shocked at the decision that saw a woman and a flower painter awarded the gold medal. They delivered a protest letter, claiming that it was a direct insult to the ‘foreign artists who have done Australia the honour of competing in its International Exhibition.’¹⁷⁵ One of the judges defended the decision in a lengthy letter, stating:

... Even admitting flower painting to be an inferior branch of art, it is absurd to pretend that Mrs Rowan is not entitled to a first award for super-excellence in that branch ... To me it appears difficult to determine which is the more offensive – the ludicrous attempt to patronise and protect the foreign artists, or the cruel and unmanly effort to injure the artistic reputation of the lady overtly referred to in the resolution.¹⁷⁶

Rowan’s response to the outcry was not recorded, but her reputation did not sustain any damage and she still managed to attain a successful career; she continued to receive commissions for paintings and live comfortably off the earnings.

Rowan’s career was also characterised by her extensive travels, which saw her visit remote places on flower hunting expeditions and exhibit her works in solo shows. Initially accompanying her husband on his business trips, Rowan travelled around Melbourne, Queensland and Western Australia during the early 1880s. With the permission of her husband she travelled to India and Europe in 1883-84, and following his death in 1892 she embarked on a series of remarkable expeditions that took her to New Zealand, London and Germany, and from 1897 the West Indies and the United States of America. During her time in London, Rowan held an exhibition at the Dowdeswell Galleries, which received such excellent reviews that Rowan had them published in a booklet titled *Press opinions of Mrs F.C. Rowan’s watercolour flower drawings*.¹⁷⁷ Rowan also showed her paintings in solo shows in Germany and New York before returning to Australia and showing her

¹⁷⁴ibid., p. 675.

¹⁷⁵Cuttings book, National Library of Australia, no date but about 21/22 January, 1889, quoted in Margaret Hazzard, *Australia’s brilliant daughter*, p. 50.

¹⁷⁶*Argus*, Melbourne, no date, but letter is dated 25 January [1889], quoted in Margaret Hazzard, *Australia’s brilliant daughter*, p. 50.

¹⁷⁷Judith McKay, *Ellis Rowan: a flower hunter in Queensland*, p. 5.

works in a range of galleries in Melbourne and Sydney. Her final exhibition in 1920 was held at Anthony Hordern's Fine Art Gallery in Sydney and contained more than 1000 paintings, grossing a record-breaking £2000, and said to be the largest-ever solo exhibition of paintings in Australia.¹⁷⁸ A parallel can be drawn between Emily Harris's family shows and Ellis Rowan's solo exhibitions, as both women promoted the sale of their works in an exhibition forum. Yet Ellis Rowan received unprecedented international recognition and acclaim for her solo exhibitions and her celebrity afforded her greater opportunities, and ultimately greater success, than Harris.

¹⁷⁸Joan Kerr, *Heritage*, p. 442.

IV Botanical/Floral Publications

Sir Henry Ponsonby is commanded by the Queen to thank Mrs Charles Hetley for the copy of her beautiful book on the wild flowers of New Zealand which she has had the kindness to present to Her Majesty.¹⁷⁹

The measure of Georgina Hetley's success as a flower/botanical painter can be measured, in part, by the royal response to her ambitious publication *The native flowers of New Zealand*. The book was 'Dedicated by special permission to her most gracious Majesty Victoria Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India' (plate 26) and a copy must have been delivered to the Queen, as Hetley received a letter of gratitude (plate 25). The association with royalty was further reinforced in the prospectus for the second edition of her book, which contained a letter of commendation from Queen Victoria:

A remarkably handsome work. The plates are perfect facsimiles of accurate and beautiful water-colour drawings. The delineations are absolutely life like and perfect, and do not seem capable of improvement. To lovers of rare and choice flowers and to botanists the selection will be a source of enduring gratification.¹⁸⁰

The royal seal of approval certainly drew the attention of the press to Hetley's publication:

The Native Flowers of New Zealand was dedicated to the Queen, and Mrs Hetley has a letter from her Majesty in commendation of the work, and also letters from the principal botanists of New Zealand and Australia, and also from Lady Jersey and others.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹Georgina Hetley, holograph transcript of letter from Sir Henry Ponsonby on behalf of Queen Victoria, in Rev. Frederick Anson, letters, MS-Papers-0661, ATL.

¹⁸⁰'The Queen', *Prospectus of the native flowers of New Zealand, [now published in one volume]*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, [1888], pasted in the front of Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, London, 1888, located in the ATL.

¹⁸¹'Mrs Hetley's flowers', *Auckland Weekly News*, 15 April 1897, p. 37.

In the prospectus for the first edition of the book, Hetley explained her motives for publishing a book of New Zealand flora:

Believing that few people are aware of the number and great beauty – in some species the surpassing beauty – of the flowers indigenous to New Zealand and that many will be glad to help in making them more generally well known, I have undertaken and have newly completed a work illustrating as many as possible.¹⁸²

After visiting Thomas Cheeseman in 1884 and seeing several of his faded dried specimens, it was suggested to Hetley, by a gentleman present, that she paint them, to which she replied ‘I would, if the Government would help me.’¹⁸³ The government duly responded and Hetley was supplied with a pass for the railways from the Honourable E. Richardson, Minister of Public Works. The Minister of Education, Sir Robert Stout ‘took copies of my book for public schools and libraries’ and Mr Mills, the Managing Director of the Union Company ‘kindly gave me passes on the steamers.’¹⁸⁴ Thus, Hetley set out ‘to do for the flora of New Zealand what Dr Buller has done for its birds’ and travelled around North and South islands of New Zealand with her niece, making sketches of the native flora in preparation for her book.¹⁸⁵

Although widowed at a young age, Hetley never remarried and remained ‘Mrs Hetley’ throughout her lifetime, a title which undoubtedly assisted her social standing. She must have also been financially independent, and was certainly a great deal wealthier than Emily Harris, as in 1886 she travelled to London with her paintings to find a suitable publisher. Hetley’s contacts with distinguished New Zealand botanists proved useful in London, as she was invited to work at Kew Gardens by the director, Sir Joseph Hooker. She used this time to further prepare for her book:

I enjoyed my stay at Kew writing descriptions, doing dissections, and obtaining information from the numerous books, many of which are not to be obtained elsewhere. I was asked to put in dissections of flowers, and, not

¹⁸²*Prospectus of the native flowers of New Zealand, [first edition in three quarto parts]*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, [1886-87], loose inside the front cover of Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1887-88, located in the Beaglehole Room, Victoria University of Wellington.

¹⁸³Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁴*ibid.*

¹⁸⁵*New Zealand Mail*, 15 January 1886, p. 17.

having sufficient knowledge myself, I have traced all I could find from different books at Kew.¹⁸⁶

In a later letter addressed to the Director of Kew, Hetley also mentioned that Hooker's cousin Miss Smith assisted her with dissections, the same 'Miss Smith' who prepared the illustrations for Thomas Cheeseman's *Illustrations of New Zealand flora* (1914).¹⁸⁷

The time that Hetley spent in London searching for a publisher also coincided with the opening of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, in which Hetley exhibited eight watercolours of New Zealand flowers.¹⁸⁸ Prior to the opening of the exhibition, the *New Zealand Mail* had noted that Hetley intended to publish a volume of New Zealand flora and remarked:

Dr von Haast will promote the project in England, and it is thought that the period of the Colonial Exhibition will be very favorable for bringing out such a work proposed. Mrs Hetley intends going to England herself to superintend the publishing of the book.¹⁸⁹

Hetley eventually selected Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington to publish her book, as she had seen 'some works similar to mine ... beautifully produced' by the firm.¹⁹⁰ Leighton Brothers, a London firm with a reliable reputation, were chosen to produce the 36 coloured plates for her book, as they were expert in chromolithography, which was the most modern colour-printing technology available. This new and expensive technology was emphasised in the prospectus for the second edition:

Now Ready
A new art work
The Native Flowers of New Zealand
Illustrated in colours
In the best style of modern chromo-litho
Art, from drawings coloured to nature by
Mrs Chas. Hetley

¹⁸⁶Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, p. 8.

¹⁸⁷Georgina Hetley, letter to Directors at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, July 1888, DC volume 175, item 26, Archives, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

¹⁸⁸London, 1886, Colonial and Indian Exhibition, *Catalogue of New Zealand exhibits*, London: William Clowes & Sons, 1886, p. 10.

¹⁸⁹*New Zealand Mail*, 15 January 1886, p. 17.

¹⁹⁰Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, p. 7.

Dedicated by permission to Her Majesty the Queen ¹⁹¹

The first edition of *The native flowers of New Zealand* was published in three parts over the period 1887-88, available for £3 3s to subscribers.¹⁹² The second edition was published in one volume and was available for purchase at £3 13s 6d, a significant increase in price from the first edition.

Hetley recognised that there was a market available for such a publication, as Hooker's *Handbook* was out of date and there was a keen colonial interest in New Zealand's native flora. And while it was socially acceptable for her to produce a deluxe coloured volume of 'flower paintings', Hetley was determined to produce scientifically accurate illustrations, remarking that the '... the additional experience and the knowledge I have obtained at Kew, will, I trust, enable me to make my drawings of more botanical value ...'¹⁹³ The detailed drawings of dissections that Hetley made at Kew were included on three separate pages located at the back of the book (plate 29), but she also lightly sketched some dissections in the background of a few of the plates. This is consistent with Hetley's overall artistic practice; although her works were usually reviewed as 'flower paintings', she took care to ensure that they were botanically accurate. It is also in keeping with the concept of 'truth to nature', as extolled by John Ruskin. Ruskin would have been an influential figure in the colonies during the 1880s, as women in colonial New Zealand exhibited an awareness of Ruskin's writings and referred to him in their letters.¹⁹⁴

Hetley's connections to eminent botanists in New Zealand are apparent in the prospectus to the first edition of *The native flowers of New Zealand*, as it contains glowing letters of recommendation from authorities and natural historians throughout New Zealand, including Sir Julius von Haast, Director of the Canterbury Museum and Commissioner to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, and Professor Thomas Kirk, lecturer in natural history at the Lincoln School of Agriculture. John Buchanan, the government botanist, also offered his opinion on Hetley's works, as did George M. Thomson, a lecturer in natural history at the Dunedin High School and F.W. Hutton, Professor of Biology at the Canterbury

¹⁹¹ *Prospectus of the native flowers of New Zealand, [now published in one volume]*, London: Sampson Low, Marston Searle and Rivington, [1888], located in the ATL.

¹⁹² *Prospectus of the native flowers of New Zealand, [first edition in three quarto parts]*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, [1886-87], located in the Beaglehole Room, Victoria University of Wellington.

¹⁹³ Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, p. 8.

¹⁹⁴ Jane Clendon, 'The art of the untrained artist', pp. 289-290.

College. Hetley must have had a close relationship with John Buchanan, as he provided her with a paragraph for her prospectus and painted two specimens of *Senecio* for her, as she was unable to obtain them herself; these paintings make up plate 20. In a letter to Buchanan, Hetley thanked him for his contribution, stating that she admired and valued them greatly ‘both on account of their being so very correct and also showing your goodwill towards my work.’¹⁹⁵

A popular volume, *The native flowers of New Zealand* received complimentary reviews. In addition to recording the royal response of Queen Victoria, the prospectus to the second edition contained several other newspaper and magazine reviews. The *Evening Standard* wrote a complimentary notice:

Lovers of flowers will be delighted with this charming portfolio of admirably executed and coloured illustrations of the flowers of New Zealand. They are really works of art, and will win a place upon the drawing-room table of many besides those addicted to the collection of books on floral subjects.¹⁹⁶

A similar response was recorded by the *Illustrated London News*:

At present we limit ourselves to bearing witness to the great beauty of the flowers reproduced in the first part. The execution leaves little to be desired; and the plates bring home to us, as never before, the gorgeousness of the New Zealand flora. Mrs Hetley’s work is, by special permission, dedicated to Her Majesty, whose subjects will, we are sure, endorse the approval of so appreciative a lover of both Nature and Art.¹⁹⁷

Following the success of the publication, a French edition was published in 1889, titled *Fleurs sauvages et bois précieux de la Nouvelle-Zélande: ouvrage illustrée à profusion de magnifiques planches en couleur représentant 46 plantes en fleurs, presque toutes non figurées jusqu’à ce jour, plantes et fleurs dessinées et peintes d’après nature*. (Wild flowers and valuable timbers of New Zealand: a work illustrated with a profusion of magnificent plates in colour representing 46 plants in flower, almost all not illustrated until now, plants and flowers drawn from and painted from nature.) This French edition was co-authored by Edouard Francis Armand Raoul (1845-98), nephew of the eminent French botanist Etienne Raoul.

¹⁹⁵Georgina Hetley, holograph transcript of letter to John Buchanan, 19 April [1885 or 1886], qMS-0290, ATL. Original located in the Mitchell Library (State Library of NSW), Australia.

¹⁹⁶*Prospectus of the native flowers of New Zealand, [first edition in three quarto parts]*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, [1886-87], located in the Beaglehole Room, Victoria University of Wellington.

¹⁹⁷*ibid.*

Edouard Raoul had met Hetley during a scientific expedition that aimed to introduce commercially important plants to French territories and was so impressed by her paintings that he recommended publishing a French version of the book.¹⁹⁸ This edition also proved to be extremely popular and fifty copies were printed and sold. Hetley revealed in a letter to Alexander Turnbull that after M. Raoul had given away ‘thirty five copies to Museums and different public institutions he had only 15 copies left, of these he sold 13 the first week that were at the [1888-89 Melbourne Centennial] Exhibition.’¹⁹⁹

Hetley intended to publish further volumes of her paintings and in 1888 wrote to William Thistleton-Dyer (1843-1928), the director of Kew, expressing her wish to further her ‘project’: ‘I am very anxious to continue the work I have begun, but in another form ... It would be a work I should delight in, to go again on the mountains and paint them from nature.’²⁰⁰ A follow-up volume, however, never eventuated due to the financial expense; Hetley noted later that year that her book was ‘originally intended to be a five part one ... but the expenses of publication are so great that altho’ the edition of 500 copies is nearly sold out, I have as yet no profit.’²⁰¹

The native flowers of New Zealand was exceptional for its time: the first full-colour, sumptuous volume that depicted New Zealand’s native flora. The colour plates are also exceptional and, although they are not sharply defined, they are still reasonably detailed. The plate depicting *Metrosideros florida*, otherwise known as Climbing Rata, was skillfully rendered by Hetley (plate 28). The yellow-green tinge of the petals at the bud stage was carefully depicted, as were the bright scarlet stamens that develop later, and Hetley also accurately depicted the woody capsules of the plant. The plate, however, bears witness to the overcolouring, fuzzy definition and bright colours of the chromolithographic process. In order to achieve each coloured plate, a separate lithographic stone was required for each colour and, as the technology was new, the end result was often overly brightly coloured; in the *Metrosideros florida* plate this is evident in the

¹⁹⁸F. Bruce Sampson, *Early New Zealand botanical art*, p. 103.

¹⁹⁹Georgina Hetley, letter to A. Turnbull, 8 October 1889, MS-Papers-0057-036, ATL.

²⁰⁰Georgina Hetley, letter to Directors at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, July 1888, item 26, Archives, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The son-in-law of J.D. Hooker, William Thistleton-Dyer was assistant director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew from 1875-1885, and took over from Hooker as director from 1885-1905. He is often cited as the director who snubbed Beatrix Potter and her fungus paintings; see Richard Mabey, *The flowering of Kew: 200 years of flower paintings from the Royal Botanic Gardens*, London: Century, 1988, p. 6.

²⁰¹Georgina Hetley, letter to A. Turnbull, 26 September 1889, MS-Papers-0057-036, ATL.

garish green leaves, which are almost lime in tone, and the brown stem which is tinged with orange. Some of the plates are also rendered on beige backgrounds, such as Hetley's depiction of *Plagianthus lyalli*, (plate 27); while the white blossoms are highlighted against the darker background, the clarity of the overall image is lessened, as the leaves and stem bleed into the background colour. Although definition was lost in the chromolithographic process, Hetley's works were still regarded as being botanically accurate; indeed, the original watercolours were praised for their accuracy and beauty by the botanists from whom she had solicited recommendations for her prospectuses. Thomas Kirk was '... much pleased with the faithfulness and beauty of her delineations. The drawings unquestionably form the best and most comprehensive scenes of illustrations of the New Zealand Flora that has come under my notice.'²⁰² While Hetley's watercolour *Ferns* (plate 30) was not one of the original watercolours prepared for her publication, her eye for detail is nevertheless evident in the brown bands present on the fungus and in the feathered detail on the fern fronds.

Hetley included brief descriptions of each of the botanical specimens depicted in the plates, recording the location and flowering time of each specimen, as well as its Latin name, common name and 'native' name, if known. In accordance with the fashion of 'economic botany', she also occasionally described the useful properties of the flora; the description accompanying the illustration of *Plagianthus lyalli*, or Lace-Bark Tree, notes that the 'bark is remarkably tough and is often used by bushmen as a substitute for rope (Cheeseman).' (plate 22).²⁰³ The text accompanying *Freycinetia banksii* records that the 'inner leaves and spike are of a thick, white juicy substance, which is said to make a good preserve; the young colonists are fond of eating it, a taste shared by the rats ... The leaves are used for basket making', while the properties of *Phebalium nudum* related to perfume, as its '... foliage and flowers have a strong, but pleasant aromatic smell, and would probably yield an essential oil valuable for perfumery purposes'.²⁰⁴

The illustrations prepared by Sarah Featon for the *Art album of New Zealand flora* are similar in style to those produced by Georgina Hetley. The first fully-coloured art book to be published in New Zealand, the *Art album* was published in 1888,

²⁰² *Prospectus of the native flowers of New Zealand, [first edition in three quarto parts]*, London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, [1886-87], located in the Beaglehole Room, Victoria University of Wellington.

²⁰³ Georgina Hetley, *The native flowers of New Zealand*, plate 34 *Plagianthus lyalli*.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, plate 36 *Freycinetia banksii* and plate 32 *Phebalium nudum* (Maire-Han).

and also had connections to royalty; a copy was presented to Queen Victoria in a special casket made of New Zealand woods and the Queen conveyed her grateful thanks via Sir Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies.²⁰⁵

Like *The native flowers of New Zealand*, the Featons' *Art album* is a large de luxe publication comprising 40 colour chromolithographic plates of New Zealand's native flora. Arranged in accordance with the Linnaean system of orders, genera and species, the book was marketed as being virtually 'an illustrated reproduction of Hooker's *Handbook of New Zealand Flora* ... popularly treated'.²⁰⁶ While Sarah Featon contributed the illustrations, her husband Edward wrote the text, describing the various properties of each specimen depicted and its economic potential, sometimes using descriptive prose; in addition to listing the properties of *Ranunculus lyalli*, he poetically described it in verse:

... Born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.²⁰⁷

The Featons' publication was initially published in three parts, and later published in one volume. The prospectus for the second division of the work listed the various bindings available:

Handsome and appropriate covers will be ready for subscribers after publication of the work at the following prices:—
Cloth (Gilt) £0 10 0
Full Calf or Morocco (Extra Gilt) £1 0 0²⁰⁸

It was also intended to be published in three volumes, but the prohibitive cost meant that subsequent volumes never eventuated; Sarah Featon later recalled that the project had cost her husband £1400 for a thousand copies.²⁰⁹ Moreover, the Wellington publishing firm Bock & Cousins Ltd. dissolved in 1889 because of the financial strain that resulted from the pioneering publication.²¹⁰

²⁰⁵F. Bruce Sampson, *Early New Zealand botanical art*, p. 95.

²⁰⁶*Prospectus for the art album of New Zealand flora, [royal quarto edition]*, Wellington: Bock & Cousins, [1888-89], in Sarah Featon's correspondence file, MU000001, box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

²⁰⁷Edward and Sarah Featon, *Art album of New Zealand flora*, plate 6.

²⁰⁸*Prospectus of the art album of New Zealand flora, [second division]*, Wellington: Bock & Cousins, [1888], loose inside the cover of the *Art album of New Zealand flora*, Wellington: Bock & Cousins, 1889, located in the Beaglehole Room, Victoria University of Wellington.

²⁰⁹Sarah Featon, letter to Director of Wellington Museum, 4 December 1919, MU000001, box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

²¹⁰Robin Gwynn, 'Cousins, Alfred Ernest 1852-1935', Claudia Orange (ed.), *Dictionary of New Zealand biography, volume two*, pp. 48-49.

Recalling their motivations for publishing the volume, the Featons stated in the preface that they wished to prove ‘fallacious and incorrect’, the assertion that there were no flowers in New Zealand.²¹¹ Furthermore, they stated that their publication aimed to be ‘serviceable to the student, and at the same time prove acceptable to the general public.’²¹² Thus, while it was a botanical volume with scientific descriptions, emphasis was also placed on the artistic merit of the volume, an aspect evident in its title and sumptuous colour plates; three separate prospectuses for the publication were discovered during the course of research for the *Art album*, each stressing the artistic and botanical merit of the work. As the prospectus for the second division asserts: ‘... we have received unsolicited testimony from some of our ablest botanists, warmly approving the artistic excellence, and educational merits of the work.’²¹³ John Buchanan, Thomas Cheeseman, H. C. Field and Professor Thomas Kirk feature among the botanists recorded in the list of subscribers to the Author’s edition; Edward Featon actually wrote to several eminent figures, including Buchanan, to promote the publication and request botanical specimens for his wife to paint.²¹⁴

Presumably working under the supervision of her husband, Sarah Featon used *Hooker’s handbook* to guide her watercolour sketches, as she later recalled in a letter to the Director of the Wellington Museum:

I should like it if you see fit to take Hooker’s Flora in hand as you look over them. By the by I used to keep that book open beside me when I was painting them so I think you will find them all correct.²¹⁵

Although the other two volumes never eventuated, Sarah Featon painted 307 specimens from all over New Zealand in preparation for their publication, often including several specimens on a page. The entire project took her eight years to paint, although it does not appear that Sarah Featon undertook any botanical excursions to collect the specimens herself; botanists and noted figures such as William Colenso and Bishop Williams assisted the Featons in their acquisition of specimens.²¹⁶

²¹¹Edward and Sarah Featon, *Art album of New Zealand flora*, p. viii.

²¹²*ibid*, p. vii.

²¹³*Prospectus of the art album of New Zealand flora, [second division]*, Wellington: Bock & Cousins, [1888], located in the Beaglehole Room, Victoria University of Wellington.

²¹⁴Edward and Sarah Featon, *Art album of New Zealand flora*, pp. 179-180.

²¹⁵Sarah Featon, letter to Director of Wellington Museum, 15 January 1920, MU000001, box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

²¹⁶Sarah Featon, letter to Minister of Internal Affairs, 19 September 1919, MU000001, box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The frontispiece that Sarah Featon prepared for the *Art album* (plate 21) vividly illustrates a range of native New Zealand floral specimens in a spectacular bouquet or ‘art’ arrangement.²¹⁷ It clearly demonstrates the authors’ wish to illustrate the profusion of flowers in New Zealand, and calls to mind the watercolours produced by Ellis Rowan, who often depicted floral specimens in bouquet arrangements (plate 32). Featon carefully blended art with science in her depiction of *Kohekohe* (plate 23). The chromolithograph depicts the leaves, flowers and seed pods of the plant and Featon has carefully composed the image so that the flowers cascade across the plate in an arc; the arrangement is both botanically correct and artistically pleasing. Featon’s original watercolours are more true to colour than the chromolithographs produced after them and some of the detail in the originals was inevitably lost in the chromolithographic process. Although her depiction of the Chatham Island Forget-Me-Not (plate 20) was not published in the *Art album*, the vivid colour in Featon’s palette is evident, as is her attention to detail; she has carefully painted each tiny flower, in both bud and full bloom, and captured the venation in the giant leaf. Like Hetley’s, the images in the *Art album* are also rendered against a darker background, as can be seen in the depictions of *Pikiarero* (plate 22) and *Yellow kowhai* (plate 24). The plates received glowing reviews, and were hailed for being the first of their kind to be produced in New Zealand:

Mrs Featon has been remarkably successful in reproducing the natural effects and the lithographers Bock and Cousins of Wellington have interpreted the artist in a manner that could scarce have been excelled in the chromo-lithographic printing establishments of Europe.²¹⁸

Comparisons were also drawn between the Featon’s publication and Sir Walter Buller’s *A history of the birds of New Zealand*, of which the second edition had just been published:²¹⁹

It is a work of the highest artistic merit ... It has been deservedly characterised as accomplishing for the luxuriant foliage of New Zealand what Sir Walter Buller has so successfully achieved for its ornithology. It is unquestionably a great colonial work of art.²²⁰

²¹⁷Edward and Sarah Featon, *The art album of New Zealand flora*, p. xi.

²¹⁸‘Reviews’, *Auckland Evening Star*, 17 December 1887, p. 7.

²¹⁹Sir Walter Lawry Buller, *A history of the birds of New Zealand*, London: Sir Walter Lawry Buller, 1887-88, second edition.

²²⁰*New Zealand Times*, 7 December 1887, quoted in *Prospectus of the art album of New Zealand flora, [royal quarto edition]*, Wellington: Bock & Cousins, [1888-89], in Sarah Featon’s correspondence file, MU000001, Box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The publication was promoted further at the 1888-89 Centennial International Exhibition in Melbourne, where it was entered in the category of ‘Engravings and Lithographs’ by the publisher Bock & Cousins.²²¹

The three books produced by Emily Harris differ quite markedly from Hetley’s and the Featons’ floral/botanical publications, as they were decidedly not de luxe colour volumes. Like Hetley and Sarah Featon, Harris utilised some of the conventions of ‘scientific botanical illustration’, but her lithographs also link to the tradition of ‘florilegium’ publications which emerged during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Florilegia were not intended to aid in scientific classification but existed more for decorative purposes; structural details of plants were suppressed, depictions of plants were often accompanied by poetry and the beauty of flowers was valued over their practical use. As early as 1879, the suggestion was made for Harris’s paintings to be published; after seeing Harris’s works exhibited at the 1879-80 Sydney International exhibition a reviewer for the *New Zealand Mail* commented:

Miss Harris, of Nelson, contributes twenty-eight drawings of New Zealand wild flowers and berries. These are not only well drawn but faithfully coloured. She is deserving of more than commendation, and such talent as she evidently possesses should not be lost to the colony; here at least is a painstaking and efficient artist, and it would not be saying too much in her favor to state that it would not be unworthy of the botanical world if she were to be asked to contribute drawings for a work on New Zealand wild flowers, nor would a publisher find such a work unrenumerative; there is a good opening for a production of this character, and no doubt a liberal Government would assist.²²²

Yet Harris never received any kind of assistance from the government, and it was not until 1890 that her books finally came into fruition. She first mentioned her publishing plans in a diary entry dated ‘August 22nd 1888’, in which she refers to the Nelson publisher ‘Mr. Jackson’:

22nd Went to Jackson’s for some wool etc Ralph Jackson said ‘Oh! Miss Harris I have a letter from my father for you.’ Mr Jackson had enclosed the estimated cost of publishing my drawing books from J.W. Walker & Co.

²²¹Melbourne 1888-89, Centennial International Exhibition, *Official record*, p. 518.

²²²‘The Sydney International Exhibition’, *New Zealand Mail*, 6 December 1879, p. 22.

London . . . Mr Jackson advises me to illustrate some little books for gift books.²²³

In preparation for the publication of her books, several of Harris's paintings were displayed in a shop window, in order to attract subscribers; again the shop window was used as an exhibition forum to gauge public interest. By November, however, she described how she was now in a 'pretty considerable fix as to how to go on with my book', as she had failed to inform Jackson that she could not afford the cost: 'Publishing, that is the real trouble, if booksellers will not order copies before it is printed what can be done.'²²⁴ Proof sheets ordered from England arrived in July 1889, while proof copies of the actual publications arrived in early 1890. These were shown to the *Nelson Evening Mail*, who commented that they were 'most artistically executed and every detail of the graceful fronds is shown with clearness and distinction' and that they would 'doubtless meet with a ready sale.'²²⁵ Because Harris was struggling with the financial cost, Jackson agreed to go 'halves':

Memo; of agreement between Miss Harris & H.W. Jackson re the publication of drawings from Books. The Books to be published by H.W. Jackson Miss Harris supplying the drawings. All expenses to be charged to the Book after these are paid the profits to be equally divided.²²⁶

Thus the lithographs were prepared in England, and the three books published locally in Nelson, under the name Jackson, in 1890: *New Zealand flowers*, *New Zealand ferns* and *New Zealand berries*.²²⁷

Each book contains twelve monotone lithographs accompanied by a few sentences of descriptive text; Harris had originally intended to include poems along with her drawings, but ended up with descriptions very similar to Hetley's.²²⁸ She also recorded some of the useful properties of the native flora, noting in *New Zealand berries* of the *Karaka*: 'Fruit bright orange colour, pulp edible, the kernel poisonous until steeped for a long time in salt and water, formerly much used for food by the Maories.'²²⁹ Similar observations were registered for the fern *Marattia fraxinea* in *New Zealand ferns*:

²²³'August 22nd 1888', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 1.

²²⁴'17 November 1888', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 2.

²²⁵*Nelson Evening Mail*, 9 January 1890, p. 2.

²²⁶'11 July 1889', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 19.

²²⁷Later the same year the books were published in a single volume, *Flowers, ferns and berries of New Zealand*.

²²⁸'April 28th', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 13.

²²⁹Emily Cumming Harris, *New Zealand berries*, Nelson: H.D. Jackson, 1890, p. 4.

Edible fern. A very handsome plant growing inland in the North Island. It is much prized for gardens and green houses. The root resembling a horse shoe, is baked and eaten by the Maories.²³⁰

Given that she could not afford colour printing, Harris coloured some of the editions by hand, using watercolours. Alexander Turnbull and Lady Ranfurly were among those to receive hand-coloured sets:

I have just finished colouring the three books for you, Flowers, Berries and Ferns, and am sending them by this mail. I am sorry to have kept you waiting so long but have been hard at work painting ever since my return from Wellington, some of the works being wanted to send to England for Christmas presents, Lady Ranfurly had two sets (six books).²³¹

Harris charged Alexander Turnbull ten shillings for each book, £1 10s in total.²³² Because the lithographic plates in her books were not coloured, they could not compete with the more alluring technology of chromolithography. Yet the volumes that Harris coloured by hand are beautifully tinted, and far more truthful in colour than the coarse colours produced by chromolithography. She noted in her diary that the books received complimentary notices: 'During the next two months Mr Jackson received a good many papers with favourable notices, but the only place where they sold quickly was Melbourne and at 10/6 instead of 7/6.'²³³ The books also received a warm review in the *Nelson Evening Mail*:

We have to acknowledge the receipt from Mr H.D. Jackson, the publisher, of three exceedingly well got up books containing respectively illustrations of the flowers, ferns and berries of New Zealand. These were drawn by Miss E. C. Harris, whose artistic skill in that particular direction is well known, and the work of lithographing them was entrusted to an English firm, who have performed their task with great taste and fidelity ... care having been taken to select the choicest specimens in several departments, and no more interesting present could be made to friends in England or elsewhere. The time, too, is an opportune one, as, if despatched by the next San Francisco mail, they will reach the old country just before Christmas ... The series of three books is published at the very moderate rate of seven and sixpence, and we quite expect to hear that the whole edition has met with a rapid sale.²³⁴

²³⁰Emily Cumming Harris, *New Zealand ferns*, Nelson: H.D. Jackson, 1890, p. 3.

²³¹Emily Cumming Harris, letter to A. Turnbull, 1 November 1899, MS-Papers-0057-32, ATL.

²³²*ibid.*

²³³'17 December', Emily Cumming Harris diaries 1885-1891 (typescript), part II, p. 52.

²³⁴*Nelson Evening Mail*, 9 October 1890, p. 2.

Jackson also promoted the three books in advertisements that ran for two weeks in Nelson newspapers, and emphasised the fact that they would make good Christmas presents (plate 19).

The lithographs in the three books are not to scale, and were based on a series of Harris's pencil drawings, which measure approximately 30 x 20cm. Four of the original drawings are held in the Alexander Turnbull Library's collection; *Lycopodium billaedieri*, *varium*, from *Ferns*, *Poropora* and *Kohe-kohe* from *Berries* and *Plagianthus lyalli* from *Flowers*.²³⁵ The lithographs remain fairly true to Harris's drawings, although the contrast between light and dark is more pronounced in the pencil drawings, and plant details are rendered more tightly. In accordance with the conventions of botanical illustration, Harris depicted plant specimens against a plain white background, and they are suggestive of the fact that she drew them from nature. Yet like Hetley and Sarah Featon, she was also concerned with artistic composition, rendering the plants in three dimensions and casting shadows, meaning that her works can be identified as botanical/flower paintings. The plate depicting *Dianella intermedia* (blue berry) in *Berries* (plate 13) can be examined in this way; Harris has arranged the specimen so that the branches holding the berries curve and twine around parts of the page, and the leaves in the bottom left reach out towards the edge of the page to balance the composition. It is interesting to compare the lithographic image to one of Harris's watercolours of the same botanical subject: *Dianella intermedia* blue berry (plate 12); although it mirrors the composition of the lithograph, with the leaves and berries reaching out across the page from right to left, the watercolour image is more lithe and detailed. The covers of the books also blend together science with art as the title typeface is set against an art palette background, while botanical specimens twist down the frame of the title page and poke through the thumb hole of the palette (plate 15).

In the *Dianella intermedia* (blue berry) lithograph, Harris hints at the plant's natural environment, as the plant protudes from the soil and has a butterfly perching on one of the branches. Both Marianne North and Ellis Rowan also depicted butterflies, various insects and birds in their botanical/flower studies (plate 34, 36 and 38), motifs which link to the florilegia tradition and publications such as Robert Thornton's (1768?-1837) *Temple of Flora*, which was first

²³⁵B-155-002, B-155-004, B-155-003 and B-155-001, Drawings and Prints, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

published in book form in 1807.²³⁶ Celebrating the Linnaean system and promoting Victorian idealism, Thornton's publication contains 31 coloured plates combined with prose and poetry (plates 7-8). While the specimens are identifiable, they are rendered in historical, allegorical and fanciful landscape settings, replete with insects, such as butterflies and dragonflies, and birds; Thornton insisted that his artists displayed the plants in the full splendour of their natural habitat. The *Temple of Flora* is widely regarded as an artistic work full of dramatic coloured engravings and aquatints, rather than a 'scientific' work.

Harris also made studies of New Zealand mountain flora in the 1890s, which she intended to have published, although the project was never realised.²³⁷ The collection of the ink and watercolour studies of mountain flora is now housed in the Alexander Turnbull Library, in Wellington. Harris again rendered the plants in their alpine environments, as can be seen in *Rubus parvus* – *mountain bramble* (plate 16). This ink and watercolour painting clearly depicts the flowers, berries, creepers and leaves of the bramble, and Harris has a softly rendered mountain landscape in the background.

Ellis Rowan was also involved in the realm of publishing, drawing, and then engraving, over 100 illustrations for the *Picturesque atlas of Australasia*.²³⁸ A large Australian project, the *Picturesque atlas* was designed to be issued in 60 parts, and was published between 1886 and 1889.²³⁹ The publication set out to describe Australia, its people and geography and contains more than 700 illustrations, with the largest number contributed by G. and J. Ashton and Ellis Rowan; the majority of Rowan's illustrations are of flowers and plants, which also sometimes incorporate birds and butterflies. Rowan's depiction of *Marianthus bignoniavens* from the country of Lowan (plate 35) is a typical illustration; a bouquet-style arrangement of flowers and vines is interspersed with the text, and Rowan's signature becomes a part of the work, blending in with a branch at the lower left of the image. The botanical text for the *Picturesque atlas* was contributed by Baron Ferdinand von Mueller (1825-1896), the Government Botanist of Victoria

²³⁶ John Robert Thornton, *Temple of Flora, or garden of the botanist, poet, painter, and philosopher*, London: Dr Thornton, 1812, second edition.

²³⁷ Harris also contributed illustrations of fairies and New Zealand plants for the children's book *Fairyland in New Zealand: a story of the caves*, by Sarah Rebecca Moore, Auckland: Brett Printing and Publishing, 1909.

²³⁸ Patricia Fullerton, *The flower hunter Ellis Rowan*, p. 6.

²³⁹ Garren, Andrew (ed.), *Picturesque atlas of Australasia, illustrated under the supervision of Frederic B. Schell, assisted by leading colonial and American artists, with over eight hundred engravings on wood*, Sydney: Picturesque Atlas Publishing Company, 1886-89.

and a close family friend of Rowan's; throughout her career, until his death, she sent him botanical specimens for identification and classification and his handwriting is evident on the back of many of her pictures.²⁴⁰ The original drawings from which the engravings for the *Picturesque atlas* were made were exhibited at the Melbourne 1888-89 Centennial International Exhibition in the New South Wales Court, in the category of 'Various Paintings, Drawings etc.'²⁴¹ Considering that Rowan was also showing her paintings in three different colonial courts at this exhibition, her profile as a botanical/flower painter must have been greatly enhanced, both nationally and internationally.

Although she did not publish her own botanical/floral publication, Rowan did publish her autobiography, *A flower-hunter in Queensland and New Zealand*, in 1898. Moreover, she contributed paintings and drawings towards other publications, such as the American botanist Alice Lounsberry's three books *A guide to the wildflowers*, *A guide to trees* and *Southern wildflowers and trees*, which were published 1899-1901. Rowan also contributed 16 colour plates for publication in *A comprehensive catalogue of Queensland plants* by Frederick Bailey.²⁴² Rowan's works can be described as uneven, like Harris's, as sometimes she employed artistic licence in the rendering of her botanical subjects, joining plants of different species together in order to produce a pleasing composition.²⁴³ Rowan described her Queensland paintings as 'flower paintings':

The collection is painted with a view of showing the general public how the flowers grow with their surroundings – While they are all botanically correct you cannot in the one drawing make a picture of the flower and also show it scientifically drawn in sections which is quite a different study.²⁴⁴

Yet her association with the botanist von Mueller and the subsequent illustrations she produced for books on botany, including the *Picturesque atlas*, reflect her fusion of science and art. The paintings that Rowan exhibited were praised for their scientific and artistic merit; Lord Leighton, the ex-President of the Royal Academy in London wrote of her works exhibited in London: 'Mrs Rowan's work is characterised by purity of tone without feebleness – each specimen botanically perfect ... created into a lovely picture.'²⁴⁵ Rowan's paintings are detailed and

²⁴⁰Patricia Fullerton, *The flower hunter Ellis Rowan*, p. 3.

²⁴¹Melbourne 1888-89, Centennial International Exhibition, *Official record*, p. 492.

²⁴²Frederick Bailey, *A comprehensive catalogue of Queensland plants*, Brisbane: A.J. Cumming, 1913.

²⁴³Judith McKay, *Ellis Rowan: a flower hunter in Queensland*, p. 61.

²⁴⁴Ellis Rowan quoted in Judith McKay, *Ellis Rowan: a flower hunter in Queensland*, p. 58.

²⁴⁵Lord Leighton quoted in Patricia Fullerton, *The flower hunter Ellis Rowan*, p. 20.

accurate enough to be able to recognise the species depicted, such as her painting of the New Zealand *Titoki* (plate 33), which depicts the leaves, flowers and berries in a pleasing and balanced composition which tumbles down the page. She also rendered many of her botanical subjects on grey paper, in order to bring out the vibrant and jewel-like colours of the flowers, birds and butterflies, as can be seen in plate 34.

V Conclusion

The government-sponsored ‘scientific botanical’ publications published by botanists in New Zealand presented detailed black and white lithographic images and descriptive scientific text; this is evident in John Buchanan’s *The indigenous grasses of New Zealand* (plate 4) and Thomas Kirk’s *Forest flora of New Zealand* (1899). Yet when Hetley’s and the Featons’ volumes are examined, it becomes clear that they were presenting something different; theirs were publications that possessed scientific applications but which also emphasised the artistic qualities of the images and the new ‘artistic’ and expensive process of chromolithography. While Hetley did not include detailed descriptive text, she did take care to include three pages of scientific dissections along with her colour plates, and promoted the book with letters of recommendation from eminent botanists. Similarly, the Featons marketed their publication as an illustrated version of *Hooker’s handbook*, but used the word ‘Album’ in their title to align it to the realm of art, along with their ‘gorgeous’ colour plates. Both Georgina Hetley and Sarah Featon used the conventions of botanical illustration, but blurred the boundaries of science by emphasising the artistic quality of their books. Their volumes were also exceptional, as nearly all of the major illustrated publications on New Zealand flora were uncoloured. While Henry Field had hoped to use chromolithography for *The ferns of New Zealand* he abandoned the idea because it would have made his publication too expensive (plate 5).

Although Harris’s three books were not as sumptuous as her female contemporaries’ publications, her volumes also demonstrate a fusion of ‘art’ with ‘science’. Marketed as art books, from which drawing copies could be made (plate 19), the lithographs, and the original pencil drawings from which the lithographs were made, also employ the conventions of scientific botanical illustration. Harris rendered her specimens against a plain white background and presented them as ‘cuttings’, by drawing the stems as if they were cut sharply on an angle. These conventions contribute to the notion of an objective study as we believe that the artist drew her specimens from nature and that her depictions were ‘truthful’. Yet

Harris was also clearly concerned with subjective artistic concerns such as composition and pictorial effect, which fall outside the boundaries of scientific botanical illustration.

Traditionally, botanical illustrations have been aligned with natural history and placed in museum collections rather than in art gallery collections. Yet, despite the fact that their works were not recognised as ‘scientific botanical illustrations’, the majority of the women’s paintings and drawings ended up in museum or library collections: Emily Harris’s paintings are housed in the Alexander Turnbull Library, the Taranaki Museum and Nelson Provincial Museum; Georgina Hetley’s paintings are located in the Hawke’s Bay Museum and the Alexander Turnbull Library; Sarah Featon’s watercolours are located in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the majority of Ellis Rowan’s works are in the National Library of Australia, Canberra. Only two of Harris’s works are held in an art institution, the Suter Art Gallery in Nelson, and these were donated by the artist herself.²⁴⁶ This also reflects the attitude of art institutions in the early twentieth century, which viewed representations of flora as belonging to the realm of ‘science’ rather than art; even so, a number of the women had difficulties in finding institutions that would accept their collections of ‘hybrid’ paintings. In seeking a venue for her permanent collection, Sarah Featon first wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs:

I have already written to the Smithsonian Institute in America and likewise to the South Kensington Museum in London, but it does seem a pity that so large and unique a collection should be allowed to go out of this country. It was originally valued at £1000 but as I need the money I will gladly take one hundred and fifty pounds £150.²⁴⁷

After a lengthy correspondence, the Dominion Museum eventually agreed to purchase Featon’s collection of 134 watercolours, which depicted 307 species of plants, for the relatively inexpensive sum of £150 in February 1920, although the Director recorded that ‘From an art point of view, they are inferior to a work of a similar kind done by Miss Jones, of Nelson.’²⁴⁸ Ellis Rowan fought an

²⁴⁶Susan Butterworth, *The Suter: one hundred years in Nelson*, Nelson: Nikau Press, 1999, p. 42.

²⁴⁷Sarah Featon, letter to Minister of Internal Affairs, 19 September 1919, MU000001, Box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

²⁴⁸Director of the Wellington Museum, letter to the Under Secretary, 16 December 1919, MU000001, box 5, item 15, 2/4/91, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. ‘Miss Jones’ was Nina Lucy Mary Jones (1871/72-1926) whose collection of about 200 studies of native flowers and fruits is held in the Suter Gallery’s collection in Nelson. She exhibited with the NZ Academy of Fine Arts and at the International Exhibition in Christchurch in 1906-07.

extraordinary public campaign in her attempt to get the Australian government to purchase her collection of paintings. When the Federal Government decided to purchase her collection in 1921, an uproar ensued, similar to the events that followed the awarding of the gold medal to Rowan at the 1888-89 exhibition in Melbourne; several well-known artists protested that her works were not fit for an art gallery, nor worth the exorbitant asking price of £21,000. Rowan's collection was argued about in the press and in Parliament; the painter Norman Lindsay labelled her collection as 'vulgar art', while Dattilo Rubbo stated that her paintings would be 'suitable for a museum perhaps, but for an Art Gallery, no.'²⁴⁹ Rowan died before an agreement to purchase her paintings was reached, and it was not until a year after her death, in the first session of Parliament in 1923-24, that her collection of 947 paintings was eventually purchased for the much-reduced sum of £5,000 and housed in the collection of the National Library of Australia.

The context in which botanical/flower paintings are shown is constantly changing. Writing in 1991, Elias stated that it was unusual to find exhibitions of botanical/flower paintings in art galleries in New Zealand and that many of the institutions that housed such works were 'built in the separation of art and science.'²⁵⁰ When I first began exploring this topic, the examples of botanical and floral art that I had seen had all been exhibited within a 'fine arts' context: in the *Wild things: botanical and zoological art from the Alexander Turnbull Library* exhibition held at the National Library Gallery in 1998; in *Botanica*, which was held at the Adam Art Gallery in 2001; and in *Masquerade*, which was on display at Te Papa in late 2001 and early 2002.²⁵¹ The boundaries of art and science were decidedly blurred in all of these exhibitions; in *Botanica* a range of books were shown, including J. D. Hooker's New Zealand volumes of *The botany of the Antarctic voyage*, Buchanan's *Grasses* as well as Hetley's, the Featons' and Harris's books, and even the dried botanical specimens mounted on paper from the *Endeavour* voyage were accorded an art status.

As this thesis has revealed, systems of classification and categorisation for exhibitions during the 1880s were not always fixed. Consequently, sometimes works which were classified as belonging to the sphere of 'science', were exhibited

²⁴⁹ Margaret Hazzard, *Australia's brilliant daughter, Ellis Rowan*, p. 141.

²⁵⁰ Ann Elias, 'New Zealand still life and flower painting 1880-1940', p. 80.

²⁵¹ *Wild things: botanical and zoological art from the Alexander Turnbull Library*, National Library Gallery, 22 November 1998–21 March 1999; *Botanica*, Adam Art Gallery, 10 August–7 October 2001; *Masquerade*, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, 17 October 2001–15 April 2002.

within an ‘art’ context. John Buchanan’s publication *The indigenous grasses of New Zealand* was classified in the fine arts category of ‘engravings and lithographs’ in the 1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition.²⁵² For the 1888-89 Melbourne Centennial Exhibition, however, his book was exhibited in the category of ‘Organisation, methods, and appliances for superior instruction’, under the umbrella heading of ‘Education and Instruction’ along with Thomas Kirk’s ‘Illustrated work on New Zealand farm trees.’²⁵³ The paintings produced by the women were also classified in numerous and different categories, partly because they were a fusion of science and art, but also because of the range of items that the women painted. In keeping with the ideology of femininity, the decorative items that Harris, Hetley and Rowan painted were commonly regarded as items of ‘craft’ and ‘ladies’ work’ and were placed in the ‘miscellaneous’ or ‘ladies’ court’ categories in art exhibitions. By engaging with this particular branch of artistic production, the women were pursuing a socially acceptable activity that reflected Victorian notions about gender. Yet painting decorative items also afforded certain financial opportunities, as Harris and Rowan were able to exhibit and sell their decorative items for reasonably large sums of money. The paintings on paper that Harris, Hetley and Rowan exhibited were also subject to a range of different classification (see appendix 1). Art Society shows and the large international exhibitions usually classified paintings of plants under the fine arts umbrella, but Harris’s paintings were also grouped in the ‘ladies’ court’ and ‘horticulture’ categories.

Although painting flora was a recognised and socially acceptable pursuit for ‘ladies’ during the 1880s, most of the women examined in this study extended the boundaries of Victorian gender roles. The notion that women remained in the private sphere is also brought into question by the women’s botanical excursioning, especially in regard to Rowan and North, who both traversed the globe. Moreover, with the exception of Sarah Featon who does not appear to have exhibited her works and who worked under the guidance of her husband, Hetley, Harris, Rowan and North actively operated outside the private sphere of home. Conventionally described as ‘female amateurs’, these four women painted works that were meant to be seen outside the domestic setting, in exhibition forums; for many women, exhibitions provided the only opportunity to publicly display and promote their works of art. Marianne North’s gallery at Kew functions as the ultimate public

²⁵²Melbourne 1880-81, Melbourne International Exhibition, *The official catalogue of exhibits, with introductory notices of countries exhibiting*, p. 525.

²⁵³Melbourne 1888-89, Centennial International Exhibition, *Official record*, p. 519.

exhibition forum as her paintings are permanently on display (plate 37). While Jeanine Graham asserts that Emily Harris ‘was never more than an amateur artist’, Harris’s artistic practices would suggest otherwise; one only need examine the number of exhibitions in which she participated to realise that she was more than just an ‘amateur’ artist, especially with regard to the private exhibitions she organised herself.²⁵⁴ Due to her family’s strained finances, Harris relied on the income from the sale of her works; for this very reason, it is misleading to characterise her as an amateur.

The women studied in this thesis played an active role in the botanical culture of New Zealand, Australia and Britain by collaborating with eminent botanists and undertaking botanical excursions. Hetley, Featon and Harris were also aware of the applications of ‘economic botany’, which is evident in their respective botanical/floral publications. Although kept outside the bounds of scientific botany, these women can be identified as fulfilling the ‘artistic’ requirements of the New Zealand Institute as promoted by Sir George Bowen: ‘it is also expedient, by means of lectures, classes, and otherwise, to promote the general study and cultivation of the various branches and departments of art, science, literature and philosophy.’²⁵⁵ Hetley, Harris, Featon, Rowan and North certainly promoted the flora of New Zealand through their exhibiting practices and the publication of their botanical/floral books. Given the prescriptive Victorian gender codes, these women were remarkable for the range of activities in which they participated and the calibre of the works they produced. Moreover, their botanical/flower paintings constitute an important body of work; those that have survived illuminate the fluid boundaries between the realms of scientific botanical illustration and art, the vibrant botanical culture of colonial New Zealand and the diverse personalities working within it.

²⁵⁴Jeanine Graham, ‘Emily Harris: the artist as social commentator’, p. 6.

²⁵⁵Sir George Ferguson Bowen, ‘Inaugural address’, 4 August 1868, James Hector (ed.), *Transactions and Proceedings*, volume 1, p. 3.

List of plates

1. Martha King, *Kotuku tuku* [*Fuchsia exortica*] c.1842, watercolour on paper, 375 x 276mm. A-005-016, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
2. John Buchanan, *Senecio greyi* [1860s], pencil and watercolour, 271 x 202mm. E-208-q-104, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
3. Pierre Joseph Redouté, *Rosa carolina corymbosa*, stipple engraving. Plate 29, from *Les roses*, volume one, Paris: Firmin Didot, 1817-1824.
4. John Buchanan, [*Ehrharta colensoi*, *Hookfil.*] 1880, lithograph, 300 x 320mm. Plate 1 from *Manual of the indigenous grasses of New Zealand*. This book was reproduced from Buchanan's folio work *Indigenous grasses of New Zealand*.
5. Henry Field, [Ferns], 1890, lithograph, 300 x 220mm. Plate 3 from *The ferns of New Zealand and its immediate dependencies*.
6. Ferdinand Mueller, [*Senecio huntii*], 1864, F. Schonfeld lithograph, 200 x 140mm. Plate 3 from *The vegetation of the Chatham-Islands*.
7. Robert John Thornton, *Rhododendron ponticum*, engraved coloured plate, finished by hand. In *Temple of Flora, or garden of the botanist, poet, painter, and philosopher*, London: Dr Thornton, 1812, second edition.
8. Robert John Thornton, *The superb lily*, engraved coloured plate, finished by hand, small folio (15x12 inches). In *Temple of Flora, or garden of the botanist, poet, painter, and philosopher*, London: published by Dr Thornton, 1812, second edition.
9. Interior view of the New Zealand Court in the Sydney International Exhibition 1879-80. Photograph, album 132, National Library of Australia.

10. Scene in New Zealand Court, Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-81. Photograph, collection of the Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne.

11. Emily Harris, *Freycinetia banksii* (*kiekie*) flower showing fruit – *tawhara* (*Taranaki*) [1880s or 1890s], watercolour on paper, 370 x 260mm. B-018-008, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

12. Emily Harris, *Dianella intermedia*. *Blue berry* [1890s?], watercolour, 510 x 700mm. C-024-011, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

13. Emily Harris, *Dianella intermedia*. (*Blue berry*) 1890, H.D. Jackson lithograph, 300 x 220mm. Plate 9 from *New Zealand berries*. Text underneath reads: ‘A grass like plant. Leaves 1-5 feet long, very slender, much branched stems, flowers small greenish white, berries a lovely blue. More common and finer in the the North then Middle Islands, frequent in fern lands and woods.’

14. Emily Harris, *Clematis indivisa* (*puawhananga*) *Some authorities leave out the h in puawhananga* 1890, H.D. Jackson lithograph, 300 x 220mm. Plate 6 from *New Zealand flowers*. Text underneath reads: ‘A large strong woody climber abundant throughout New Zealand festooning trees especially on the skirts of the forest. Flowers white.’

15. Emily Harris, Cover to *New Zealand ferns* 1890, H.D. Jackson lithograph, 300 x 220mm.

16. Emily Harris, *Rubus parvus* – *mountain bramble* [*creeping lawyer*] ca. 1890-1896, ink and watercolour on paper, 262 x 208mm. E-001-q-014, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

17. Emily Cumming Harris, letter to exhibition commissioner, 25 January 1879, MU000188, box 1, item 10, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

18. Advertisement for Emily Harris’s exhibition in the *Nelson Evening Mail*, 6 December 1879, p. 2.

19. Advertisement for Emily Harris’s books in the *Nelson Evening Mail*, 10 October 1890, p. 2.

20. Sarah Featon, *Myosotidium hortensia*, *Chatham Island forget me not* [date unknown], watercolour. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Neg. No.F.004921/08). Pencil writing on the bottom reads: 'Myosotidium nobile (Chatham Island New Zealand) The Chatham Island Lily (very fresh when received).'

21. Sarah Featon, *Wild flowers and berries* 1889, Bock and Cousins chromolithograph, 295 x 235mm, frontispiece to the *Art album of New Zealand flora*.

22. Sarah Featon, *Pikiarero. Clematis hexasepala* 1889, Bock and Cousins chromolithograph, 295 x 235mm. Plate 2 from the *Art album of New Zealand flora*.

23. Sarah Featon, *Koke-kohe – Dysoxylum spectabile* 1889, Bock and Cousins chromolithograph, 295 x 235mm. Plate 18 from the *Art album of New Zealand flora*.

24. Sarah Featon, *Yellow kowhai – Sophora tetraptera* 1889, Bock and Cousins chromolithograph, 295 x 235mm. Plate 28 from the *Art album of New Zealand flora*.

25. Georgina Hetley, holograph transcript of letter from Sir Henry Ponsonby on behalf of Queen Victoria, in Rev. Frederick Anson Letters, MS-Papers-0661, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. This letter is in Hetley's own handwriting.

26. Leighton Brothers, London, dedication page c.1888, chromolithograph, 373 x 270mm, from *The native flowers of New Zealand*.

27. Georgina Hetley, *Plagianthus lyalli* [lace-bark tree, whau-whau] c.1888, Leighton Brothers chromolithograph, 373mm x 270mm. Plate 34 from the *The native flowers of New Zealand*.

28. Georgina Hetley, *Metrosideros florida* [climbing rata, kahikahika] c.1888, Leighton Brothers chromolithograph, 373mm x 270mm. Plate 16 from the *The native flowers of New Zealand*.

29. Georgina Hetley, [Dissections III] c.1888, Leighton Brothers chromolithograph, 373mm x 270mm, from the *The native flowers of New Zealand*.

30. Georgina Hetley, [*Ferns*]. 1. *Hymenophyllum polyanthus* [*sanguinolentum*] 2. *Trichomanes reniforme*. 3. *Linaria membranacea* [*Blechnum membranaceum*] 4. *Hymenophyllum flabellatum* [*flabellatum*] [1880s?], watercolour and ink. B-073-024, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
31. Georgina Hetley, *Leptospermum scoparium*. *Manuka* [1880s?], watercolour 355 x 228mm. B-073-015, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
32. Ellis Rowan, *A bunch of Australian wild flowers* 1888, chromolithograph, 590 x 397mm from *Australian town and country journal*, *Christmas supplement*. nla.pic-an10641702, National Library of Australia.
33. Ellis Rowan, *Alectryon excelsum* Forster, *New Zealand* 1893, watercolour, 545 x 380mm. nla.pic-an6801615, National Library of Australia.
34. Ellis Rowan, *Coleus scutellarioides* benth. (*labiatae*) *North Aust.*, *Murdannia graminea* (R. Br.), *Bruckn.* (*Aneilema gramineum* R. Br.) (*Commelinaceae*) *N.A.* 1887, watercolour, 540 x 375mm. nla.pic-an6649803, National Library of Australia.
35. Ellis Rowan, *Marianthus bignoniavens*. *from the country of Lowan* 1886, Picturesque Atlas Publishing Company, wood engraving, 270 x 185mm, *Picturesque atlas of Australasia*, volume II, p. 278.
36. Ellis Rowan, *Painted screen* c.1890, gouache and watercolour on paper and gouache on silk, double-panel hinged screen; each panel 180.5 x 66.5 x 3.5cm, reproduced from Patricia Fullerton, *The flower hunter Ellis Rowan*, Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002, p. 92.
37. View of the Marianne North Gallery at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The paintings of New Zealand can be seen near the left-hand corner of the entry wall. Reproduced from Marianne North, *A vision of eden: the life and work of Marianne North*; preface by J.P.M. Brenan; foreword by Anthony Huxley; biographical note by Brenda E. Moon, Exeter, Devon: Webb & Bower: Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; Leicester: WHS Distributors, 1980, p. 11.
38. Marianne North, *Fishbone tree and the parson bird of New Zealand* [1881], oil painting. No. 724 in the Marianne North Gallery, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England. Reproduced from Bee Dawson *Lady painters, the flower painters of early New Zealand*, Auckland: Viking, 1999, p. 133.

39. Marianne North, *View of Otira Gorge, New Zealand* [1881], oil painting. No. 714 in the Marianne North Gallery, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England. Reproduced from Bee Dawson *Lady painters*, p. 136.

40. Mary Hannah Tyer, *Artificial flowers* 1885, wool, wax, wire, glass, newspaper and wood. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Neg. No. F.003821_7).

40a. Mary Hannah Tyer, *Artificial flowers* 1885, wool, wax, wire, glass, newspaper and wood. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Neg. No. F.003821_8).

41. Table painted with flowers and inlaid with paua, [date unknown], Collection of the Sarjeant Art Gallery, Wanganui. Gift of Mrs D. Roberston.

41a. Detail of table painted with flowers and inlaid with paua, [date unknown], Collection of the Sarjeant Art Gallery, Wanganui. Gift of Mrs D. Roberston.

Plates



Plate 1



Plate 2



Plate 3

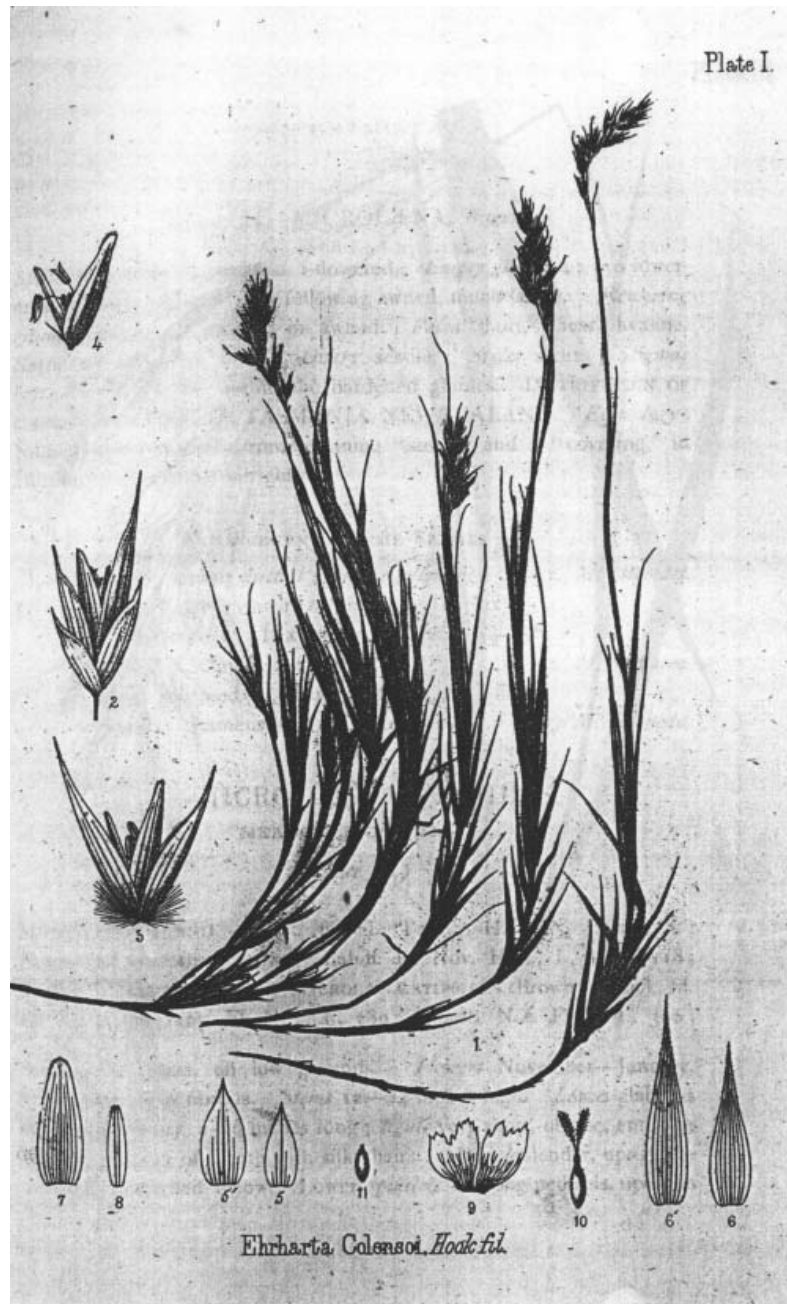


Plate 4

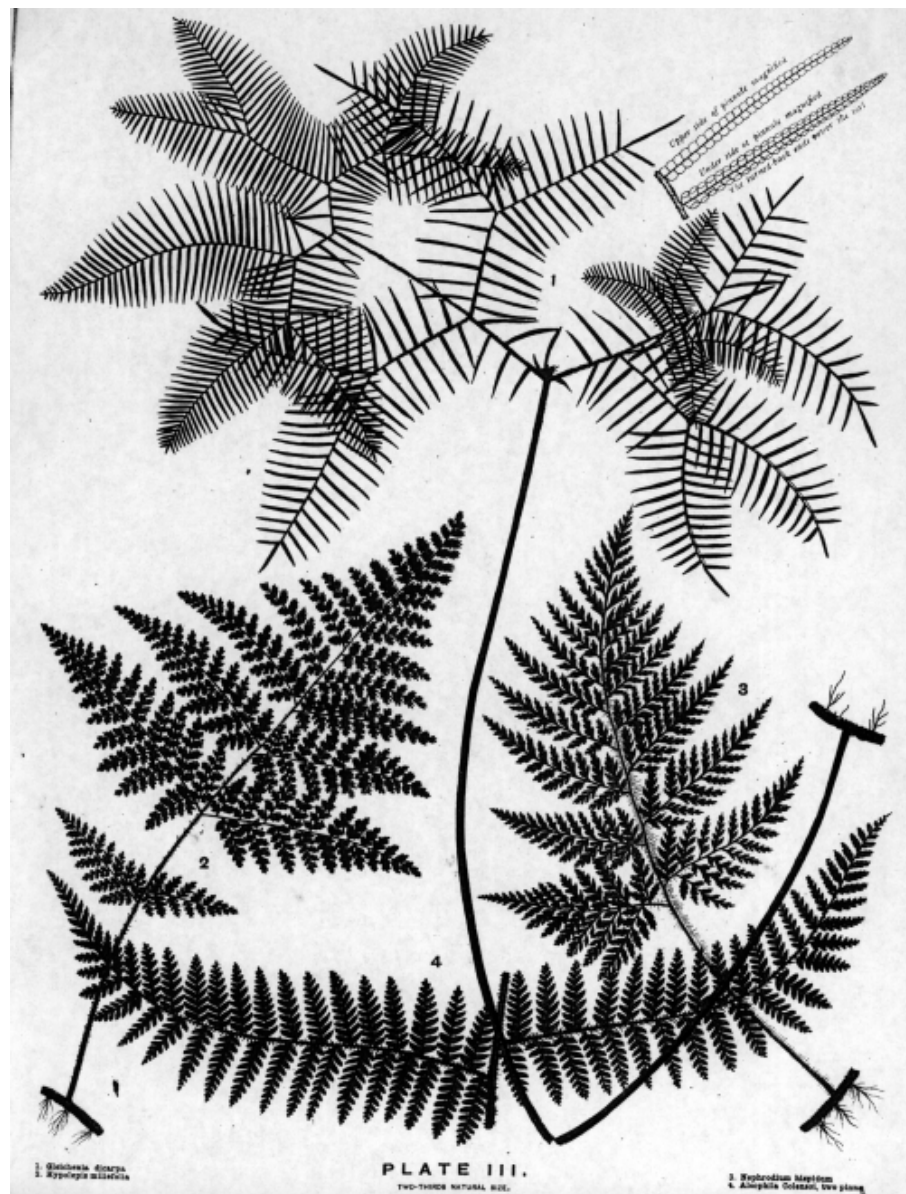


Plate 5



Plate 6



Plate 7

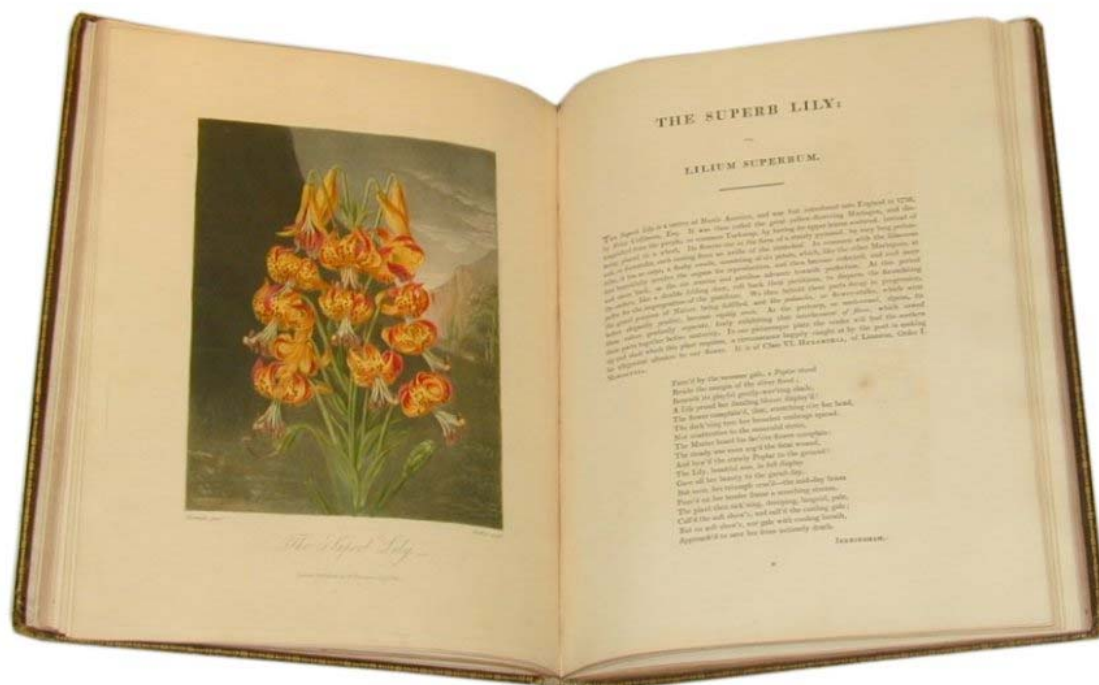


Plate 8



Plate 9



Plate 10



Plate 11



Plate 12



Plate 13



Plate 14

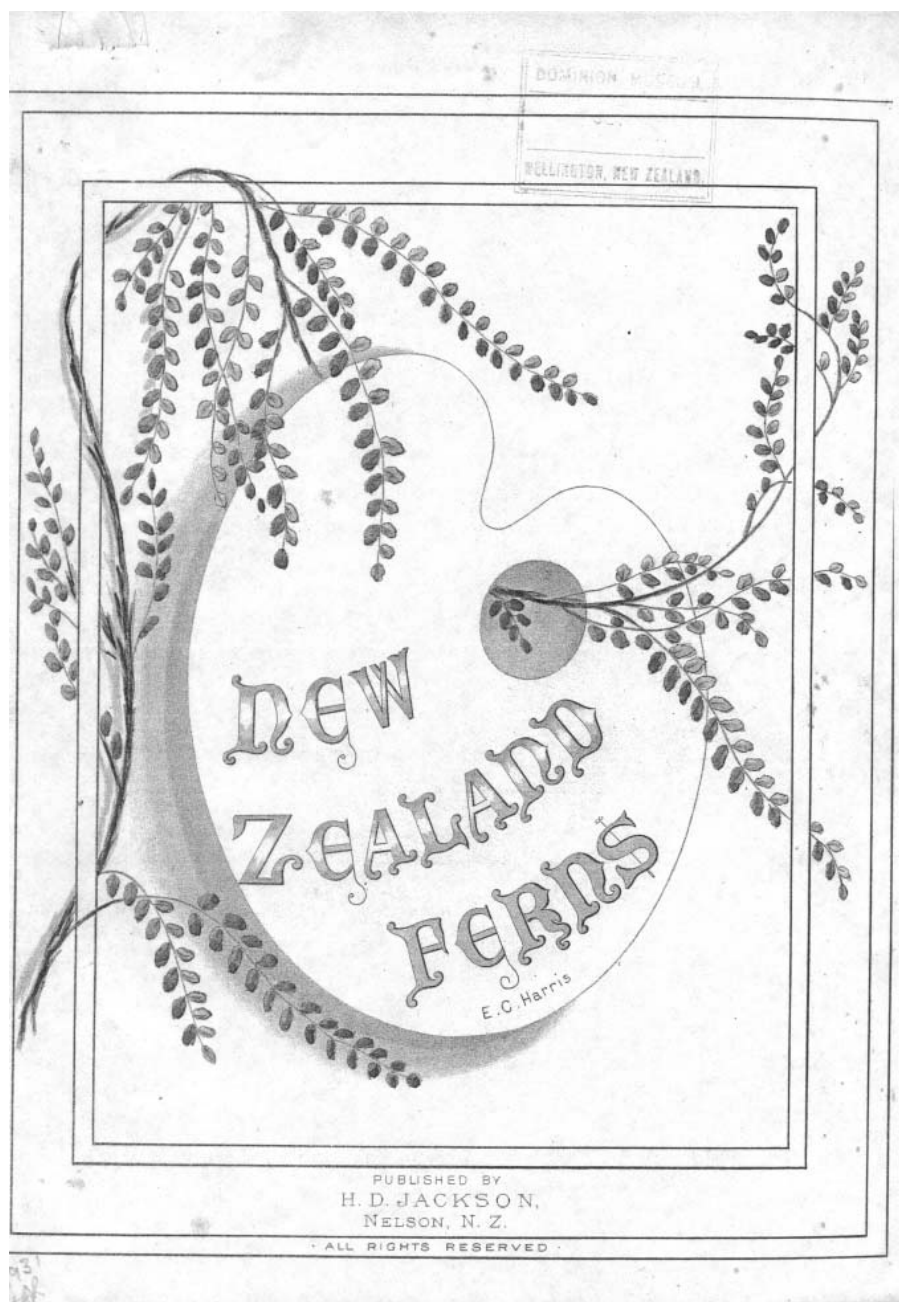


Plate 15



Plate 16

and Berres. I commenced
it for the Philadelphia
Abolitionist, but it was
prevented by finishing
it.

I propose to make 26.
distinct drawings of the
same size, and one

of a larger size as I have 14 of the smaller
centre. Each to be pictures finished and
framed and numbered it will take four
so that the names of the or five months to print
slaves can be entered the next, before I
in the catalogue. Commence I am now

The pictures anxious to know whether
might be having some appearance of my
thing in this fashion design, as it would

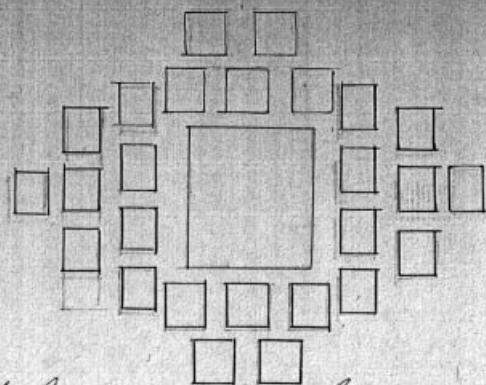


Plate 17

<p align="center">NAVAL ARTILLERY.</p> <p>MUSTER PARADE on MONDAY NEXT, November 25, at 7.30 p.m. Undress. Every Member, including Recruits, must be present, with all Arms, Accoutrements, &c. on issue to him. Absentees will be fined.</p> <p align="right">W. SIMPSON, Captain Commanding.</p>	<p>Pianist,—who have caused such a furor all over New Zealand, money being refused at the doors almost every evening.</p> <p>Family Prices 2/- and 1/-. Children Half- price. Doors open at 7.15. Front Seat Tickets at Mr. J. HOUNSELL'S, Bookseller; no reserved seats. Entire Change of Programme for Wednesday Country Tour; Richmond, Thursday, 28th; Wakefield, Friday, 29th.</p>
<p align="center">EXHIBITION OF PICTURES, NEW ZEALAND WILD FLOWERS, and other PAINTINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE SHELBOURNE ST. SCHOOL-ROOM, Nov. 29, 30, and Dec. 2. Admission 1/-. Season Tickets 2/-, -4d</p>	<p align="center">STRAWBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES,</p>
<p align="center">BALLAST.</p> <p>TENDERS wanted immediately for the Supply of about 250 tons good dry Shingle BALLAST for barque 'ASTERION' Particulars to be had on Application to SOLANDERS & CO., 3792-2 Agents.</p>	<p align="center">NOW READY FOR J A M.</p>
<p align="center">NEESON BREWERY, ESTABLISHED 1843.</p>	<p align="center">AT</p>
<p>J. R. DODSON & SON have now ready for Sale their celebrated A K, A fine Tonic ALE, brewed es- pecially for Summer use,</p>	<p align="center">KARSTEN & CO.'S, HARDY STREET.</p>

Plate 18

JUST PUBLISHED

A SET,

COMPRISING

**3 BOOKS NEW ZEALAND FERNS,
FLOWERS, AND BERRIES.**

Price 7/6 per Set.

These Drawings are really Works of Art,
having been beautifully Lithographed in
London, by the best artists, and are intended
to form

EXCELLENT PRESENTS
for sending to England and places at a
distance as a souvenir of New Zealand, or
they make interesting Table Books or
Drawing Copies.

Postage per Set to any part of New
Zealand 10d.; to England 1/6.

H. D. JACKSON

Plate 19



Plate 20



Plate 21



Plate 22



Plate 23



Plate 24

(Copy) Windsor Castle
December 11. 1888

Sir Henry Ponsonby is
conducted by the
Queen to thank Mr.
Charles Hickey for the
copy of her beautiful
work on the Wild Fowls
of New Zealand which
she has had the kind-
ness to present to
Her Majesty.

Plate 25



Plate 26



Plate 27



Plate 28

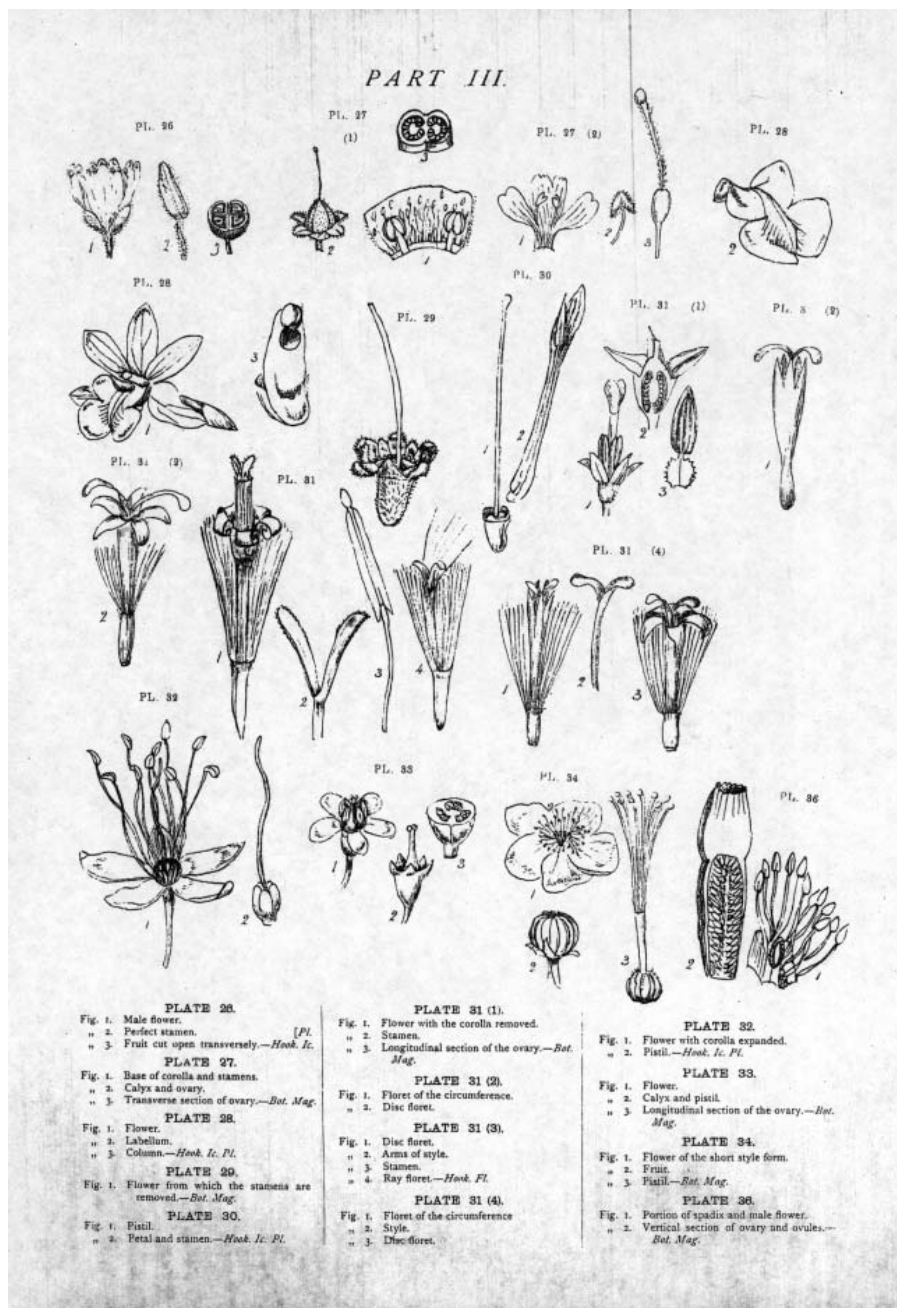


Plate 29



Plate 30



Plate 31



Plate 32



Plate 33



Plate 34

fantastic shapes when illumined by the setting sun, and whose deep gorges and precipitous cliffs afford a succession of views grand, spectral, romantic and Dantesque. The base may be reached by the quarry railway, which also affords easy access to the beautiful Lake Lonadale. To the south, Mounts Cole and Mortlake are striking features in the landscape, while to the east the attention is arrested and the admiration commanded by the bold escarpment of the Pyrenees and the Blue Mountains. Stawell is situated midway between the Great and Little Wimmeras, from which it is nine miles distant in either direction, and these streams afford good fishing grounds, while at certain seasons of the year their banks are much frequented by wild fowl.

The mountains are rich in native flowers, some of which are of great beauty, and these alone, independently of the other charms of the district, attract many visitors during those months of the year in which they are to be found in the greatest profusion and the greatest luxuriance of bloom.

The town is enriched with two fine reserves: one a large public garden in Stawell West, the other a botanic garden, both of which are admirably laid out. The excellent water supply has facilitated the establishment of public baths, and the market accommodation is ample for the wants of the inhabitants.

From Stawell the railway continues almost in a straight line to the north-west, passing through the villages of Deep Lead, Glenorchy, Walwal and Lubeck to Murtoa, where it makes an abrupt dip to the south-west through Jung Jung and Doon to Horsham. From Murtoa a branch line connects the last-named with Warracknabeal, a little settlement, over two hundred and forty miles north-west of Melbourne, planted on the edge of a dense mallee scrub extending far into the county of Karkaroo.

At about two hundred and thirty miles from Melbourne is Horsham, which was long "the city of the plains" *par excellence*.

being for some years the terminus of the railway is the centre of the principal wheat-growing district of the famous Wimmera country. This is a well laid out built town, and is the seat of an important manufacturing fine agricultural implements which have proved a factor in the development of the wheat-producing capacity of the plains that surround it. Besides agriculture, the town is

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pumped
Wimmer
tributed

throughout its whole extent, in addition to its State schools, excellent private educational establishments and the borough supports five. Its government buildings are one roof surmounted by a

tower;
town ha
borough
posing st
its gener
supplied

modern medical and appliances, sufferers from the extended area are she treated. The town is the quarters of the Hospital. Wimmera agricultur

whose shows have for many years attracted numbers of interested visitors. An mechanics' institute is well furnished with and newspapers; and the local racetrack affords excellent opportunities for testing of the horse stock bred in the Wimmera is a favourite resort of sporting men.

Beyond Horsham stretches the vast tract as the Wimmera country. Here are extensive of good wheat land, which yield, year without any artificial stimulus, from sixteen bushels of grain per acre. The with the seasons and with the quality of but the average lies between the limits. The country is flat, and the rainfall has some in escaping from it, which is an embarrassment to the farmer.

If he can seed his land in the second May or the first half of June, he is fortunate; if he in July, he is still fortunate; but excellent crops are known to reward a seeding that took place so late in the middle of August. The Wimmera district is well with flour mills, and a good deal of wheat produced in the district is ground on the spot, but by far the largest



MURIELANTHUS RHIZOMATOSUS
From the woods of Looe.



Plate 36



Plate 37

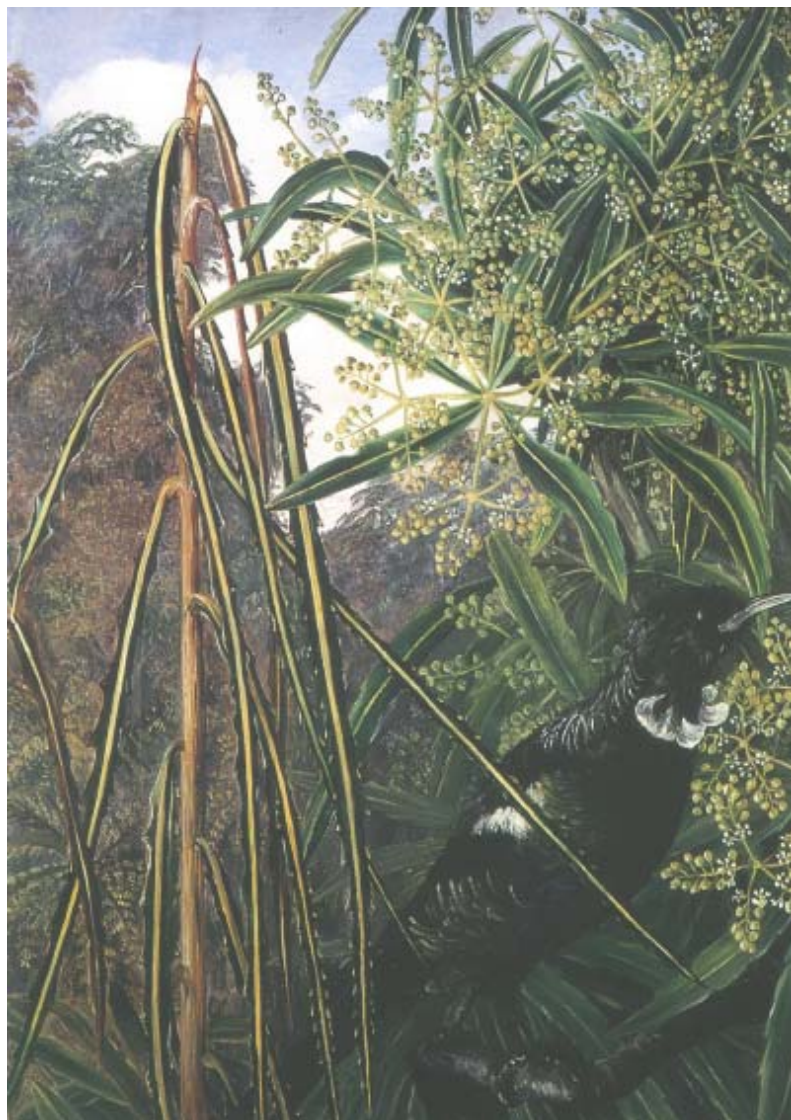


Plate 38

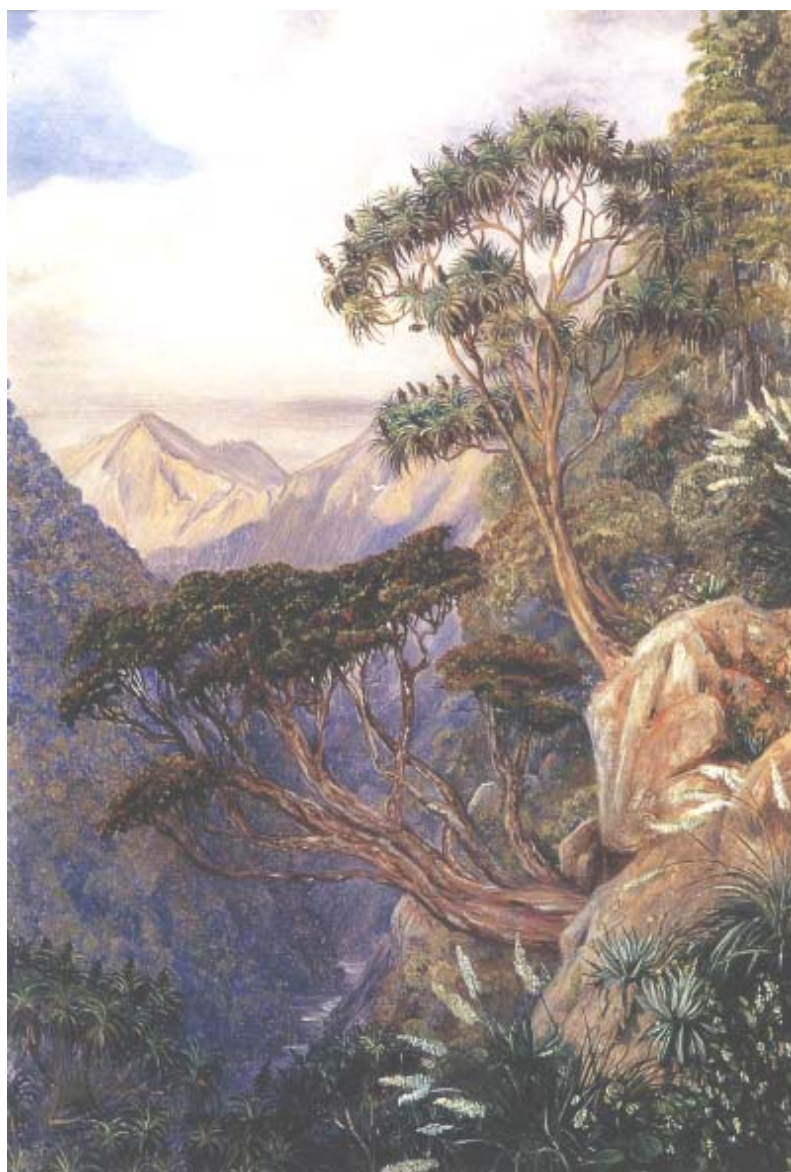


Plate 39



Plate 40



Plate 40a



Plate 41



Plate 41a

Appendix 1

Exhibitions: Harris, Hetley, Rowan

Abbreviations:

NZ	New Zealand
NZH	<i>New Zealand Herald</i>
AES	<i>Auckland Evening Star</i> (1879-1887)
AS	<i>Auckland Star</i>
AWN	<i>Auckland Weekly News</i>

Capitalisation is reproduced as it appeared in the original document.

Emily Harris					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1879 Art Treasures Exhibition, Nelson	Watercolours	'Blackberries'		1st award	Catalogue
1879-80 Sydney International Exhibition	catalogues classify works differently: 'Art – Painting' (in NZ Court catalogue) & 'Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Flowers' (in Official record)	'Twenty-eight Water Colours (drawings of New Zealand wild flowers and berries)'			NZ Court catalogue & Official record & Official awards catalogue
1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition	catalogues classify works differently: Horticulture: Plants for Conservatories (in NZ Court catalogue) & Various Paintings and Drawings (in Official catalogue)	'Twenty-eight water-colours of New Zealand wildflowers and berries'			NZ Court catalogue
1882 Auckland Society of Arts	Water Colors Hand Painted Fan Water Colour Studies	'The Glen (Nelson) from Nature' 'New Zealand Wild Flowers' 'Design for Bracket, New Zealand Wild Flowers'	£1 5s £1 1s £1 5s	Prize	Official catalogue Society of Arts catalogue Society of Arts catalogue Society of Arts catalogue
1882 NZ International Exhibition, Christchurch	New Zealand Exhibits, Ladies' Court, water colour paintings and pencil drawings do. do. do. do. Italian Artists, Watercolours	'New Zealand Wild Flowers' 'New Zealand Wild Flowers' 'New Zealand Wild Flowers' 'New Zealand Ferns'		} Second order of Merit	Christchurch Exhibition catalogue
1883 Auckland Society of Arts	'Hand-Painted Fans' Foliage Flowers & Fruit prize Design for Certificate of Merit	Unknown Unknown Unknown	£30		Christchurch Exhibition catalogue Christchurch Exhibition catalogue Christchurch Exhibition catalogue NZH 13-04-83 p. 5 Society of Arts catalogue Society of Arts catalogue

Emily Harris					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1883 Fine Arts Association, Wellington	Unknown	'Wild Flowers from Milford Sound'	£1 10s	1st prize	Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'New Zealand Wild Flowers'	£1 10s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'Kaka'	£1 10s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'Silver Eyes & Nest'	£2 0s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'Blackberries & Ferns'	£1 10s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
1884 Auckland Society of Arts	Hand-painted Fans	'New Zealand Wild Flowers'	£1 1s		NZ Mail 28-07-83, (supp) p. 1
	Plaquets and Terra-Cotta Ware (Not for competition)	Unknown			Society of Arts catalogue
1884 Fine Arts Association, Wellington	Unknown	'Wild Flowers'	£2 2s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'3-fold Screen'	£12 12s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'Chess Table. New Zealand Flowers'	£5 5s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
	Unknown	'Two Door Panels, N.Z. Flowers'	£3 3s		Fine Arts Association catalogue
1884 New Zealand Art Students' Association	Mantlepiece Drapery	'Silvia'		3rd prize	NZH 14-10-84 p. 5
1885 Industrial Exhibition, Wellington	Special Art Section: Painting	'Three-Fold Screen, Flowers Painted on Satin'		1st prize	Official record
	do. do.	'Table Screen, Spring Flowers'			Official record
	do. do.	'Table-top, New Zealand Flowers'			Official record
	do. do.	'Four-fold Screen, Flowers on cream Satin, on ebonized N.Z. Wood'		3rd prize	Official record
	do. do.	'Fan, N.Z. Flowers and Ferns'			Official record
	do. do.	'Mantel Drape, Kowhai Flowers worked in Silk'			Official record
1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London	Oil Paintings	'Two Painted Screens'			Catalogue of NZ exhibits
	Oil Paintings	'Painted Fan'			Catalogue of NZ exhibits
	Oil Paintings	'Two Table-tops, painted with flowers'			Catalogue of NZ exhibits
	Various Paintings & Drawings	'Screen, painted with New Zealand Flowers'			Catalogue of NZ exhibits
	Lace, Net, Embroidery and Trimmings	'Mantel Drape worked in Silk' (spelt differently in NZ Court catalogue)			Official catalogue

Emily Harris					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work		Price	prize
1888-89 Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne	Oil Paintings	'Oil Paintings of New Zealand flowers, birds, and berries'			NZ Court catalogue
Personal/Family Exhibition, Nelson, November 1889	Water-colour Paintings, Drawings &c.	'Water-colour Paintings of New Zealand flowers, birds and berries'			NZ Court catalogue
Personal/Family Exhibition, New Plymouth January 1890	n/a	(New Zealand Wild Flowers and other Paintings)			Harris diaries 22-11-89 pp. 30-32
Personal/Family Exhibition, Stratford, January 1890	n/a	(Comprised four cases of pictures, screens etc. & one box)			Harris diaries 01-01-90 p. 35
		'Fan'		£0 15s	
		'Little Wren'		£1 0s	
		(Comprised four cases of pictures, screens etc. & one box)			Harris diaries 08-01-90 pp. 43-44
		'Three cards'		£0 6s	
		'Study of fruit'		£1 0s	
		'Mountain flowers to be copied'		£0 7s	
Personal/Family Exhibition, Nelson, August 1890	n/a	(Paintings, screens, panels, table-tops etc.)			Harris diaries 17-08-90 p. 46 and NZ Mail 17-10-90 p. 25
Personal/Family Exhibition, Wellington, November 1890	n/a	(Paintings, screens, panels, table-tops and sets of Harris' books)			Harris diaries 30-11-90 pp. 47-50
Personal/Family Exhibition, New Plymouth, April 1899	n/a	(Alpine paintings)			NZ Mail 27-04-99 p. 20

Georgina Hetley					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1881 Auckland Society of Arts	Miscellaneous do. do. do. do.	'Madeira Knitting, hand-made' 'Doilies of New Zealand Ferns and Mosses' 'Bouquet of Autumn Flowers and Ferns, in Cloth'			Society of Arts catalogue Society of Arts catalogue Society of Arts catalogue
1882 Auckland Society of Arts	Embroidery Design, Original Water Colour Studies	'Embroidery Design, Original' 'New Zealand Ferns' x 8		Merit Cert.	Society of Arts catalogue Society of Arts catalogue
1883 Auckland Society of Arts	Mantlepiece Drapery Studies: Foliage, Flowers, Fruit	Unknown Unknown		(only entry) Prize	AES 12-04-83 p. 2 & catalogue AES 12-04-83 p. 2
1884 Auckland Society of Arts	Water Colours	'Grass'	£0 10s		NZH 26-04-84 p6 and Society of Arts catalogue
1884 Auckland Society of Arts, December	Christmas Card Competitions	"Four cards illustrating the native flowers"		3rd prize	NZH 07-11-84 p. 5
1884 Art Students' Association, Auckland	New Zealand Wild Flowers	'Waiwera'		2nd prize	AES 23-10-84 p. 4
1884 Fine Arts Association, Wellington	Unknown Unknown Unknown Unknown Unknown	'Ferns' 'Ferns and Flowers' 'Ferns and Flowers' 'Flowers from the West Coast Sounds' 'NZ Lily'	£1 0s £1 0s £1 0s £5 5s £1 0s		Fine Arts Association catalogue Fine Arts Association catalogue Fine Arts Association catalogue Fine Arts Association catalogue Fine Arts Association catalogue
1885 Auckland Society of Arts	Original Studies by Students of Amateurs	'Senecio glastifolius & Fruit of Nikau Palm, Areca sapida'	£2 2s	2nd prize	AES 25-04-85 p. 4 and Society of Arts catalogue.
1885 Art Students' Association, Auckland	Watercolours	'Manuka Flowers by Gaultheria'		1st prize, bronze medal	AES 22-10-85 p. 2

Georgina Hetley					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1885 Industrial Exhibition, Wellington	Special Art Category: Paintings	'Nikau Berries & Euphrasia'		1st prize	Official record
	do. do.	'Australian Flowers, after Mrs Rowan'			Official record
	do. do.	'Rata and Erina'			Official record
1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London	Various Paintings & Drawings	'New Zealand Flowers, eight pictures'			Catalogue of NZ exhibits
1893 Auckland Society of Arts	Water Colours	'Pansies by Billotry, French Exhibitor in the "Salon"'			AS 10-03-93 p. 4 & Society of Arts catalogue
1893 Exhibition at the Library House of Representatives	Unknown	Unknown			AWN 08-07-93 p. 17
1894 Auckland Society of Arts	Water Colours	'Four Studies of Flowers'			NZH 08-03-94 p. 6 & catalogue
1895 Auckland Society of Arts	Unknown	'Manuka, Septosporum & Parsonisia'			AS 10-04-95 p. 5 & catalogue
	Unknown	'Jacaranda, Mimosafolia'			AS 10-04-95 p. 5 & catalogue
	Unknown	'Anthropodicum Cirrhatum, New Zealand'			AS 10-04-95 p. 5 & catalogue
	Unknown	'Scarlet Bananas, Madeira'			AS 10-04-95 p. 5 & catalogue
1897 Auckland Museum Exhibition		(Collection of paintings of NZ, NSW and Madeira flowers)			AWN 15-04-97 p. 37

Ellis Rowan					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1872 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition	Unknown	'4 Panels of Victorian Wildflowers'		Bronze medal	Margaret Hazzard, <i>Australia's brilliant daughter, Ellis Rowan: artist, naturalist, explorer</i> , p. 25
1879-80 Sydney International Exhibition	NSW Court: Sculpture and Painting	Water-colour paintings 'Australian Flowers'		1st degree of Merit Special (small silver medal)	Official record
1880-81 Melbourne International Exhibition	Victoria Court: Water Colours Western Australia Court: Various Paintings and Drawings NZ Court: Various Paintings and Drawings	'Group of 14 Water Colours, on Satin' 'Water Colour Paintings of Groups of the Wild Flowers of Western Australia' 'Thirty Water Colour Drawings of New Zealand Wild Flowers, painted from Nature, by the Exhibitor'		Gold medal	Official catalogue Official catalogue NZ Court catalogue
1883 International Exhibition, Calcutta	Victoria Court	'12 watercolours'			Hazzard p. 43
1883 International Colonial Export-Trade Exhibition, Amsterdam	Unknown	Unknown		Silver medal	Hazzard pp. 43-45
1883 Exhibition in Russia	Unknown	Unknown		Gold medal	Hazzard pp. 43-45
1884 Exhibition in Denmark	Unknown	'Lace Making'		Prize	Hazzard pp. 43-35
1886 Colonial & Indian Exhibition, London	Victoria Court: Various Paintings and Drawings South Australia Court: Oil Paintings	'Ninety-five Water-colour Drawings of Australian Flowers' 'Painting of South Australian Flora.' Lent by the Exhibitor to the South Australian Commission.			Official catalogue Official catalogue
1888-89 Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne	Queensland Court: Various Paintings, Drawings etc.	'Queensland Flowers'		1st degree of merit	Official record

Ellis Rowan					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1888-89 Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne cont...	Victorian Artists' Gallery do. do. NZ Court: Various Paintings, Drawings	'Marguerites' 'Chrysanthemum' 'Twenty water-colour drawings, etc.- New Zealand flora'		2nd prize Gold medal 1st prize	Official record Official record Official record
1889-90 New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, Dunedin	Victorian Collection	'Victorian Wild Flowers' x 17			Catalogue of the exhibits
1891 Exhibition, Buxton's Art Gallery, Melbourne		(99 paintings)		Gold medal	Judith McKay, <i>Ellis Rowan: a flower-hunter in Queensland</i> , p. 83
1893 World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago		(100 watercolour flower drawings)			Patricia Fullerton, <i>The flower hunter Ellis Rowan</i> , p. 23
1896 Exhibition, Dowdeswell Galleries, Mayfair, London		(500 paintings of wildflowers)			McKay, p. 5, p. 84
1902 Exhibition, Clausen's Gallery 5th Avenue, New York					Fullerton, p. 23
1904 Exhibition, Scourfield Chambers, Melbourne					McKay p. 84
1907 <i>Australian Exhibition of Women's Work</i> , Perth					Fullerton, p. 23
1909 Exhibition, Bernard's Gallery, Melbourne					McKay p. 84
1910 Exhibition, Angus & Roberts' Gallery, Sydney					McKay p. 84
1912 Exhibition, Old Town Hall, Brisbane					McKay p. 84

Ellis Rowan					
Exhibition Title	Category	Title of Work	Price	prize	Source
1914 Exhibition, Fine Art Society's Gallery, Melbourne		(95 paintings)			Fullerton p. 24
1915 Exhibition, Anthony Hordern's Gallery, Sydney					McKay p. 84
1918 Exhibition, Fine Art Society's Galleries, Melbourne		(40 birds of paradise, 72 fungi, 172 flowers, 2 coral, a bat, squirrel and a fish)			Fullerton p. 24
1919 Touring Exhibition USA including: Art Gallery of Stanford University American Museum of Natural History, New York					McKay p. 84
1920 Exhibition, Anthony Hordern's Gallery, Sydney		(1000 works were exhibited)	£2000 sum		Joan Kerr, <i>Heritage</i> , p. 442

Appendix 2

Collections of works

Sarah Featon

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

1992-0035-2277/1-133

133 depictions of the native flora of New Zealand; one third of the collection comprises the original watercolours for the chromolithographs in the Featons' *Art album of New Zealand flora*, Wellington: Bock & Cousins, 1889.

Emily Harris

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington

New Zealand Plants

B-155-001/008

Pencil on paper, sizes varying

Includes four of the original pencil sketches for lithographs in Harris's books *New Zealand flowers*, *New Zealand berries* and *New Zealand ferns*, Nelson: H.D. Jackson, 1890.

New Zealand flowers in colour. Volume 2

C-023-001/022

Watercolours, 381 x 482mm

New Zealand flowers in colour. Volume 3 [1890s]

B-018-001/018

Watercolour & pencil with Chinese white, various sizes

New Zealand flowers in colour. Volume 4

A-062-001/009

Watercolours, 267 x 190mm

New Zealand mountain flora [189-?]

E-001-q-001-029

Ink watercolours with typescript descriptions, 310 x 250mm

Nelson Provincial Museum

AC 398, AC 399, AC 472, AC 807, AC 853

Five oil paintings depicting landscapes, an eclipse of the sun, a comet and Manuka blossom.

Puke Ariki, Taranaki

A66.051, A66.098, A66.659, A65.641, A65.644, A66.639

Collection of oil paintings and watercolour paintings depicting the native flora of New Zealand and a pencil drawing of a grey warbler.

Suter Gallery, Nelson

Ureure. Flower of the Kiekie, Freycinetia banksii

Watercolour on paper 735 x 540mm

Ureure. Flower of the Kiekie, Freycinetia banksii

Watercolour on paper 740 x 535mm

Georgina Hetley

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington

[Various landscape scenes]

A-175-001/11

Flora of Australia and Madeira [ca 1870]

B-073-001/015

[Botanical paintings 18-?]

B-073-022/027

Watercolours (various sizes)

Hawke's Bay Museum

Collection of 96 watercolours of plants, including the original watercolours for the chromolithographs in Georgina Hetley's *The native flowers of New Zealand*, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1887-88.

Martha King

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington

A-005/1-41

Collection of forty watercolours of botanical studies.

Marianne North

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, England

Gallery of 832 paintings of the world's flora.

Ellis Rowan

Deakin University Art Collection, Melbourne

Untitled [Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne], c.1890-1900, watercolour on paper
27.7 x 65.4cm

Garden Library, Dumbarton Oaks, United States of America

Four watercolour drawings of Australian flora.

National Library of Australia, Canberra

Collection of 947 paintings of botanical subjects, predominantly Australian flora.
<http://www.nla.gov.au/catalogue/pictures>

Queensland Museum

Collection of 125 paintings of botanical subjects.

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