


Marguerite Tollemache in Rio de Janeiro: new research and information

Marguerite Tollemache no Rio de Janeiro: novas pesquisas
e informações

DOI: 10.20396/rhac.v4i1.17585

ROBERT JOHN WILKES

Postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Philosophy and the Humanities at
State University of Campinas (UNICAMP)

 0000-0002-9207-508X

Abstract

This article presents new research about the Brazilian travels of the Victorian writer and amateur artist Marguerite Tollemache. During her time in Brazil in 1853–5, she produced drawings and watercolours depicting the landscapes of Rio de Janeiro and Petrópolis, now in the Instituto Moreira Salles. The article utilises a series of unpublished letters written by Marguerite and her husband, William Augustus, in Brazil, and which contain references to the drawings in the IMS.

Keywords: Woman artist. Landscape. Instituto Moreira Salles. Marguerite Tollemache.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta novas pesquisas sobre as viagens brasileiras da escritora e artista amadora, Marguerite Tollemache. Durante seu tempo no Brasil de 1853 a 1855, ela produziu desenhos e aquarelas retratando as paisagens do Rio de Janeiro e Petrópolis, hoje conservados no Instituto Moreira Salles. O artigo utiliza uma série de cartas inéditas escritas por Marguerite e seu marido, William Augustus, no Brasil, e que contém referências aos desenhos do IMS.

Palavras-chave: Artista mulher. Paisagem. Instituto Moreira Salles. Marguerite Tollemache.

The Instituto Moreira Salles acquired the album “Drawings of Rio de Janeiro 1853–55” in 2008, as part of Martha and Erico Stickel’s collection of *Braziliana*.¹ It comprises forty drawings and watercolours, thirty-nine by Marguerite Tollemache (née Purves) and one by her husband, William Augustus Tollemache.² Until now, little was known about Marguerite’s trip to Brazil, other than that she was accompanying her husband, who was working at the British Legation in Rio de Janeiro. Marguerite herself was something of a mystery; as Mànya Millen noted in 2018, her biography was “still incomplete” despite numerous searches.³

New research into Marguerite’s life and work is presented here for the first time, creating a more complete “portrait” of the artist, her work and her artistic and literary interests. Furthermore, thirty-nine unpublished letters written by her and William during their stay in Brazil have provided additional insights into how and why the drawings in the IMS were made. To convey the full contents of the letters is beyond the scope of this article; nevertheless, the second section will give an overview of their contents. It has also been possible to ascertain the location of the couple’s house in Rio, which is depicted in several of the drawings. The article therefore makes an original contribution to the existing knowledge of British iconography produced in Brazil.

A brief biography of Marguerite Tollemache

The basic facts of Marguerite’s life have been established by Mànya Millen, although some can be corrected here. She was born Marguerite Home Purves (or Purvis) in 1817, the daughter of an English father, John Home Purves, and an Irish mother, Ellen (née Power).⁴ John and Ellen separated in 1823, after which he “obtained the office of British Consul at Pensacola [United States], and there he died, from the effects of the climate, in 1827”.⁵ In 1828, the widowed Ellen married Charles Manners-Sutton, a Tory

This research is supported by the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), project n^o 2020/11942-0, and was partly aided by a research trip to the UK in December 2019. I am grateful to the University of Southampton Archives and Special Collections for permission to quote from the Tollemache letters and to reproduce Figure 3; to Jovita Santos at the Instituto Moreira Salles for her help when I visited the collection in July 2022, and for permission to publish Figures 4, 5, 10 and 11; and to Prof. Christiana Payne for her comments regarding an earlier draft of this article.

¹ See: SIRIUBA STICKEL, Erico J. **Uma pequena biblioteca particular**: subsídios para o estudo da iconografia no Brasil. São Paulo: Edusp, 2004, p. 677.

² To distinguish between the different Tollemaches discussed and avoid any confusion, I will use their first names throughout this article. Marguerite referred to him as William in her letters, so this name is used here.

³ MILLEN, Mànya. O mistério Marguerite, 2018. **Instituto Moreira Salles**. Available at: <https://ims.com.br/por-dentro-acervos/o-misterio-marguerite/>. Accessed 1 Aug. 2022.

⁴ TOLLEMACHE, Edward Devereux Hamilton. **The Tollemaches of Helmingham and Ham**. Ipswich: W. S. Cowell, 1949, p. 146, states that Marguerite was born in the same year as her husband; William was born in 1817.

⁵ MADDEN, Richard Robert. **The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess Blessington**. London: T. C. Newby, 1855, v. 1, p. 379–80.

politician who was Speaker of the House of Commons; she thus became Viscountess Canterbury. Her portrait was sketched at this time by Sir Thomas Lawrence.⁶ She died in 1845. Marguerite's maternal aunt, after whom she was possibly named, Margaret or Marguerite Gardiner, Countess of Blessington, was a writer who published several popular books, including an account of her acquaintance with Lord Byron. A painted portrait of her by Lawrence is now in the Wallace Collection, London.

On 3 June 1846, Marguerite married William Augustus Tollemache [Figure 1], a lieutenant in the 2nd Regiment of Life Guards. Marguerite's sister-in-law Georgina later described their wedding: "How lovely she [Marguerite] was that day, when she stood with you [William] at the altar in the little Church among Burnham Beeches [in Buckinghamshire], in her simple bridal dress and white muslin veil".⁷ Marguerite and William had first met in Paris through his sister Selina, a close friend of Marguerite.⁸ He was born in 1817, the son of Admiral John Richard Delap Tollemache and Lady Elizabeth Stratford, of the aristocratic Tollemache family. He was promoted to captain of his regiment in December 1847, before changing to a diplomatic career, working as an attaché for the British Legations at Berne and Berlin, and at the British Embassy in Paris, from 1850–1.⁹ He was a creative individual, writing poetry and sketching portraits of family members.¹⁰ One of the drawings in the IMS, depicting three Black children, previously attributed to Marguerite, is in fact by William, as its inscription indicates: "delt W.A.T. November 7th 1854".¹¹

Marguerite was close with her sister-in-law, Georgina Cowper-Temple (née Tollemache). A photograph in the Spencer Cowper family album in the Victoria and Albert Museum [Figure 2] shows the two women sitting at a tea table, with Marguerite on the right. Nearly all of Marguerite's letters from Brazil are addressed to Georgina. Marguerite was later described by Edward Tollemache (William's great-nephew) as "a perfect companion, beautiful, intellectual and artistic, and a mystic. [...] Her favourite haunt was the library of the British Museum".¹² A more contemporaneous description of her comes from the socialite Margaret Leicester Warren, who wrote that she "has a nice quiet face, with very soft tired eyes and a gentle expression, grey hair, parted smoothly down under a black lace handkerchief".¹³ The general picture is of a quiet, introverted woman who enjoyed intellectual and artistic pursuits.

⁶ Known from an engraving in the National Portrait Gallery, London; Frederick Christian Lewis Senior after a drawing by Thomas Lawrence, published 1839 (NPG D32595).

⁷ COWPER-TEMPLE, Georgina. **Mount Temple Memorials**. London: privately published, 1890, p. 45.

⁸ TOLLEMACHE, op. cit., 1949, p. 145.

⁹ Ibidem. LONDON Gazette, 17 Dec. 1847, p. 4629. THE FOREIGN Office List for 1857, London, 1857, p. 79.

¹⁰ TOLLEMACHE, op. cit., 1949, p. 145, 158.

¹¹ Instituto Moreira Salles, n°001SK00718: "Leopoldina, Justino, Theresina".

¹² Ibidem, p. 146.

¹³ WARREN, Margaret Leicester. **Diaries**. Taunton: [n.p.] 1924, v. 2, p. 285 (15 February 1873).



Figure 1:
Photograph of William Augustus Tollemache, 1861.
Albumen print, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Figure 2:
Photograph of Georgina Cowper-Temple (left)
and Marguerite Tollemache (right), c. 1850–60.
Albumen print, Victoria and Albert Museum,
London.

Marguerite and William had three homes: 35 Berkeley Square in Mayfair, a house in the village of Nutfield, Surrey, and one in Paris.¹⁴ Their Nutfield home, Ridge Green House, was visited by Margaret Leicester Warren, who described it afterwards in her diary. The description is worth quoting in full as it demonstrates the Tollemaches' aesthetic interests:

[The house] was hardly bigger than a cottage, but so lovely. A heap of irregular gables and eaves and lattice windows. The walls all built of old brown purple bricks and growing close up to them, one or two rustling poplar trees. There is also a tiny courtyard inside and quantities of odd corners and doors and little staircases. Over the doorway is written "Turum est" and on the highest gable of all is stuck one large, gold sunflower! The inside is perfect too. Windows of bottle ends, plants in tubs and flowers, –flowers everywhere! Books, pictures, beautiful blue "Morris" jars, everything artistic and in good taste. Mrs Tollemache, Edith's Aunt Marguerite, suits her house. She is very pretty and quiet and gentle. Mr Tollemache is charming.¹⁵

Warren's account confirms the Tollemaches' fascination with "everything artistic", with Pre-Raphaelite leanings: a reference to William Morris, a Latin motto above a doorway (recalling the Latin motto "Ars longa vita brevis", carved above the fireplace in Morris's Red House in Bexleyheath), and the sunflower, soon to become a symbol of the Aesthetic Movement in the 1870s. This house still stands in Nutfield, with the sunflower visible atop one of the gables.

In 1870, Marguerite published her first book, *Spanish Towns and Spanish Pictures*, derived from a travel journal which she kept during a tour of Spain in 1869, and illustrated with several drawings by her (a point to which I will return). Marguerite dedicated the book to Sir William Stirling Maxwell, an expert on Spanish art, to whom she had shown the manuscript.¹⁶ It was a critical success. The *Athenaeum* described it as a "useful companion" to tourists, also praising Marguerite's "highly-educated mind, free from the cant of connoisseurship".¹⁷ The *Art-Journal* commended Marguerite's decision to focus on Spanish painting, a topic long overlooked by British audiences.¹⁸ The book even led to Marguerite forming an epistolary friendship with the novelist George Eliot, who read the book with "fascination" after Marguerite sent her a copy.¹⁹ *Spanish Towns* was issued in a second edition in 1872, and Marguerite published three more books in her lifetime: *Many Voices* (1883), *Spanish Mystics: A Sequel to "Many Voices"* (1886) and *French Jansenists* (1893), all of which are compilations of extracts from Christian texts.

¹⁴ TOLLEMACHE, op. cit., 1949, p. 145.

¹⁵ WARREN, op. cit., v. 2, p. 300 (28 April 1873).

¹⁶ TOLLEMACHE, Marguerite. *Spanish Towns and Spanish Pictures*. London: J. T. Hayes, 1870, dedication.

¹⁷ ATHENAEUM, 21 Jan. 1871, p. 75.

¹⁸ ART-JOURNAL, 1 Feb. 1871, p. 63.

¹⁹ See letters in: HAIGHT, Gordon S. (ed.). *The George Eliot Letters*. New Haven: Harvard University Press, 1955, v. 5, p. 227, Eliot to Frederick Locker (16 December 1871); p. 273, Eliot to Marguerite Tollemache (21 May 1872).

At this time, Marguerite and William socialised in creative circles, and they appear in the published diaries of various Victorian intellectuals. For example, the writer Augustus Hare recorded a dinner party with Rafe and Edith Leycester at 6 Cheyne Walk in 1875: “The company were Mr and Mrs Haweis, Mr and Mrs Tom Taylor, and the Augustus Tollemaches”.²⁰ This demonstrates the distinguished company that the couple were keeping: Mary Eliza Haweis and her husband Hugh were both writers, while Tom Taylor was a prominent playwright and editor of *Punch* magazine. During a visit to Broadlands, the home of Georgina and her husband William Cowper-Temple, Hare recorded seeing a group portrait which included Marguerite and William, painted by Edward Clifford, an artist associated with the Pre-Raphaelites.²¹

According to Edward Tollemache, Marguerite and William later “became poorer” and moved from Berkeley Square to Cheyne Walk in Chelsea, also changing their Nutfield home for “the Glen at Babbacombe [in Devon], the thatched cottage on the beach below [...] Georgina’s house [Babbacombe Cliff]”.²² Exactly when this happened is uncertain. The couple were still living in Berkeley Square in 1885.²³ Six years later, in 1891, an electoral register listed William living at 2 Cheyne Walk.²⁴ When Marguerite signed a petition by the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection in October 1891, she gave her address as Cheyne Walk.²⁵ Edward Tollemache also states that the Cheyne Walk house was “transformed” for the couple by the architect Philip Webb, which further connects them with the Victorian art world.²⁶ Webb was closely associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, frequently collaborating with Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones and Ford Madox Brown; he designed Red House for Morris and his wife Jane in 1859. It is unclear how extensively he renovated the Tollemaches’ Chelsea house, if indeed this is true. In the Victorian and Albert Museum are two designs by Webb for a sundial and a well cover, both done “for W. A. Tollemache” (William Augustus).²⁷ They are undated, and it is unclear whether the Tollemaches’ city home could have accommodated these features, or if they were intended for their property in rural Nutfield.

²⁰ HARE, Augustus J. C. *The Story of My Life*. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1896–1900, v. 4, p. 307 (20 February 1875).

²¹ *Ibidem*, v. 4, p. 72 (10 December 1872): “In Mr Cowper Temple’s room upstairs is Edward Clifford’s family group of the ‘Maimed and Halt’ being called in to the feast, the figures being those of the Cowper-Temples, Augustus Tollemaches, Lord Roden, Lady Palmerston, and Clifford’s favourite drummer. They are wonderful likenesses, but it is a strange picture, with our Saviour looking in at the window”. With thanks to Richard Jordan-Baker of the Broadlands Estate for confirming that the painting is no longer in the house’s collection (email to the author, 20 December 2021); its current location is unknown.

²² TOLLEMACHE, *op. cit.*, 1949, p. 146.

²³ WEBSTER’S Royal Red Book; or Court and Fashionable Register for January, 1885. London, 1885, p. 24.

²⁴ See also THE POST Office London Street Directory for 1891, London, 1891, p. 253.

²⁵ SPECIAL Supplement to the Zoophilist. *The Zoophilist*, 2 Nov. 1891, p. 171.

²⁶ TOLLEMACHE, *op. cit.*, 1949, p. 146.

²⁷ Philip Webb, *Design drawing for a well cover for W. A. Tollemache* (E.303:1-2014 and E.303:2-2014), *Design for a sundial for W. A. Tollemache* (E.302-2014), Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Marguerite and William remained childless. In later life, they settled in the village of Risby in Suffolk, where Marguerite “had inherited a small property”, Risby Cottage.²⁸ She died on 20 November 1896 and was buried at Risby. Three months later, in February 1897, William auctioned off fifteen mezzotints at Christie’s in London.²⁹ He lived on at Risby Cottage until his death in 1911 at the age of 95 and was also buried in Risby churchyard.

Letters from Brazil

Towards the end of 1853, Marguerite and William left England for Brazil. William was to work as an attaché at the British Legation, then located in Botafogo in Rio de Janeiro. The couple’s exact departure date is not known, but James Gregory notes that it was shortly after Georgina Cowper-Temple’s birthday on 8 October.³⁰ A letter from William to Georgina on 12 November reported that they had arrived in Rio following “not a very pleasant voyage”.³¹ He outlined his ambitions for the trip in his next letter:

I shall remain here, learn Portuguese, & try & make myself *au fait* of the business of this mission, so that when [Henry Francis Howard, the British envoy extraordinary to Brazil] goes in August I may be perfectly qualified to be left in charge [...] & I hope further to be afterwards named to the Secretaryship [...] Should these anticipations be unfulfilled, I shall return home without delay, & retire altogether from the Profession.³²

The trip did not start well for Marguerite: soon after arriving, she caught a fever and was bedridden at their hotel.³³ After recovering, she was relieved to retreat up to “The Spot”, a “place on the Corcovado Mountain” whose fresh air and beautiful views she praised in numerous letters to her sister-in-law.³⁴ In one, dated 20 November 1853, she included a small sketch of the view from the drawing-room window [Figure 3], anticipating the landscape drawings that she began making a few months later.³⁵ The Spot appears in several other sketches by Marguerite: one of the few watercolours by her, dated 30 June 1854 [Figure 4], shows its tastefully furnished drawing-room, with William sitting at a writing desk.

²⁸ TOLLEMACHE, op. cit., 1949, p. 146.

²⁹ CATALOGUE of a Small Collection of Mezzotint Engravings after Sir J. Reynolds and G. Morland, the Property of William Augustus Tollemache, Esq. London, 1897, p. 8–9.

³⁰ GREGORY, James. **Reformers, Patrons and Philanthropists: The Cowper-Temples and High Politics in Victorian England.** London: I. B. Tauris, 2010, p. 69.

³¹ WILLIAM Augustus Tollemache to Georgina Cowper-Temple, “Rio”, 12 November 1853, Broadlands Archive, Special Collections, Hartley Library, University of Southampton (hereafter cited as BA), MS62/BR/55/19/5.

³² WILLIAM to Georgina, “Rio”, 14 Nov. 1853, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/6.

³³ MARGUERITE Tollemache to Georgina, “The Spot”, Corcovado’, 20 Nov. 1853, BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid. The ship in the sketch was added by William, which Marguerite noted “has *not improved it*”.

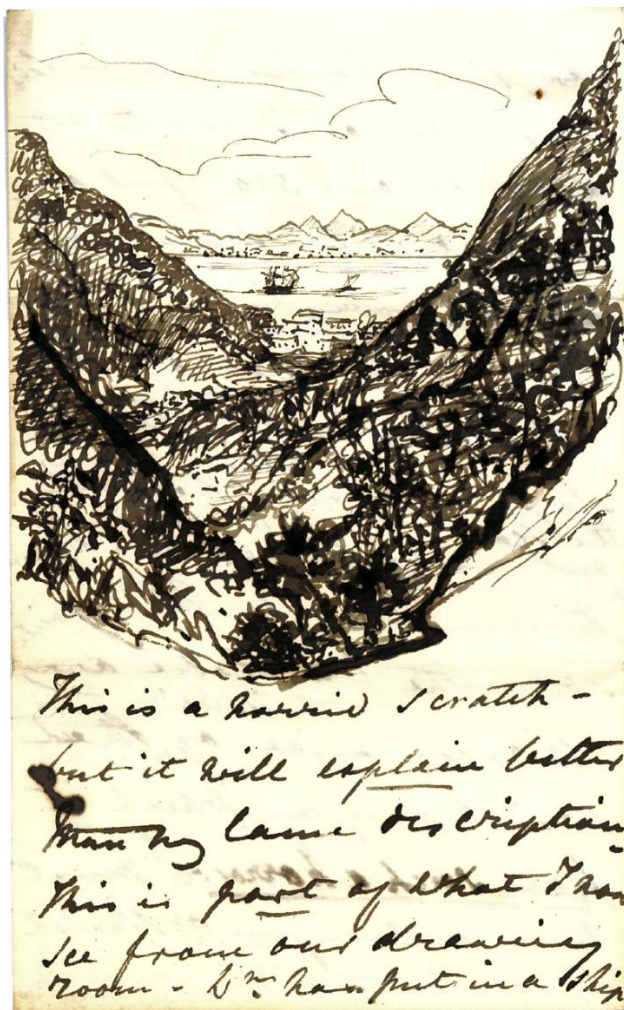


Figure 3:
 View from the drawing-room window of “The Spot”,
 Corcovado, in a letter from Marguerite Tollemache
 to Georgina Cowper-Temple, 20 November 1853.
 Broadlands Archive, University of Southampton
 Archives and Special Collections.

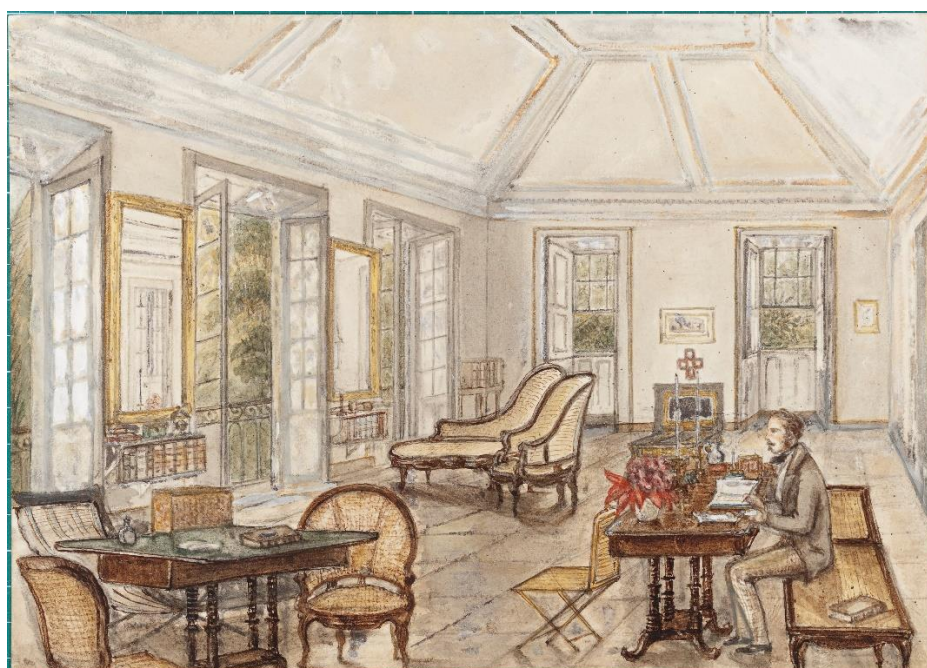


Figure 4:
 Marguerite Tollemache,
**Drawing Room “The
 Spot”, Corcovado, 30th
 June 1854.**
 Watercolour on paper,
 18.5 x 25.9 cm,
 Instituto Moreira Salles.

The couple moved regularly between Rio de Janeiro and Petrópolis. Marguerite made numerous drawings of their Petrópolis residence, called the Presidencia. She despaired constantly about the hot weather, which both she and William hated. In February 1854, William wrote to Georgina of “the depressing effect of the climate of Rio. This depression [...] is the most horrible thing I ever endured”.³⁶ His prejudiced attitude towards Brazil in general is summarised by another comment to Georgina: “there is nothing in the country to create interest excepting its natural Beauty”.³⁷ Even his job at the Legation bored him; he wrote often to his sister complaining about the lack of work and longing to be back in England, where the Crimean War was causing “a state of excitement hitherto unknown in our time”.³⁸ Eventually, his attitude mellowed, and he wrote mutedly that he and Marguerite were “lead[ing] the same tranquil tame existence”.³⁹

Despite these negative feelings, Marguerite managed to find some pleasure in her new surroundings, particularly its natural splendour. From their cottage below the Corcovado she could contemplate the landscape, writing to Georgina: “Wherever I turn my eyes I see nothing but green & it is so grateful to me after that dreadful glare at Catete”.⁴⁰ At The Spot, Marguerite set about creating “a little flower garden” (“put in order”, she noted, “by the Black who is let with the House”), which included Brazilian roses, gardenias and a “large Mango Tree, under which William & I read prayers together”.⁴¹ She was happy to “lead *the life of a Hermit* [...] the only life to lead in this country, & I bel[ie]ve the secret of keeping tolerably well, for there is nothing to be gained by going below [into the city]”.⁴² This also explains why most of her drawings depict only a handful of locations, mainly The Spot and its environs and Petrópolis. The probable location of The Spot will be discussed below.

One letter in September 1854 suggests that the couple felt aimless in Brazil: “I wonder what is to be our path? Whether towards home or to remain where we are or go elsewhere! Sometimes I wish one, sometimes the other”.⁴³ Overall, the Tollemaches did not really enjoy their time there, and they were anxious to return to England as soon as possible. Feelings of homesickness, owing to the vast distance separating them from William’s family, are frequently expressed in the letters. They particularly disliked Rio: for Marguerite it was “dreadful”; for William, “vile”.⁴⁴ By February 1855, Marguerite feared “that we may have another month to stay

³⁶ WILLIAM to Georgina, “Petropolis”, 7 Feb. 1854, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/11.

³⁷ WILLIAM to Georgina, “Rio”, 13 Jan. 1854, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/10.

³⁸ WILLIAM to Georgina, 27 Mar. [1854], BA, MS62/BR/55/19/13.

³⁹ WILLIAM to Georgina, ‘Rio’, 10 Jun. [1854], BA, MS62/BR/55/19/15.

⁴⁰ MARGUERITE to Georgina, “The Spot’, Corcovado”, 20 Nov. [1853], BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

⁴¹ MARGUERITE to Lady Elizabeth [Tollemache?], “The Spot’, Corcovado”, 9 Dec. [1853], BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ MARGUERITE to Georgina, “The Spot’, 13 Sep. [1854], BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

⁴⁴ MARGUERITE to Georgina, “The Spot’, Corcovado”, 20 Nov. [1853], BA, MS62/BR/55/3; WILLIAM to Georgina, “Rio”, 14 Nov. 1853, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/6.

here, for I am longing with quite as much anxiety as William to get home to you all again”.⁴⁵ Their wish was granted in April, when they boarded the ship that would take them back to England.

“She has taken to drawing”

Marguerite’s drawings are first mentioned in a letter from William to Georgina, written at The Spot on 15 March 1854: “I have been in the town & at the Legation all day [...] & Marguerite has been taking views & writing letters to send home”.⁴⁶ The following month, Marguerite herself told Georgina about her new hobby:

I have done Em a lot of drawings for her book to go next boat – William is anxious to keep them – doubting anyone else’s caring for them but I am sure Em will take care of them, & then if we live, which God grant, to go back, it will be charming to look & think of Brazil *at a distance*.⁴⁷

This letter conveys Marguerite’s ambivalence about Brazil, which both appalled and fascinated her. The former feeling was mainly due to the tropical climate, the latter to the beautiful landscapes which she had begun documenting in her drawings. The “Em” to whom Marguerite sent the sketches could have been her other sister-in-law, Georgina and William’s sister Emily Halliday, or Emily Temple, Georgina and William’s sister-in-law. While it is tempting to think that Marguerite is referring to a published book, it was more likely to have been a personal scrapbook or album kept by “Em”. Therefore, although Marguerite made the drawings in a sketchbook – some of the sheets, such as Figure 5, show signs of having been torn carefully out of a book – they did not stay in this format for long but were sent sporadically back to England. She was keen for her family and friends to see the landscapes as soon as possible, giving them an immediate visual chronicle of her experiences to supplement her letters.

Another letter by William in April 1854 describes Marguerite’s practices in more detail:

I am glad to say she has taken to drawing (sketching from nature), which I encourage in every way, in [the] 1st place because it occupies her, & prevents her having so much leisure for reflection and low spirits, and also because she has really a great deal of talent for view-taking, and would be able, if she [ou]ld colour, to shew you a country which I hope you will never see.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ MARGUERITE to Georgina, “British Legation”, 13 Feb. 1855, BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

⁴⁶ WILLIAM to Georgina, “Rio (The Spot)”, 15 Mar. 1854, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/2.

⁴⁷ MARGUERITE to Georgina, “Tijuca”, 9 Apr. 1854, BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

⁴⁸ WILLIAM to Georgina, “Rio”, 10 Apr. 1854, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/14.

This letter demonstrates the therapeutic purposes of Marguerite's drawings during her spells of unhappiness in Brazil. Sketching may have offered her a feeling of stability during a period of uncertainty; the tranquility of the drawings and their patiently observed natural details seem at odds with the feelings of anxiety and discomfort expressed in the letters. Marguerite's practise of writing full dates and detailed descriptions on the backs of the sheets – beginning with “Mango Tree by Moonlight, Tijuca” on 7 April 1854 – allowed her to chronicle the passing of time, like a visual diary.

The last direct reference to Marguerite's drawings is in June 1854, when William reported that “Marguerite is looking very well, & most happily finds amusement by the hour in drawing – a talent long kept in abeyance but which now comes in very opportunely”.⁴⁹ Clearly, Marguerite was returning to a favourite pastime. Although the drawings are not mentioned in the remaining letters, she continued to make them regularly through the rest of 1854 and into 1855, as the dates on the sheets testify. Of the forty sketches, four simply bear the year 1854; a fifth is dated April 1854, without the day. Given how carefully Marguerite wrote full dates on the remaining drawings, the five partially dated ones were probably made prior to the thirty-five fully dated ones. As William's letter quoted earlier indicates, Marguerite began “taking views” in about March 1854. The earliest recorded date is 7 April 1854, and the last date is 29 April 1855 – a view of the island of São Vicente in the Cape Verde archipelago, sketched on the ship that was taking the couple back to England. The two preceding sketches of scenes in Bahia and Pernambuco, dated 18 and 21 April, were done aboard the *Avon*, meaning that this was the month that Marguerite and Augustus left Brazil.

Identifying “The Spot”

As mentioned earlier, Marguerite's first Brazilian sketch was technically the one included in her letter to Georgina in November 1853, showing the view from the drawing-room window of The Spot [Figure 3]. A few months later, she depicted the same view in a larger drawing, dated 8 May 1854 [Figure 5]. It is probably the sketch mentioned in a letter from Marguerite to Georgina on 15 May:

I am sending Em some sketches for her Book. Look at the one of the View from these windows. It is such a lovely view, & tho' my drawing will I fear be half rubbed out by the time it arrives, still I hope there will be enough left to give you a good idea of our view.⁵⁰

That the drawing dated 8 May [Figure 5] was done in crayon accords with Marguerite's fear that it would be erased during the journey back to England.

⁴⁹ WILLIAM to Georgina, “Rio”, 10 Jun. 1854, BA, MS62/BR/55/19/15.

⁵⁰ MARGUERITE to Georgina, “The Spot”, 15 May [1854], BA, MS62/BR/55/3.

Comparing Marguerite's drawings with other Rio landscapes has helped to determine the likely location of The Spot, where thirteen of the drawings and the three watercolours were made. Some thirty years earlier, a view very similar to those mentioned above had been sketched by Maria Graham and published as an engraving in her *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil* [1824; Figure 6]. Graham's drawing shows the prospect down the valley towards Guanabara Bay from the house of Dirk van Hogendorp, a Dutch count who occupied a coffee plantation called Novo-Sion at the foot of the Corcovado, and which Graham visited in January 1822.⁵¹ Van Hogendorp's cottage was also depicted in a painting by an anonymous artist [Figure 7]. A Dutch article published in 1923 identified the location of Novo-Sion and included a photograph of the view from it [Figure 8], which resembles Graham's and Marguerite's sketches.⁵² This article also states that, although van Hogendorp's original *chácara* no longer existed, there were traces of the original coffee plantation. These details match other drawings of The Spot by Marguerite, such as one depicting coffee trees lining a path down to a pool where William would bathe.⁵³ According to another article in *O Paiz*, the Rio Carioca once ran through the property, which explains the pool and small river depicted in some of Marguerite's sketches.⁵⁴ The steep hillside cutting into the scene on the right in Marguerite's and Graham's drawings and the 1923 photograph can be identified as the Morro Dona Marta; the Corcovado itself is situated behind the viewer.

There are further parallels between Marguerite's and Graham's drawings and a painting by Nicolas-Antoine Taunay, *View of the Bay of Rio de Janeiro from the Tijuca Mountains* [Figure 9], in the Museu Castro Maya. Taunay depicts a group of upper-class people resting in the foreground, with the city visible at the bottom of the valley.⁵⁵ It has been dated to 1819–20, making it almost contemporaneous with Graham's drawing of the view from Dirk van Hogendorp's cottage and the painting of the same property [Figure 7]. (Stylistically, Figure 7 recalls Taunay's work, but this requires additional research.) These drawings and paintings all depict the same location below the Corcovado, meaning that the Tollemaches' cottage was in the vicinity of van Hogendorp's former Novo-Sion plantation. Today, the site is used by the Toca de Assis, a Catholic brotherhood.⁵⁶ It is possible that the buildings used by them, which appear to be from the nineteenth century, were those inhabited by the Tollemaches, but this requires further research.

⁵¹ GRAHAM, Maria. *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, 1823*. Londres: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1824, p. 168–72 (1 January 1822).

⁵² DE WONING van Dirk van Hogendorp in Brazilië (1817–1822). *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, v. 79, n. 4, 1923, p. 642–5.

⁵³ IMS, no. 001SK00703: "Coffee Trees / Steps to the Bath / Spot / delt M T. / 25th November 1854".

⁵⁴ INTERESSANTE episódio de história carioca: um general de Napoleão que viveu no Rio de Janeiro. *O Paiz*, 29 Apr. 1923.

⁵⁵ See: LAGO, Pedro Corrêa do. *Taunay e o Brasil: obra completa, 1816–1821*. Rio de Janeiro: Capivara, 2008, p. 134–7.

⁵⁶ Located at Ladeira do Ascurra, 186. In the courtyard is a stone monument, erected in the 1920s; it is dedicated to van Hogendorp and bears a Dutch inscription identifying the location as where he lived and died.



Figure 5:
Marguerite Tollemache, **View from Drawing [room] window at “The Spot”, May 8th 1854.**
Pencil and crayon on paper, 16.3 x 19.6 cm, Instituto Moreira Salles.



Figure 6:
Edward Finden after Maria Graham, **From Count Hoggendorp's Cottage**, published in GRAHAM, Maria.
Journal of a Voyage to Brazil. London: 1824. British Museum, London.



Figure 7:

Unknown artist, **General Dirk van Hogendorp at Novo-Sion, Rio de Janeiro**, c. 1820.
Oil on canvas, 36.5 x 45 cm. KITLV, Leiden University Libraries.

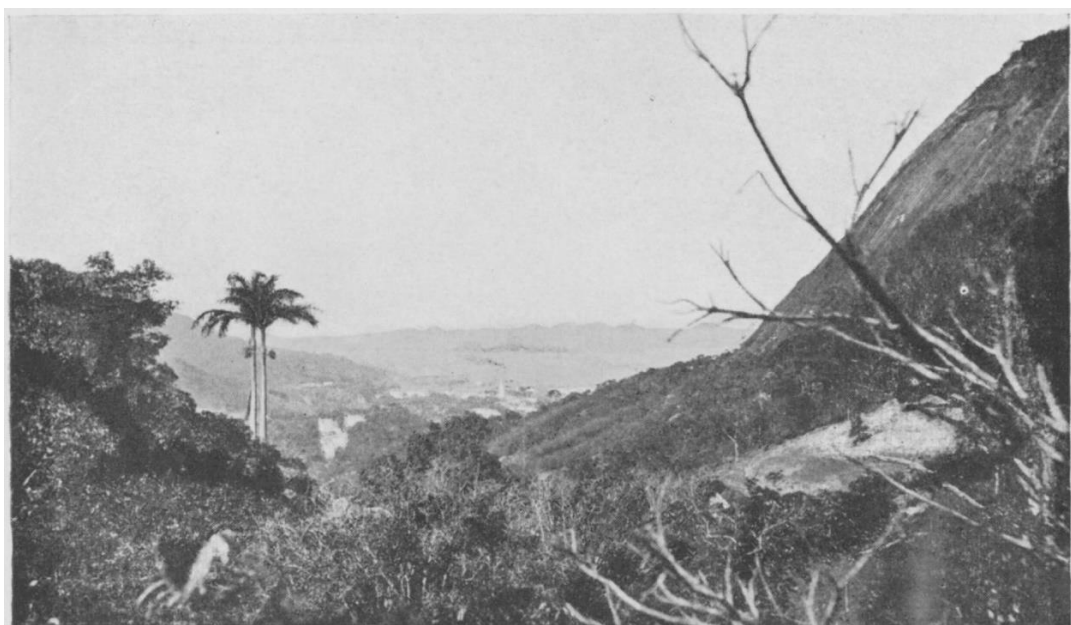


Figure 8:

Photograph of the view from the former site of Dirk van Hogendorp's plantation
Novo-Sion, Rio de Janeiro, c. 1923. Published in 1923.

**Figure 9:**

Nicolas-Antoine Taunay, **View of Rio de Janeiro from the Tijuca Mountains**, c. 1820.
Oil on canvas, 52 x 64 cm. Museu Castro Maya [IBRAM].

The legacy of the drawings

Although it has been suggested that Marguerite “probably did not even intend to publish her drawings” after returning to England, the possibility should not be discounted.⁵⁷ The nineteenth century saw a boom in the British publishing trade for richly illustrated travel books, giving Georgian and Victorian audiences the opportunity to “visit” foreign lands and marvel at their peoples and landscapes from the comfort of their drawing-rooms.⁵⁸ In the 1810s and 1820s, when travel between Britain and Brazil greatly increased, many such books were published, including Graham’s *Journal*, James Henderson’s *A*

⁵⁷ EQUIPE Brasileira Iconográfica. Marguerite Tollemache – uma mulher viajante, 2018. Available at <https://www.brasilianaiconografica.art.br/artigos/2021/marguerite-tollemache-uma-mulher-viajante>. Accessed Jun. 15, 2021: “Provavelmente, nem tinha intenção de publicar seus desenhos, o que confere à sua obra um tom de memória pessoal” (my translation above).

⁵⁸ See BETHELL, Leslie. **Brazil by British and Irish Authors**. Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, 2006, p. 31–79.

History of the Brazil (1821) and Henry Chamberlain's *Views and Costumes of the City and Neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro* (1821), all of which reproduced the authors' own landscape drawings made in Brazil.

A more recent British publication which Marguerite might have seen was *Views in South America* (1852) by the diplomat William Gore Ouseley, comprising twenty-six lithographs with a commentary by the artist. Although Ouseley considered his drawings "amateur efforts", he was encouraged to publish them by "more than one artist of celebrity" back in Europe, and by Prince Albert, to whom the book is dedicated. Ouseley explained that, "although in an artistic point of view [the drawings] cannot command attention, [...] yet, as representing places for the most part out of the beaten track of travellers, and of some interest, he has ventured to publish them".⁵⁹ These words may have inspired Marguerite, who also selected unassuming views that were "out of the beaten track": patches of dense woodland, William's bathing pool at The Spot, small houses in Petrópolis. Henderson, Chamberlain, Graham and Ouseley were all amateur artists; nevertheless, as Ouseley suggested, their sketches were publishable because they depicted scenes that were unfamiliar to British audiences. Their "amateurishness" did not matter. Therefore, although Marguerite was an amateur, it would not have been unfeasible for her drawings to be published back in England.

In fact, one of Marguerite's drawings, a view of Guanabara Bay from São Domingos in Niterói done on 13 April 1855 [Figure 10], was reproduced as a coloured lithograph, simply titled *Rio de Janeiro* [Figure 11]. The print is undated, so it is difficult to know how soon after Marguerite's return to England it was made, but it may have been later in 1855. The lithograph was copied from Marguerite's drawing by Paul Gauci and printed by Messrs Fuller, a printseller and publisher located at 34 Rathbone Place, London. Gauci slightly altered Marguerite's composition in the process, removing the boat in the lower-left corner and softening the contours of the hills. It is not known how many copies of the lithograph were printed. Three are known to survive, in the IMS [Figure 11], the Museu do Ingá in Rio and the National Maritime Museum in London.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ OUSELEY, William Gore. *Description of Views in South America, from Original Drawings Made in Brazil, the River Plate, the Parana, &c. &c., with Notes*. London: Thomas McLean, 1852, p. v–vi.

⁶⁰ Museu do Ingá, Rio de Janeiro, nº 00502. I am grateful to Jovita Santos for this information. Royal Museums Greenwich, ID nº PA10426.

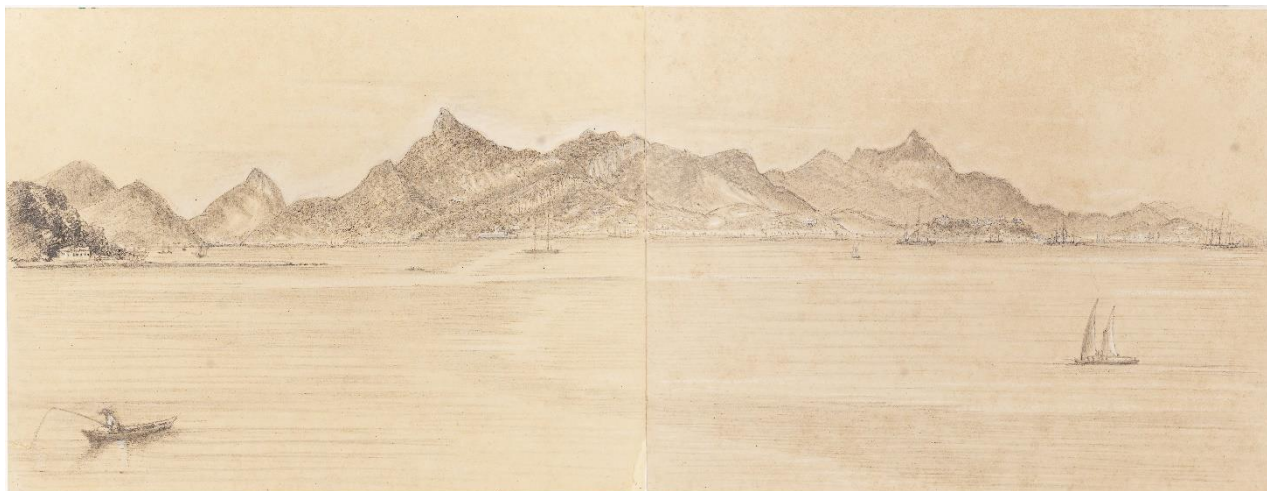


Figure 10:
Marguerite Tollemache, **Bay of Rio from San Domingo 13th April 1855.**
Pencil and white crayon on paper, 23.1 x 59.7 cm.
Instituto Moreira Salles.



Figure 11:
Paul Gauci after Marguerite Tollemache, **Rio de Janeiro**, published c. 1855.
Lithograph, coloured pencils and watercolour, 30.9 x 64.5 cm.
Instituto Moreira Salles.

We might also suppose that Marguerite had larger ambitions for her Brazil drawings based on her subsequent literary activities. Her first book published in 1870, *Spanish Towns and Spanish Pictures*, includes photolithographs reproducing nine observational sketches which she had made during her trip to Spain [Figure 12]. The images are small and embedded within the text, although one appears as a full-page plate, depicting the Torre de los Escipiones near Tarragona, dated 16 May 1869 and bearing Marguerite's monogram [Figure 13]. Stylistically, the Spanish drawings resemble those in the IMS, with a close attention to detail and a careful rendering of trees. Although this development in Marguerite's career occurred after her time in Brazil, she may have harboured similar ambitions at the earlier date but was unable to fully pursue them. Indeed, the illustrations in *Spanish Pictures* would not have been possible without her experience of "view-taking" in Brazil in the 1850s.

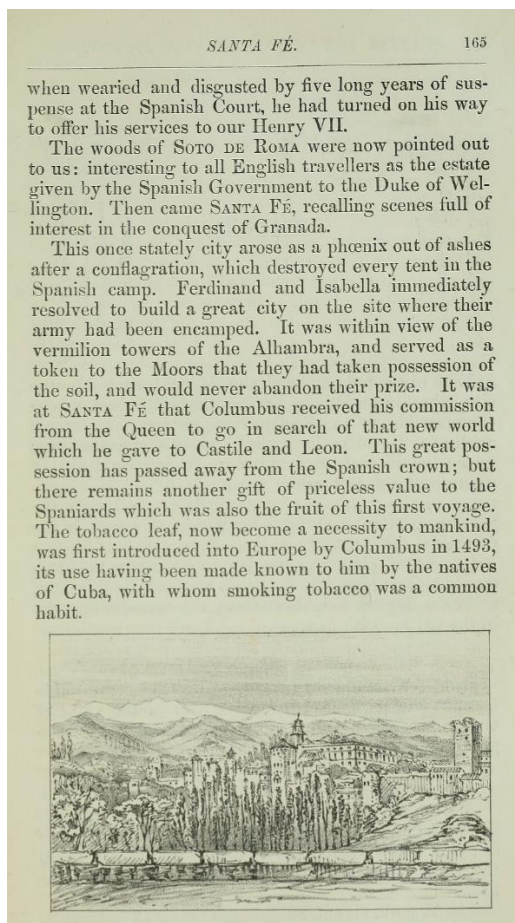


Figure 12: Page from TOLLEMACHE, Marguerite. *Spanish Towns and Spanish Pictures*. London: J. T. Hayes, 1870.

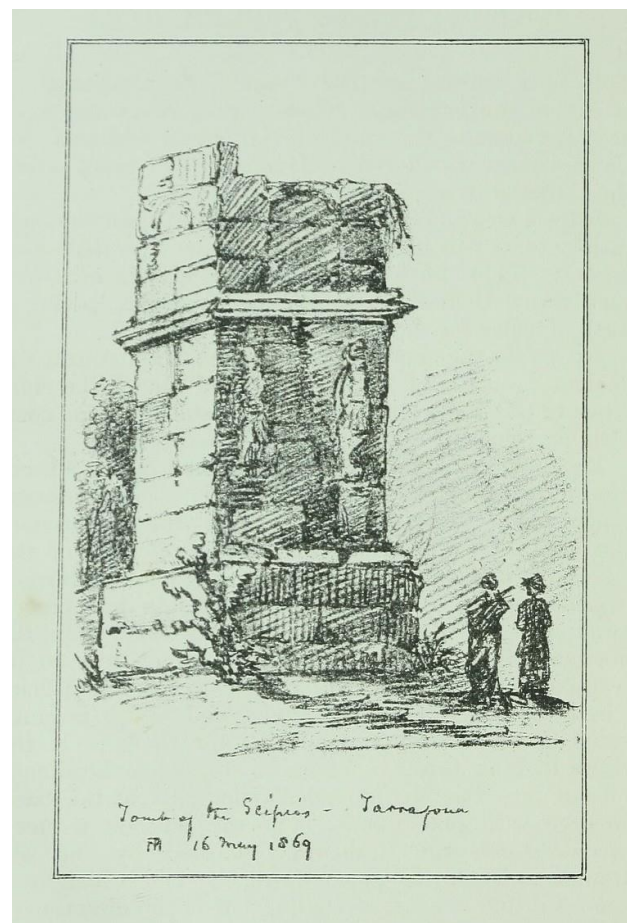


Figure 13: Stephen Ayling after Marguerite Tollemache, *Tomb of the Scipios – Tarragona / MT 16 May 1869*, c. 1870.

The Brazilian drawings and watercolours are now conserved in individual mounts, but they were originally mounted together in an album with a blue hardcover binding, which the IMS has kept. The title “DRAWINGS OF RIO DE JANEIRO 1853–55” is stamped on the spine, meaning that the album was always intended to house this set of drawings. An inscription inside the front cover reads: “Views taken when attached to the Legation at Rio Janeiro – Brazil by Marguerite Tollemache from November 1853 to April 1855”. The album’s pages are also inscribed with descriptive titles and dates which match those on the versos of the now separated sheets, so that it is possible to see the order in which they were originally assembled. Despite the precise dates written on most of the sheets, they were not pasted into the album chronologically. The handwriting on the sheets and throughout the album closely resembles Marguerite’s, as evidenced in her letters. Therefore, she must have assembled the album herself after her return to England. Whether or not the album is the same “Book” belonging to “Em” that is mentioned in Marguerite’s letters to Georgina is difficult to ascertain.

The provenance of the album is also obscure. The Stickels evidently bought it from João Fernando de Almeida Prado in São Paulo, but it is not known when or how he acquired it. Since the drawings entered the IMS’s collection, they have rarely been displayed in public, although they are fully digitised online. Figures 10 and 11 were included in the IMS’s exhibition *Panoramas* in 2012.⁶¹ This article has shed new light on the Tollemaches’ travels in Brazil and the drawings themselves. Marguerite initially began drawing as a pastime during her solitude in Rio de Janeiro and to send back to her friends in England. She evidently aspired to publish them after returning home, as evidenced by the lithograph by Paul Gauci and her later book *Spanish Towns and Spanish Pictures*. In this way, her work participated in a trend among British artist-travellers that had been initiated by figures like Chamberlain and Graham earlier in the century, whereby private images entered the public sphere through printed publications.

⁶¹ PANORAMAS: a paisagem brasileira no acervo do Instituto Moreira Salles. São Paulo: IMS, 2012.