

The book cover features a dark, textured background with various botanical illustrations. At the top left, there is a large, detailed illustration of a fern frond. To its right, a butterfly with orange and black wings is perched on another fern frond. In the upper left corner, a white, spiky flower is shown. The bottom left corner contains a cluster of pink and white plumeria flowers. The bottom right corner features a large, vibrant pink and orange protea flower. The central text is overlaid on the dark background.

Travelling with
MARIANNE
NORTH

ADVENTURER, BOTANIST & ARTIST



Photo credit: Marianne North
by Unknown photographer, 1880s, NPG x128767
©National Portrait Gallery, London



Painting by kind permission of the North Family and photographed by Bob Billington

Hastings House by Marianne North

On the Old London Road in Hastings stands a large, white house in which, in 1830, Marianne North was born into a comfortable existence. Self-educated, (she detested school), Marianne was intelligent and sensitive with a lively sense of humour and a talent for singing. Her family, wealthy and well-connected, eschewed Victorian conformities, all of which stood her in good stead and undoubtedly helped to develop the remarkable person that she was to become.

She spent her winters at Hastings Lodge "a large house with lots of bells, servants and visitors surrounded by gardens. There were three glass houses: one for orchids, another for temperate plants, and another quite cool for vines and cuttings" where Marianne and her father would "work like slaves". Summers were spent in Rougham, the family's country home (where she owned a pet parrot called 'Twenty Pounds'), and travelling in Europe, North Africa and The Levant.

It was her passion, some would say obsession, shared with her father, for plants, flowers, nature and travelling that secured her place in history. These along with her magnificent paintings now housed in her gallery at The Botanic Gardens, Kew.

From her first visit to Kew's Temperate House in the 1850s, Marianne dreamed of exploring the world to paint all things beautiful and exotic in nature. From 1870 she followed that dream, hunting out plants across the world bringing hundreds of gloriously rich oil paintings of flowers, trees and animals to an astonished audience in England. She also kept a journal, edited into the intensely personal, 'beautifully descriptive and evocative 'Recollections of a Happy Life', that tell of her remarkable experiences.

In 2018 the Exploring Marianne North Project worked with a group of 10 women in Hastings to research and discover more about Marianne. Their research, deliciously illustrated by her paintings, has been compiled into this booklet to give a taste of her experiences. We hope you enjoy 'Travelling with Marianne North'.

Packing Inventory

Portmanteau
Travel Bag



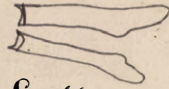
Travel toiletry set



Underwear
including bloomers,
chemise, corset,
modesty petticoat



Satchel,
for everyday use



Stockings



Leather Boots



Travel hat



Gloves



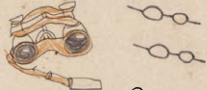
Woolen overcoat & shawl

Hair Accessories



2 x black dress (wool)
2 x black dress (cotton)
with collars plus one silk
for 'special occasions'

Opera glasses & Spectacles



Art supplies: brushes, tubes of paint (cobalt blue, lead white, orange, green), inks for sketching, paper and travel easel



Letter writing materials
& letters of introduction
Journals for recording adventures
and reading matter



Natural Tints
To be made along the way,
using Madder
or Rubia Tinctorum

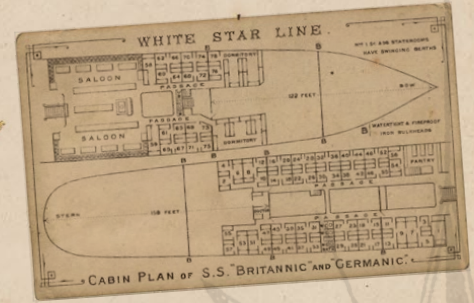
Transport

Marianne used whatever means available to her to track down the subjects she sought to paint across the globe. Travelling was often an adventure in itself!



By Sea

Ocean Liners: for example Cunard Line and Royal Mail Steamers Line



By Land & River

Steam Trains: passenger and freight, bullock and horse drawn coaches including Cobb and Co. coaches (Australia), horseback, donkeys and mules (some ill-mannered), canoe (for shooting the rapids), jinricksha, on foot



Cobb & Co



Jinricksha



North America 1871, 75, 81

The dream begins in North America and Canada 1871.
Set sail 13th July on the SS. Malta from Liverpool.
Arrived 22nd July, Boston, Massachusetts.

"I had long had the dream of going to some tropical country to paint its peculiar vegetation on the spot in natural abundant luxuriance; so when my friend Mrs. S. asked me to come and spend the summer with her in the United States, I thought this might easily be made into a first step for carrying out my plan."



Painting 207 An old Red Cedar on the rocks near West Manchester, Massachusetts

Once settled into Mrs S's house near West Manchester, USA

"...we walked over the cliffs to find a most curious cedar tree, perfectly shaved at the top like an umbrella pine by the sea winds, with its branches matted and twisted in the most fantastic way."

"The food on those days was always extra good. Huckleberry puddings with cream were quite divine, and corn-cakes and chowder..."

Elkridge
Huckleberry Pudding

Ingredients
 1 pound of flour
 1 pound of light-brown sugar
 8 eggs
 1 quart of berries

Instructions
 Beat the flour, sugar, and eggs as sponge cake, and add the berries, nicely picked, washed, and allowed to dry, like as sponge cake. This may be served with sauce; either hot or cold.

Elizabeth Elliott Leach,
 The Quaker Woman's Cookbook
 first published 1835



Painting 187 Niagara Falls

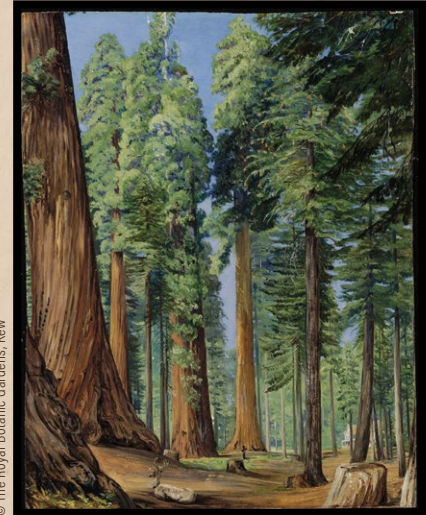
© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

"The falls far outstretched my grandest ideas. They are enormous, the banks above and below wildly and richly wooded, with a great variety of fine trees."

Revisiting North America in 1875 and again 1881 to paint the great Redwoods.



"There was no difficulty in finding the trees; only in choosing which one to paint, and how to get far enough away from such big objects as to see the whole of any one. Fifteen feet through, at a yard from the ground and two hundred or nearly three hundred feet high, were the measurements of the largest."



© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Painting 154 The Calaveras Grove of the Big Tree, or Wellingtonia, in the evening

By steam train to Yosemite

"...the still heat was very trying, the ground covered with dazzling sand, with a few scrubby trees loaded with mistletoe and cacti, some like pillar-posts thirty feet high, others branching like candelabra."



Painting 185 Vegetation of the Desert of Arizona

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Photo credit: Library of Congress

"President Grant went to great lengths to welcome me. I could not think what I had done to deserve all this; but after I left it came out. Mrs Grant talked of me as the daughter of Lord North, the ex-Prime Minister of England. I always knew I was old, but was not prepared for that amount of antiquity."

Jamaica 1871, 72, 85

Set sail 15th December,
Jamaica Steamer from New York.
Arrived 24th December, Kingston, Jamaica.

"In the West Indies at last!
Christmas Eve!... I landed entirely alone
and friendless, but at once fell into kind
and helpful hands..."

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Painting 124 *Leonotis Nepetaefolia*
and Doctor Hummingbird, Jamaica

At Clifton Lodge

"I was in a state of
ecstasy, and hardly
knew what to paint first...
I painted all day,
going out at daylight and
not returning until noon,
after which I worked at
flowers in the house, as
we had heavy rains most
afternoons..."

"...the Doctor humming-bird, with
green breast and two long tail-
feathers, used to dart about the
garden in the company of his wife,
who was like him, minus the tail."



Painting 179 View in the Fernwalk, Jamaica

"At last we turned into
the forest... and rode through
the Fern Walk; it almost took
my breath away with its lovely
fairy-like beauty;"

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Brazil 1872

Set sail 9th August 1872 on the
Neva Royal Mail ship from Southampton.
Arrived 28th August, Pernambuco, Brazil

"I asked Charles Kingsley and
others to give me letters to Brazil
and the West Indies, his book,
'At Last', having added fuel to
the burning of my rage for seeing
the Tropics."

"I soon felt myself at home in Rio
... at the top of the hotel...; both the
Sugar-loaf and the Corcovado
mountains... were within sight."



Painting 825 View of Corcovado Mountain,
near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Breakfast



"... we never started without a cup of hot coffee
and a biscuit—a great security against the bad
effects of a cold damp morning ride."

On the road to Corcovado Crag

"The common snail of Brazil introduced
itself to me on that road; it was as large as
a French roll and its movements were very
dignified. It had a considerable appetite
for green leaves (as I afterward found after
keeping one as a pet in a foot-pan for a month),
its eggs were nearly as large as a pigeon's..."

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Painting 142 Ground Orchid, Carqueja
and Giant Snail, Brazil



Lunch

"I found some difficulty about food for luncheon; if I put meat
into a tin box it went bad, if I took it in paper the ants ate it up
for me, even eggs they contrived to get into, and at last I came to
the conclusion that oranges and bread were the best provision to take."

Brazil continued...



"The mules became quite unmanageable...and we all took to galloping violently up and down the steep paved street, which were now torrents of liquid mud - such a clattering, splashing, umbrella-grinding procession!"

Tenerife 1875

Set sail New Year's Day 1875 from Madeira.
Arrived 13th January, Santa Cruz.



Stayed a week at Mr. S.'s home in Puerto di Orotava enthralled by the garden

"The ground was white with fallen orange and lemon petals; and the huge white Cherokee roses covered a great arbour and tool-house with their magnificent flowers. I never smelt roses as sweet as those in that garden. I scarcely ever went out without finding some new wonder to paint..."

"Any one who likes bread and chocolate can live well all over Spain; I did not care if I got nothing else."



Japan 1875

Set sail 16th October 1875 on the Oceanic from San Francisco.
Arrived 7th November 1875,
Yokohama, Japan



Painting 658 Distant View of Mount Fujiyama, Japan

"I was given a special order from the Mikado to sketch for three months as much as I liked in Kioto, provided I did not scribble on the public monuments or try to convert the people, for it was a closed place to Europeans."



Travel by Jinricksha

"A kind of grown up perambulator, the outside painted all over with marvellous dragons...they started into the city at full gallop, tearing round the corners and yelling like wild things, and finally fell down like a pack of cards, upsetting me at a street corner. I heard my skull go crack against the wall of the house."



Wild Cherry Tea

"The smell was delicious, the taste only fit for fairies, and very hard for big mortal tongues to discover. The tiny girls who served us were very pretty, and merry over our gigantic and clumsy ways. I felt quite Broddingnagian in Japan."



Painting 652 Entrance to the Temple at Kobe, Japan

"a white horse was kept in case God came down and wanted a ride... a stuffed horse is kept in another shed close by, to be ready, in case the holy beast should die, to fill his place and not disappoint the equestrian Deity."



Painting 527 Rose in Close-up

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Marianne North Travels 1871-1884

Plants named after Marianne North



Marianne often travelled on Cunard Line ships



Painting 602
Crinum northianum
A Bornean Crinum



Painting 367
Kniphofia northiae
A giant Kniphofia near
Grahamstown, South Africa



Painting 501
Northia seychellana
Foliage, flowers and fruit
of the Capuchin Tree,
Seychelles



Painting 561
Nepenthes northiana
A new pitcher plant from
the limestone mountains,
Sarawak, Borneo

Canada
1871

America
1871, 75, 81

Jamaica
1871-72, 85

Portugal
1875

Tenerife
1875

India
1877-79

Ceylon
1876-77

Singapore
1876, 80

Borneo
1876, 80

Java
1876

Australia
1880

New Zealand
1880

Brazil
1872

Chili
1884

South Africa
1882

"the greatest pleasure...
was to see new and wonderful
countries, and the only rival
to that pleasure was the one
of staying quietly at home.
Only ignorant fools think
because one likes sugar one
cannot like salt,"



Sample menu included
Chicken Salad Sandwiches,
Strawberries & Cream, Assorted Cakes
Vanille, Lemon and Strawberry Ice Cream
Wine menu, including Chateau Lafitte and Champagne



Photo credit: Julia Margaret Cameron

Returned via Ceylon where her friend,
famous photographer Julia Margaret Cameron

"dressed me up in flowing draperies of cashmere
wool, let down my hair, and made me stand with spiky
cocoa-nut branches running into my head..."



1871 Traveled from Toronto to Detroit
in a Pullman

"...for 75 cents extra
I was in solitary glory
till 8 o'clock at night..."

1871 Traveled from
San Francisco to Yokohama

"On the 16th of October I
took possession of a splendid,
large, airy cabin on the
Oceanic one of the finest
steamers afloat..."

Arrived 7 November 1875

Borneo 1876, 1880

First visit in 1876

Travelled on a little steamer
to Singapore then on to Borneo



Sir Charles Brooke (1829 -1917)
Second Rajah of Sarawak (1868-1917)
Photo credit: A. Bossano, Wellcome Images

"...where I was warmly welcomed by the
Ranee Margaret 'A very handsome
English lady' and her husband,
the Rajah of Sarawak."

"The forest was a perfect world
of wonders... There were great
metallic arums with leaves two-foot
long, graceful trees over the streams
with scarlet bark all hanging in
tatters, and such huge black apes!
One of these watched and followed us
a long while, seeming to be as curious
about us as we were about him.
When we stopped, he stopped, staring
with all his might at us from behind
some branch or tree-trunk; but I had
the best of that game, for I possessed
an opera-glass and he didn't, so could
not probably realize the whole of our
white ugliness."



Painting 545 Forest Scene, Matang, Sarawak, Borneo

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Illustration by Twinkl



Second visit in 1880

Travelled from Singapore
on the Rajah's gunboat,
the Alarm, to Sarawak.
Arrived 25th May.



"My friends... got a canoe with a mat
and pillow, and two Dyaks to paddle
and push; so I gained once more the
pleasure of shooting the rapids,
lying on my back... sometimes shooting
swiftly down through deep-green water
and white foam, while the men clutched
at rocks and tree-stumps..."



Painting 561 Pitcher Plant

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Painting 540 Moonlight View from the Istana, Sarawak, Borneo

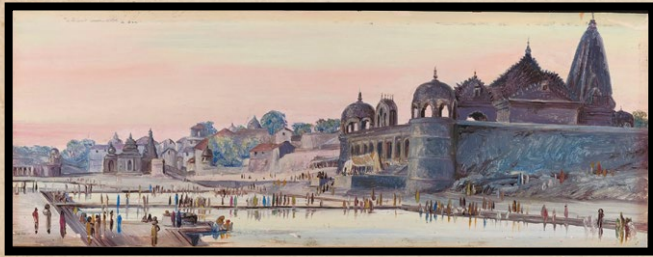
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"There was a state dinner of twenty-four one night...
The party was quite funereal in its solemnity...
I got into disgrace by preferring to sit and look at the
moonlight and lights of Kuching reflected on the water,
on the cool verandah, instead of joining the dismal circle
round the glaring lamp-lit drawing room."

India & Ceylon 1877

Set sail 10th September 1877 on the Tagus from Southampton.
Arrived 15th November 1877, Galle, Ceylon; then, after a few days
with friends, on to Tuticorin or Thoothukudi.



Painting 292 Nassick, in the Bombay Presidency

Edward Lear's letter of introduction to
Dr Arthur Coke Burnell, an English scholar
of Sanskrit based in Madras:

"If this is given to you by Miss North, please do all
you can for her as to sights - particularly flowers, etc.,
etc., as she is a great draughtswoman and botanist,
and is altogether raciously clever and delightful."



Painting 294 The Sacred Lotus of Puidma

Dr Arthur Coke Burnell (1840-1882)
was a great scholar and amassed a large
collection of Sanskrit manuscripts which
are now in the British Library. Burnell
was planning to write about the sacred
plants of the Hindus and had a selection
ready for Marianne to paint.

Laura Ponsonby in the British Library
SAALG newsletter: Issue 2

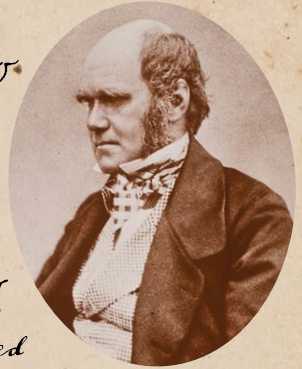


Painting 338 Mount Everest or Deodunga
from Sadukpho, North India

"Frost was white on the ground
round me when I began, at
sunrise, to paint the highest
mountain in the world -
Deodunga, or Mount Everest
as it is now called."

Australia & New Zealand 1880

Set sail 18th April 1880 on the Sindh from Marseilles
with old friends via Sarawak, Singapore and Borneo.
Arrived Brisbane 8th August 1880.



"Charles Darwin... was, in my eyes, the greatest
man living... he thought I ought not to attempt any
representation of the vegetation of the world until I
had seen and painted the Australian. I determined
to take it as a royal command and go at once."

"In one place I sat down, and
without moving could pick twenty-five
different flowers. The banksias were
quite marvellous, their huge bushy
flowers a foot in length, and so full
of honey the natives were said to get
tipsy sucking them."



Painting 775 A West Australian Banksia



"Mrs. Ellis Rowan,
the flower painter I
had heard so much of...
kept a room for me, and
at once introduced me
to quantities of the most
lovely flowers..."

"I kept so quiet that
a kangaroo came
feeding close to me,
and I could watch
its comical mode
of proceeding..."



South Africa 1882

Set sail August 1882, Grantully Castle, from Dartmouth. Arrived 18 days later at Cape town to be met by two friends.



Painting 369 Strelitzia augusta at St John's Kaffraria, Seychelles

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

"...the slightest touch to the end of its blue arrow (when ripe) jerks out the pistil and stamens... I dissected one of the great flower-heads, and found at least a dozen young flowers, with their gaudy bracts, tucked away in their honey-bed inside."

On the Ostrich Farm at Grootte Port

"I was lucky enough to... see the gradual entrance into life of the birds... The one I painted, half in half out, turned its head to look at each person who spoke, and seemed to be attending to what we said."



Painting 451 "Coming Out" of a Cape Beauty

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Seychelles 1883

Set sail 27th September 1883, on the Natal, from Marseilles.



Painting 492 The Clove in fruit, and view over Mahe, Seychelles

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

From Praslin by rowing boat

"At last we put up sail and ran into the valley of the coco de mer: a valley as big as old Hastings, quite filled with the huge straight stems and golden shiny stars of the giant palm: it seemed almost too good to believe that I had really reached it."

Chili 1884

About the middle of November 1884, I started on my last journey...

"With the kind help of Sir J.F., a cabin was secured all to myself all the way to Valparaiso and 'till we reached Bordeaux all was enjoyment. Then my nerves gave way again (if they were nerves!), and the torture has continued more or less ever since."

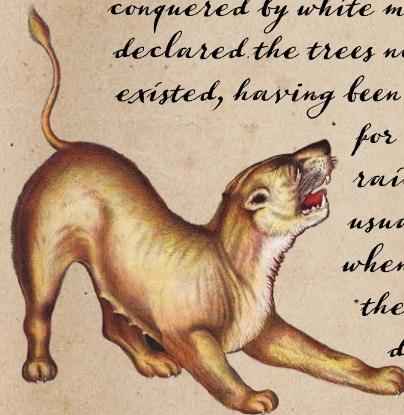


Painting 026 The Blue Puya Cactus at home in the Cordilleras, near Apoquindo, Chili

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

"I would not give up and was rewarded at last by the mists clearing, and behold, a great group of the noble flowers (Puya) standing out like giants, at first, then gradually coming out with their full beauty of colour and form."

"They said I must sleep out, be eaten by pumas, or carried off by Indians, a noble race which had never yet been conquered by white man. Others declared the trees no longer existed, having been all sawn up



for sleepers for railways; but as usual I found when I got nearer the spot, that all difficulties vanished."

© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

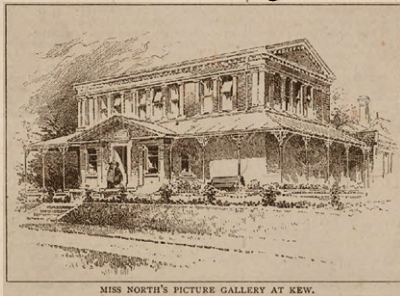


Painting 004 Puzzle Monkey Trees, and Guanacos, Chili

Gallery at Kew Opening 1882



Photo credit: whatsthatpicture.com



© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

MISS NORTH'S PICTURE GALLERY AT KEW.

"Afterwards [final visit to Jamaica] I returned straight to England, where it took me another year to finish and rearrange the gallery at Kew. Every painting had to be re-numbered, so as to keep the countries as much together as possible, the geographical distribution of the plants being the chief object I had in view in the collection."



Photo credit: The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Photo credit: The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

On 11th August 1879 Marianne wrote to Sir Joseph Hooker, her friend and the Director of Kew Botanic Gardens, offering to donate her collected works to the gardens along with a building suitable to house them. Her donation was graciously accepted although her request to have tea and coffee served there was politely declined.

Marianne commissioned her friend, architectural historian James Fergusson, to design the building after the colonial structures she had admired in India, and when it was completed, she carefully arranged all her paintings in a dense mosaic on the walls, sorted according to geographical location of subject.

This prolific and astounding celebration of her life's work opened on 7th June 1882 to great acclaim.

Following more travels an extension was added in 1883 to house more paintings. The gallery now houses 848 of her rich and vibrant works.

Marianne's wry humour and determination show amongst the floral displays around the interior doors, designed and painted by herself. Above two doors are delightful illustrations of the tea and coffee plant, so giving her the last, and enduring word regarding tea and coffee at the gallery!

"Her gallery at Kew is a monumental work: to finish it she fought bravely against increasing illness; when it was done her strength was also gone..."

- Janet Symonds, Marianne North's sister

Home and the last days 1886

"After that was finished, I tried to find a perfect home in the country..."

1886 - Alderley, Gloucestershire



© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Painting by Marianne, Alderley, Gloucestershire

"I have found the exact place I wished for, and already my garden is becoming famous among those who love plants; and I hope it may serve to keep my enemies, the so-called 'nerves', quiet for the few years which are left to me to live."

"No life is so charming as a country one in England, and no flowers are sweeter or more lovely than the primroses, cowslips, bluebells, and violets which grow in abundance all round me here."



"Here her record ends... She died on Saturday, August 30th, 1890, and was buried in the quiet green churchyard at Alderley."

- Janet Symonds

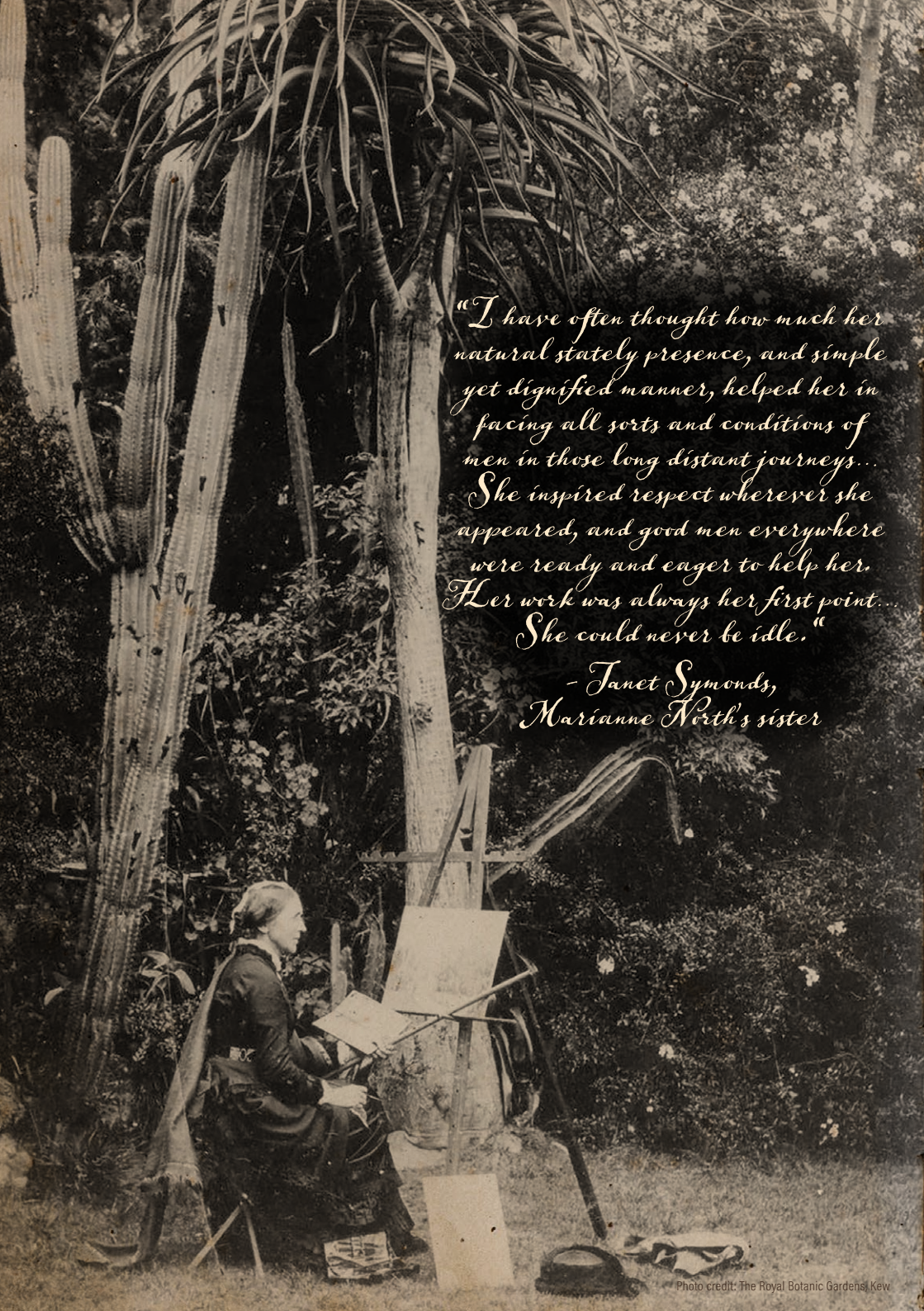
"I felt that something new and delightful had come into my life, for she had not only introduced me to pitcher-plants, but to orchids, palms, ferns and many other things... Miss North was the one person who made me realise the beauties of the world. She was noble, intelligent and kind!"

- from My Life in Sarawak by Lady Margaret Brook



© The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Painting 547 View of the River from the Rajah's Garden, Sarawak



"I have often thought how much her natural stately presence, and simple yet dignified manner, helped her in facing all sorts and conditions of men in those long distant journeys... She inspired respect wherever she appeared, and good men everywhere were ready and eager to help her. Her work was always her first point... She could never be idle."

*- Janet Symonds,
Marianne North's sister*

Photo credit: The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Thank yous & credits

Exploring MARIANNE NORTH

Exploring Marianne North project with Creative Force

Design by Kristina Alexander at Super8Design.com • Edited by Teri Sayers-Cooper for Creative Force

Marianne North quotes are from her 'Recollections of a Happy Life', Volumes 1 and 2

Volunteer Participants

Special thanks to the 10 participants who researched and contributed to 'Travelling with Marianne North'

Pat Thomas Allen

Julie Gidlow

Sophie Ansar

Amanda Jobson

Twinkle Ansar

Jasmin Kobayashi-Maier

Elena Dennison

Louisa Singleton

Lisa Edwards

Sarah Wilson



LOTTERY FUNDED

Exploring Marianne North project has been made possible with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund thanks to money raised by National Lottery players.
hlf.org.uk



CF works with local partners and communities to develop programmes that inspire and empower people, foster community spirit and nurture change.
creativeforce.org.uk

Thank you to Christine Blakemore and the North Family for their invaluable support

Finally our thanks to the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.
For information about visiting the Marianne North Gallery at Kew Gardens, go to www.kew.org

