

Hi Jeannie

Thanks for your thoughts and items of info to contribute to our store of knowledge re Anna Geale, especially for identifying the Portrait of a Peasant Woman. I had forgotten where that one was.

You are quite correct in saying that Dave had selected several of the water-colours. He then decided that he had nowhere to hang them and would rather offer them to other family members and I was lucky enough to be able to afford his price for them so securing them for the family – I imagine that I will leave them to Alex and Asti and Olivia.

I had them re-framed as the old original frames and cardboard backs were ancient and the cardboard appeared to be wormy. I saved a small section of the cardboard backing and sealed it in plastic to prevent any of the worms escaping and infesting the new frames and I stuck the plastic-wrapped section on the back of the picture because it appeared to have historic value of its own, not least a sample of our dear Old Mum's execrable handwriting – just one word "Italy?" the question mark also being Mum's. Mum had typed on her label the following :-

"SUBJECT: Italy?

Painted by Katherine Anna Geale

Married 29 Sept 1897 in Freiburg Germany

To Frederick Augustus James ("Nunks")

Obit: 1903 Florence Italy"

The name of the original framer and his details appear printed on the card too : Harris & Sons – Picture Frame Makers, 70 George Street, Plymouth, Devon and (here is the intriguing bit) a frame number 71012 and a date (in pen and ink) "2.5.1903" which appears to have been six months before Kitty (Anna) died in Florence!!

John's estimate of the date of death as November 1903 is fixed by reference to the date of the letter announcing her death in December 1903 so I find it intriguing that the picture was framed six months earlier in Cornwall.

In case you did not receive the earlier email Jeannie we are indebted to Clementina and her friends for having identified the church in Siena which is depicted in the watercolour. I shall ask Clem to have another look at the other watercolours next time she comes to visit but they are clearly all in Tuscany and appear to be accurate representations of each locality. Kitty was a jolly good artist.

A hundred years have passed since she painted the pictures but I shall certainly pay a visit to her grave if we can locate it and place flowers there

Thank you John and Jeannie for your contributions to our store of knowledge. What also fascinates me is the fact that Kitty and Nunks got married so late in their lives Kitty aged 62 and Nunks aged 55.

Love to you all

Mike