

John Singer Sargent

American (1856 – 1925)

Portrait of Miss Elsie Palmer or Young Lady in White

1889 – 1890

Oil on canvas

What do you notice first about Elsie? Her intense expression? Her beautiful clothes? Her politely clasped hands?

Sargent depicts Elsie caught in between two worlds: childhood and adulthood. Elsie's uncanny gaze confronts the viewer with an intensity uncommon for a seventeen-year-old. Yet she wears her hair down — a social convention that would have marked her as a child at that time. A letter from Sargent to Elsie's mother says, "we will see what we can do — with the hair if not with the picture," revealing that there might have been some conversation about her appearance in the portrait.

Not only was Elsie a young woman on the brink of adulthood, but she was also divided between the world her father had created in Colorado Springs and the one her mother cultivated in England. Queen Palmer, aware that her poor health might cut short her time with her daughters, raised Elsie to be a maternal figure for her two much younger sisters. Caught between youth and maturity, between mother and father, and between the roles of sister and surrogate mother, Elsie's intensity in this portrait may reveal the tension of a young woman drawn in multiple directions.

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Printing Block with Engraving *Elsa Palmer*

Ca. 1900

The manufacturer Warrington & Co, London, is engraved on the opposite side.

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 90.2.10

Elsie Palmer's 18 Carat Gold Wedding Band

1908

Elsie married Leo Hamilton Myers at Glen Eyrie on January 20, 1908.

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 90.2.3

Silver Hairpin owned by the Palmer Family

Date unknown

Hairpin is believed to have been inherited from Queen Mellen Palmer's family.

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.8

Spiral Straight Hairpin owned by the Palmer Family

Date unknown

Hairpin is believed to have been inherited from Queen Mellen Palmer's family.

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.9

**Jewelry Box featuring a carved Asian motif,
owned by the Palmer Family**

Date unknown

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.11

Elsie Palmer's Diary

1894

Read entries from Elsie's diary, including her impression of John Singer Sargent, on the touchscreen.

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S997.97.19

***Essays Modern* by Fredric W.H. Myers**

1883

The author is the father of Leo Myers, whom Elsie Palmer would later marry.

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.11

***Essays Classical* by Fredric W.H. Myers**

1883

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.41

The Renewal of Youth and Other Poems

by Fredric W.H. Myers

1882

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.43

Sack-Back Gown owned by the Palmer Family

Ca. 1760

Queen Palmer and the girls wore this dress in family theatrical productions and for play. It is believed to have been passed down through the Mellen side of the family and modified over the years to fit the present style. The gown is called a “sack-back” gown due to the double box pleats that extend from the top of the gown to the hemline. Due to the alterations, it features a variety of different fabrics.

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.12

Steinway and Sons Square Grand Piano

1861

Shipped to Chicago in 1862 and later owned by General Palmer.

Gift of Maud McFerran Price, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 885

Lawrence Alexander “Peter” Harrison

English (1866 – 1937)

The Garden of the Gods

Ca. 1903

Oil on canvas

The specific site of the painting is unknown, but it is believed to have been painted from Glen Eyrie.

Anonymous Gift, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 997.0097.0002

James McCabe of London Grandfather Clock

Ca. 1790s

General Palmer purchased the clock around 1900 and placed it in Glen Eyrie. After Palmer's death, it was sold in 1910 to artist Francis Drexel Smith.

Gift of Katherine L. Walker, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 2001.62.1

Glen Eyrie Photograph Album from Edmond C. Van Diest

1907

Gift of Elsie Queen Nicholson, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum,
A77-129-2

TOP FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Queen Palmer's Personal Seal featuring her initials Q.M.P.

Date unknown

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 93.15.1

Sterling Silver Teaspoon with the initials "EP" on handle

Date unknown

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.1

Jewelry Box with geometric designs, owned by the Palmer Family

Date unknown

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.14

Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt

Vols. I and II

Translated by Francis Hueffer

1886

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.42 and
S2000.121.33

BOTTOM FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Das Rheingold, Der Ring Das Nibelungen
by Richard Wagner

1876

Inscribed with *Elsie Palmer*.

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.83

***Tristan and Isolde* by Richard Wagner**

1886

Inscribed by Fred Jameson.

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.32

Drinking Glass and Leather Case owned by General Palmer

Ca. 1907

The glass is believed to have been used in one of General Palmer's automobiles.

Gift of Ruth Reed Robertson, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 58-77

***Tanglewood Tales* by Nathaniel Hawthorne**

1878

Inscribed by William Jackson Palmer:

Elsie Palmer

from her Papa

on her sixth Birthday

New York Oct 30 / 78

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.68

In Memoriam by A.H.H.

1876

Inscribed by Queen Mellen Palmer:

My Elsa —

from Motherling

Xmas 1885

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.83

TOP:

Locket Pendant containing locks of the strawberry blonde hair of Elsie (E) and Marjorie (M) Palmer

Date unknown

Gift of the Estate of Dorothy Palmer, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 63-1-1

BOTTOM:

Two Printing Blocks with the image of a flying eagle

Date unknown

The overlapping initials QMP, for Queen Mellon Palmer, are engraved on one printing block. General Palmer's initials, WJP are engraved on the other block.

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 90.2.5 and 90.2.6

TOP:

Queen Palmer's Silver-Plated Scabbard Letter Opener

1882

Inscriptions on the scabbard read *Q.M.P. May 1882 and Nothvng.*
Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 90.2.4

BOTTOM:

Ivory and Gold Fish-Shaped Brooch owned by Palmer Family

Date unknown

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.10

Lawrence Alexander “Peter” Harrison

English (1866 – 1937)

Portrait of Marjorie Palmer

Ca. 1903

Oil on canvas

This painting is unfinished by the artist. The donor of the painting was the niece of Cecile Jacobeit, the Palmer girls' governess.

Gift of Alice Foster, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 63-93

Attributed to

Lawrence Alexander “Peter” Harrison

English (1866 – 1937)

Palmer Girls on the Lawn

Ca. 1903

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Estate of Dorothy Palmer, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 64-54

Walnut Elephant owned by Elsie Palmer

Date unknown

Gift of Beverly Ann Diehl, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 2015.69.1

TOP:

**Silk Embroidered Bodice owned by
Dorothy Palmer**

Ca. 1900

Gift of Lewis and Louisa Creed, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 995.257.17

BOTTOM:

***Poems of Emile Verhaeren* translated by
Alma Strettell**

1899

Inscribed:

*To Elsie —
her “friend’s daughter” —
from Alma
March / 99*

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.28

Perfume Bottle owned by Queen Palmer

Ca. 1900

The blown glass perfume bottle was found in an Italian chest used as a jewelry cabinet by Elsie Palmer.

Gift of Beverly Ann Diehl, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, 2014.29.1.a-b

Peter Harrison sketches

Date unknown

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S997.97.52

Photograph of Peter Harrison

Date unknown

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum,
S2000.121.129

Wood and Garden by Gertrude Jekyll

1899

Inscribed:

*Elsie —
from Alma
Xmas / 99*

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.27

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Sketch of Peter Harrison

Charcoal on paper

Ca. 1904

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S997.97.300

***Essays in London and Elsewhere* by Henry James**

1898

Inscribed:

Elsie Palmer from Papa —

Glen Eyrie — 1898 —

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S2000.121.8

LEFT:

Columbia Dry Cell Battery

1890s – early 1900s

In the early 1900s, electric gates surrounded Glen Eyrie. When General Palmer and his family returned to the Glen on horseback from excursions in Garden of the Gods, battery-powered gates swung open to allow them to come home via the trail systems. These gates were powered by Columbia Dry Cell Batteries, which were housed in metal boxes buried in the ground. These were some of the first batteries available to consumers and their presence at Glen Eyrie is indicative of General Palmer's enthusiasm for new technology.

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.002

RIGHT:

Hoffman 2A Vacuum Valve

Ca. 1903

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.009

Westinghouse Mazda Light Bulb Box

Ca. 1904

Glen Eyrie had electric lights around the same time as they came into vogue in New York City. The light bulb that came in this box had a tungsten filament. Palmer generated his own electricity in a power plant located on his property, which powered the glittering lights of the castle.

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.007

Light Bulb

Early 1900s

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.006

LEFT:

Roof Tile

Date unknown

Elsie Palmer accompanied her father on a European shopping trip to look for architectural details for the new Glen Eyrie in 1903. Her father acquired the roofing tiles from a historic building in England possibly dating back to the 1500s. He had each tile carefully wrapped up and shipped all the way back to Colorado to form the roof of his castle. Although Glen Eyrie has since been re-roofed, you can see some of these original clay tiles on the small outcropping just above Marjory Palmer's sleeping porch at Glen Eyrie.

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.011

RIGHT:

Puzzle Floor Tile

Ca. 1903

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.005

LEFT:

Door Plates

1903

When General Palmer built his castle in 1903, he incorporated decorative door plates into the architecture of his new home. Even the doors of his home were beautifully decorated.

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.001 and 2013.003.010

RIGHT:

Door Knobs

Ca. 1903

On loan from the Glen Eyrie and Navigators History Department, 2013.003.004

Quote from a Letter from Elsie Palmer to Queen Palmer

1894

The quote you see here is taken directly from Elsie's letter to her mother in Elsie's own handwriting:

*I love The Mote better than any other place in the world except - -
-!! And when I am am [sic] away from it I always long to get back
to it, just the way with Glen Eyrie.*

You can read the full letter on the touchscreen in the gallery.

Tim Nicholson Collection, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, S997.97.72

Elsie Palmer with Queen Palmer and Kelpie

This photograph shows Elsie, her mother, and her dog standing just outside Ightham Mote.

Image courtesy of Ightham Mote | UK National Trust.

Glen Eyrie

Image courtesy of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum.

John Singer Sargent

American (1856 – 1925)

A Game of Bowls

1889

Oil on canvas

This photo mural depicts *A Game of Bowls*, which Sargent painted around the same time he was working on Elsie Palmer's portrait at Ightham Mote. This scene is believed to feature Elsie Palmer, her mother, and Sargent's sister (among others) playing an outdoor game in Ightham Mote's grounds.

Image courtesy of Ightham Mote | UK National Trust.