



36

How Gottfried Lindauer used photography in his portraits has long been a matter of speculation. In 2013 Auckland Art Gallery conservators Sarah Hillary and Ute Larsen definitively confirmed that some of his portraits were painted on a photographic base. Subsequent research revealed that Lindauer was not circumspect about this technique, referring to these works as “bromides” – an acknowledgement of photography’s integral role in their creation – and selling them for a reduced price. He affixed the enlarged photograph to board and used it in place of underdrawing, applying oil paint directly onto its silver nitrate surface. As Sarah Hillary observes the paintwork tends to be “very opaque and quite thick in the highlights and very thin in the darks, presumably where the photographic details are located.”

Amongst the advantages of Lindauer’s bromide technique was its innate reproducibility: multiple versions could be made. These two paintings of Emma Anthony (née Petty) and her husband William, along with portraits of their adult children Archie and Gertrude, formed a group of four, of which two sets were made. A complete set descending to each child. Archie’s set remains within the family, while the set belonging to Gertrude came onto the auction market in the 1970s and was subsequently broken up.

The subjects have a direct familial connection to Lindauer; Emma was the younger sister of his second wife Rebecca Petty. According to family records Emma died in 1943. Her husband William was a chemist and predeceased her by many years, dying aged 46 in 1895, making his portrait posthumous. Emma’s three-quarter turned head adds an informality when combined with William’s pose, his gaze directly meeting the viewer. Together, they make a handsome couple, poignantly reunited through portraiture a decade after William’s passing.

Dr Jane Davidson-Ladd

Dr Davidson-Ladd recently completed her PhD at the University of Auckland: “The Master of ‘Maoriland’: Louis John Steele (1842-1918)”.



36

36

Gottfried Lindauer (1839 -1926)

Portraits of Mr & Mrs William Anthony

oil on photographic base

signed (lower right) & dated 1906

60 x 49cm (each)

\$40,000 - \$70,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection Manawatu

1 Sarah Hillary and Ute Larsen, "Merging Techniques – New Research into Lindauer's Use of Photographs", <http://www.lindaueronline.co.nz/artist>, 2013.

2 Ute Larsen and Jane Davidson-Ladd, "Under the Lens: Gottfried Lindauer, the Photographer-Painter", in *Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand: The Māori Portraits*, Auckland University Press and Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, 2016, p.224.

3 Hillary quoted in *ibid.*, p.224

4 "Rare Lindauer Portraits", *Dominion*, 27 Feb 1973.

5 Elsie M. Lindauer, letter, 17 Apr 1974, Lindauer artist file, E. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery. Emma's death date requires confirmation as it is not consistent with NZBDM records.

6 *Daily Telegraph* (Napier), 7 Sep 1895, p.3.