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Helen Bynum, William Bynum

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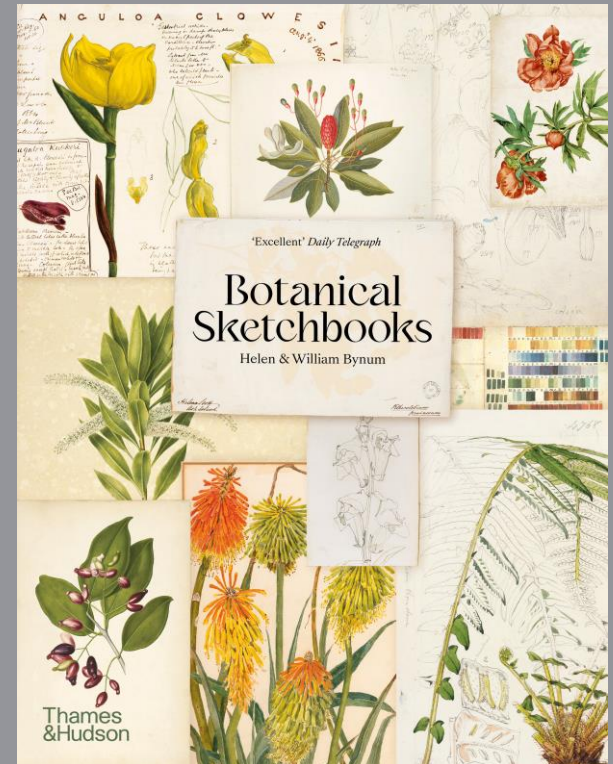
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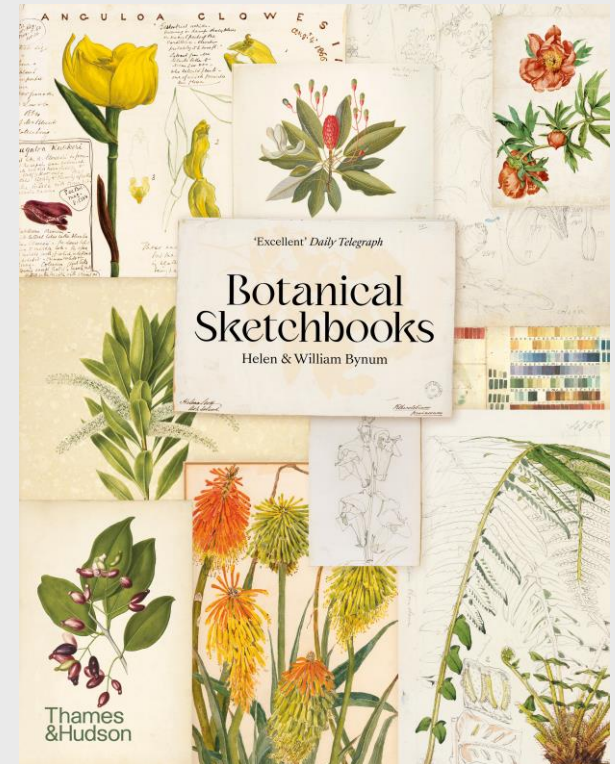
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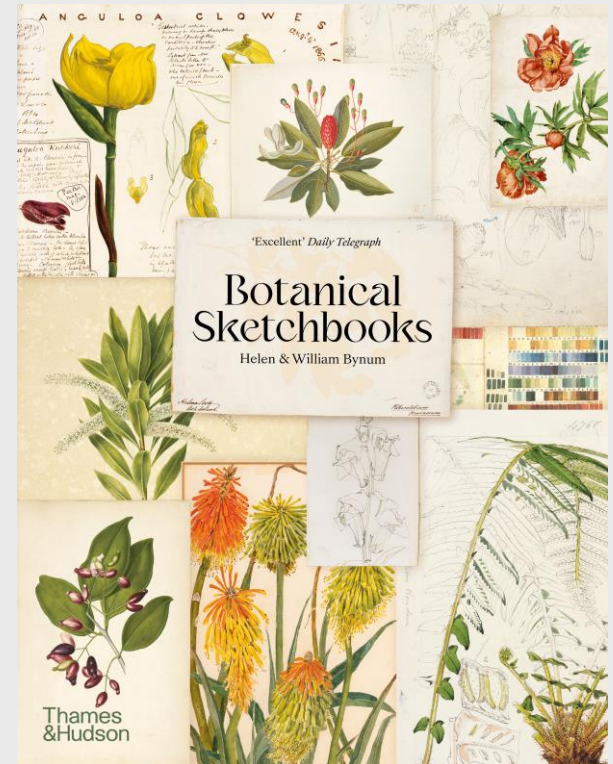
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Key Sales Points

- A captivating glimpse into the first-hand experiences and adventures of around 80 artists – professional, amateur and accidental – from the 15th century to the 20th century and from around the world.
- Includes sketches from Leonardo da Vinci, Georg Dionysius Ehret, Carl Linnaeus, Maria Sibylla Merian, Hellen and Margaret Shelley, John James and more.
- Filled with remarkable images from the unparalleled collections of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and sourced from other libraries, museums and archives – many of them rarely if ever reproduced before.



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On the cover: [front] Drawing of the orchid *Oncidium hallii* by Francis Hall; [back] *Ilex buxifolia* from Pidurutalagala, Sri Lanka, drawing by John Champion. Illustrations © 2017 The Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Half-title: Conrad Gesner, nodding thistle (*Carduus nutans*).

Title page: Maria Graham Callcott, 'Weed of the Gulf Stream'. As she sailed home from South America to Britain, Callcott continued to botanize, sketching seaweed lifted from the sea on 14 October 1825.

Authors' note: The plant names the artists used in their sketches are given in inverted commas, with modern scientific names provided where identification is helpful or possible.

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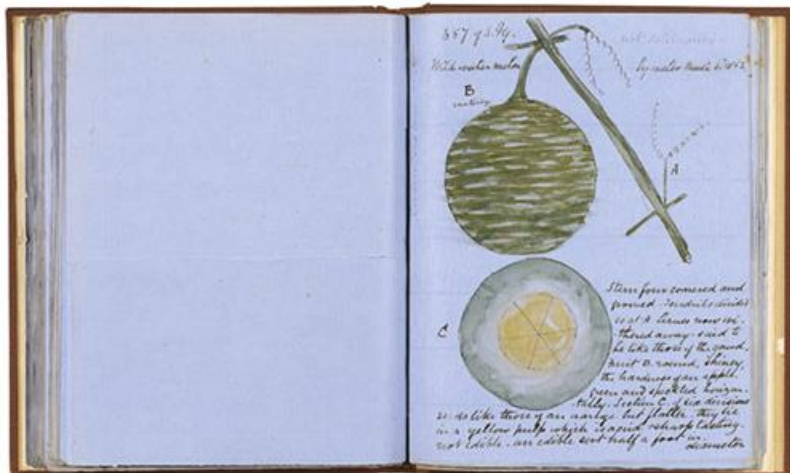
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JAMES AUGUSTUS GRANT

While an army officer in India, James Augustus Grant (1827–1892) energetically pursued his passion for shooting. But he was also a keen watercolourist and botanist, having studied botany and natural history at Marischal College, Aberdeen, and taken drawing and perspective lessons from a local artist. At the end of his ten years in India, during the relief of Lucknow in the Indian Rebellion of 1857, he lost his right thumb and forefinger and was invalidated home.

Grant's next adventure was in Africa. He volunteered for the expedition of 1860–63 sponsored by the Royal Geographical Society and led by his old shooting companion John Hanning Speke, who was determined to confirm Lake Victoria (Nyanza) as the primary source of the White Nile. But at the crucial stage of the journey, Grant was unwell and couldn't verify Speke's report, which remained contentious for several years.

Grant was able to paint, however, and his 250 watercolours provide a striking record of their famous expedition. And

despite the weather, terrain and a brush with robbers, the potential for botanizing also appealed to Grant: 'it occurred to me that many a pleasant hour might be spent in collecting plants'. He collected 761 African plants, 113 of which were new to science, and thanks to the African portage they arrived at the coast to be shipped home. Although some of Grant's drawings enlivened Speke's published account of the journey, his own *A Walk Across Africa* (1864) is curiously unillustrated.

With the help of Grant's detailed notes and field drawings, others, including Thomas Thomson at the Linnean Society and Daniel Oliver at Kew, were able to identify and classify some of his finds. Walter Hood Fitch (p. 156) illustrated a volume on the expedition's botany, with Grant paying for the engravings. Grant's real fascination lay with ecological relationships, and the indigenous people and their use of so much of the African flora for food, medicine and practical, material goods. It was a new way of seeing the world.

This 'Notes & Sketches' album holds copies Grant made from his field notes when they were sent to Thomson to identify. Most are marked 'undetermined' and were not included in the publications, but notes added later (see opposite top) reveal that Grant continued to ponder the expedition's botany.

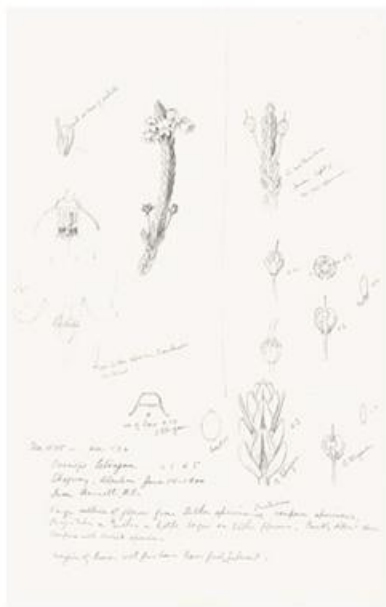
FREDERICK ANDREWS WALPOLE

Anyone who walks the final 285 km (177 miles) to Trail, Oregon, to find a site for a homestead certainly has something of the adventurer in him. Frederick Andrews Walpole (1861-1904) left Chicago and headed west in 1882. He had probably studied art with the landscape and portrait artist Junius R. Sloan, an academician at the Chicago Academy of Design, who took his students on paid sketching trips and advocated the 'Gospel of Nature'. Sloan was a devotee of John Ruskin (p. 206), an enthusiasm Walpole shared. How and when Walpole learnt his botany is less clear, but the annotations on his 800-odd drawings and sketches are evidence of his botanical literacy. Evident, too, is his appreciation of subtle differences in the colour and form of fruit and leaves on the same plant, and between different plants of the same species in various locations.

By 1896 Walpole had been working for ten years as a lithographic artist in Portland, where he had moved. In September that year his work was noticed by Frederick V. Colville, chief botanist of the Department of Agriculture and curator of the National Herbarium in Washington, DC, who was investigating the medicinal plants used by the Klamath people in Oregon. Congress had voted in 1889 to provide funds for botanical exploration and collecting in little known areas of America, and good artists were valuable assets. With Colville's encouragement, Walpole successfully applied for a post as botanical artist for the Department of Agriculture.

Walpole liked to sketch plants from life in their natural surroundings. Field sketches, often drawn in graphite, watercolour and very fine ink, could then be worked up in the studio. These preferences were also practical in the northern latitudes, with a busy part of the year spent in the field in the warmer months and the remainder in the herbarium in Washington, DC. Here Walpole also sketched from preserved specimens, making comparisons with his field work. In 1900 and 1901 he made two trips to Alaska, searching for specimens of medicinal plants and appreciating the way of life of the indigenous people. A few years later he died of typhoid in the field, sadly echoing his wife's death in 1898 from the same disease.

[Above right] Pencil sketch of the white mountain Arctic heather, *Cassiope tetragona*, illustrating Walpole's practice of comparing specimens in the field and studio. [Right] *Pinus attenuata*, the knobcone pine. (Opposite) '*Scirpus lacustris occidentalis*' (*Schoenoplectus acutus*) or tule: its stems and red roots were used in basket-making by the Klamath people. The rootstock was sketched on a second visit to the Klamath Falls.





Callcott's approximately 100 sketches were annotated to explain sizes and proportions. She included the location she had collected the specimen and used a microscope to better reveal the small floral parts. Above is '*Bombax pentandrum*' (*Ceiba insignis*) with 'old flowers' and 'flower newly opened'.

MARIA GRAHAM CALLCOTT

'I narrowly escaped becoming a slattern for life.' So the more mature Maria Graham Callcott (1785-1842) described her former self. She grew out of her tomboy stage but never lost her feistiness; the leading intelligentsia of Edinburgh nicknamed her 'metaphysics in muslin'. Although she showed signs of tuberculosis at an early age (and would later die from it), she travelled widely and published accounts of her experiences. A typically accomplished woman of her period, she was a keen sketcher and appreciated landscapes with an artist's eye; she also wrote books on art history. Maria fell in love with her husband, Thomas Graham, on board the ship taking her and her family to India. There she visited different parts of the country and enjoyed the company of the leading botanists; her journal became her first book.

In 1821 she accompanied her husband, now a ship's captain, to South America. When he died at sea en route from Brazil to Chile in 1822, she buried him, grieved, but resisted pressure to return to home. She stayed for another three years in South America, and again published a journal of her adventures. It was an exciting, if unnerving time to be in South America. She experienced a severe earthquake in Chile in 1822. Both Brazil and Chile were gaining their independence from Portugal and Spain, and territories less accessible to British naturalists were opening up. Little wonder that William Hooker (p. 152) was only too pleased that she collected plants and seeds for him. She reported that preparing dried specimens was a battle against the moisture and insect life of the tropics, and sensibly asked him on 11 April 1824: 'Pray in case of the fading of the colours of dried specimens might it not be advisable for me to add enough [coloured] sketches - say just an outline with the real colour of a petal and a leaf?'

Back in England she married the landscape painter (later Sir) Augustus Wall Callcott in 1827. A stroke in 1831 left her very frail, but she continued to write prodigiously. Her *Scriptural Herbal* (1842) was the product of her sick bed.



'*Bromelia*', a pencil sketch (above right), and '*Meliconia* formerly *Musa*' (right). Callcott sometimes presented her plants in scenic landscapes to capture the full effect of the exotic flora.

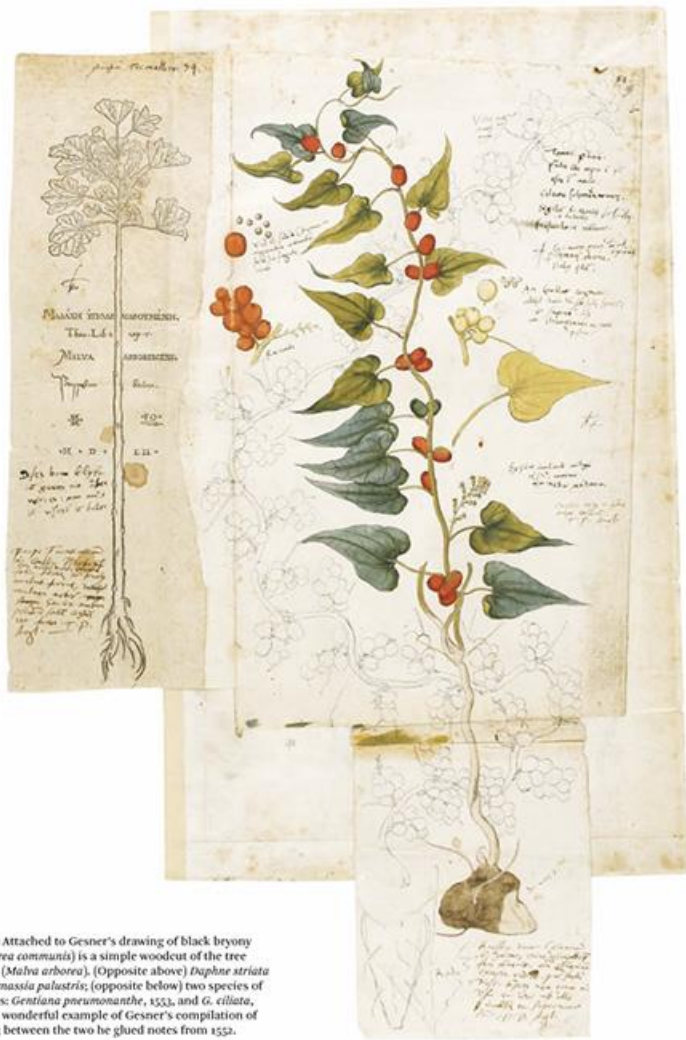
(Overleaf) Callcott noted on one sketch (left), 'Many headed pineapple excellent flavour weighed near 30 lbs'; (right) *Senna alata*.



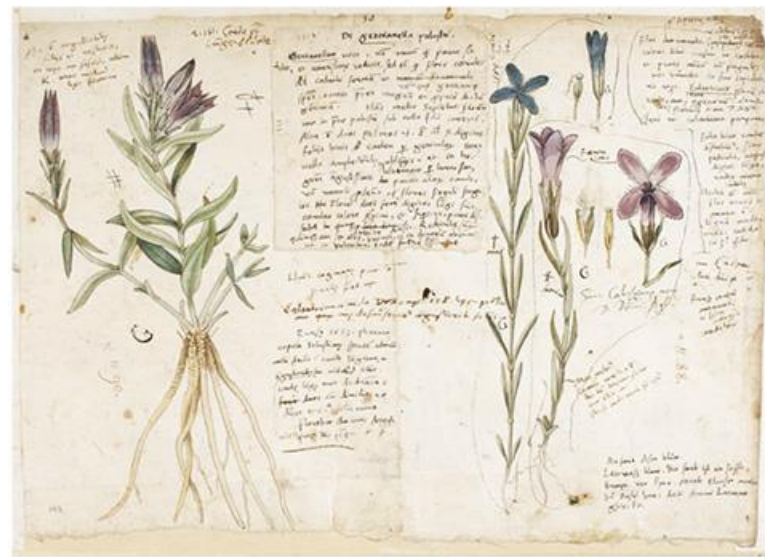
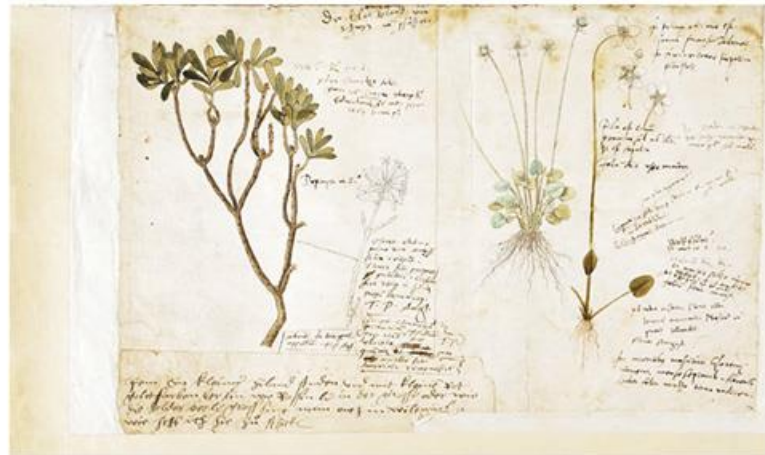
Champion consistently sent home news of plants he thought might be new to western science, with detailed drawings and copious notes on flimsy writing paper. All here (previous pages and above) are from his botanizing in Sri Lanka, including (page 80) a *Desmodium* sp. and (page 81) *Ilex buxifolia*, collected on 'Pedro table galls' (Pidurutalagala), the highest peak on the island. (Opposite) *Aschyroanthus ceylanicus*, a trailing epiphyte; (above) *Artabotrys zeylanicus*.



The first pages of the 'Skizzenbuch Port Elizabeth 1908' (as it was titled by hand on the cover): the sketches of 'Microloma linearis' (*M. tenuifolium*) illustrate Drege's evolving botany. He made an initial drawing on 5 April 1901 and subsequently corrected the name. From a plant in his garden he then added details of the flower and seed pod on 24 July 1908, and finally the outline of the root and emerging shoots above soil level on 9 June 1912.



(Above) Attached to Gesner's drawing of black bryony (*Dioscorea communis*) is a simple woodcut of the tree mallo (*Malva arborea*). (Opposite above) *Daphne striata* and *Parnassia palustris*; (opposite below) two species of gentians: *Gentiana pneumonanthe*, 1553, and *G. ciliata*, 1564 - a wonderful example of Gesner's compilation of images; between the two he glued notes from 1552.





(Above) Hooker's watercolour sketch of the Sikkim larch, *Larix griffithii* (first discovered by and named for William Griffith, p. 168), captures not only the form of the pendulous branches but also their movement in the wind on a mountainside at Lachung, Sikkim, near the border with Tibet. (Opposite) A Himalayan landscape framed by a tree covered with epiphytes. Hooker was living his dream of 'acquiring a knowledge of exotic botany'.

JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER

Many botanists sketched, but Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817–1911) is perhaps the most accomplished artist. He inherited his artistic talent from his father, William Hooker (p. 152), along with his passion for botany and his post as Director at Kew. He initially trained in medicine and his first expedition was as assistant surgeon (and naturalist) on HMS *Erebus* (1839–43), but botany was his abiding love. The *Erebus* explored the Great Ice Barrier (the Ross Ice Shelf) of Antarctica, as well as New Zealand and the islands of the South Pacific. Hooker discovered many plants previously unknown to European science, and his six large volumes on the flora of the Antarctic, New Zealand and Tasmania established his reputation.

His notebooks from the expedition, as well as from his famous trip to the Himalaya (1847–51), demonstrate his artistic skills, as much in close-ups of individual plants as in landscapes and scenes including the people he encountered. Walter Hood Fitch (p. 156) prepared the plates from his drawings for the subsequent publication on rhododendrons, the first part appearing, under his father's supervision, while he was still in Asia. It was Hooker's work on rhododendrons that introduced these popular plants to British gardens, and his *Himalayan Journals* (1854) is a classic of Victorian plant exploration and its adventures, including his incarceration when he was accused of espionage.

After Hooker succeeded his father as Director at Kew in 1865, he turned the gardens into a centre for the collection of botanical material and its transmission to all parts of the British empire. He continued working tirelessly throughout his long life, publishing volumes of flora with introductory essays setting out his more general botanical principles and inevitably enriched with beautiful plates, often made from his own drawings. He excelled as a systematic botanist and as a researcher of the geographical distribution of plants, the subject of much of his correspondence with his lifelong friend Charles Darwin. He was privy to Darwin's ideas on evolution long before the publication of *On the Origin of Species* (1859), and he publicly supported Darwin thereafter.

Despite his closeness to Darwin, who never held a scientific post, Hooker was ever anxious to sideline the lesser dabblers and enthusiasts who peopled botany, and to establish its practice as the preserve of professional scientists.

(Overleaf) Hooker included a tremendous amount of detail in his field sketches, including the shape (in the bottom right corner page 174) of the tree rhododendron *R. grande*, and the characteristic leaves of *R. falconeri* (page 175), which are huge, at 'eighteen inches', as he reported, and covered with fine brown hairs, or indumentum, underneath.



III Making Art

Making Art is a privileged look into private worlds – a storehouse of colour, shape and texture that artists created, and to which they could return when wanting to conjure a rose in full bloom, or recall the veining of a leaf or the peeling of bark. We are fascinated by how artists work, and some of the sketches allow us a unique window into the rarefied world of the very best specialist botanical artists, while others reveal the studies and preoccupations of those concerned with the accurate depiction of the natural world and its flora in the high and decorative arts. Making art is also about the difficulties artists faced in supporting themselves and furthering their careers. A greatness of vision is displayed in *nature in art*. The practical realities of reliance on others are examined in *patrons' dependents*. From near perfect plate drawings to the most preliminary sketches, *in print* explores the preparatory work of illustrators. The sketches in *jobbing* tell of those for whom botanical art was only one element in their careers, or who worked uncertainly as various kinds of artists-for-hire. All tried to make a living by making art.

ALFRED RIOCREUX

Only the bottom half of this sketch of *Pelargonium diadematum* was used as a plate for *Herbier général de l'amateur*, the faint pencil line above it marking the part included.



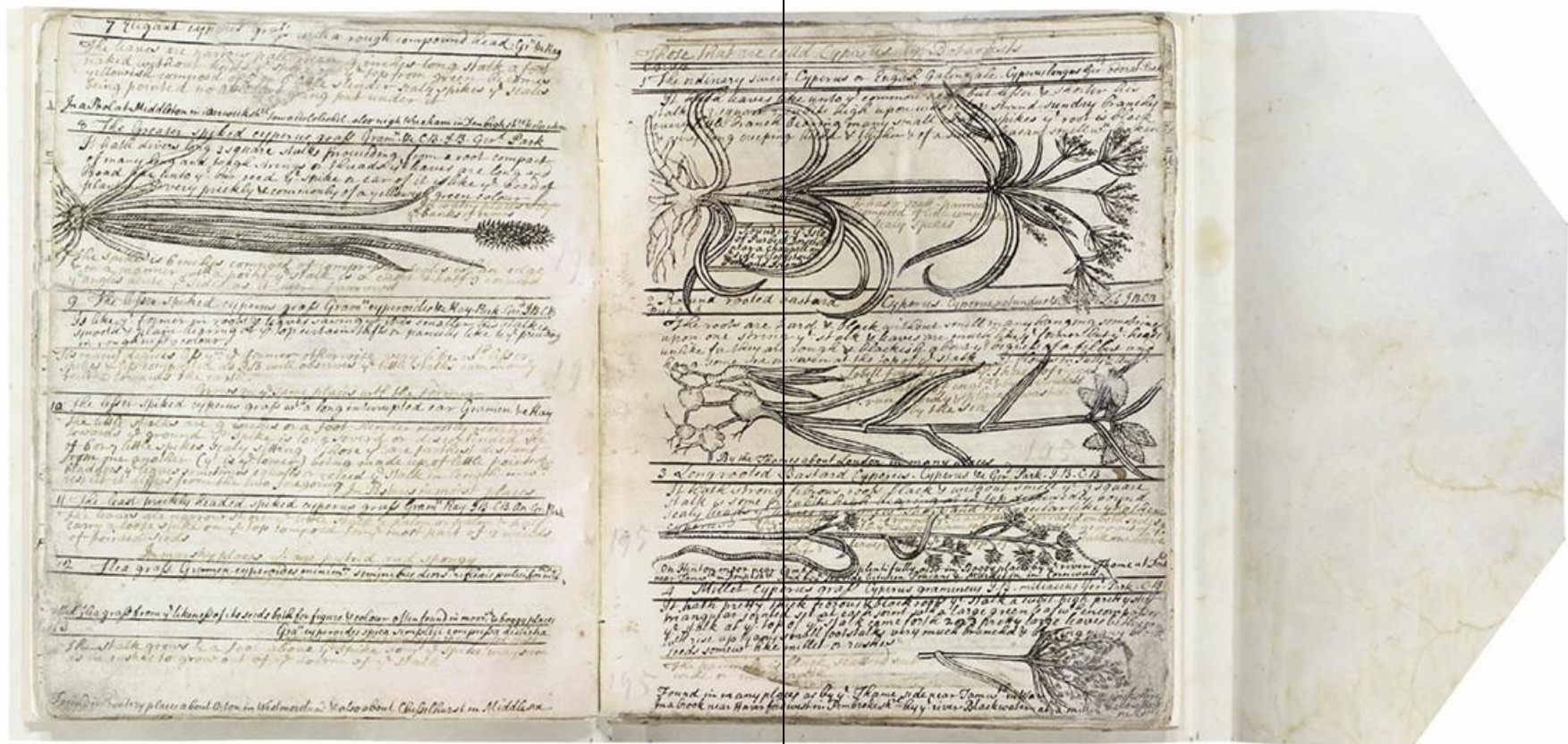
Pelargonium diadematum var. *hybridum* of *Carrollianum formosum* Linnæus



(Above) Bare stems of a maple (*Acer* sp.) and, below it, the evergreen *Photinia glabra* covered in snow; on the right are studies of another evergreen, *Heloniopsis orientalis*. Yoshikawa's intense scrutiny of flowers and leaves is also evident in the sketch of 'Torikabuto' or aconite (opposite), which is highly poisonous but also used as a medicine, as the notes mention.







FRANCIS NICHOLLS
 An Oxford student and lecturer, 'Frank' Nicholls (1699–1778) dissected and taught anatomy for several years before embarking on a scientific Grand Tour of Europe in the early 1720s. After a short period in Cornwall he arrived in London, where he taught lucrative anatomy classes. In 1743 he married the daughter of the famous and influential physician Richard Mead, who helped his practice – Nicholls was appointed

a physician to King George II in 1753. Of the couple's five children two survived, and Nicholls returned to Oxford to educate his son before retiring to Epsom, Surrey.
 Although a successful and busy physician, at some point Nicholls also began collecting botanical notes and making sketches of native British plants. He used these materials to create two surviving notebooks, in a complex process of recording that involved writing a new manuscript in darker

ink followed by its systematic enhancement in paler ink. He also relied on earlier notes and sketches made on the back of used paper that he cut to shape, sometimes pasted in and sometimes left between the appropriate pages waiting to be fixed into the spaces. Interwoven with the text are the idiosyncratic ink drawings. Not all plants are illustrated, perhaps not all were seen – there are references to key botanical texts in the headings – but he includes location

notes for some, and these indicate that botanizing was a lifelong hobby.

Nicholls would have learnt botany during his medical education. His notes mostly describe a plant's form and habitat. The rhizome of the 'sweet Cyperus or English Galingale' (top right) had a traditional use in perfumery and he commented on its 'sweet pleasant smell when broken'.