

Frederick Timpson l'Ons
Kaffir Drift: Landscape with Cattle
Oil on tin (34,5 x 50,5 cm)
SANG Acc 1289

TECHNICAL REPORT

This painting has been painted on an unprimed, flattened (or possibly not yet moulded), printed piece of biscuit tin. Examination of the printing which is partially visible through the paint layers, and enhanced when viewed in infrared, reveals that the tin comes from the biscuit manufacturer Peak Frean & Co., founded in 1857 in Bermondsey, South West London.



Recto, normal light



Recto, raking light

Support

The painting is executed on tin. This is a piece of biscuit tin, which has either been flattened or was never made into a tin after being printed. It has only a slight warp and not many dents, as can be seen in the raking light image. The verso is printed or painted black and has several scuffs and scratches. It is possible to see parts of the printing on the tin through the paint layers, and when viewed in infrared light, one can quite clearly read the writing: "Peak Frean & Co. / London / BISCUITS", which lies upside down in relation to the orientation of the painting.



Verso, normal light



Recto, infrared light



Macrographs showing the printing on the tin visible through the paint layers

Ground

The tin is unprimed and the paint layers applied directly to the surface of the printed tin. This is mostly a beige colour and has been used by the artist as an imprimatura layer, so to speak, with the beige colour as the base of the composition.

Paint

The paint layers are brushy and oil rich, as would be expected from a non-absorbent support, and drying craquelure is visible in places, as well as some wrinkling and resisted strokes. The brush strokes of the paint application are also quite visible in the sky for example in a raking light. The details of the figures and animals are delicately painted and have a light impasto in the build-up of the paint. The use of sgraffito is evident in the depiction of the crop.



Macrograph showing resisted and medium rich strokes in the foliage



Macrograph showing detail of figures



Macrographs showing the paint build-up and impasto in the depiction of the animals



Macrograph showing impasto in the fire



Macrograph showing foliage and aloe



Macrograph showing sgraffito in the crop and discoloured retouching

There is a fair amount of retouching which is obscuring the original paint, particularly in the sky. This is possibly due to the transparency of the original paint in relation to the printing of the tin, which may have become more obvious over time as the paint ages and becomes naturally more transparent, and was therefore treated with retouching in a previous restoration. This is clearly visible in ultraviolet light, where it can be seen to lie over the varnish layer, obscuring the fluorescence of that layer.



Image in ultraviolet light showing extent of retouching

Bronwyn Leone
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