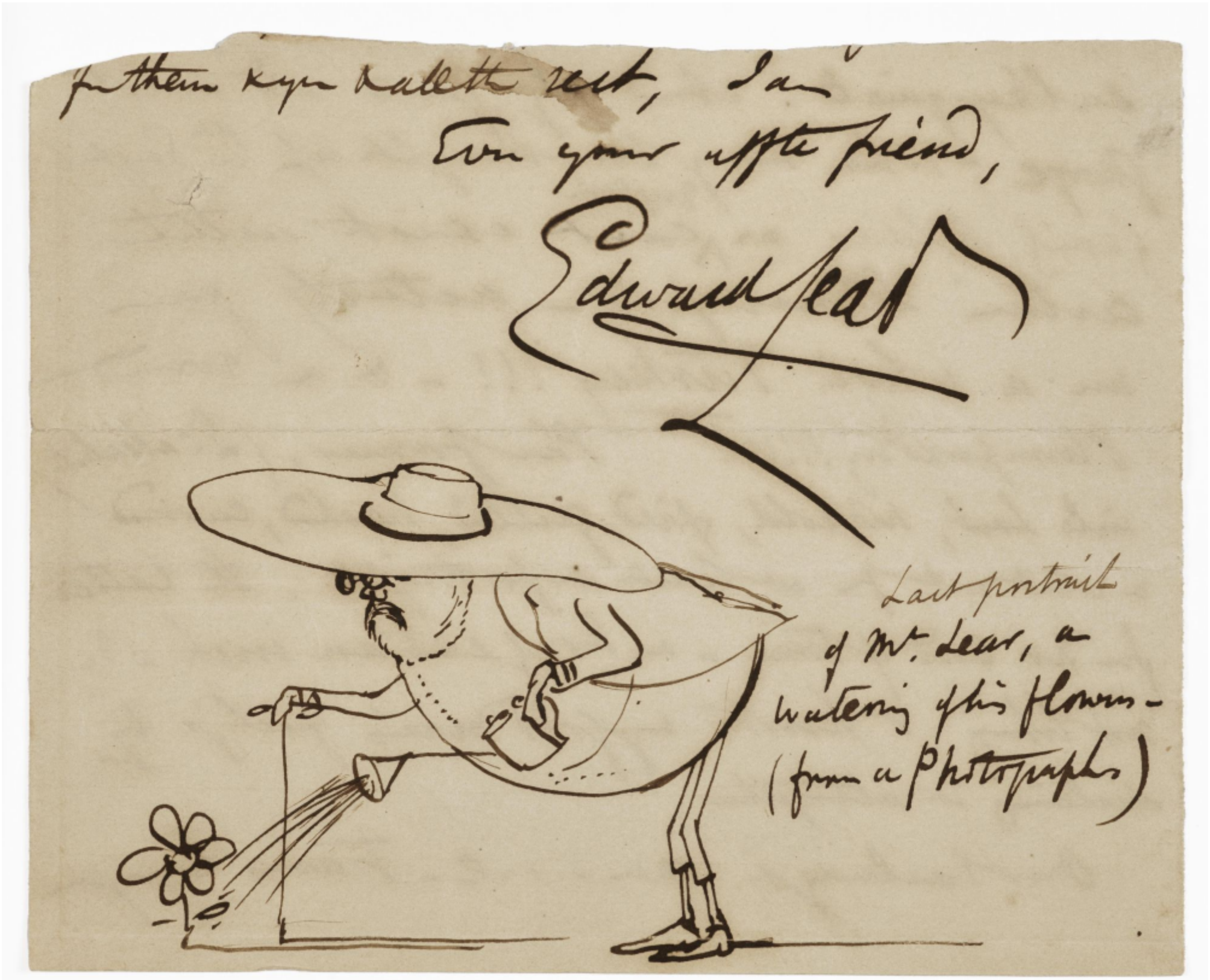
Self-Portrait watering Flowers

Edward Lear



REF: 3149

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Description

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Edward Lear (1812-1888)
Self-Portrait watering Flowers

Signed as part of the letter, From your affct friend,/Edward Lear. and further inscribed: Last Portrait/of Mr. Lear a watering of his flowers - (from a Photograph)

Pen and ink
11 by 13.4 cm., 4 ¼ by 5 ¼ in.

Provenance:
David and Nancy Perth, 17th Earl and Countess of Perth

The present letter appears to have been written shortly after Christmas with Lear capturing his beloved servant, friend and travelling companion Giorgio Kokali's ideas of English Christmas food. Kokali became Lear's manservant in Corfu in the spring of 1856 and remained with the artist until his death in August 1883. He accompanied Lear on all his travels and would dress in the costumes that Lear collected during their journeys and act as a model for the figures in Lear's paintings. The two became close and Lear mourned his death, writing to Emily Tennyson, 'I wish I could think that I had merited such a friend' (Emily Tennyson, 18.viiii.83, MS. Tennyson Research Centre, Lincoln).

The fragment verso reads: 'sulky quiet. And my good old Serv.t George, - who having been brought up in an English/family, believes we English can't exist without certain Xmas food - …for me a whole Turkey!!! & a round plum pudding!!!!!! The former, (2…) … last, hot, cold, fried, grilled, hashed, curried and what not, for a least a fortnight; the latter for no end of time - as 2 my eat an inch a day, not liking to hurt my good man's feelings by declining it altogether. Our railway's open - i - e - trains have gone'. Recto: 'for them … maketh … I am/Ever your afftc friend,/Edward Lear/Last portrait.of Mr. Lear, a/watering of his flowers - (from a photograph)'

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