

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Charles-Henri Contencin (1898 - 1955)

Summer in Findeln, Zermatt, Switzerland

oil on panel

33 x 55 cm.

signed

For many generations, the group of hamlets known as Findeln, was the summer home of Zermatt families who grazed their cattle, grew crops, and made hay on the sunny south facing slopes of the Sunnegga and Rothorn mountains, high up above the village. The livestock were driven up from the valley floor at the end of spring and once the milk had been turned into cheese it was carried back down along well-worn mountain paths.

The beautiful scenery was nevertheless largely immaterial to the Alpine farmers as their lives were tough and unsparing and until the early twentieth century the way of life changed little. Today these small shelters and grain stores and the tiny chapel of Ze Gassen, visible in the foreground, have their own charisma as remnants of the 'unspoilt' Alps.