

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Charles-Henri Contencin (1898 - 1955)

The Fletschhorn seen from above Saas Fee, Valais, Switzerland

oil on panel

38 x 55cm

signed

The exact location of this lofty farmstead, almost hewn into the side of the valley, has not yet been determined. However, given the height of the Fletschhorn and the Lagginhorn seen far across the Saas-Fee valley, both hovering around the 4,000-metre mark, it must have been a remote setting for Contencin to have painted in. Aside from the striking composition, this picture offers a snapshot of Alpine life one hundred years ago. Stacked up on a rock platform and with stone 'feet' at each corner to prevent rats and mice from accessing it, the grain or hay store on the right were prevalent in the Valais region. And many of them are still in use today. Looking closely at the chalet to its left, with its green shutters, one can see a window box with flowers.

The viewpoint looks northeast and away from the Mischabel peaks which were behind where the painter sat. Looking from the left, the Jegihorn, Fletschhorn and Lagginhorn run into the chain of mountains dominated by the Weissmies to the right and not seen. The depiction of such a dramatic ambience combined with the feeling of life carrying on around makes for an outstanding picture.