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Vijayanagara

Splendour in Ruins

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Preface by John Grollings

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- Splendid examples of early photography
- A comprehensive overview of the documentary and other activities at Vijayanagara over time

The remarkably accomplished Alexander Greenlaw, probably the first photographer to reach Vijayanagara in South India in 1855, is known principally through his monumental paper negatives of this great imperial Hindu city. Greenlaw, an army officer, explored the vast site, capturing the temples, shrines, palaces and pleasure pavilions with his camera, as well as recording the dramatic landscape that surrounds the ruins of this once majestic capital. While Greenlaw's response to the architecture within its spectacular natural setting is the principal focus of this book, the work of subsequent photographers at the site is also explored. Included are images by William Pigou, Edmond David Lyon, Nicholas & Co. and others. They show the role of photography in documenting and preserving the site through a comparative approach that seeks to present a comprehensive overview of commercial, archaeological and other documentary activity at Vijayanagara in the 19th century.

George Michell trained as an architect in Melbourne, and then obtained a PhD in Indian Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, with a dissertation on Early Chalukya temples. Since then he has undertaken numerous documentation and research projects, most recently with John M. Fritz at Hampi. Surendra Kumar studied information technology in Bengaluru, and now works part-time as a photographer, specializing in panoramic topographic views. His work has been spectacularly showcased in Discovering the Deccan (Pictor, Mumbai)

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