

Charlotte Bosanquet



The Drawing Room, Fairford Park, Gloucestershire

Reference: 10803

Dimensions:

Height: 19.50 cm / 7⁵/₈ in

Width: 30.50 cm / 12 in

Inscribed on mount: Fairford/Miss Bosanquet, watercolour over traces of pencil

19.5 x 30.5 cm; 7 3/4 x 12 1/8 inches

Provenance

Augusta Raymond-Barker, Fairford Park; By family descent until 2016

Harriet Bosanquet, (1798-1830) daughter of William Bosanquet, a banker, married John Raymond-Barker of Fairford Park on 6 May 1823. They had two daughters, Augusta b. 1827 and Leonora, b. 1829, presumably the two girls in purple dresses in this watercolour. The drawing is by her sister Charlotte, the girls' aunt. Charlotte Bosanquet was a talented artist of interiors and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford have an extensive collection of her work. When their father William Bosanquet died in 1840 Charlotte was left unexpectedly impoverished and moved from house to house staying with members of her extended Huguenot family, building up what amounted to a pictorial diary of her movements

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amongst the many branches of the family, usually depicting the libraries, halls, or drawing rooms of their houses. One of her sketchbooks is entitled 'The Bosanqueti - a selection of Several Mansion Houses, Villas, Lodges, Parks, etc., the principal residences of a distinguished Family with descriptive notes' (see Cherry, Deborah. *Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists*. London: Routledge, 1993, p. 131).

Fairford Park was built for Andrew Barker in 1661-2 by Valentine Strong (d.1662 and completed by Strong's eldest son Thomas) and the design is known only from Kip's engraved bird's eye view of about 1710. The house was altered circa 1740 and the grounds circa 1750-60 to Rococo taste.

['This almost perfect Restoration composition was however much altered in the C18; the house c. 1740 and the grounds c. 1750-60 to Rococo taste ...' (D.Verey & A. Brooks, *Gloucestershire 1: the Cotswolds*, 3rd ed., 1999, pp.369-70). Soane remodelled the house for John Raymond Barker in 1789-90. His Journal No. 1, in the Sir John Soane's Museum, has an entry for 22 May 1789: 'Sanders went to Fairford this Eveng / to take plans of the House / & Offices; ret'd the 26', other entries follow and finish with 'Received in full April 1791 £227:8:6'. Soane's changes to this room seem to have been restricted to the chimney piece and the cornice, and the bookcases seen framing the composition of this watercolour. (A drawing for the chimneypiece of the drawing room is in the Sir John Soane's Museum).

After use as an American military hospital during the war, the family sold Fairford House in 1945 and the house (not the estate) was eventually bought by Gloucestershire County Council and became the site for Farmor's Comprehensive School.