

Ann Baring



Hilly landscape with cattle watering and rustics on donkeys

Reference: 10931

Dimensions:

Height: 34.80 cm / 13³/₄ in
Width: 47.90 cm / 18⁷/₈ in

Signed and dated I.I.: Ann Baring delt 1789, watercolour over pencil on laid paper watermarked with the Strasburg Lily 34.8 x 47.9 cm; 13 5/8 x 18 7/8 inches

Provenance

Private collection, U.K., until 2019

This charming work shows Ann Baring's watercolour style as similar to that of her fellow Devonian Francis Towne and she may be presumed to have been one of his pupils. The watercolour shows several similarities to Towne's work, especially the trees in shade immediately above the white cow, and the figure and his donkey crossing the bridge. This would appear to be a composition drawn from elements learned from Towne. The strong shadow cast by the tree trunk in the

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right, and the fussy foreground plants in the bottom right corner are also characteristic of this kind of Towne. She is also known to have painted oils.

Ann Baring, who lived in Devon all her life, was the daughter of John Baring, (1730-1816) of Mount Radford House, Devon, an English merchant banker and M.P. and the eldest son of Johann Baring (1697-1748), a clothier from Bremen in Germany who had settled in Exeter, where he built up a large business and obtained English citizenship. Her mother was Ann Parker, the daughter of Francis Parker of Blagdon near Paignton in Devon. She is known to have worked in Ireland as well as Devon. A Miss Baring commissioned a watercolour from Towne of Lago Maggiore in 1781 (Tate Gallery, Francis Towne online catalogue FT 350).

After John Baring's father's death in 1748, he inherited the large family cloth business in Exeter. Together with his younger brother Francis, he extended his commercial interests to London and set up the partnership of John and Francis Baring, of which he was the senior partner. He soon retired from activity in London for Devon and left the running of the London business to Francis, under whose guidance it evolved into Barings Bank. In 1802, Barings and Hope & Co. were called on to facilitate the largest land purchase in history, the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the area of the USA.

John Baring founded banks in Plymouth and Exeter and was elected Member of Parliament for Exeter in 1776. He was also appointed Sheriff of Devon for 1776. He retired from Parliament in 1802. His daughter Ann had three sisters, Elizabeth, Charlotte and Margaret and two brothers.

The Baring daughters and their cousins were prominent in Exeter society and were known in the circle that included Towne's friends and customers. In 1786 Ann's sister Charlotte married John Short of Bickham, one of Towne's patrons (see FT240), and in 1790 Frances, daughter of Charles Baring, married William (see FT876), the son of Towne's musician friend William Jackson, whose house, Cowley Place, was very near to Barton Place. In 1791 Frances's sister Jaquetta married Sir Stafford Northcote of Pynes, another nearby estate where Towne had sketched (FT143). Charles Baring's daughter Lucy was a close friend of Frances, daughter of John Merivale, Towne's major patron, and after Lucy's death in 1815 Frances married her widower, John Lewis Mallet of the Audit Office.

I am grateful to Richard Stephens for his comments on this watercolour.