

William Turner of Oxford



Chale Bay - looking out to sea from St Catherine's Down and Oratory, Isle of Wight

Reference: 11005

Dimensions:

Height: 32.30 cm / 12³/₄ in

Width: 54.10 cm / 21¹/₄ in

Chale Bay- looking out to sea from St Catherine's Down and Oratory, Isle of Wight

Watercolour over traces of pencil.

32.3 x 54.1 cm.; 12 ³/₄ x 21 ¹/₄ inches

Provenance

Spink, London, sold 11 October 1956;

Private collection U.K., until 2020;

With Karen Taylor Fine Art;

Private collection, U.K. until 2024

Turner of Oxford was in Sussex in 1846 from when this beautiful drawing may well date, as he made a large watercolour from near Portsmouth with the Isle of Wight in the distance in that year. He has chosen a calm day and the stillness of

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the shepherds amplifies the awe with which they are observing the beauty of nature.

The location has an interesting history. In 1313, a ship, the St Mary of Bayonne, was blown off-course and ran aground on the treacherous Atherfield Ledge in Chale Bay. Its cargo of white wine was sold illegally by the sailors and many barrels found their way into the cellars of Walter de Godeton, Lord of the Manor of Chale.

The ship came from Gascony, then part of King Edward II's kingdom. He was not amused, and Walter de Godeton was fined by an ecclesiastical court. The Pope heard of the incident and, to avoid excommunication, de Godeton was ordered to build an oratory and beacon on Chale Down as penance.