The Dropping Rock at Knaresborough, Yorkshire

Francis Nicholson



REF: 2665

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Description

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Francis Nicholson. O.W.S. (1753-1844)
The Dropping Rock, Knaresborough, Yorkshire

Signed and inscribed verso: The Dropping Rock at Knaresborough/F. Nicholson..... or at No 58 Cornhill London
Pen and ink and watercolour over pencil heightened with scratching out
29.5 by 41.5 cm., 11 ½ by 16 ¼ in.

Provenance:
London, Fine Art Society.

Born in Pickering, Yorkshire, Nicholson and his family moved to Knaresborough in 1792. Despite a growing reputation and his market becoming increasingly centred on London, with the artist regularly sending works to the annual exhibitions, as well as supplying topographical views for Copper Plate Magazine, the artist resisted moving to London until 1803. He was fascinated by advances in materials and became increasingly experimental with his technique. In 1799 he received an award from the Society of Artists for his developments with the technique for stopping-out. It was perhaps this reputation for experimenting with watercolour that made him a popular teacher. He was a founder member of the Watercolour Society in 1804, but resigned in 1813 in order to concentrate his efforts on experimenting with materials. He published his findings in a Practice of Drawing and Painting Landscapes from Nature in Watercolour, in 1820.

There is a similar, larger watercolour dated 1803 which was exhibited at the Royal Academy. There are other views of the same subject, which were exhibited at the Old Watercolour Society in 1807, 1809 and 1811.

The Dropping Rock or Well, has been a popular tourist spot for centuries. It was first recorded in 1538 and became well known for its rich mineral content which seemingly turned items to stone and for its healing properties. The water which flows over the cliff and into the pool is so highly calcified, that anything left in the water, quickly becomes coated and over the years, people have left all sorts of things including, shoes, toys and trinkets, hanging in the fall.

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