The Pontine Marshes above Terracina, Italy

Edward Lear

Sold

Guy Peppiatt Fine Art Ltd.
Riverwide House, 6 Mason's Yard, Duke St. St. James's, London, SW1Y 6BU
T: 020 7930 3839 M: 07956 968 284 E: guy@peppiattfineart.co.uk www.peppiattfineart.co.uk

REF: 1676

Height: 13.5 cm (5.3")

Width: 26.6 cm (10.5")

Description

Edward Lear (1812-1888)
The Pontine Marshes above Terracina, Italy

Pen and grey ink and washes over pencil heightened with white
Image 13.5 by 26.6 cm., 5 1/2 by 10 1/2 in.

This drawing was intended to be engraved as part of a series of illustrations to the poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). Lear first met Tennyson in 1851 and over a number of years worked on selecting drawings from his sketches which would fit with lines from Tennyson's work. In 1878 he began to concentrate on the project and decided to produce 200 images which he had acheived in sketch form by 1885.

This image illustrates lines Tennyson's `Ode to Memory': `Stretched wild and wide the waste enormous marsh.' The pen and ink sketch for this work is in the Yale Center for British Art (see Scott Wilcox, The Art of Travel, 2000, p.114, no.132, ill.) and is inscribed on the border with the lines from Tennyson. Lear died before he completed the series but in this instance got as far as the finished drawing ready to be engraved.

The Pontine Marshes are an area of marsh extending on the coast south of Rome from Anzio in the north to Terracina in the south. This is a view of the marshes from Terracina with the promontory of Monte Circeo or Cape Circeo on the horizon above the town of San Felice Circeo.

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