

Dumbarton on the Clyde, Scotland

Mary Mitford



Description

Mary Mitford (c.1770-1850)
Dumbarton on the Clyde, Scotland

Signed and inscribed verso: Dumbarton castle, approaching from Glasgow/Mary Mitford
Watercolour over pencil on laid paper
27 by 44.8 cm., 10 ½ by 17 ½ in.

Provenance:
With Richard Ivor, London, where bought October 1989;
By descent to the present owner

Mary Mitford was a talented amateur artist whose work only became known when a group of drawings appeared on the London art market in 1989. Since then various other drawings have come to light. Mary's younger brothers, Colonel William Mitford (1744-1827) and John, 1st Baron Redesdale (1748-1830) are both known to have been taught by William Gilpin (1724-1804). Whether Mary studied under Gilpin as well is unclear, although it is possible to see Gilpin's influence in some of her work. It has been suggested that she may have been a pupil of William Marlow (1740-1813) and although as Kim Sloan has noted 'her manner of drawing trees and buildings is very close...he was not known to have taken pupils' (Kim Sloan, 'A Noble Art' Amateur Artists and Drawing Masters c.1600-1800, 2000, p. 187).

The ancient castle of Dumbarton, founded in c.1220, guards the point where the River Leven meets the River Clyde. It was initially built to withstand attack from the Norwegians who at the time ruled the Hebrides and the Islands in the Clyde. Its last defensive use was during the Second World War.