Swarming the Bees

Edward Dayes



REF: 3122

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Description

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Edward Dayes (1763-1804)
Swarming the Bees

Signed and dated lower right: E Dayes 1800
Pen and ink and watercolour over pencil
38.5 by 48.7 cm., 15 ¼ by 19 ¼ in.

Provenance:
Moorwood Collection;
James Leslie Wright (1862-1954);
With Spink and Son Ltd, London;
Private collection, November 1948;
By descent to the present owner

Engraved:
By Hellyer as Swarming the Bees, 1802

The small, upturned basket in the bottom of the watercolour, looks to be a bee-hive, or skep, ready to take a new swarm of bees. Bees were traditionally kept in small woven dome-shaped baskets called skeps. However, to gather the honey, the skep had to be destroyed and the bees along with it and a new swarm had to be gathered. From the late 17th Century methods of beekeeping began to change in order to find ways of gathering in the honey without harming the bees.

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