Dolbadarn Castle on Llyn Peris, North Wales

John Varley



REF: 3056

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Description

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John Varley (1778-1842)
Dolbadarn Castle on Llyn Peris, North Wales

Signed lower right: J Varley/1832
Watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour and stopping out
30.1 by 60.3 cm., 11 ¾ by 23 ½ in.

The present highly finished watercolour demonstrates the influence of the great Romantic landcape painter Richard Wilson (1714-1782), as well as earlier artists Poussin and Claude, with an emphasis on creating works with a lyrical, poetic atmosphere and formalised composition, rather than topographical accuracy.

The lofty tower of Dolbardarn Castle is all that remains of the fortress probably built under Llywelyn ap lorwerth, (c.1173-1240), that once formed a key part in the defences of the ancient kingdom of Gwynedd. Its importance lay not only in its strategic position at the foot of the Llanberis pass, but in its symbolism of Llywelyn's power. It was captured by Edward I in 1284 and some of its timbers were taken to build Caernarfon Castle. In the 18th century its dramatic location made it a popular destination for tourists and artists.

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