A Spanish View

John Varley O.W.S

£350



REF: 1165

Height: 14 cm (5.5")

Width: 21.5 cm (8.5")

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Framed Height: 38.5 cm (15.2")

Framed Width: 45 cm (17.7")

Description

In the mid-1820s, Varley was in the habit of exhibiting watercolours of exotic scenes in Spain, North Africa and other countries, none of which he had actually visited, probably in an attempt to revive the market for his work. These works were mainly based on watercolours and prints made by British travellers to the respective countries, notably military officers. It is not at present clear whether this is a Spanish or a North African view. If Spanish, it may be a view over the Escorial, or it may be a view of "Tangier from the Moorish Burying Ground, with Gibraltar in the extreme Distance - from a Sketch by Lieut. Larcomb, Royal Engineers", which was exhibited at the Society of Painters in Water-Colours in 1825, no. 251. Whatever the subject, it shows Varley successfully exploring Mediterranean scenery and flora in a cool raking light.Surprisingly, there is a drawing of Morpeth Castle underneath this watercolour, only visible when the sheet is held up against strong light. Varley's watercolour of the castle in the National Galleries of Scotland sees the castle from a similar perspective.

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