

The Harvest Field
CHARLES CATTON Jnr.

Sold



Description

CHARLES CATTON JNR. 1750-1819 English School The Harvest Field Oil on copper 42 x 58
 cms 16½ x 227/8 inches Overall framed size 59.5 x 72.5 cms 233/8 x 28 ½
 inches Exhibited Royal Academy 1792 No. 176

Charles Catton Jnr was born in London on 30th December 1750, the son of Charles Catton Snr, the animal, landscape, classical and history painter. His father was one of thirty-five children born in Norwich and had originally been a noted painter of heraldry on coaches and hatchments but had graduated to a higher form of art, eventually becoming a full Royal Academician and one of the foundation members of the RA. He had been apprentice coach-painter to George III and in 1754 was appointed Master of the Company of Painter Stainers but, in his recreation time, produced landscapes and portraits. His profession earned him a good living and apparently he left his son financially secure.

Catton Jnr lived at his fathers house in Gate Street, Lincoln Inn Fields in London, where his father resided from 1769 to 1793. He was initially instructed by his father and worked as a professional coach painter but entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1775 to further his studies. He exhibited his first painting, "A View of London from Blackfriars Bridge, at the RA the following year and was soon established as an artist in both oils and watercolours as well as engraving and working as an illustrator and a theatrical scene-painter.

He travelled extensively through England producing topographical views and he gained a reputation for these works. Many of these incorporated animals and these were finely observed and painted. Catton engraved a significant proportion of these scenes and they were used for various publications, both books and periodicals, such as the Copper Plate Magazine, Middiman's Views, and "The Seasons" by Thompson. In 1788 he drew, engraved and published "Animals drawn from Nature and engraved in Aquatinta" and in 1793, Henry Jukes, the London printer, published "A Series of four Views in English and Scottish Border Country" a set of hand-coloured aquatints which both Catton Snr and Jnr worked on together following Jukes's commission.

His "Animals drawn from Nature" publication, (later published in New Haven in America in 1825 by a local publisher and book seller called H Howe), was a particularly lovely series of designs portraying wild and domestic animals such as lions, monkeys, dogs and bears. These are historically interesting in the print worlds as they are the first example of aquatints being used for natural history illustrations.

In 1793, working in conjunction with the artist E A Burney, he exhibited a series of designs illustrating John Gay's "Fables" which were subsequently published. He also worked with several explorers and naturalists documenting the results of their travels to the new lands. Like other natural history and botanical artists, Catton had not himself visited these far away places to draw the subjects from life in their indigenous habi...