JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

In Full Cry

JAMES HARDY JNR. R.I.

Sold



REF: 374767

Height: 25.5 cm (10")

London, England

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Width: 30.5 cm (12")

Description

James Hardy Jnr was the son of the London landscape and portrait painter James Hardy. One of six children, his youngest brother Heywood (1842-1933) also became an artist achieving popularity for his sporting pictures, equestrian portraits and coaching scenes. Their father had originally been a musician and three uncles also played in the Royal Private Band of Music. One of these uncles, William Hardy, was the conductor of Queen Adelaide's Private Band and his son, Frederick Daniel Hardy, (1826-1911) became a noted painter of genre subjects and a key member of the Cranbrook Colony, a group of artists which also included Augustus E Mulready, George Bernard O'Neill and Thomas Webster.

James Hardy Jnr was born in Chichester but the family moved to Bath when the children were young. He spent most of his adult life in Bristol sending his exhibits to the London venues from addresses in St Michael's and Bedford Villa in Terrell Street but from 1871to 1875 paintings were sent from Gloucester Crescent in Regent's Park and then from 1884-6 from North Finchley, London.

He painted both in oils and watercolour and is best known today for his skillfully executed pictures of dead game. These were often an integral part of a broader composition which could include a gillie and ponies or sporting dogs on the shooting moors with the day`s bag at their feet. He would often group three sporting dogs together and paid particular attention to the depiction of the dead game, demonstrating excellent technical prowess. Titles of exhibited works of this type include: Young gillie with setters and dead game; Highland Gillie; Setters and Scotch Game and Dead Grouse, subjects that were eagerly sort after in the wake of the fame of Sir Edwin Landseer and his Balmoral association and this helped to popularise Hardy's work in his lifetime.

The game pictures formed the preponderance of his work but he also produced rustic genre, some portraits and a few hunting scenes. Feeding the Rabbits; Blackberrying; The Poacher; Cockle Gatherers returning; The Hedger's Dinner; The Entomologist; The Monkey's Court and In the Wheatfield are examples of some of the paintings exhibited which demonstrate his range.

He exhibited one hundred and nineteen paintings in public exhibitions including nine at the Royal Academy, forty-six at the Royal Society of British Artists and twenty-eight at the New Watercolour Society (originally known as The Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour) and he was elected a full member of this last body in 1877.

James Hardy helped with the development of the career of his brother Heywood by lending him the money to travel to Paris in order to study and the latter entered the school at Beaux Arts in 1864.

Christie's held a sale of his work on 9th March 1878 and a further one after his death on 4th April 1889. Examples of his work can be seen in: Bury Art Museum; Royal Holloway, University of London; Stockport Heritage Services; West Park Museum in Macclesfield; Ulster Museum; Royal Hospitals, Belfast and Wisbech and Fenland Museum.

Bibliography: Dictionary of Victorian Painters - Christopher Wood
Dictionary of British Animal Painters - Colonel J C Wood
Dictionary of British Sporting...

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