The Rhine at Cologne, sunset

Henry Bright

Sold

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REF: 1208

Height: 18 cm (7.1")

Width: 28 cm (11")

Framed Height: 36.5 cm (14.4")

Framed Width: 46 cm (18.1")

Description

This lyrical and brilliantly painted watercolour of the Rhine at Cologne pre-dates the more familar drawings with chalk and watercolour for which Bright is better known, and features his ealier moogram. It may well date from a tour of the Rhine, perhaps made in the early 1840s in the company of J M W Turner. A watercolour probably by Turner in the Te Papa collection (listed as by R P Bonington) would appear to have been made at the same time, or be based on strudies made at the same time as Bright made this watercolour, from about 20 metres to the right of Bright's vantage point. In both works it seems that a storrm has cleared and the setting summer sun is now shining over the river. With a little imagination we can track the progress of this storm in Turner's 'Rhine and Rhine Castles' sketchbook (CCCLI), dated by Tate to about 1844, although this date may be re-evaluated. In the two watercolours boats feature in similar locations, although Turner characteristically added the ferry boat crossing the Rhine towards the Cathedral.

Turner is known to have been accompanied on some of his later tours by companions who would be responsible to travel arrangements, and Bright may have fulfilled this role on one or more of them. It is thought that Turner encouraged the younger artist, as did Ruskin, and it is quite possible that they sketched and painted together.

The present work was probably once in an exhibition mount, and was previously thought to be a contender to be identified with Bright's first Royal Academy exhibit, no. 1182 in 1843, 'Sketch on the Rhine - Moonlight', although as indicated above, it is more liklely a sunset scene.

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