SARAH COLEGRAVE
FINE ART

The Dream of Caedmon

Louis B Davis

Sold

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REF: 183371

Height: 114.3 cm (45")

Width: 30.48 cm (12")

Framed Height: 138.43 cm (54.5")

Framed Width: 54.61 cm (21.5")

Description

Davis was born in Abingdon, Oxfordshire. He was educated at Abingdon School where he was awarded a foundation scholarship in 1871. In 1891 he became a student of the stained glass artist, Christopher Whall, at this studio in Dorking and was to assist Whall in many of his window commissions. After leaved Whall he joined Lowndes and Drury in Fulham and as he became busier he contracted with the James Powell & Sons to make some of his works and before long he was able to maintain his own design studio in Ewelme, Oxfordshire. Among his most important windows designs are those for: Westminster Abbey, Cheltenham College, St Giles's Cathedral in Edinburgh, Dunblane Abbey. In addition to his stained glass work he was also a watercolourist, illustrator and author. As a painter he exhibited at the New Gallery, The Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours and elsewhere. He was a member of the Art Works Guild and the Society of Painters in Tempera. The present work is closely related to the artist's watercolour, The Nativity, of c.1900 (exhib. London, Last Romantics, 1989, no.53). The subject of the sleeping shepherd and his heavenly dream is probably a depiction of the Dream of Caedmon. This is a subject Davis used in some of his stained glass designs, although this work is probably intended to be an independent work or possibly a design for part of an altar-piece. Caedmon was an early Anglo-Saxon poet. According to Bede he cared for the animals at Whitby Abbey during the abbacy of St Hilda (657-680) and learned to compose poetry one night in the course of a dream. He went on to compose a large number of beautiful verse and vernacular songs. We are grateful to Peter Cormack for his kind assistance in cataloguing this picture.

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