

SARAH COLEGRAVE
FINE ART

The White Cat
Margaret Margaret

Sold



Description

MARGARET GERE, NEAC

The White Cat, Isola San Giulio, Lake Orta

Signed and dated I.I.: M GERE/1928 Watercolour over traces of pencil

25 by 38 cm., 10 by 15 in. (frame size 46 by 55 cm., 18 by 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.)

Charles H. St John Hornby (no.053 in the catalogue of his collection.)

Margaret Gere was a founder member of the Birmingham Group of Artists-Craftsmen. She was born in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire and was the half-sister of the artist Charles March Gere, studying under him from 1897 at Birmingham Municipal School of Art. A noted tempera artist, she initially worked in the medium in 1901 when copying the work of Piero della Francesca in Florence. Returning to England in 1905 she studied at the Slade School of Fine Art in London under Fred Brown, Henry Tonks and Walter Russell. She showed with and was a member of the New English Art Club and Royal Birmingham Society of Artists and held her first joint exhibition with her brother at the Carfax Gallery in 1912. Joining other members of the Birmingham and Cotswold groups in many joint exhibitions she also held a number of one-man shows both in London and Cheltenham. She lived with her half-brother Charles in Painswick Gloucestershire where they were among the earliest members of the Cotswold Group. She and Charles made regular sketching trips abroad together but are only known to have collaborated once: on the illustrations for the Ashendene Press' *Morte D'Arthur*. She is represented in the collection of the Tate Gallery, Royal Holloway College and Cheltenham Art Gallery. An exhibition of her work was held at Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum in 1984.

This work was in the collection of Charles H St John Hornby (1867-1946), founder of the Ashendene Press. Under the influence of Emery Walker and Sydney Cockerell he set up the press in Ashendene, Hertfordshire in 1895. In 1899 it moved to Chelsea and operated until 1935, apart from a break in production during World War I. Producing small print runs of beautifully executed books he employed a number of important artists and designers including Eric Gill and Robert Catterson-Smith, then head of Birmingham School of Art. In c.1910 he commissioned Charles March Gere and Margaret Gere to produce a group of illustrations for his edition of *The Morte D'Arthur* which was published in 1913. He was a keen supporter of both Charles and Margaret, he owned a number of their paintings.

