SARAH COLEGRAVE
FINE ART

Helen Allingham - The Edge of the Heath

Helen Allingham

£2,800



REF: CG

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Description

HELEN ALLINGHAM, RWS(1848-1926)
The Edge of the Heath – Red Squirrel on the Path
Signed l.l.: H AllinghamWatercolourFramed
27 by 20 cm., 10 ¾ by 8 in.(frame size 47 by 42 cm., 18 ½ by 16 ½ in.)
Helen Allingham (nee Paterson) was born near Burton-on-Trent, Derbyshire, and received her training as an artist at the Birmingham School of Design and Royal Academy Schools. She began her career as an illustrator for The Graphic and the Cornhill magazines; she also produced colour illustrations for a number of books
In 1874 Helen married the Irish poet William Allingham, a close friend of Rossetti, which enabled her to enter the closed circle of the Pre-Raphaelites. It is likely that the present watercolour is a scene on Witley Common, Surrey, an area of woodland and heath, near the artist's home. William and Helen Allingham had moved to Sandhills near Witley in 1881. Their time at Sandhills was the happiest and most prolific period, the peaceful surrounding inspired William's poetry and the local cottages, gardens, landscape and people provided endless subject matter for Helen's paintings.
In 1907 Helen edited for publication her husband's diary, which contain many interesting reminiscences of Tennyson, Carlyle and other well-known contemporaries, including John Ruskin, who wrote kindly of her work in his book The Art of England, 1884. She worked continuously until her death, painting studies of rural cottages and country gardens, recording the changing rural lifestyles. She supplied colour illustrations for a number of books: Happy England (1903), The Homes of Tennyson (1905) and the Cottages Homes of England (1909). Works by her are in many public collections.