Dard Hunter's Paper Mill, New York State

Maxwell Ashby Armfield

Sold



REF: 1422

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Description

MAXWELL ARMFIELD, RWS.

Dard Hunter’s Paper Mill, Gomez House, New York State

Inscribed with title on a label on the reverse Coloured chalks and pencil on brown paper, unframed, in mount only

17.5 by 15.5 cm., 7 by 6 in. (mount size 34 by 31 cm., 13 ½ by 12 ¼ in.)

Alexander Ballard, and thence by descent.

Born at Ringwood, Hampshire, of Quaker parents, his father being a milling engineer, Armfield studied at the Birmingham School of Art under Arthur Gaskin and Joseph Southall who taught him the tempera technique he was to practice for the rest of his life. In September 1902, after visiting Italy at the suggestion of Gaskin, he went to Paris, enrolling at the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere and sharing a studio with three other students – Norman Wilkinson (also from Birmingham), Keith Henderson and the sculptor Gaston Lachaise. Returning to London the following year, he embarked on the series of one-man exhibitions that were henceforth to mark his career, showing first at Robert Ross’s Carfax Gallery (1908, 1912) and subsequently at the Leicester Galleries and elsewhere, as well as contributing regularly to the RA, NEAC and RWS. In 1909 he married the writing Constance Smedley, with whom he was to work closely until her death in 1941. In 1915 they left for an intensely active and successful seven-year spell in America.

Armfield was not only a painter but a prolific illustrator and versatile decorative artist, while being deeply involved in theatre, music, teaching and journalism and writing some twenty books, including poetry, accounts of his foreign travels and such textbooks as the much-acclaimed Manual of Tempera Painting (1930). He was also a tireless researcher in occult religions and passionately interested in the formal and philosophical basis of art.

He is represented in the collection of the British Museum and many provincial and overseas galleries.

William Joseph “Dard” Hunter (1883-1966) was an American authority on printing, paper and papermaking. Born in Ohio, he spent some time studying and working in Europe before returning to the United States in 1912 and buying Gomez Mill House, near Marlboro, New York. Here he built a small papermill with a wooden water wheel and experimented in the production of handmade paper. In 1939 he opened the Dard Hunter Paper Museum at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He wrote, printed and bound Old Papermaking and Papermaking by Hand in America (1950). He was also a great champion of other types of arts and crafts, experimenting with pottery, jewellery, stained glass and furniture.