

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



John Selby Prideaux

A Jackdaw (*corvus monedula*)

watercolour on paper 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (24.8 x 37.3 cm.) signed

Selby, who lived his whole life in Northumberland, was an English ornithologist, entomologist and botanist with a good knowledge of trees and fishes in the tradition of eighteenth century all-round naturalists. He excelled at painting birds and etching them on to copper plates to illustrate his own atlas, *Illustrations of British Ornithology*, which took from 1818 to 1833 to complete. He was a genial and kindly man, who encouraged Audubon when he arrived in England and Edward Lear, another famous ornithologist. This sheet was one of 277 original watercolours and drawings by Selby in a famous American ornithological collection which included work by Audubon and which was dispersed at Sotheby's New York thirty years ago.