

**Lot 981 Portrait of Anne, Wife of Sir Hugh Smyth and second Daughter of Hon. John Ashburnham. 29 in. x 25 in.**



Adrian Shann, in correspondence with Anton Bantock in the 1990s, in relation to various paintings that were at Ashton Court purchased by his father, wrote (Bristol Archives 41648/P 2/16):

*“My father and a friend, Mr Helps, bought some 14 or 15 paintings in the sale, the only portrait of a member of the Smyth family being (I believe) that of Anne, daughter of John Ashburnham, wife of Sir Hugh Smyth; I do not know what became of this painting (lot 981 in the sale).”*

Anton Bantock in his book “The later Smyths of Ashton Court” wrote that this painting had vanished but could possibly be at Walcot Hall.

**Who was Ann Ashburnham?**

Ann or Elizabeth Ashburnham was born in 1637 and was the daughter of John Ashburnham who was Groom to the Bedchamber of King Charles I and II and powerful in the royal court. In 1654 seventeen-year old Ann married Hugh Smyth of Ashton Court.

Although Ann was busy raising a large family and had ill health, letters show she was interested in the estate and discussed it with her mother-in-law, Florence.

After the restoration of the Charles II Ann wrote to Hugh saying his mother had not approved of the wine drinking celebrations in the streets of Bristol, so Ann sent her mother-in-law a ‘*barril of sider*’.

Hugh was made a baronet in 1663, but he died young aged 47. Ann went on to marry Colonel John Romsey. John died in 1689 and Ann died in 1697.