The Friday Market and Theatre, Ann Street, Belfast

John Nixon

Sold

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REF: 496

Description

John Nixon (1760-1818)
The Friday Market and Theatre, Ann Street, Belfast

Signed verso: a Friday market at Belfast/with a View of the Theatre/J Nixon/1809
Pen and grey and brown ink and watercolour
29.9 by 45.1cm., 11 ¾ by 17 ¾ inches

The Ann Street theatre opened in 1778 and was occupied for its first few seasons by the actor Myron Hamilton and his company. It was later demolished at an unknown date. On an 1791 map of Belfast, it is described as the `New Playhouse.' Ann Street is one of the oldest streets in Belfast and runs parallel to High Street - in the eighteenth century it ran between Shambles Street (now William Street South) which is the road disappearing behind the theatre to the right and Queens Bridge. This view is taken from the Corn Market with Ann St to the left.

Nixon was an amateur artist who was in business in London with his brother Richard as an Irish merchant. He travelled extensively on sketching tours including several trips to Ireland in the 1780s and 1790s often in the company of other artists such as Francis Grose or Thomas Rowlandson. This and no.???? Are later works and clearly show the influence of Rowlandson under whose tutelage he became `a very professional amateur indeed' (Huon Mallalieu, Dictionary of British Watercolour Artists, 2002, vol. II, p.77). A view of Belfast after Nixon was engraved by George Walker and published in 1797. A view of the Linen Hall, Belfast by Nixon, dated 1790, was sold at Christie's on 14th May 2004, lot 75

Exhibited:
London, Royal Academy, 1809, no.462 as `A market day in Belfast'

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