The Battle of Mahidpur, India 21st December 1817

Denis Dighton

Sold

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Description

Denis Dighton (1792-1827)
The Battle of Mahidpur, India 21st December 1817

A pair, each signed lower right: Denis Dighton Military Painter to his Majesty and dated 1824
Watercolour over pencil heightened with touches of bodycolour in original gilt frames
Each 52.5 by 75.3 cm., 20 ½ by 29 ½ in.

Provenance:
Private collection, Scotland

Denis Dighton, the son of the caricaturist, Robert Dighton Senior (1751-1814), entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1807. He came to the attention of the Prince of Wales, later George IV and consequently was commissioned into the 90th Regiment (Perthshire Volunteers) in July 1811. Less than a year later, however, he resigned in order to marry, and continued to develop his career as an artist, specialising in military subjects. He was appointed Military Draughtsman to the Prince Regent in 1815. He painted paintings of the Peninsular Wars and was sent to Belgium just days after the Battle of Waterloo.
The present pictures depicts the final battle of the Third Anglo-Maratha Wars between the Holker faction of the Maratha Confederacy and the British East India Company, at the town of Mahidpur on 21st December 1817. The Maratha Princes were a group of Hindu princes who banded together to fight their common enemies. During the 18th Century they were effective against the Mughal Empire and ended up controlling a vast area of Central India from Orissa in the East to Delhi in the North. However, they were not always united and the British through a blend of diplomacy and warfare gradually wore down and weakened the Maratha. Sir Thomas Hislop led the British, who nearly lost the battle until a traitor in the Holker camp retreated, changing the odds. The Peace Treaty that was signed in January 1818, effectively ended the Maratha rule and the British became the principal power in India.

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