Exeter

Peter De Wint

Sold



REF: 1856

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Description

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Peter de Wint (1784-1849)
View of Exeter from across the Exe

Watercolour over pencil heightened with white, scratching out and gum arabic
32.5 by 99.7 cm., 12 3/4 by 39 1/4 in.

Provenance:
Mrs Day, 1884;
Anonymous sale, Christie's, 17th November 2005, lot 60, sold for £12,000

Exhibited:
London, Society of Painters in Water-colours, 1849, lot 276;
London, Vokins, Peter de Wint, Society of Painters in Water-Colour Centenary Exhibition, 1884, no.89
Provenance:
Mrs Day, 1884;
Prudential Corporation plc, 1995;
Anonymous sale, Christie's, 17th November 2005, lot 60, sold for £12,000

Literature:
Sam Smiles and Michael Pidgley, The Perfection of Devon - Artistic Visitors to Devon c.1750-1870, exhibition catalogue, 1995, no.16, ill. p.55

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Exeter, Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Djanogly Art Gallery, University of Nottingham, The Perfection of Devon - Artist Visitors to Devon c.1750-1870, 1995, no.16

This watercolour shows the city of Exeter from the south from the banks of the river Exe. In the centre is Exeter Cathedral with the houses of Colleton Crescent, built in the 1820s, to the left. J.M.W. Turner painted the city from a similar viewpoint in the mid 1820s (see Smiles and Pidgley, op. cit., no.80, p.106).

This dates from de Wint's last major sketching tour, to Exeter and the river Dart in September 1848. In 1848 he was still in poor health following an earlier attack of bronchitis. His wife Harriet recalled in his Memoir: `He was ill the whole of the year 1848, and it was hoped the country would be beneficial. The mild humid air of South Devon, however, did not suit him, although the few days he spent at Exeter he was better and able to sketch a great deal, as he very much admired the city and its venerable cathedral' (quoted in Hammond Smith, Peter de Wint, 1982, p.125).

This large studio work was completed in the winter of 1848 and was one of his last exhibited works, at the Old Watercolour Society in 1849 along with `View on the River Dart, Devonshire.' He died in June 1849. The critic of the Athenaeum magazine thought his exhibits of 1849 were `as remarkable for breadth and mastery of handling as any we have hitherto seen by him.' The use of white bodycolour is typical of his late work.

A similar panorama, of Nottingham, was exhibited at the Society of Painters in Water-colours in 1848, no.28 and is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (see Peter de Wint `For the common observer of life and nature', exhibition catalogue, edited by Peter Lord, 2007, no.75, pp.172-3, ill.

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