



Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items

Watercolour of "Our" House At St. Thomas' Mount

Sold



REF: 82413

Height: 17 cm (6.7")

Width: 25.5 cm (10")

Description

This watercolour on paper painting of "Our" House At St. Thomas' is signed J. Hoyes, 1854. to the bottom right hand corner.

John Hoyes became a 2nd Lieutenant in the East India Company's Madras Artillery in on the 14th of June 1854 after graduating from their Seminary. The Mount, as it was often referred to, was 11 miles south of Madras and was the headquarters of the Presidency's Artillery. The military cantonment was at the foot of St. Thomas' Mount and had a large parade ground, barracks and bungalows for officers. It is very likely that the bungalow in this picture is one of those. The bungalow has a veranda to either side, a turning circle and a well-tended garden to the front. To the centre of the painting is a fellow officer wearing the dark blue with red and gold facings of the Madras Artillery.

John Hoyes had a steady rise through the ranks becoming a Lieutenant in 1858, a 2nd Captain in 1864, Captain in 1870, Major in 1872 and was given the rank of Lieutenant Colonel on his retirement in 1875. He returned to England and died 15 years later in London in 1890, aged 54.

Given the date to the painting and Hoyes commission, he must have painted it fairly soon after his arrival, perhaps documenting it to describe his life in India to family back home. As he was only 18 at the time it can be imagined that his family were anxious to know about how he was getting on. The Patrick Montgomery Collection has an album of Hoyes watercolours and photos of fellow officers dating to 1855, so it would seem that it was a common practice of his to record his time in India. He would have been taught to draw by the HEIC, and although the painting is naive and clearly by an amateur, he did have some skill. Although not overtly military, the painting does give an insight into the conditions a young East India Company officer enjoyed in Madras, a few years before the mutiny. Dated 1854.

Image size is give. Framed size is 11 1/2 W 14 1/4 D 3/4