Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture & Travel Items

An Extensive Panorama View Of A British Military Encampment And Small Fortified Coastline Town watercolour

Sold

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Height: 39.35 cm (15.5")

Width: 127 cm (50")

Description

Panorama Watercolour Of A British Army Camp

This a very interesting, large watercolour on paper painting of a late 18th century British army camp outside a small coastal town.

The long size is unusual and suggests that it was probably painted in a studio rather than from life, perhaps as a study for a larger painting. It may well be a composition built up from a number of smaller sketches painted in the field. Certainly there are a number of little cameo scenes throughout the painting: the soldier saluting an officer who is pointing, the lady and gentleman walking their dog, two labourers carrying a sack and pushing a wheelbarrow with a dog, a mother and child carrying fire wood, soldiers walking with ladies, two gentlemen looking out to sea, there are numerous boats, probably fishing etc. etc. In short, scenes of everyday life.

The uniform and clothing is late 18th century and the flags in the camp are the old Great Union Flag that was changed in 1801 with the addition of red diagonal lines. The place is harder to be sure of. The camp looks like it could be on a peninsular or small island off the coast of North America and could well be Connecticut, Massachusetts or Maine, all of which saw action during the American Revolution. Equally, it could be a little further north on the east coast of Canada. Another possibility could be a militia camp in Britain or the army in Northern Europe but the stockade around the town points more towards colonial America. To the left of the picture is a wooden windmill, which are known to have been used in Cape Cod to work salt.

The quality of the work and the detail is very good but at some stage in the painting's history, it has been over cleaned. There is also evidence that the edges were originally turned over a board or frame. It maybe that we never discover the exact story behind this water colour but it is well painted, an unusual size and a very good illustration of a late 18th Century British army camp.

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