A Road near Seville, Spain

John Frederick Lewis, R.A.



REF: 2643

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Description

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John Frederick Lewis, R.A. (1804-1876)
A Road near Seville, Spain

Watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour, scratching out and stopping out
30.5 by 41.5 cm., 12 by 16 ¼ in.

Provenance:
Viscount Eccles;
With P and D Colnaghi, London;
With Thos Agnew & Sons, where bought, February 1980;
By descent until 2022

Exhibited:
Guildford House Gallery, J.F. Lewis, Painter of the Desert and the Harem, 1977, no.48;
London, Thos. Agnew & Sons, 107th Annual Exhibition of Watercolours, 1980, no.169

Lewis lived in Spain for just under two years from the summer of 1832. However, he continued to be influenced by his experiences and to work up his studies and sketches into finished watercolours and paintings and lithographs. Between 1837 and 1840, despite having left England again, this time for Italy, all except one of his exhibited works were of Spanish scenes. Like his contemporary and friend David Roberts (see nos.44 and 45, who also travelled through Spain during 1832, Lewis was instrumental in fuelling the interest that Spanish subjects had for the British public. He published two books of twenty-six lithographs of Spanish views on his return, Sketches and Drawings of Alhambra, 1835 and Lewis's Sketches of Spain and Spanish Character, 1836.

Despite the political unrest in the country, Spain was easily accessible to travellers during the period, although relatively few British travellers visited. David Wilkie (1785-1841) had visited in 1828, shortly after the end of the Peninsular Wars. David Roberts and Richard Ford (1796-1858) were amongst others who ventured to the region.

Lewis travelled initially to Madrid, where he had an introduction to Richard Ford, from the Rev. Henry Wellesley, although Ford himself was in Seville at the time, he effected an introduction to the British Ambassador. Lewis then travelled south to Toledo and Granada, before joining the Fords in Seville in November or December 1832, staying with them until April 1833. Seville captivated Lewis with its numerous churches and monasteries, crumbling mansions with hidden gardens and courtyards and its narrow, winding streets.

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