The Monastery at Batalha, Portugal, 16th August 1837

James Holland



REF: 3224

Description

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James Holland (1800-1870)
The Monastery at Batalha, Portugal, 16th August 1837

Signed lower centre: Batalha/JH 37 and inscribed in pencil lower left: Batalha August 16th
With collector's mark lower left
Watercolour and pencil heightened with bodycolour on blue-grey paper
25.3 by 16.7 cm., 10 by 6 ½ in.

Provenance:
Sir William Drake (1817-1890) (Lugt no.732);
With Richard Feigen & Co., New York

James Holland was probably the first British landscape artist to visit Portugal when he arrived in the summer of 1837. The publisher William Harrison sent Holland there to produce illustrations for his forthcoming Landscape Annual edition focusing on Portugal. Holland's Portuguese views are rare and considered his greatest works.

Holland left London in May 1837 and took a boat direct to Lisbon arriving the first week of June. After a month in Lisbon and Sintra he travelled north to Oporto in early July. He reached Batalha on 15th August and stayed several days. The town is famous for its late fourteenth century monastery which is a World Heritage Site.

On his return to London, Holland chose eighteen watercolours to be engraved for The Tourist in Portugal of which four were views taken at Batalha. The sketches from this trip show Holland at his most bold and confident with strongly coloured washes laid over vigorous outlines in pencil.

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