

Recruiting outside the Sun Inn

Thomas Rowlandson

Sold



Description

Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827)

A Recruiting Party outside the Sun Inn, Bodmin, Cornwall

Pen and grey and black ink and watercolour over pencil
With a signed pen and grey ink and pencil drawing verso
31.0 by 47.5 cm., 12 ¼ by 18 ¾ in.

Provenance:

Anonymous sale, Sotheby's, 14th July 1994, lot 117;
Private collection until 2012

Rowlandson was a frequent visitor to Bodmin to see his friend the banker Matthew Michell who lived at nearby Hengar House. These visits lasted from the mid 1790s until Michell's death in 1817. Rowlandson seems to have admired the quaint houses and inns of the old centre of Bodmin and drew them a number of times. At least five versions of 'The Arrival of the Stage Coach at Bodmin' are known and the Sun Inn, Bodmin appears in various drawings by Rowlandson, one in Bury Art Gallery and another 'Bodmin, Cornwall: The Arrival of the Stage Coach' which is dated to 1795 (see John Riely, Rowlandson Drawings from the Paul Mellon Collection, exhibition catalogue, 1978, no. 58, p.42).

During the Napoleonic Wars recruiting parties would have been a common sight on the streets of England and especially in the West Country with the major naval base at Plymouth nearby.