Design for Fulham War Memorial

Gilbert Joseph Holiday

Sold



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REF: 193225
Height: 39.37 cm (15.5")

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Width: 95.25 cm (37.5")

Framed Height: 87.63 cm (34.5")

Framed Width: 143.51 cm (56.5")

Description

Gilbert Holiday was the son of Sir Frederick Holiday and nephew of Henry Holiday, the painter and stained glass designer. His early years were spent in St John’s Wood where he would have been familiar with the horses and troops of the Royal Horse Artillery. He was educated at Westminster before attending the Royal Academy Schools and first worked as an illustrator for The Graphic, Tatler and The Illustrated London News. At this time he shared a studio with Lionel Edwards who said of Holiday “no one can, or ever could, paint a horse in action better that Gilbert could.” In 1908 he married Mina Spencer of Guernsey. At the First World War he worked as a war artist for The Graphic before being commissioned into the Royal Field Artillery as a Forward Observation Officer in 1915. Later appointed as Reconnaissance Officer, he was allowed to draw across the 8th Corps area and prepared a number of artillery panoramas, several of which were later purchased by The Imperial War Museum (now believed lost). He played an active part in drawing up plans of enemy positions, often venturing into No Man’s Land with his sketchbook. Holiday left the army in 1919. His work continued to appear regularly in Tatler and Illustrated London News, although he now became a well-respected equestrian artist and illustrator, painting every kind of equine subject including hunting, racing, polo, coaching, working horses and show jumping. He was also popular for Regimental commissions. Being equally confident working in oil, watercolour, pastel or pencil, he was considered on the outstanding equestrian artists of his day. A keen hunting man, Holiday had a serious fall in 1932, crushing his spinal cord. He never walked again and although paralysed below the waist he continued to paint until his death in 1937. The present work is a design for a bronze plaque on Fulham’s World War I memorial to the 7th London Brigade, Field Artillery. The memorial is in Vicarage Gardens, near Fulham Palace, but sadly Holiday’s bronze plaque disappeared in 2003.