Public access description

Popular paintings of this period were often reproduced as prints in order to reach a wider market. When this scene of the Indian Mutiny was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1858 it caused a sensation. One critic declared that it was ‘one of those sacred subjects before which we stand not to criticise, but to solemnly meditate’. Others, however, were outraged that it showed Indian soldiers threatening to assault British women. To appease public disgust the artist changed the painting replacing the attackers with a rescue party of Scottish soldiers. It was the changed version of the painting that was engraved.

Descriptive line

William Henry Simmons (1811-1882) after Sir Joseph Noël Paton; 'In Memoriam'; 1862; Britain; engraving and stipple engraving

Physical description

Reproductive engraving showing an imagined scene during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. A group of fearful British women and children with a female Indian servant are hiding. The central figure holds a Bible and looks heavenwards. In the background a troop of Scottish soldiers is seen entering to rescue them. The title is printed below with 'Designed to Commemorate the Christian Heroism of the British Ladies in India during the Mutiny of 1857, and their Ultimate Deliverance by British Prowess' and with a biblical quotation from psalm 23 (King James version): ‘Yea though I walk through the shadow of the Valley of Death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me’.

Dimensions

Height: 86.4 cm, Width: 68.5 cm

Museum number

E.164-1970

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O130715/in-memoriam-print-paton-joseph-noel/