Public access description
This jewelled sword with original scabbard once belonged to the Maharaja Holkar. It was bought for £150 in 1888 from a Miss Malcolm, with the information 'The sword was taken from the Maharajah Holkar at the battle of Mehidpor in 1817, and presented by the army (with the permission of the Government) to Sir John Malcolm'. Miss Catherine Malcolm (1815-1891) was Sir John Malcolm's youngest daughter. On 21 December 1817, British forces under the command of Sir Thomas Hislop and with Malcolm as his political agent had defeated army of the Maharaja of Holkar. Under the treaty of Mandasor signed on 6 January 1818 the house of Holkar lost its independence and became a feudatory of the British government. The sword had been seized with other treasures from the Holkar cavalry, and after some debate was presented to Malcolm. The parasol, an emblem of kingship, overlaid in gold on the blade indicates that it was a royal weapon. The gold hilt is embellished with 276 diamonds, 378 rubies and 38 emeralds.

Descriptive line
Sword, Indore, ca. 1800.

Physical description
Sword with metal hilt entirely covered with sheet gold and set with rubies, emeralds and diamonds; the curved watered steel blade polished bright; gold overlaid parasol on one side of the blade beneath the hilt.

Dimensions
Length: 94.5 cm IS.24-1888, Length: 83.5 cm IS.24A-1888

Museum number
IS.24A-1888

Object history note
Bought by the museum for £150 from Miss Malcolm. Catherine Malcolm (1815-1891) was the youngest daughter of Sir John Malcolm, and in 1888 was living at 87 Sloane Street (information supplied by John Malcolm, 10/10/2013).

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O40326/sword-unknown/