JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

“British Consulate, Trebizond, Black Sea, 1834”

ENGLISH SCHOOL FIRST HALF 19TH CENTURY

£ POA



REF: 374822

Height: 29.5 cm (11.6")

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Width: 41 cm (16.1")

Description

ENGLISH SCHOOL, FIRST HALF 19th CENTURY “British Consulate, Trebizond, Black Sea, 1834” Oil on canvas, inscribed on label on reverse29.5 x 41 cms115/8 x 161/8 insOverall framed size 41.3 x 52.2 cms 16¼ x 20½ ins Trebizon (or Trabzon), is situated on the Black Sea coast in north-east Turkey and being located between the Caucasus to the north and Persia to the south, became a significant stop on the historic Silk Road. It had been founded by Greek colonists in the time of Xenophon and later, as a remote capital of a Roman province, owed much of its strategic importance and subsequent wealth to the Emperor Hadrian who constructed an artificial harbour. Protection on the landward side was afforded by a double line of walls and towers which over subsequent centuries were incorporated into the strengthening of the fortifications by Christians and Turks. That part of western Asia Minor had always been volatile and as marauding tribes ravaged the countryside, Trebizond became a place of refuge, particularly for the wealthy. It had been autonomous for long periods aided by its defensible topography, natural and man-made harbours and wealth, a consequence of having accessible copper and silver mines and it was situated far enough away from the western and eastern Roman centres of power to be relatively untroubled by them.By the late 2nd and early 3rd century AD, there was a fleet of ships in the harbour for protection against pirates and the garrison was bolstered by 10,000 men and combined with the Greek easy going nature, a sense of impregnability ensued followed by indolence. This ended with an invasion by the Goths - who had established a kind of kingdom on the Cimmerian Bosphorus and had plundered most of the Black Sea coastline by 260 – who with a clever strategy breached the defenses and left the city in ruins. It then sank into a period of relative obscurity for almost 1,000 years when it grew again into the small Empire of Trebizond, or Trapezuntine Empire, which constituted the north-eastern corner of Anatolia and the south of Crimea, and was a successor of the Byzantine Empire. It was established by the Georgian queen Tamar in 1204, shortly before the sack of Constantinople and endured through to the 15th century. The towns bordering the Black Sea in north-eastern Turkey were comprised of an ethnically diverse populace and Marco Polo had noted that: (they) “…reside in the cities and fortified places and gain their living by commerce and manufacture.” As well as the Turkic inhabitants, there were also large groups of Armenians and Greeks. The latter, were for the most part the descendants of the second wave of Greek settlers who had arrived between the early 13th century and the mid-15th while the latter were the vestige of Greater Armenia which had been vanquished by the Seljuks in the 11th century. The Greeks often formed the entire population of villages in the area whereas the Armenians tended to be in more scattered communities. Trebizon and its immediate environs bear Greek place names and a dialect, peculiar to ...

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