

Basic Detail Report



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Title

Funeral Procession of Late Lord Viscount Nelson from the Admiralty to St Paul's Cathedral

Date

1806

Primary Maker

Augustus Charles Pugin

Medium

Ink on paper

Dimensions

Image: 320 x 443 mm

Name

Engraving

History

Admiral Lord Nelson is considered the greatest naval hero in British history and his death at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 plunged the country into mourning. His corpse arrived back in England in a cask of brandy and raw alcohol and was taken to Greenwich on 5 January 1806. There it was placed in a lead coffin which was then placed inside another wooden one made from the mast of L'ORIENT - salvaged (at Nelson's orders) after the Battle of the Nile (1798). Nelson's body lay in state in the Painted Hall at Greenwich Hospital for three days, where tens of thousands of people from all walks of life filed past the remains of their beloved naval hero. There were so many mourners that the authorities were fearful a riot could break out at any time, brought on by nothing more than grief over Nelson. Black hangings covered the vivid wall paintings and brightly coloured shields and coats of arms gleamed in the glow from hundreds of candles. The coffin was surrounded with trophies, including captured French and Spanish flags. On the 8th his remains were placed in the royal barge originally made for King Charles II and taken up river, accompanied by Lord Hood, Sir Peter Parker and the Prince of Wales. The Prince at first announced his intention to attend the funeral as chief mourner, but later attended in a private capacity with his brothers when his father King George III reminded him that it was against protocol for the Heir to the Throne to attend the funerals of anyone except members of the Royal Family. The City Livery Companies attended the procession in their own ceremonial barges, to make the procession from Greenwich to Whitehall the most exciting spectacle ever to have been seen on the river Thames. Disembarking at Whitehall they proceeded to the Admiralty, where the body of Lord Nelson, attended by his chaplain Alexander Scott, who had been with Nelson when he died, remained overnight. The next day, 9 January, a funeral procession of 32

admirals, over a hundred captains, and an escort of 10,000 troops took the coffin from the Admiralty to St Paul's Cathedral. Along the processional route there was a revered silence from the huge crowds that had assembled in the streets and in the stands which had been specially erected to accommodate the throng. Mourners occupied every conceivable vantage point in order to witness this overwhelmingly sad spectacle. After a four-hour service Nelson was laid to rest within an Italian marble sarcophagus presented by King George III from the Royal Collection.