

ABBOTT and HOLDER Ltd

Est: 1936

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PHILIP ATHILL Managing Director TOM EDWARDS Director



Fortunino Matania R.I. (1881-1963)

Afternoon tea in a ruined farmstead behind the British Lines in the Ypres District.

Pen, brush, ink, grey wash and gouache. Signed.

Inscribed verso: 'Passed by the Censor Major A. Stuart, GHQ'. 'No.36 June 1915'.

Illustrated: *The Sphere*, London, 5th June, 1915, pp.240-241.

Lit: Lucinda Gosling, *Goodbye, Old Man: Matania's Vision of the First World War*,

History Press, 2014, Ill. p.57.

13.5x20.75 inches.

£6,500.

'With the aid of "The Sphere's" special artist with the British army in the western field we are able to take our readers into the interior of a ruined farmhouse behind the British lines. The officers are at tea. An orderly has just brought in a fresh brew and has placed the pot upon a table. "A half-cup sir?" inquires the subaltern officer. "Thank you, yes". Maps dangle over the edge of the table to make way for pots, the sugar basin, the tea cups, and the bread and butter. Otherwise it is always maps, maps, maps everywhere. But now is the interlude of tea, and the steam from the cups mingles with the fragrant smell of good tobacco. An occasional bullet may splinter the rafters, and the concussion of a shell may rattle the tea cups, but the walls of the room are well sand-bagged up to a comfortable height, and the serenity of the moment is not disturbed'. (Extract from *The Sphere*).