THE LIMNER COMPANY



FRENCH SCHOOL (17th century)

A Gentleman, possibly Henri II of Lorraine (1614-1664), wearing a cloak band and a love lock with a bow

Circa: 1635

circa 1635

Oil on copper

Oval, 69 mm. (2 $^{3}/_{4}$ in) high

Gilt-metal frame with bow surmount

The identification of the sitter in this portrait as Henri II of Lorraine, 5th Duke of Guise, comes from the facial similarity it bears to Van Dyck's 1634 portrait of the same sitter, in the National Gallery of Art, Washington [1947.14.1]. Both gentlemen also sport the same hairstyle, including a love lock falling over their left shoulder, adorned with a bow. This was a popular style in the early 17th century and had been a favourite style of Charles I in England. They also both wear the same cloak band, a wide-spreading collar usually made of linen and bordered by lace.

Henri became the Duke of Guise in 1640 following the death of both this brother Francis (1639) and his father (1640). Before then, he had been the Archbishop of Rheims, from the age of fifteen. In an act of opposition to the French, he fought on the side of the Holy Roman Empire in the Battle of La Marfee in 1641. As a result, Louis XIII sentenced the Duke to death, and he fled to Flanders.

The Duke soon found another rebel cause to join and was part of the Masaniello revolt of 1647. This took place in Naples and was intended to end the Spanish Hapsburg rule there. Because of an old family claim to Naples, he was able to benefit from the success of the revolt and became head of the Royal Republic there. This position only lasted a year, however, and he was captured in 1648. After a second attempt to take Naples, the Duke returned to France, becoming a Grande Chamberlain of

It is known that the Duke had a motto by which he lived- "There are only two things in life: war and women, or women and war, the order does not matter, as long as both are present". The ‘war’ element is clearly explained by the actions outlined above, and the women can be explained by his iconography. Such extravagant fashions as a cloak band and bright bow in his hair may have been intended to reflect, and record, the way in which the duke conducted himself, inside and outside of battle.