THE LIMNER COMPANY



JOHN BOGLE (1746 - 1803)

Portrait miniature of an Officer of a British Infantry regiment

Circa: 1787

1787

Watercolour on ivory (licence 7DWPL37E)

Octagonal, 3.8 cm (1 $^{1}/_{2}$ inches) high

Signed and dated, 'IB. 1787.'

Gold frame mounted on a larger oval locket frame with dark blue guilloche enamel obverse, and a glazed reverse revealing plaited blonde hair.

John Bogle was one of the most important Scottish miniaturists of the eighteenth century. He studied in Glasgow at the Drawing School which had been founded by the brothers Robert (1707-1776) and Andrew Foulis (1712-1775) in 1753. By 1767 he was living and working as a miniaturist in Edinburgh, where he exhibited at the Society of Artists between 1769-1770. A couple of years later he was exhibiting at the Royal Academy in London between 1772-1794, initially giving his address as 1 Panton Square but seemingly had moved back to Edinburgh by the time he wrote his will in 1786.

As in the case of the present work, his miniatures tend to be small; perhaps a reason he has not received the recognition he arguably deserves. This is a fine example of Bogle's minute stippling, particularly effective on the face, which appears exquisitely modelled. The size and octagonal shape suggest it may have been originally housed in a piece of jewellery. The sitter's flirtatious gaze is indicative of the personal - most probably romantic - nature of the portrait, and it would have been worn on the body by the intended recipient.

It is inscribed by Bogle and dated 1787, therefore belonging to the period of the artist's return to Edinburgh, although he would continue to exhibit in London. The sitter's uniform identifies him as a

subaltern of a British infantry regiment.

The British were engaged in multiple large-scale military campaigns during the eighteenth century, and the resulting absence of many men from their loved ones lead to a proliferation of miniatures depicting men in uniform during the period. The present miniature numbers among these and was likely given to a wife or sweetheart prior to the gentleman’s departure.