# THE LIMNER COMPANY



**RICHARD COSWAY (1742 - 1821)**

**Portrait miniature of William Barrington (1758-1801), 3rd Viscount Barrington, wearing blue jacket with large brass buttons, white waistcoat and stock**

Circa: 1787

1787

*Watercolour on ivory (licence QW31ELXT)*

Oval, 67 mm (2 $^{5}/_{8}$ in) high

Signed on reverse: ‘Rdus Cosway R.A / Primarius Pictor / Serenissimi Wallia / Princisois / Pinxit / 1787’

Gold plated frame

The sitter in this portrait miniature has previously been misidentified as ‘Barrington Price’, likely a concoction of the Barrington and Price names, which relate to each other. Shute Barrington (William Wildman Barrington, the second Viscount Barrington (1717–1793), employed his nephew for his landscaping - the Picturesque pioneer, Sir Uvedale Price (1747-1829). Price’s theories came to illustrate the views taken by artists and poets of the romantic period and were satirised in literary works such as Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey and Pride & Prejudice. His influential work, An Essay on the Picturesque as compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful, was first printed in 1794.

This portrait, however, compares very favourably with extant portraits of William Barrington. Eldest son of Maj-Gen. John Barrington (1719-64) and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Florentius Vassal, he was born 28 December 1758 and baptised at St George, Hanover Sq., London, 25 January 1759. An officer in the 7th Foot (Lt., 1775; resigned 1778), he succeeded his uncle as 3rd Viscount, 1 February 1793,

but did not succeed to the estate which was left to his uncle's brothers as trustees, except for an annuity of £600 a year. This provision appears to have been made because the 2nd Viscount was concerned about his heir's 'state of mind'; by a codicil to the will the trustees were given power to lay out the annuity on the 3rd Viscount's behalf if they ever felt that he was not capable of managing his own finances. He married, 8 July 1781 at St Marylebone, Anne, daughter of James Murrell of Thetford Abbey (Norfolk), but had no children. This portrait may have been a gift to his wife.

He lived latterly at Corston (Somerset), and did not inherit Beckett House. He died 13 July 1801 and his burial has not been traced, but his will (proved in the PCC on 4 August 1801) expressly forbid the removal of his corpse to Shrivenham, and requested burial in the parish where he was living at the time of his death.