THE LIMNER COMPANY

CHRISTIAN FRIEDRICH ZINCKE (c.1683 - 1767)

Portrait enamel of a Knight of the Order of the Bath

Circa: Circa 1725

Circa 1725

Enamel on copper

Gold frame with reeded border

Oval, 48mm (1 7/8ins) high

Christian Friedrich Zincke, was born in Dresden in the 1680s. Training as a goldsmith, in the profession of his father, he also studied portrait painting, and in 1706 moved to England to collaborate with Swedish enamellist Charles Boit. While Zincke began working under Boit, he eventually surpassed his teacher in skill and established his own practice as a miniaturist. With the help of portraitist Sir Godfrey Kneller, Zincke earned commissions from prominent, even royal, patrons, appointed in 1732 as cabinet painter to Frederick, Prince of Wales. Zincke's popularity among esteemed members of English society is evidenced by the current portrait.

This enamel depicts a gentleman wearing a blue coat as well as the red riband and star donned by knights of the Order of the Bath. Only partially visible here, the centre of the badge displays an emblem of three small crowns and the motto "*Tria juncta in uno*" ("Three joined in one"), referring to the union of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The order was instituted in 1725 by King George I, and for 300 years since its founding it has recognised the work of senior military officials and civil servants. The title of the order recalls a medieval knighthood initiation ritual of washing, which symbolised purification.

While the sitter has traditionally been identified as the Duke of Leeds, none of the dukes of the period were members of the order. The erroneous identification of the sitter as the Duke of Leeds may owe to the fact that Zincke painted portraits of at least two Dukes of Leeds, one of whom wore the blue sash and star badge of the Order of the Garter, not the Order of the Bath.

The fact that the contemporary Duke of Leeds was not a member of the order in question, and that the portrait dates to around 1725, supports the conclusion that the sitter is one of the thirty-eight original members of the Order of the Bath which consisted of King George I, the Duke of Montagu (the Great Master of the order), and thirty-six companions. Zincke painted the portraits of several members of this first class of knights in the order, including Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond; Robert Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford; Thomas Coke, afterwards Earl of Leicester. Zincke also painted the wife of member Thomas Lumley-Saunderson, afterwards Earl of Scarbrough. The sitter's youthful appearance suggests he would have been one of the younger knights, likely born no later than 1690.