

# THE LIMNER COMPANY



## Portrait drawing of Lucy Anne Burr, later Mrs James Phillips (1805-1884), on her 4th birthday

Circa: 1809

1809

*Pencil and grey wash on card, heightened with white*

Rectangular, 82 mm (3 ¼ in) high

Signed 'J.S. / 1809' (lower right) and inscribed in the artist's hand '2.d of may/ her birth day/ 4 years old' (lower left) and 'miss Lucy Burr' (lower centre), with extensive inscription verso.

Gilded wood frame

When Smart drew this sensitive portrait of Miss Lucy Anne Burr, she was celebrating her fourth birthday. Historically, the drawing has been described as having been painted on her fifth birthday, though Lucy was christened on the 21st July 1805 and therefore is more likely to have been born in that year. Her age also makes more sense given that her parents only married in April 1804.

Both her mother, Lucy Burr (*née* Parry) (1773-1805) and her father, Lieutenant General Daniel Burr (1749-1828), were also painted by Smart in the years before this drawing was taken. The former was painted in 1804[1], the year she was married to Daniel, and the latter was painted twice, in 1799[2] and 1803[3]. It is possible that the artist either had a connection with the family or that they were simply impressed with his work and wanted to have their likenesses taken by one of the most fashionable miniature painters of his day.

Young Lucy grew up without her biological mother, who died only a few months after giving birth. Her father had only married for the second time a year after this portrait was drawn. There is an evident likeness between mother and daughter in the two portraits taken by Smart, and they may even be wearing the same pearl necklace, if this was passed from mother to daughter. Though Lucy's father was

a member of the army in Madras, and her maternal grandfather, Thomas Parry, had been one of the Directors of the Honourable East India Company, she lived in England as a young girl. In May 1826, she married James Phillipps of Bryngwyn, Hertfordshire. Little else is known about her later life.

In many cases, portrait drawings like this example are seen as either unfinished or preparatory works. This is not the case here. John Smart offered finished drawings as cheaper, but just as fine, options to his clients wishing to have their portrait taken. The extensive inscriptions on this drawing of the young Miss Burr further indicate that this was not a sketch for a later portrait but was given straight to the family.

[1] Sold Christie's, 2 June 2009, lot 268.

[2] Portrait in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art, The Edward B. Greene Collection, 1942.1156.

[3] Sold Christie's, 2 June 2009, lot 263.