THE LIMNER COMPANY



JOHN SMART JUNIOR (1776 - 1809)

Portrait miniature of Horatio Townsend of Bridgemount, Co. Cork (1768-1824), facing right in blue coat with gold buttons and black collar, white waistcoat and frilled cravat, powdered hair 'en queue'

Circa: 1801

1801

Watercolour on ivory (licence L2HU5ZB3)

Oval, 62 mm (2 $^{1}/_{2}$ in) high

Signed and dated 'JS Jun/1801' (lower right)

Gold frame with plaited hair reverse

Horatio (also known as Horace) Townsend was the eldest son of Reverend Edward Synge Townsend and his wife, Elizabeth. He appears to have spent his life living between London and Ireland, and snippets of his story can be found in family correspondence and diaries. This miniature, painted by the son of John Smart, was painted before Townsend inherited Bridgemount from his father (who died in 1819) and whilst he was still a young bachelor (he would get married in 1814/15). Some correspondence written after Horatio's death alludes to questions about his behaviour and sanity during his lifetime, and it is clear that he must have been a divisive character:

'His temper was naturally bad and never restrained and he became proud, morose and unkind to his friends…His brother placed him in a lunatic asylum here, but the late Dr Hallaran the medical inspector did not think him insane and discharged him…' [1]

An identical portrait of Horatio can be found in the Starr Collection of portrait miniatures at the Nelson Atkins Museum, Kansas (F65-41/41). This is painted by John Smart Senior (1741-1811) and is dated

to 1800, a year before the present work. It is likely that this portrait was commissioned as a copy by Horatio, given that its provenance places it within the Townsend family until 1947. The existence of this copy by son after father provides an interesting insight into their professional relationship; Smart Junior was not only copying his father to learn but to promote his business and produce miniatures, possibly where Smart senior did not have the capacity to complete all commissions requested of him. In Leo Schidlof's, *The Miniature in Europe* (1964), this miniature is illustrated, but dated erroneously to 1804. Therefore, this is the only copy done by Smart Junior of this particular work by his father.

[1] Letter from Dr Edward Richard Townsend to Dr Symonds, dated 19 November 1955, Llanvapley Papers.

Literature:

D. Foskett, John Smart the Man and His Miniatures, London 1984, pp 60, 75, illustrated pl. XXXI no. 109.

D. Foskett, A Dictionary of British Miniature Painters, 1972, vol.1, p.517 (Horatio Townsend, Esq.).

L. Schidlof, The Miniature in Europe, Graz, 1964, vol. II, p. 1045, and illustrated vol. III, pl. 542.