THE LIMNER COMPANY



ENGLISH SCHOOL (17th century)

Portrait oil of physician Daniel Whistler (1619-1684), wearing black robes and white linen collar

Circa: circa 1660

circa 1660

Oil on copper

Set into original wood (likely boxwood) frame, carved with an intricate rosette pattern (19th or early 20th century inscribed label 'John Rogers, the Martyr 1555')

This image of Whistler would appear to be a contemporary copy of a portrait now in the collection at the Royal College of Physicians. It may have been painted around the time he married (1657) or when he returned to England in 1659 after his time away with the embassy headed by Bulstrode Whitlocke into Sweden.

Whistler is best known for his early work on the study of rickets, as well as his writing on “Dental Fashions or Tooth-rites”. Here, he not only gathers from his vast reading the ideas of his predecessors, giving accounts of deformations of teeth, the earliest recorded tooth-extractions, experiments with transplantations of teeth and gold-plating.

There are vastly differing accounts of his character, from Samuel Pepys describing him as “as good company, and a very ingenious man;” while his contemporary, the diarist, Evelyn, terms him “the most facetious man in nature.” He seems to have raced through both his and his wife's great fortune, unable to keep up with the pace of spending.