A study of Lord Chesterfield's Hand

James Ward, R.A.

Sold

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Description

James Ward, R.A. (1769-1859)
A study of Lord Chesterfield's Hand

Signed with monogram and inscribed lower left: Ld Chsterfield's hand - for the large picture
Black and red chalk and stump on wove paper watermarked J Whatman/1811
22.9 by 25.7 cm., 9 by 10 in.

The present drawing is a study for the right hand of George Stanhope, 6th Earl of Chesterfield (1805-1866), for Ward's large scale painting of Lord Stanhope, Riding a Pony, now in the Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery. There is a detailed drawing of the composition in the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven. Ward also painted a portrait of Lord Chesterfield's niece and daughter.

Lord Stanhope succeeded his father as the 6th Earl of Chesterfield in 1815, at the age of 10, the year the related painting was completed. He was passionate about sport including cricket, sailing and in particular horseracing. He had a good eye for bloodstock and his horses won the St Leger, the Oaks and the Grand National on various occasions. A newspaper report about the Earl's character in the Derby Mercury in 1860 said of him 'succeeding to a vast fortune and the accumulation of a long minority, under careful trustees, there was none to prevent his Lordship from indulging those tastes for the turf, the chase and the road which seemed born with him and which have since given him such a conspicuous position among the sporting noblemen of the age'. However, his success on the track, was not sufficient to fund his horse racing and by the time he was 30, he had lost nearly half his fortune. Finding himself unable to continue to fund his lavish lifestyle, he retired to Bretby Hall, Derbyshire.

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