Portrait of a Gentleman

Irish School 1780s



REF: 2990

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Description

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Irish School, 1780s
Portrait of a Gentleman

Half-length, facing left wearing a brown coat and grey and white waistcoat
Oval, pastel
30.4 by 25.4 cm., 12 by 10 in.

The present portrait of a young gentleman can be dated to the 1780s or early 1790s. Although waistcoats had always been important part of male attire, during the last two decades of the century, they became even more of a focal point and fashionable gentlemen favoured pattered or striped waistcoats with plain coats and breeches. His knotted, rather than lace, cravat also became increasingly popular and furthermore he is wearing his own hair, powdered, rather than a wig. In May 1795, William Pitt introduced a tax on hair powder and within 5 years, the use of hair powder had virtually stopped, apart from specific roles and at court.

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