Portrait of William Simpson of York

John Raphael Smith

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REF: 2982

Description

John Raphael Smith (1751-1812)
Portrait of William Simpson of York

Three-quarter length in an interior, with a view of York through the window
Inscribed on a label attached to the backboard: William Simpson Esq/ Corn merchant/Micklegate/York
Pastel
45 by 34.3 cm., 17 ¾ by 13 ½ in.

William Simpson (1786-1819) was the son of Richard (a successful corn merchant of Pickering, alderman, and sheriff of York) and Bithiah, was baptised on 3rd March 1786 at the Church of St Peter and St Paul's, Pickering. William grew up mainly at Blansby Park, Pickering, but spent the remaining years of his short life in York when his parents moved there in the early 1800s. He took over his father's business at North Street, at the bottom of Micklegate, and became a corn merchant and miller in his own right after his father's death in 1816. William died young, age thirty-three and was buried on 4th March 1819 at St Mary's Church, Bishophill Senior, York. The family business was taken over by his younger brothers and thrived for another sixty years. William was survived by Mary, his Lincolnshire wife of nine years, and five of their six children. We are grateful to Elizabeth Cottell for the information on the sitter.

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