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Miniature Portrait Of A Young Lady Called Lady Wellesley



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Signature : RICHARD COSWAY (1742-1821)

Period : 18th century

Condition : En l'etat

Height : oval, 67 mm high

Description

Watercolour on ivory (licence 3EJ58ZNW) Signed and dated on the backing card 'Rdus Cosway / R.A. / Primarius Pictor/ Serenissimi Walliae / Principis / Pinxt: / 1788' Set into gold fausse-montre frame with plaited hair reverse centred with gold initial 'W' Oval, 67 mm. (2 5/8 in.) high The lady depicted in this miniature portrait is traditionally identified as Lady Anne Wellesley. There is no reason to doubt the identification of the sitter as Wellesley, later Lady Fitzroy, and then Lady Culling Smith (1768-1844). Several portraits of her, by artists such as John Downman, John Hoppner, and Charles Hayter, appear identical to the woman called Lady Wellesley here. The daughter of Garret Wesley, 1st Earl of Mornington, Lady Anne married Henry Fitzroy, with whom she had

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two daughters: Anne Caroline Fitzroy (1790/1-1835) and Georgiana Frederica Fitzroy, the future Duchess of Beaufort (1791/2-1821). After her husband's death, she married Charles Culling Smith (c. 1775-1853), and the couple had two children, Emily Frances (1800-1889) and Frederick William Culling (died 1828), godson of Frederick, Duke of York and Albany.

Correspondence between Lady Anne and Princess Charlotte of Wales (1796-1817) is held in the Royal Archives, suggesting a personal relationship between them. This was probably due to the close friendship between the Princess and Lady Anne's daughter, Georgiana. In a letter, also held in the Royal Archives, the Duchess of Leeds wrote to George, Prince Regent, expressing Charlotte's desire to see her friend Georgiana Fitzroy again. Before becoming Regent in 1811, George, Prince of Wales, had appointed Richard Cosway (1742-1821) as his official miniature painter. 1786. It is known that Cosway painted at least three miniature portraits of Princess Charlotte at different ages. Cosway's connections with the princess and her family may have facilitated his meeting with Lady Anne, which led to this miniature portrait and perhaps, indirectly, to Cosway's portrait of Lady Anne's sister-in-law, Emily Fitzroy (1770-1800).