



Major General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney

Date

1795–1796

Primary Maker

James Earl

Medium

oil on canvas

Description

Major General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney is a half-length portrait of a man in military costume with a landscape background. The figure faces three-quarters left, with his head turned slightly forward and his eyes looking to the viewer's right. The man's gray hair is combed back, and loose curls hang at his ear. His eyes are brown, and his lips form a gentle smile. Pinckney's face is represented as a full oval, with a brown line defining the fold in his fleshy chin. His uniform consists of a brown coat with buff collar, facings, and cuffs, and gold epaulets with braided fringe and two stars. Four buttons on the facings and one on the collar are fastened, and two additional buttonholes are shown on the

facings; there are three buttons on the man's proper left cuff and two on his right. Pinckney wears a white stock and ruffled jabot under a buff waistcoat. He also wears buff-colored gloves and breeches. White ruffled shirt cuffs are partly visible at his wrists, and he holds a black hat with a white lining in his right hand. At Pinckney's hip is a silver-handled sword with a round pommel and a striped grip. The quillon, a part of the sword's guard, has an elongated S shape. The buff-colored scabbard of the sword is attached to a reddish-brown leather strap with a buckle that winds under the coat. The landscape behind Pinckney features an expanse of sky that is blue above and pink at the horizon. A body of water below the sky has three narrow, vertical white elements. A pair of trees and a few bushes to the left of the sitter frame that part of the landscape, and another bush appears behind him on the right. A flat, grassy area stretches in front of and behind the tree line. James Earl's even application of paint gives the figure, including his face and costume, a sense of solidity. The edges of the jabot, the fringe on the epaulets, and the highlights on the sword are painted with a low impasto that add texture and interest to those areas. The facings of Pinckney's coat are painted rather summarily and are transparent in some areas, especially along the edge. The trees in the landscape and the varied edge of the pink and blue areas of the sky at left are much more painterly in quality.

Dimensions

canvas: 88.9 x 73.7 cm (35 x 29 in.)