

John Ker, 3rd Duke of Roxburghe KG KT PC (23 April
1740 – 1804)

£1,800

REF: 4174

Height: 5.5 cm (2 1/4")



Short Description

a Scottish nobleman and bibliophile wearing pale pink doublet slashed to reveal white and the Order of the Thistle on green ribbon

This is a rare example of Cosway signing his work on the obverse.

Ker succeeded his father to become the 3rd Duke of Roxburghe in 1755. He fell in love with Christina Sophia Albertina, oldest daughter of the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. Shortly afterwards a younger sister, Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, became engaged to King George III. It was considered bad etiquette for an elder sister to marry someone of lower rank than a younger sister. For whatever reason, John and Christina separated and remained single for the rest of their lives. If George III recognised the sacrifice that Ker had made, it was rewarded with a high position at court. He was Lord of the Bedchamber from 1767, was appointed a Knight of the Thistle in 1768. In 1796 he was appointed Groom of the Stole and made a Privy Counsellor. He collected ancient books, particularly of Shakespeare's work and other works which merely mentioned Shakespeare. At his death in 1804 there were 10,000 items. Most were books, but there were also pamphlets and broadside ballad sheets. His library was auctioned in 1812, leading to the formation of the Roxburghe Club

More Information

Year	circa 1780.
Medium	Watercolour on ivory,
Signed	Signed with initials C on obverse