



HENRY BONE

(Truro, 1755 - London, 1834)

Three-quarter-length portrait of a man, seated beside a table with books
numbered and inscribed in brown ink, lower centre: *Bottom*

pencil, black ink and wash, squared in black ink

375 x 280 mm

This three-quarter length portrait of a man is a large and rare example of a preliminary drawing for an enamel work by the Truro-born artist, Henry Bone. Although the sitter is unknown, the open plan on the table beside him may be indicative of his profession as an architect. As was Bone's custom in his drawings for enamel works, the sheet provides a record of a portrait, likely by a contemporary British artist such as Sir Henry Raeburn, Sir Martin Archer Shee or John Opie. These drawings formed the starting point for Bone's enamelling and the sheet's squaring and inscriptions provide valuable insight into his working method.

Having visited a client's home and laboriously copied the chosen picture onto a squared sheet of paper of the same scale as the intended enamel, the paper would be notched to allow accurate alignment, laid over another sheet of paper coated with red chalk and traced through to the enamel prepared on copper plaque below. The chalk tracing on the enamel was then fired to fix the outline, painted, and fired again several times until the desired finish was attained.

Preliminary drawings for Bone's enamels are extremely rare outside of the three albums in the National Portrait Gallery library. These albums, which contain some 700 drawings, constitute the Bone family archive, and remained in the family until their acquisition by Sir George Scharf and sale to the NPG in

1890.

Please contact us for a full catalogue entry.