



Birth Record of John Mason

Medium

Watercolor, pen and ink on paper

Description

A decorative birth record in watercolor, pen and ink, on paper, with a narrow brick red outer linear border enclosing three sections or panels divided by two ornate horizontal bands. The top section encloses the name "JOHN MASON" in bold black calligraphy, with tiny diamond-shaped ornaments on the bars of both "H" and

"A." Floral branches in green, pink and yellow are painted immediately above the name. Light blue semicircles, resembling swags or suggesting draperies, are placed along the inside of the top border and along the left and right sides of the name, ending at the first decorative band. Both horizontal bands are worked in a diamond and cross repeating pattern in brown ink highlighted with pink and red pigments. The center section encloses the inscription "Son of Solomon Mafon and Anna his wife / Was born January the 3^d Anno Domini 1767." A decorative mariner's compass or starburst element is drawn to the right of the birth year. The lower section features a central floral arrangement in pink, blue and green in an urn atop a stepped pedestal, in which is written the phrase "Nothing I ask but which include / Of all thy earthly power / Let me kneel and pray / That I may live today." To the left of the central floral motif is an elegantly dressed female figure, her brown hair worn long and curled and her face in profile to the right, wearing an olive green gown with a lacy kerchief and sleeve ruffles, a pink rosette on the front bodice and a pink scarf or bag over her right forearm. To the right of the floral arrangement is an equally well-dressed man, his right arm outstretched towards the woman, his left hand on his hip. The man wears his brown hair in curls reaching the shoulders of his brown close-fitting coat, trimmed with lace cuffs and revealing a pink trimmed waiscoat. A spray of pink roses is placed to the extreme left of the female figure, a spray of white flowers to the extreme right of the male figure.

Dimensions

8 × 10 in. (20.3 × 25.4 cm)