

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

ADAMS, Mrs

fl. London 1778

A pastellist known only from her advertisements in the London press. On 20.III.1778 she appeared in the *Daily advertiser*:

LIKENESSES

Mrs ADAMS, at No. 380, Oxford-Street, opposite Berners-Street, draws Likenesses of grown People and Children in Crayons, for 7s. each, Frame and Glass included [&c.]

This was repeated in the *Morning post* on 23.IV.1778, with the addition to the 7s. price that “if painted on vellum, 8s.” By 28.IX.1778, according to the *Public advertiser*, she had moved to 27 Wardour Street, and now offered crayons only on vellum, with a cheaper alternative of “coloured chalks”, 5s.:

LIKENESSES. Mrs. ADAMS, No. 27, Wardour-Street, Soho, takes strong Likenesses of grown People and Children, highly finished in Crayons upon Vellam, for 13s. each, an elegant oval burnished Gold Frame and Glass included; also striking Likenesses in coloured Chalks for 5s. each, a handsome black and Gold-Frame and Glass included, finished in one Hour, so that each Person may take their Picture away with them; likewise Shades reduced to any Miniature Size, for 2s. 6d. each, sitting one Minute only, Nothing required unless real Likenesses are obtained. Specimens to be seen as above.

A little later, in the *Morning post and daily advertiser*, 22.XII.1778:

LIKENESSES

MRS ADAMS, paintress in crayons, begs leave to acquaint the Nobility, and her Friends in general, that she has purchased that curious machine, the Royal Delineator, by the assistance of which she hopes to give satisfaction to such Friends as shall please to favour her with their commands, being enabled by the help of this instrument to finish them much better, and the likeness much stronger in any view for 15s. each upon vellum, and elegantly framed. Likewise Miniature Pictures neatly finished for 10s. 6d. each; and shades reduced small enough to put in a watch for 2s. and 6d. each. Specimens may be seen at No. 27, Wardour-street, Soho. N.B. As the Delineator is very little incumbrance, Mrs Adams will have no objection to wait on families at their own houses.

The Royal Accurate Delineator was a technically superior camera obscura, using three lenses and a system of adjustable boxes; it was patented by William Storer in 1778, but was mentioned by Horace Walpole in a letter to Henry Seymour Conway of 16.IX.1777. Pastellists such as Bateman and Dobson (*qq.v.*) owned these instruments. Although Storer acknowledged the help of the royal instrument-maker George Adams, Mrs Adams’s addresses differ and there may have been no relationship.

By 1782, no. 27 Wardour Street had been taken by John Flaxman, RA; nothing more is heard of Mrs Adams.

Bibliography

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