

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

## **ASTLEY, Mrs Edward, née Rhoda Delaval**

Dissington, Northumberland 1725 – Bath 1757  
Daughter of a naval captain who had inherited the Vanburgh mansion Seaton Delaval from an uncle, Rhoda Delaval was celebrated for her beauty and accomplishments, among them her flair as an amateur portraitist in pastel. In 1747 she began taking lessons from Arthur Pond (*q.v.*), who was already fashionable in court circles. A painting attributed to Pond (London, NPG) shows Miss Delaval executing a pastel portrait; her self-portrait (medium unspecified) was engraved by MacArdell. Some of her works are said to have survived in the family. In 1751, she married Edward Astley of Melton Constable (he was later made a baronet). Their London residence was 11 Downing Street. She was portrayed by Reynolds in 1756 shortly before her death, said to be as a result of the loss of her two eldest children. Although she had 11 siblings (among them the notorious MP Sir Francis Blake Delaval, KB, a younger brother, created Baron Delaval in 1783, and Sarah, Countess of Mexborough), it was her surviving son Sir Jacob Henry Astley that eventually inherited the family estates.

### **Bibliography**

Manning 2000; Sloan 2000, pp. 230f

### **Portraits**

SELF-PORTRAIT, m/u  
~grav.: MacArdell

