

Online edition

**BARBER, Rupert**

Dublin 1719–1772

Barber was the son of a Dublin woollen-draper; his mother Mary was a poet and friend of Swift. Barber was apprenticed in London to Arthur Pond (a friend of his mother) between 1735 and 1739. He is recorded in Bath in a letter to Swift of 3.XI.1736 by his mother, who says that he “is learning to paint” there, and “if he be in the least apporved of, in all probability he may do very well at Bath; for I never yet saw a painter that came hither, fail of getting more business than he could do, let him be ever so indifferent.” Nevertheless Barber returned to Dublin in 1743, where he was taken up by Mrs Delany (*q.v.*); she introduced him to sitters such as Lord Massarene and Lord Chesterfield, and provided him with a house within the grounds of Delville, her house near Dublin. He was recorded in London in 1748; again in Bath in 1752; in both Dublin and London in 1760, and in Dublin in 1770. He experimented in glass-making, and in 1753 was awarded a premium of £20 by the Dublin Society. In 1770 he appears to have made a substantial loss in a distillery business which he set up with “a very artful person”.

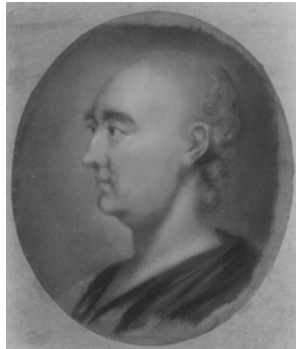
Barber was principally an enamelist. Some oil portraits by him inspired a few verses of praise in *Faulkner’s journal*, .II.1750. The striking image of his mother’s correspondent is the only known pastel, although there are several versions of it, some incorporating surrounding oak leaves and books derived from A. Miller’s 1744 engraving of Francis Bindon’s full-length painting. The striking image may have influenced Zoffany’s portrait of Garrick (Ashmolean Museum). Another portrait of Swift is in watercolour, apparently after Bindon. There is some confusion with his younger brother Lucius (1720–1767), who was also an enamelist working in Dublin and, between 1763 and 1766, London. Rupert’s son was a pupil of West (*q.v.*) at the Dublin Society school.

**Bibliography**

Crookshank & Glin 2002; *Dictionary of Irish biography*; Dublin 1969; Foskett 1987; João Fróes, ed., *Remarks on the life and writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift: John Boyle, Fifth Earl of Cork and Orrery*, 2000, p. 31; Hofstetter 2008; Lippincott 1983, pp. 78, 95; Marks 2001; Saur; Sloman 2002, p. 200; Strickland 1913

**Pastels**

Jonathan SWIFT (1667–1745), Dean of St Patrick’s, Dublin, pstl, c.1745 (desc.: Le Fanu family; T. P. Le Fanu, Abington, Bray 1913). Lit.: William Monck Mason, *The history and antiquities of the collegiate and cathedral church of St Patrick...*, Dublin, 1820, p. 445; Marks 2001, p. 46 repr.; Ingamells 2009b, p. 278 repr. ♪



~repl., with added books and oak leaves, pstl, (Bryn Mawr College. Dr Richard Mead, Great Ormond Street, London; London, Langford & Baker, 20.III.1754, Lot 38, 4 gns. Don Mary K. Woodworth 1960). Lit.: Marks 2001, pp. 35, 77 repr. Brian A. Connery, *Representations of Swift*, Newark, n.d. [2002], repr. cvr; Crookshank & Glin 2002, repr. ♪



~version, with collar, pstl, 58.5x48 (Nathan; London, Christie’s, 20.IV.1928, Lot 4 repr., as by John Russell, 22 gns; Royds. Professor & Mrs Robert Folkenflik, University of California at Irvine). Lit.: Marks 2001, p. 48 repr. ♪



~cop. Sir Thomas Alfred Jones (1823/24–1893), pstl (London, V&A, P.66)