

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

## **COLE, Christian**

*fl.* 1697–1735

British diplomat; secretary to the Earl (later 1<sup>st</sup> Duke) of Manchester. Biographical details remain obscure; Cole was possibly a member of the brewing family established in Twickenham. He was in The Hague and Ryswick with the Earl of Pembroke 1697–99 when Manchester was British ambassador extraordinary to Venice in 1697 and to Paris in 1699, but appears to have become his secretary around this time. Cole was certainly in Italy by 1704, travelling to Venice, Verona, Padua and Rome. Manchester was appointed ambassador to Venice again in 1707, and Cole was formally accredited as secretary resident that year (at a salary of 40s. a day); he was chargé d'affaires 1708–14 and minister resident in Venice in 1715. Some sources suggest that he remained in post until 1719; however although his credentials for this second mission were issued 11.II.1715 and he was back in Venice 8.V.1715, his mission was short-lived; he never had public audience as resident; he had vacated his rooms when his successor, the historian Alexander Cunningham arrived, 15.VIII.1715; and he had left Venice by 22.XI.1715. He then seems to have travelled extensively in Europe with the soldier and diplomat John Braithwaite, who was to marry Cole's niece Sylvia in 1730. Cole was back in London in 1723 (leasing a house, 8 Cork Street). In 1733 he published a compilation of historical memoirs. He is known to have sought other positions, such as the governorship of North Carolina (which Manchester proposed to Newcastle), but met with no success.

Tomitano (cited Sani 1985, p. 79) reports a reference to Cole as an amateur pastellist. He certainly had a keen interest in art, and was probably also involved in Manchester's invitation to Pellegrini, Ricci and other Venetian artists to London c.1708–09. He is best known for his friendship with Rosalba Carriera (*q.v.*), maintaining a correspondence with her from 1704; teaching her English; and even searching for good supplies of pastels for her during his travels. In Rome in 1705 he ordered pastels for her of the most beautiful blue, yellow and red; as they were expensive, he insisted on their being made in his presence.

### **Bibliography**

Burns 2007; Ingamells 1997; Filippo Pedrocco, in Turin 2003, p. 80; Sani 1985; Whistler 2009, pp. 183ff