

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

CROMMELIN, Issac-Mathieu

Saint-Quentin 1730 – Saint-Germain-en-Laye
1815

Administrator, writer and amateur artist from an important Huguenot family (Hodges made a number of pastels of his Dutch cousins). He was brought up in Saint-Quentin but from 1764 spent 18 years at Autun as administrator of a tobacco warehouse. He moved to Guise in 1783, where he collected salt taxes for nine years, and in 1792 became administrator of public works at Saint-Germain-en-Laye. During the Revolution he was arrested and imprisoned for some time. An amateur pastellist, during his stay in Autun he encountered Devosge and Étienne-Guy Charton (1694–1768), a pupil of Oudry, who encouraged his artistic activities. In his memoirs he describes making a careful copy of La Tour's portrait of a monsieur J..., receveur du parlement de Dijon, whose daughter, in Autun, wanted him to copy it. Her brother, an officer in the guards, then commissioned a second copy. (It seems possible that the La Tour subject was président Joseph Joly de Bévy, whose daughter Françoise married, in 1749, Pierre-Marie de Naturel, comte de Valetine, who lived at Blanzay, near Autun; one of her brothers was a colonel d'infanterie.) In prison at the château of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Crommelin managed to obtain a room with a magnificent view which he painted in pastel, giving the result to Mme Lemaire.

Bibliography

Michaud; *Mémoires de J.-M. Crommelin, de Saint-Quentin, dernier de sa race en France*, c.1806, pp. 76, 186; repr. as *La Société d'Autun au milieu du dix-huitième siècle*, ed. Harold de Fontenay, 1872

Pastels

Monsieur J..., receveur au parlement de Bourgogne, pstl, a/r La Tour (comm., fille du sujet c.1764)
~repl. (comm., fils du sujet)
Vu des jardins du château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, pstl (Mme Lemaire c.1794)