

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HONE, Nathaniel

Dublin 24.IV.1718 – London 14.VIII.1784

The Irish painter is thought to have studied under Robert West (*q.v.*) at the Dublin Society school, and would have been familiar with the technique of drawing in chalks, although his early success was with his miniatures and enamels. He moved to London around 1742, the year in which he married Mary Earle (said to have been the illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Argyll); her fortune provided a certain security. (After her death in 1769, he married Ann Jones, widow of William Tinswood, a woollen draper, and heir to her aunt who had married the rector of Petworth.) Hone's younger brother Samuel travelled to Rome in 1752, becoming a member of the Accademia del Disegno in Florence on 3.IX.1752, and Nathaniel was also elected four months later *in absentia* (a source of much confusion). Among other connections, he was associated with the Pall Mall jeweller John Lacam, of whose wife he made two enamels (one buried with her husband); she had also been drawn by Liotard.

Hone was a member of the Incorporated Society of Arts from its opening in 1760 until 1768. The following year he was a founder member of the Royal Academy, which he famously left following his dispute with Sir Joshua Reynolds whom he depicted in his satirical painting of the *Conjuror*. In 1775 Hone arranged what has been called the first one-man exhibition in London, consisting of roughly 100 of his own works in 66 numbers; they included only one pastel, "painted 27 years ago", and it appears that he had abandoned crayons as well as miniatures in favour of oil painting some years before the exhibition. (Edwards noted that "Mr Hone's talents might be considered as by no means limited, for he painted several portraits in crayons, and also scraped some good mezzotintos...") However several pastels which it is tempting to attribute to him on the basis of similarity to his later style in oil suggest that he may have continued occasionally to have used the medium. His charming depictions of children include the oil painting in Dublin of one of his own sons, Horace (*q.v.*) or John Camillus. The few known pastels are lightly executed drawings, with the less intense colouring characteristic of older practitioners such as Knapton.

Hone's notebooks for 1752 and 1753 are preserved in the British Library. They include sporadic entries for diary appointments and accounts. In May 1753 he paid 8s. 9d. at "Mrs Cecils for Crayons", and 4s. for "2 strained [*viz*] for crayons" as well as 10s. for "Liotards prints"; the suppliers of these two items were not recorded. The following month he received two payments, totalling £7/16/-, from "Governor Eyres", i.e. Stratford Eyre, which presumably relate to the portraits of his brother Thomas and wife or perhaps further Eyre family portraits. (Nesta Butler, pr. comm. 2016) **Monographic exhibitions**

Hone 1775: *Exhibition of pictures by Nathaniel Hone*, R.A, 70 St Martin's Lane, 1775

Bibliography

Alexander 2021; Crookshank & Glin 2002; *Dictionary of Irish biography*; Dublin 1969; Edinburgh 2008; Edwards 1808, p. 103; Figgis 2014; Grove; Hofstetter 2008; Ingamells 1997; McGuire 1939, p. 15; New Haven 1979; Pappe & al. 2008; Sée 1911; John Thomas Smith, *Nollekens and his times*, I, p. 120ff; Strickland 1913; Waterhouse 1981; G. C. Williamson, *Behind my library door*; 1921; Wright 2006

GENEALOGIES [Hone](#)

Pastels

J.4028.101 Catherine, dau. of Thomas BABINGTON, pstl, 65x49 (Mrs Gilliat 1903. Oxford, Mallam's, 13.VII.2011, Lot 162 repr., with pendants, as circle of Knapton, est. £3–5000). Exh.: London 1903, no. 263 n.r., as by Hone [new link] ϕ v



J.4028.1015 Frances, dau. of Thomas BABINGTON, pstl, 65x49 (Oxford, Mallam's, 13.VII.2011, Lot 162 repr., with pendants, as circle of Knapton, est. £3–5000) [new attr.] ϕ v



J.4028.102 Thomas BABINGTON [(1715–1776) of Rothley Temple], pstl, 65x49 (Mrs Gilliat 1903. Oxford, Mallam's, 13.VII.2011, Lot 162 repr., with pendants, as circle of Knapton, est. £3–5000). Exh.: London 1903, no. 265 n.r., as by Hone [new link] ϕ v



J.4028.103 Thomas EYRE (c.1720–1772), in uniform of 49th (Irelawney's) Foot, captain 1748, surveyor general of Ireland 1752–63, MP for Fore; & pendant: J.4028.104 spouse, née Anne Cooke, in a yellow dress with blue wrap, pstl, 55.9x43.2 (Dublin, Office of Public Works. [?Comm. Stratford Eyre, governor of Galway, brother of sitter, 1753, £7/16/-]. London, Christie's, 17.V.2001, Lot 64 repr., Irish sch., c.1750, est. £10–15,000, £11,750; acqu.). Attr. Hone. Nesta Butler, pr. comm. 2016 ϕ a



J.4028.107 Gentleman in a brown coat, pstl/ppr, 58.5x46, sd "N. Hone. 1747" (Dublin, NGL, inv. 6996. Acqu. Mr D. Hone, Dublin, 1969). Lit.: Le Harivel 1983 ϕ

Pastels (Burgbley). Lit.: Crookshank & Glin 2002, p. 99 n.r. [v. Downman]



J.4028.109 An old man, crayons, 1748. Exh.: Hone 1775, no. 4

J.4028.11 Boy in a blue suit and white hat with blue ribbon, a finch perched on his right shoulder, in an interior, pstl, 54x40.7, sd \ "NH/76", 1776 (London, Christie's, 15.V.2003, Lot 23 repr., est. £3–5000, £1000) Φ



Photo courtesy Christie's

J.4028.113 Boy in brown coat, pstl, 29.5x23.5 ov. (Denys Cowell .X.2002. London, Sotheby's, 12.VI.2003, Lot 113 repr., est. £2–3000, £1800) Φ



Photo courtesy Sotheby's

J.4028.116 Unknown lady in mauve and blue dress, pstl (Agnew's; acqu. c.1950 as by Hoare; PC 2012, attr. Cotes) [??Cotes; attr., ?] [] φα

