

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

CASTLE, John

fl. Russia 1734–38

John Castle appears in Russian sources as Я Кассель or Иоганна Касселя, and is said to have been born in Hamburg. He was in fact an English adventurer, an officer in the German army, and he worked in Russia under contract with the Academy of Sciences. He was enlisted as draughtsman to an expedition to the Urals and the Kazakh steppes in 1734 led by I. K. Kirilov, chief secretary of the Senate, inspired by Peter I's interests in mapping his empire. Kassel made topographical drawings as well as the first known pastel portrait in Bashkortostan. Castle's diary recording his journey were published in *Materialien zu der Russischen Geschichte seit dem Tode Peter des Grossen*, Riga, 1784, II, pp. 611ff, where he appears on the title page as "John Castle einem Engländer und gewesenen Kunstmahler bei der Orenburgschen Expedition".

Pastels

Молодого башкира (young bashkir),
pstl/pchm, 1735 (St Petersburg, GRM) *φ*

