

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

LEMOINE, Jacques-Antoine-Marie

Rouen 1751 – Paris 1824

Although this Lemoine is frequently cited as a pastellist and as a pupil of La Tour, the only works that were known with secure attributions at the time of my 1999 catalogue were a handful of paintings, numerous miniatures and his many drawings in black chalk with stumping and occasional use of pastel as a highlight. But at the 1791 Exposition de la Jeunesse, the entry for no. 121, "Portraits en pastel", is clearly contrasted with the preceding no. 120, "Plusieurs portraits dessinés tant à la pierre noire qu'au crayon, mêlé de pastel estompé". The difficulty is that records of signed works (such as the portrait of Caroline des Courtils, whose mother was a Lemoyne de Belle-Isle) may quite possibly be by a homonym – most likely his fellow Rouennais Jacques-Manuel Lemoine (*q.v.*), to whom we now give the 1775 Autoportrait (which emerged subsequent to the 1999 article); it is clearly neither of nor by Jacques-Antoine-Marie. The 1818 portrait of Malouet does however now appear to be by this Lemoine.

Although a few examples from as early as 1773 are by a different artist (perhaps the amateur from Lille, *q.v.*), the appearance in 2008 of a pastel, signed and dated 1771, requires a reexamination of the earliest stage of his work as the pastel appears to be more accomplished than the drawings which appeared at this time. It is possible that the date is a misreading for 1777, which would tie in more comfortably with the evolution of his œuvre. Another pastel, signed and dated "Lemoine P. 1778", which was rejected in Jeffares 1999 (no. 231) on the basis of inadequate evidence must now also be reconsidered as it appears that two pastels with this signature were with descendants in 1957. A further pastel, indistinctly signed and dated 1784, can also be added to the œuvre. It must be conceded that Lemoine's efforts as a pastellist were not particularly remarkable; in contrast, his portrait drawings displayed considerable authority, while his best miniatures were not excelled.

The special chalk used by Lemoine in his portraits was noted by the artist in the salon livret for 1796 ("crayon noir-de-velours de la composition du citoyen Coiffier, rue du Coq Saint Honoré, no. 133"). These may be a development of the invention of M. Lemoine, peintre noted for 1812 in the *Dictionnaire... des découvertes* (one suspects this might have parallels with the monochrome pastel used by English and Irish pastellists at the time, but it is close enough to black chalk usually to be described as such):

L'invention des crayons indigènes est nouvelle pour le public; mais elle remonte à l'an 1774, époque à laquelle l'auteur cessa de faire usage de crayons ordinaires. Ceux dont il s'agit ici sont composés de matières toutes indigènes à la France; ils laissent bien loin derrière eux les espèces les plus estimées jusqu'ici, par le degré de perfection auquel les a portés m. Lemoine. Ils sont propres aux graveurs, pour les grands dessin aux hachures, pour l'usage de l'estompe, et conviennent pour remplacer la pierre noire. La composition ne nous est pas connue. Dès qu'il nous sera parvenu des renseignements à cet

égard, nous les insérons dans l'un de nos Dictionnaires annuels.

Archival documents which were not referred to in 1999 cast light on the early stages of Lemoine's career. They identify the uncle with whom he resided in Paris from 1772 as Léonor-Agnès-Jacques Lemoine de Bretot (1714–1775), conseiller du roi, syndic des tontines. This uncle seems to have married late, being the second husband of a Marie-Henriette Blondel, widow of a member of the Académie de Saint-Luc, Étienne-François Martin, maître peintre vernisseur du roi, rue du Faubourg-Saint-Martin, the son of one of the five brothers famed for *vernis Martin*. His first wife was the daughter of the premier valet de chambre of the duc d'Orléans, while Marie-Henriette, his second wife, whom he married in 1770 (just a year before he died in 1771, when she took over the business) was the daughter of a commissaire des poudres et salpêtres au département de Paris. It is clear from her will (1779) that both Lemoine and his brother Marie-Louis-Léonor were effectively adopted by the couple; they are described as "ses enfants". Her connections would no doubt have assisted in getting Lemoine started in the capital. Of lasting significance however were Lemoine de Bretot's close links to the Le Couteux family, Lemoine's great patrons: he acted as witness to the appointment of both Antoine and his son Antoine Le Couteux de Verclives as secrétaires du roi in 1749 and 1753 respectively. He may well have been related to the Pierre-Jacques Lemoyne who married Verclives's sister Marie-Louise Le Couteux in 1732.

Bibliography

AN MC CV 1302, 27.v.1770; Bellier de La Chavignerie & Auvray; Bénézit; Blanc 2006; *Dictionnaire chronologique et raisonné des découvertes... en France, de 1789 à 1820*, Paris, 1822, IV, p. 184; *Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, 1957, 486; Favre Lejeune 1986, II, p. 821; Jeffares 1999; Jeune 1988, pp. 289ff; Le Breton 1914; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Lemoinsne 1913; Ratouis de Limay 1946; Sanchez 2004; Michael Sonenscher, *Work and wages: natural law, politics and the eighteenth-century French trades*, Cambridge, 1989; Thieme & Becker; Wildenstein 1966; Michel Zylberberg, *Capitalisme et catholicisme dans la France moderne*, 2001, pp. 112ff

v. Genealogy, Lemoine

Pastels

Caroline DES COURTILS, future marquise de Leusse (1772–), à l'âge de 4 ans, caressant un chat, un fichu blanc sur la tête, une écharpe bleue drapée sur son corsage blanc, pstl, 54x44 ov., sd 1776 (Léon Allard de Mécüs; Paris, Georges Petit, 6–7.vi.1910, Lot 7 n.r.). Lit.: Ratouis de Limay 1946, p. 185 n., n.r.; Jeffares 1999, no. 9 [attr. ?].-A.-M./?].-M. Lemoine]

Deux portraits de la famille LEMOINE, pstl, sd "Lemoine P 1778" (fille de Léonor-Agnès-Jacques Lemoine de Bretot; desc.: PC 1957). Lit.: *Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, 1957, 486 n.r.

=?Jeune fille au ruban bleu et rose, pstl, 63.0x52.0 ov., sd "Lemoine P/1778" (Monaco, Sotheby's, 5–6.xii.1991, Lot 186 repr., as Elisabeth Lemoine). Lit.: Jeffares 1999, no. 231 repr., rejected [new attr., ?] ◊

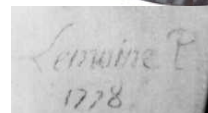


Photo courtesy Sotheby's

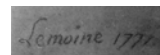
Louis-Antoine-Victor, baron MALOUE (1780–1842), préfet, pair de France, pstl, 54x44.5, sd → "Lemoine 1818" (Monaco, Sotheby's, 2.vii.1993, Lot 240 repr., as Marie-Victoire Lemoine, est. F120–150,000, F30,000 [new attr.] ◊



Photo courtesy Sotheby's

Homme de qualité, pstl, 22x17, 1812 (Versailles, Cheveau-Légers, Martin, 11.iv.1976, F900)

Dame en robe bordée de dentelle, ruban bleu aux cheveux, pstl, 63x51 ov., sd → "Lemoine 1771" [?1777] (Indianapolis, Antique Helper, 7.xii.2008, Lot 385 repr., ?M.-V. Lemoine, est. \$300–500, \$1000) ◊



Dame en robe blanche, pstl, 70x50 ov., sd →
"Lemoine/1784" (PC Versailles -c.2008; PC
2011) [new attr., ?] ♀



Portraits, pstl, 64x55 ov., Exposition de la Jeunesse
1791, no. 121