

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MASON, George

fl. London 1764; – Boston 1773

Mason appeared first in London, advertising in the *Gazetteer & London daily advertiser* on 5.IV.1764 and a number of subsequent occasions:

GEORGE MASON, Limner begs Leave to inform the Public, that he draws Faces in Crayons for Two Guineas each. He likewise Paints from the Life in Oil at Three Guineas, copies, mends and cleans Pictures. Those that are pleased to encourage him in any of the above Ways, are desired to direct a Line to him at Mrs Tillotson's in George-Street, or at the New-England and New-York Coffee-House, in Threadneedle Street, and they shall be immediately waited on. Mr Mason teaches Painting in Crayons on very reasonable Terms. N.B. Mrs Tillotson has a Room to Let ready furnished.

The phrasing is sufficiently close to suggest Mason as the author of several anonymous notices. This advertisement appeared in the *Gazetteer and new daily advertiser*, 18.VI.1764:

FACES neatly drawn in Crayons, from fifteen Shillings to one Guinea, and one Guinea and a half, according to the Size. Gentlemen or Ladies who are pleased to favour me with their Commands, by directing to M. C. to be left at Mr Rule's Academy, in Islington; Mr Watte'l, in Peckham; Mr Huntly, in Abbchurch-Lane; or Mrs Foard's, in Queen Street, Bloomsbury, shall be immediately waited upon. At which Places Specimens of my Performance may be seen; also the Originals if required.

NB As a striking Likeness must be the greatest Inducement to any Persons having their Portrait, I flatter myself that I can give great Satisfaction in that Point. I have no Objection to go into the Country.

A similar advertisement appeared in the *Public advertiser*, 9.XI.1765:

FACES or PORTRAITS, drawn in Crayons, after the neatest Manner, from 15s. to two and three Guineas. Any Gentleman or Lady directing a Line to AB at Batson's Coffee-house in Cornhill, or at the Hambro' in Sweeting's Alley, shall be immediately waited upon.

Those that honour him with their Commands may see a Specimen of his Performance if desired. Miniature and other Pictures copied in Crayons; old oiled Pictures cleaned, mended, and new varnished, in the best Manner. Drawing in Crayons taught.

If he does not make a good Likeness he asks not any Thing for his Trouble.

A few years later he advertised (in his own name) in the *Boston Chronicle*, 7–11.VI.1768:

George Mason, Limner, begs leave to inform the public (with a view of more constant employ) he now draws faces in crayon for two guineas each, glass and frame included. As the above mentioned terms are extremely moderate, he flatters himself with meeting some encouragement especially as he professes to let no picture go out of his hands but what is a real likeness. Those who are pleased to employ him are desired to send or leave a line at Mrs. Coffins near Green and Russel's Printing Office and they shall be immediately waited upon.

One wonders if he purchased his pastels from John Gore, who advertised “crayons...sold cheap for cash” in the *Boston gazette* (9.III.1761); five years later he offered “crayons in sets”.

The death in Boston of “George Mason, Limner” was reported in the *Supplement to the Massachusetts-Gazette*, issue 1.VII.1773.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Bolton 1923; Burroughs 1936; Dunlap 1918; Schmiegel 1975