

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

SHAFTESBURY, Countess of, née Lady Susannah Noel

1711 – Petersham 1758

Also Susan. Daughter of the 3rd Earl of Gainsborough, she married Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 4th Earl of Shaftesbury (son of the philosopher) in 1724, at the age of 14 (the marriage took place with his mother's consent but not that of his guardian, giving rise to a legal case). They lived at Wimborne St Giles in Dorset. He was a close friend of Handel. An amateur artist, she was a friend of Mrs Pendarves (later Mrs Delany, *q.v.*). Henry Fielding described her as "the well-shap'd Fair". Two watercolour landscapes by the Countess were also at the family home in 1963.

Bibliography

Henry Fielding, *Miscellanies*, Oxford, 1997, III, p. 342; Betty Matthews, "The Handel portrait at St Giles", *Music & Letters*, XLIV/1, .1.1963, pp. 43–45

Pastels

George Frederick HANDEL (1685–1759), pstl, 21.5x18 (St Giles House 1963). Lit.: Matthews 1963, repr., related to Kyte portrait and Houbraken engraving φ

