

# Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

## **SHIRREFF, Charles**

Edinburgh c.1750 – c.1831

The deaf and dumb miniaturist, Shirreff, or Sherriff, also produced pastel portraits in his early years. He arrived in London in 1768, and was befriended by Caleb Whitefoord. He entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1769 and exhibited at the Free Society from 1770 to 1773 and the Royal Academy from 1771. His handicap perhaps encouraged his interest in the theatre, and he was a fervent admirer of Garrick, celebrated for his dramatic gestures. His submissions to the Free Society in 1772 included both works “in crayons” and “in chalks”; they were sent from Mr Burgess’s in Bloomsbury, the address of the painter Thomas Burgess, presumably his teacher; he exhibited portraits and subject pictures in oil and chalk at the same time. He is recorded in Cambridge, Brighthelmstone and Bath (1791–94). Burgess taught other pastellists such as Martha Isaacs (*q.v.*) and, like her, Shireff travelled to India. Permission for his trip was granted on 11.v.1796, and he travelled to Madras with his father and sister, remaining there from 1797 until 1799 or 1800, then settling in Calcutta before returning to England c.1808.

### **Bibliography**

Archer 1979; Foskett 1987; Hofstetter 2008; Basil Long, “Charles Shirreff the deaf-mute”, *Connoisseur*, xci, 1933, pp. 83ff; Sloman 2002, p. 202; Waterhouse 1981

### **Pastels**

SELF-PORTRAIT, crayons, Royal Academy 1771, no. 186  
Gentleman, crayons, Free Society 1772, no. 176