

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastelists before 1800*

Online edition

SCOULER, James

Edinburgh 1741 – London brd 28.II.1812

His father, also called James Scouler or Scoular (–1782), was a harpsichord maker; his cousin John Brown (1749–1787) was a miniaturist. Both cousins are likely to have studied in Edinburgh, under William Delacour (*q.v.*), and both had moved to London by 1769. Scouler exhibited at every Royal Academy from 1769 to 1784; the address, Great Newport Street, was that of his father. Among the works shown, mostly miniatures, were portraits in “chalks” (1773) and crayons from 1775. A copy that year after a Frans Hals painting then at Althorp is in effect a pastel miniature; it highlights this first known example of an informal pose that was imitated by pastelists in the eighteenth century (notably La Tour, *Laidégaine*). Scouler produced some competent pastels including the fine portrait of the precocious astronomer John Goodricke, an ambitious composition inspired by the work of Hamilton. A number of pastels and miniatures by Carriera, together with five crayons by Hamilton, appeared in his sale (London, Hutchins, Wells, Fisher, 10–11.IV.1797).

At least one (and quite probably more) of his pastels [J.669.151](#) has had his signature removed and replaced by Russell's no doubt by unscrupulous dealers in the early twentieth century.

Scouler seems to have a close relationship with the family of William Rush, with two versions of Mrs Rush's pastel, each with a pendant, one of her brother and one probably of a son; there were also three small oval oils of the Rush children.

The date of his death, given incorrectly in many sources, is established by his will proved 10.III.1812 (PROB 11/1531, 1812; will made 1808). It shows that for the last years of his life he lived with a Mrs Katton Tregoze Susanna Smith (c.1749–1846) of Great Russell Street; he is presumably the James Scouler recorded there (opposite the British Museum) from 1781 in the rent books (London Metropolitan Archives; until 1776 he lived in Great Newport Street). An annuity to Mrs Smith of £100 p.a. and several other legacies, including to one Alexander Hemmings (1792–1849), illegitimate son of his brother Alexander Scouler, indicate that the artist was financially comfortable: but litigation ensued between his creditors and his executors (*Stell v Fly*, Chancery, 1817; the Rev. Dr Henry Fly, one of his trustees, was confessor to the royal household), and an 1850 annotation to his will records the death of the trustees before administration was complete.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Foskett 1987; Sée 1911; Wright 2006

Critiques

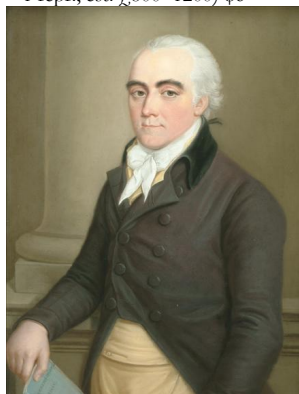
Anon., “Royal Academy Exhibition”, *London courant, Westminster chronicle & daily advertiser*, 1–10.V.1782: 45. Portrait of a young gentleman and his dog, – Crayons. J. Scouler. – Good, but in an affected style. 194. Portrait of a gentleman, crayons. J. Scouler. A neat piece of work.

Pastels

[J.669.081](#) ?[SELF-PORTRAIT], at work, pstl, 25.5x21 ov., s “J. Scouler...” (Derby, Bamfords, 27.X.2020, Lot 2066 repr., anon. unknown, est. £5) [new attr.; new identification, ?] φαδν



[J.669.101](#) ?SELF-PORTRAIT; & pendant: [J.669.102](#) ?wife, pstl, 72x54 (Donnington, Dreweatt Neate, 8.X.2008, Lot 17 repr., est. £3–4000; Nottingham, Dreweatt Neate, 27.XI.2008, Lot 1 repr., est. £800–1200) φδ



[J.669.104](#) General Sir Thomas BLOMEFIELD (1744–1822), colonel-commandant Royal Artillery, pstl, 33x25.4 ov. (Canon R. W. Howard, St Peter's Hall, Oxford 1955) φφ



[J.669.105](#) Colonel COSWEN [?Lieutenant-Colonel John Cosnan (1723–1773) of the 45th Foot], pstl/ppr, 28x21.5 ov., sd Scouler 1775 (PC 2015) φδ



~pseudo-pendant, Mrs Cosnan, v. Hamilton

[J.669.108](#) Mrs Richard DAWKINS (∞ 1791), née Jane Catherine Long (1764–1826), pstl, 1774 (Rodsall Manor 1925). Lit.: Robert Mowbray Howard, *Records and letters of the family of the Longs of Longville, Jamaica, and Hampton Lodge*, Surrey, 1925, I, p. 282 repr. φ



[J.669.11](#) John GOODRICKE (1764–1786), astronomer, ¾ length, with a sphere etc., pstl, 63x49, 1785 (London, Royal Astronomical Society. The sitter's grandfather, Sir John Goodricke, 5th Bt (1708–1789), ambassador in Stockholm; his grandson, Sir Henry Goodricke, 6th Bt (1765–1802); his son, Sir Harry James Goodricke, 7th Bt (1797–1833); Sir Francis Lyttleton Holyoake, Bt; John Dent 1836; George Wilson of Gilling Castle; acqu.

Charles Alfred Goodricke (1847–1915) 1898; don 1912). Lit.: *Monthly notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, 73, .XI.1912; *The observatory*, 35, .XII.1912, pp. 419, 435; Charles Alfred Goodricke, *Incidents in the lives of some of the Goodrickees of Yorkshire*, unpublished MS, 1913, n.r.; Ormond & Rogers 1979, n.r. φσ



J.669.112 Edward LONG (1734–1813), planter in Jamaica; & pendant: J.669.113 spouse, née Mary Ballard Beckford (1736–1797), pstl, 1774 (Rodsall Manor). Lit.: Robert Mowbray Howard, *Records and letters of the family of the Longs of Longville, Jamaica, and Hampton Lodge*, Surrey, 1925, I, pp. 122, 124 n.r.

Long, v.q. Dawkins; Pocock

J.669.115 [Isaac Abrahamsz. MASSA (1586–1643)], seated on a wooden chair, in 17th century costume, pstl, 21.6x19, sd → “Scouler/1775” (London, Bonhams Knightsbridge, 25.XI.2009, Lot 152 repr., est. £500–700. Oxford, Bonhams, 17.III.2010, Lot 74 repr., est. £400–500). [A/r Frans Hals pnt., 1626 (Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario; olim Althorp)] φνσ



J.669.115 Lady MENZIES, pstl/ppr, 23.5x19.7 ov., sd ↘ “J Scouler 1770” (New Haven, Yale Center for British Art, inv. B1979.30) φδ



J.669.1161 Sir Hugh MUNRO, 8th Bt, 28th Laird of Foulis (1763–1848), when a boy; & pendant: J.669.1162 mother, Lady Munro, née Anne Rose (1728–1810), daughter of Hugh Rose of Kilravock and widow of Sir Harry Munro, 7th Bt, in a landscape with a bullfinch, pstl, 23.5x19.5 ov. (PC 2011; Cyril & Shirley Fry;

sale p.m., London, Sotheby's, 8.VII.2021, Lot 176 repr., est. £1200–1800, £1764) [new attr., ?] φαν



J.669.117 Lady POCOCK, née Charlotte Mary Long (1765–1846), ∞ 1791 Sir George Pocock, Bt, MP, pstl, 1774 (Rodsall Manor 1925). Lit.: Robert Mowbray Howard, *Records and letters of the family of the Longs of Longville, Jamaica, and Hampton Lodge*, Surrey, 1925, I, p. 280 repr. φ



Rush, v. Smith

J.669.119 Richard SMITH (1732–1811), rear-admiral, of Poulton, Wallasey; & pendant: J.669.12 sister, Mrs [William] Rush (∞ 1748), née [Mary] Smith (1728–1813), mother of Sir William Rush, dau. of George Smith, pstl/ppr, 30x22.5 ov., n.s./sd ↘ “J Scouler/1787” (acqu. Debenhams 1909, Davis; Alice Taylor 7.I.1910. London, Phillips, 11.XI.1997, Lot 8 repr., est. £1000–1500, £1050. Richard Allen; sale p.m., London, Bonhams Knightsbridge, 21.V.2014, Lot 48 repr., est. £1000–1500) φσ



J.669.121 ~repetition of Mary Smith, Mrs Rush, in a blue dress; & pendant: J.669.1215 [??] Frederick Thomson (1744–1815), apothecary and surgeon, of Church Street, Kensington; or ?Samuel Rush (1752–1820), in a brown coat, holding a book, pstl, ov., sd 1787 (desc.: sitter's granddaughter, Maria Rush (1789–), ∞ 1809 Henry Urmston Thomson; desc.: PC 2025) φδ



J.669.123 General Joseph SMITH (1733–1790), in red coat with blue facings, gold epaulette, white waistcoat with gold lace and buttons, white stock, black hair ribbons, crayon, 58x48 ov., sd ↘ 1779 (London, National Army Museum, inv. 1960-10-52). Lit. *Journal of the Society for army historical research*, XXXIX, 1961, p. 65, repr. opp. p. 61 φσ



Six members of the TAYLOR family: J.669.1241 lady in blue, facing right; J.669.1242 officer in uniform; J.669.1243 lady facing left; J.669.1244

lady, head inclined; & J.669.1245 two boys, 5 pstls, 29x24 ov., two sd 1773 or 1778 (Nottingham, Mellors & Kirk, 20.IX.2018, Lot 594 repr., est. £600–800) φ



J.669.125 Gentleman, chalks, Royal Academy 1773, no. 269

J.669.126 Gentleman, chalks, Royal Academy 1773, no. 270

J.669.127 Young gentleman, crayons, Royal Academy 1775, no. 287

J.669.128 Gentleman in a red coat, pstl/ppr, 30.5x25.4, sd v “Scouler 1780” (Abbott & Holder, exh. cat, *Heads*, 22.I.–26.II.2011, no. 26, £2250) φ



J.669.13 Gentleman, m/u, Royal Academy 1781, no. 128

J.669.131 Young gentleman and dog, crayons, Royal Academy 1782, no. 45

J.669.132 Gentleman, crayons, Royal Academy 1782, no. 194

J.669.133 Boy, crayons, Royal Academy 1784, no. 10

J.669.134 Gentleman in brown coat, pstl, 32x25 ov., sd v “Scouler 1796” (Abbott & Holder 2011) φσ



Photo courtesy Abbott & Holder

J.669.137 Young lady, crayons, Royal Academy 1775, no. 286

J.669.138 Elegant lady in white dress, blue shawl, in a classical interior, cr. clr/ppr, 84.5x63.5, sd v “Scouler 1780” (London, Sotheby’s, 14.III.1985, Lot 44 repr., est. £600–800. London, Phillips, 30.I.1995, Lot 30, est. £1000–1500, £700) φ



J.669.139 Lady in a white dress holding book and quill, column in background, pstl, 54x44 ov, sd v 1780 (Stansted Mountfitchet, Sworders, 8.XII.2015, Lot 185 repr., est. £200–300, £200) φ



J.669.141 Lady, crayons, Royal Academy 1781, no. 89

J.669.142 Girl, crayons, Royal Academy 1784, no. 12

J.669.143 Lady, pstl, 30x23.5 ov., sd → “J. Scouler 1788” (Fernhurst, Haslemere, John Nicholson, 19.V.1999, Lot 209 repr., est. £750–1000, £750. London, Sotheby’s, 28.XI.2002, Lot 215 repr., est. £800–1200, b/i. London, Sotheby’s Olympia, 2.VII.2003, Lot 158 repr., est. £800–1200, £800 [=£960]. London, Christie’s South Kensington, 21.III.2007, Lot 706 repr., est. £400–600, £600) φσ



Photo courtesy Sotheby’s

J.669.144 Lady in a black dress, white bonnet and fichu, pstl, 25x18 ov, (Broadway, Worcestershire, British Bespoke Auctions, 9.V.2024, Lot 128 repr., anon., est. £80–140) [new attr., ?] φσ



J.669.146 Officer in a blue coat with white facings; & [?]pendant: J.669.147 lady in a blue dress, pstl, 37x31 ov., sd 1776 (Mrs Alec Tweedie (1860–1940); desc.: Mackworth, Hansons, 10.VI.2009, Lot 500 repr./n.r., ?James Scouler, est. £500–600) φ/φπ



J.669.151 [olim J.64.3283] Gentleman, half-length, in a blue coat, holding a cane in his right hand; & pendant: J.669.152 wife in a blue dress, pstl/ppr/board, 74.6x57.2, (man) originally s v

“J. Scouler 1788”; later “J. Russell” (London, Robinson & Fisher, 15.x.1931, Lot 91 repr./n.r., as sd Scouler. New York, Parke-Bernet, 3.vi.1981, Lot 92 repr., \$3000; dep.: Fogg 1981–; New York, Christie’s, 30.v.2003, Lot 46 repr., est. \$8–12,000, \$8000 [= \$9560]) [original attr. restored 2024] Φv



Photo courtesy Christie's