

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

TOTT, Sophie-Ernestine de

Constantinople 29.I.1758 – Versailles 20.IX.1848
Referred to as “Countess Totte” by Sée, the artist of the pastel of Elfi Bey must be the French émigrée artist Sophie de Tott, daughter of François, baron de Tott (1733–1793), a consul in Constantinople of Hungarian extraction, later maréchal de camp and gouverneur de Douai. Sophie de Tott was an amateur painter and musician. Although never married, she was a chanoinesse of Sainte-Anne de Munich and thus entitled to be called Madame de Tott as she is usually described. She was effectively adopted by Mme de Tessé, aunt of the marquise de Lafayette. Her sister married François, duc de La Rochefoucauld in Altona in 1793. She was the subject of a portrait by Vigée Le Brun and the friend of Thomas Jefferson, with whom she exchanged letters on J.-G. Drouais’s *Marius prisonnier à Minturnae* (1786). A miniature of Sophie painting the portrait of the comtesse de Tessé (Washington 1977, no. 229 repr.) has been attributed to her father; perhaps it is a self-portrait. She emigrated during the Revolution, and exhibited a number of portraits in unspecified media at the Royal Academy between 1801 and 1804. In 1807 she was part of the retinue of Elizabeth Berkeley, Margravine of Anspach. In 1825, back in France, she made a copy of a portrait of the prince de Condé. In a “consentement, execution testamentaire” of 26.VIII.1851 (AN MC/XCI/1996), her heir is identified as her sister, the duchesse de La Rochefoucauld (Marie-Françoise had previously requested a posthumous inventory for an unspecified Mlle Tott, 3.III.1804). A copy of her will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and lists a number of family portrait bequests, none identifiable as in pastel or before 1800.

Bibliography

Garnier 1995; Graves 1905; Greer 2001; Mézin 1997; Michaud; Sée 1911; Washington 1976

Pastels

J.723.101 ELFI Bey (–1807), pacha of Cairo, 1804
J.723.102 Mme Isaac MORIER, née Elisabeth Clara van Lennep (1760–1834), charcoal, pink pstl/green ppr, 20.75x15.5 (Dutch PC). Lit.: rKD n.r., attr.