

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

WILKES, Mary “Polly”

London 1750–1802

There are several references in the correspondence of John Wilkes to his daughter's activity as an amateur pastellist. In a letter to his friend Humphry Cotes from Paris, 30.IV.1764, he writes “I mean to send my mother-in-law a drawing of miss Wilkes's, and her mother something in crayons. She has really made a very happy progress.” Writing to Polly herself from Naples, 9.IV.1765, he describes his pleasant lodgings, adorned with “your crayons of the woman's head, and a basket of fruit; and your picture by Mr Fossier.” Back in Paris (1.XI.1765) he reports to Polly that M. Fossier (*q.v.*) dined with him last week, and sent his compliments. Later (12.VI.1770), when Polly was staying in Paris, he refers to a pastel of her by M. Cezeron (*q.v.*) executed for Mme de Chantereine, and recommends that “you avail yourself as much as you can of your being at Paris to take lessons from [him]”. In addition to the well-known Zoffany double portrait of father and daughter (London, NPG), Polly's estate included a pastel of herself by Hoare (*q.v.*), and a number of portraits of the duchesse de Châtillon and of her daughters.

Bibliography

Arthur H. Cash, *John Wilkes*, New Haven, 2006;
Correspondence of the late John Wilkes, ed. John Almon, London, 1805, II, pp. 70. 153; IV, pp. 49, 52; V, p. 114