

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

BUFFON, Pierre-Alexandre Leclerc, chevalier de

Buffon 23.VI.1734 – Montbard 22.IV.1825

Half-brother of the celebrated naturalist, the chevalier de Buffon was a soldier in the Seven Years War, where he distinguished himself at the siege of Kassel. He belonged to the régiment des Gardes lorraines, of which he became lieutenant-colonel in 1774, rising to the rank of maréchal de camp (1790). He retired to Montbard where he devoted himself to writing, poetry, his violin and pastel painting. According to his great-grand-nephew, some of his pastel landscapes were of real merit. The sole example known today dates from the early nineteenth century and shows a lady who might be the owner mentioned in 1820, the wife of the artist's nephew, née Élisabeth-Georgette, dite Betzy Daubenton (1775–1852). An engraving of a family portrait published by Nadault de Buffon 1863 shows features quite similar to the anonymous pastel (*v. Éc. fr.*) of an unknown officer who can be identified as Buffon by his uniform, that of a lieutenant-colonel of the Gardes lorraines; the female pendant may be the portrait of his much younger wife, whose name is not given in the *usuels*. It is tempting to suggest that they might be by Buffon himself but that is speculation.

Bibliography

Henri Nadault de Buffon, *Correspondance inédite de Buffon, à laquelle ont été réunies toutes les lettres publiées jusqu'à ce jour*, Paris, Hachette, 1860;
Henri Nadault de Buffon, *Buffon, sa famille, ses collaborateurs, ses familiers*, Paris, 1863

GENEALOGIES [Le Clerc](#)

Pastels

J.1856.151 Dame en robe blanche, pstl/ppr, c.1820, inscr. verso "Peint par le chevalier de Buffon/Donné par Mme la Comtesse de Buffon/a Montbord 1820"(Vichy Enchères, 17.VIII.2024, Lot 12 repr., est. €300–500) φν

