

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

GOWAN, Alexander

fl. New York 1798

Alexander Gowan advertised drawing lessons in the *New-York daily advertiser* (2.1.1798):

Drawing taught at No 64 Maiden Lane. The utility and advantage of this polite branch of education is too well known to need any comment, it being the only means by which either the mechanic, artist, or engineer can form an exact idea of the methods by which their designs can be rendered easy or practicable. Landscapes, Figures, Flowers, architecture, with the theory and practice of perspective made easy.

The methods of teaching are new and expeditious and according to the rules of the first masters in Europe. Striking likenesses painted in Miniature, *Crayons*, and in Oil, by A. Gowan, from London. Ladies or Gentlemen will be waited on at their own lodgings if required. The terms are moderate and may be known by applying at No 64 Maiden.

His wife advertised as a milliner and mantua maker in the same year.

It is possible that he was the "AG" who advertised as follows in the *Caledonian Mercury*, 6.VIII.1763, p. 375:

PICTURES drawn neatly in Crayons as big as life, at FIFTEEN SHILLINGS STERLING each, by A. G. Limner. Gentlemen or Ladies who are pleased to employ him, may depend in his doing the utmost of his endeavour to give them satisfaction. As is thought in general, by the critics on painting, that nothing comes nearer the resemblance of flesh and blood, than a well drawn Crayon picture, he hopes to meet with approbation from those who are judges, and hopes that those who have been so good as employ him already, will give him a character. – He continues to call once a day at the Nether-bow coffee-house. – By sending a note there, directing him where to call, will be sure to give attendance.

It is unclear if he was related to Alexander Gowan (–1803), the Edinburgh marble-cutter said to have worked in Roubilliac's studio; he married a Mary Martin in 1755, and was a master mason at Queensferry by 1759 when an apprentice was recorded.