

1 Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HENSHAW, William

Cambridge 1753 – London 1775

The son of a Cambridge gunsmith, John Henshaw and his wife Sarah Stephens, and nephew to the Cambridge engraver and printseller William Stephens. In a letter to Walpole of 6.I.1773, the Rev. William Cole hailed this “extraordinary genius for engraving which [sic] arose at Cambridge without anyone’s taking notice till just now”. (In another letter Cole also compared Henshaw’s print with one by [Christopher] Sharp (*q.v.*) which he describes as “very bad”.) Walpole responded immediately, asking “is he a professor, or only a lover of engraving?”, offering to lend him heads to copy. When through Dr William Howell Ewin he obtained Henshaw’s “elegantly engraved” copy of Mason’s head of Thomas Gray, Walpole at once persuaded Paul Sandby to show the work to Bartolozzi, who took the young man on as a pupil despite his father’s implacable opposition. Henshaw entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1773, exhibiting a pastel two years later. He died “of a violent fever” in August that year.

Bibliography

John Blatchly, “William Stephens of Cambridge”, *The bookplate journal*, .III.2005, pp. 3ff; Walpole, letters to William Cole, 8.I.1773, 18.II.1773; Eliot Warburton, ed., *Memoirs of Horace Walpole and his contemporaries*, London, 1851, II, pp. 176, 398f; Waterhouse 1981

Pastels

J.3864.101 Lady and her child with a golden monkey, chlk, crayons, Royal Academy 1775, no. 148