

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HOSKINS, John, Jr

?London c.1617 – p.1703

Astonishingly little is known about the son of the celebrated miniaturist John Hoskins Sr (*q.v.*), but he was evidently also a miniaturist of sufficient accomplishment for his work to be confused with his father's. The suggestion that he may have been a pastellist is said to be supported by a passage in John Aubrey's life of Robert Hooke but in fact this refers to Hoskins Sr. There is no mention of any crayon, or indeed any work by Hoskins Jr himself, in the advertisement for his 1703 sale, the catalogue for which has not survived. The theory of Hoskins Jr as pastellist depends alone on an imaginative reading of a garbled story in Vertue concerning the V&A's pastel, traditionally called Samuel Cooper's self-portrait. It may nevertheless be correct.

Much about this single work causes continued confusion. The identification of the sitter is not universally accepted: two named copies made by Lens before 1711 are persuasive rather than conclusive, and the identification of the much earlier miniature Cooper self-portrait in the Royal Collection has also been disputed. The attribution is problematic both because the pastel is not as good as we would expect an autograph work by Cooper to be; because, if taken from life (the sitter appearing not much more than say 50 years old), the pastel would be an unusually early example of soft pastel painting in England (a development of the Lely technique seen in the 1670s); and because of the mention of a certain "Jackson" as author. Since the hand may be responsible for other anonymous pastels, the question is of some significance.

The exact passage in Walpole's *Anecdotes* is as follows:

It is an anecdote little known, I believe, and too trifling but for such a work as this, that Pope's mother was sister of Cooper's wife. Lord Carleton had a portrait of Cooper in crayons, which Mrs Pope said was not very like, and which, descending to Lord Burlington, was given by his lordship to Kent. It was painted by one Jackson, a relation of Cooper, of whom I know nothing more, and who, I suppose, drew another head of Cooper, in crayons, in Queen Caroline's closet, said to be painted by himself; but I find no account of his essays in that way.

Vertue first (c.1721) noted "the head of S. Cooper limner. done by Mr Lens after a Cryon drawing by SC (sold in Mr Grahams sale) in posses Ld Bristol." It is his second account, written in 1727, which is the source of most of the confusion:

the Picture in Crayons of S. Cooper Limner. that lately belong'd to Ld Carlton. coming to Ld Burlington after his death he gave it to M^r Kent Painter

M^s Pope mother to M^r Alex: Pope was Sister to M^r Cooper wife of the famous limner. she well remembers this picture in Crayons, & when it was done (*not very like*) not by Cooper himself but by ... Jackson who painted in that way to the life. & was related to Cooper. & at his death left to him many things of drawings unfinisht, designs, pictures &c all papers written books of accounts were left in poses of his Widow.

E. Earl of Oxford

The name of Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford is appended to this note: nothing that could be the Jackson remains at Welbeck, so this is probably no more than a record of the source of the story – and further explanation of its confusions. The difficulty is that no plausible Jackson (*q.v.* for the candidates) has emerged fitting the description.

Vertue must either have soon forgotten, or no longer believed, Lord Oxford's story when, c.1739, he noted in Queen Caroline's closet in Kensington Palace "some large limnings of Cooper – his own head in Crayons." A few years later, Vertue again returns to this: on 30.V.1743 he "went to Kensington to deliver an order to the Housekeeper of the Palace ... for me to copy or draw all those heads from pictures drawn & painted by Holben... [and] S Coopers head Limner in Crayons." The "Catalogue ... taken at Queen Caroline's Command, by Mr Vertue, in September, 1743" was reproduced in George Bickham's *Delicia Britannica* (2nd ed., 1755, p. 51), before being issued in 1758 where measurements are added. No. 213 is "A head of S. Cooper the limner, in a narrow gold frame, by himself, done on crayons, 9½ in. height, 7½ in. breadth." The sketch of the display even helpfully identifies "Cooper his head". Apart from the frame, all of this corresponds with the V&A pastel. A drawing in the NPG drawing may possibly be the one made by Vertue himself, and may well be that on which the Chambers engraving was based, as some of the common details seem not to be present in the V&A pastel.

Even the purchase by Walpole raises an uncertainty: if his inscription is to be taken literally, this may have been the small English portrait by "S. White" sold with three Rosalba "crayons" directly to Walpole in the Dalton sale (lot 69, day 2), or the anonymous portrait of a gentleman sold with a landscape enamel (lot 88, day 1), rather than one of the four Cooper "miniatures" (lot 66, day 1), which were bought by a different purchaser.

According to the theory first put forward by Mary Edmond in 1978 and adopted by several later authors, most recently appearing in Cooper 2013, Vertue's 1727 reference is not to Jackson, but to "Jack's son", being Mrs Cooper's reference to her cousin, John Hoskins, Jr. It cannot be said that this reading is without its own problems. Vertue's statement that Jackson left his drawings to Cooper (implying the pastellist predeceased the sitter; the vital words "to him" was an interlinear insertion by Vertue, with a caret) is interpreted as "Jack's son" being left Cooper's drawings, although under Cooper's will Hoskins (in common with a number of other relatives) is left only 20s. "to buy him a ring"; however this picture was evidently not given to Hoskins, as it reappeared in the will of Cooper's widow, Christiana. Whether read as Jackson or Jack's son, Vertue himself appears to have disregarded the theory in a formal catalogue.

However, the most difficult physiognomic feature of the V&A pastel to reconcile with the early self-portrait of Cooper is the raised eyebrow, a feature which is present in a number

of miniatures by both Hoskins. The "Jack's son" theory would also open the possibility of a slightly later date for the pastel, as perhaps a posthumous copy from a lost self-portrait, which would fit more comfortably with the technique. It would also go some way to explain why this continued to be called Cooper's self-portrait when it was made by another artist.

Bibliography

Cooper 1974; Cooper 2013; Robert Davies, *Pope: additional facts concerning his maternal ancestry*, London, 1858, p. 18; Mary Edmond, "Limners and picture makers", *Walpole Society*, XLVII, 1978–80, p. 112; Mary Edmond, "Samuel Cooper, Yorkshireman – and recusant?", *Burlington magazine*, CXXVII, 1985, pp. 83–85ff; Foskett 1974; Norgate 1997, pp. 101, 195; Oxford DNB, *s.v.* Cooper, Hoskins; Richard Stephens, "The Hoskins family of limners", *British art journal*, XIX/3, 2018, pp. 78f; Vertue, *passim*; Walpole 1849, II, pp. 532f

Pastels

J.4048.101 Samuel COOPER (1609–1672), miniaturist, pstl/ppr, 24.5x19.4, inscr. *verso* "Samuel Cooper...from the royal collection at Kensington Palace and given to Mr Dalton (at whose auction it was bought in 1791) by King George 3. Hor. Walpole" (London, V&A, inv. Dyce 91. [?Mrs Samuel Cooper, née Christiana Turner (1623–1693); legs: John Hoskins; Hoskins sale, .III.1703.] Richard Graham; sale, London, Thomas Pelletier, 6.III.1712, Lot 48, "Sam. Cooper. His own head", crayons, £4/6/-; Henry Boyle, [1st Baron] Carleton [(1669–1725)]; desc.: [his nephew, Richard Boyle, 3rd] Earl of Burlington [(1695–1753) 1725]; don: [William] Kent c.1725. George II/Queen Caroline, 1739–43; George III; don: Richard Dalton, antiquarian and surveyor of the King's Pictures; London, Christie's, 9–11.IV.1791, [?9.IV.1791, Lot 66 (four large miniatures by Cooper), £1/8/-; Godard, ?9.IV.1791, Lot 88 (a portrait of a gentleman and a landscape enamel, £2/2/-; Walpole); or ?11.IV.1791, Lot 69 part, a small English portrait by S. White, with three heads in crayon by Rosalba, £1/11/-; Walpole)]; Horace Walpole, Strawberry Hill; desc.: Earl Waldegrave; Strawberry Hill, George Robins, 25.IV.1842 & seq., day 18, no. 166 n.r., 19s.; Strong, Bristol. Rev. Alexander Dyce (1798–1869); legs 1869). Exh.: New Haven 2009, no. 201, fig. 351; Cooper 2013, no. 67, attr. John Hoskins Jr. Lit.: George Bickham, *Delicia Britannica*, 2nd ed., 1755, p. 51, no. 213; Vertue 1755, p. 31, no. 213; Walpole 1784, p. 512 n.r., additions; Graham Reynolds, "A miniature self-portrait by Thomas Flatman" *Burlington magazine*, LXXXIX/528, .I.II.1947, p. 67n.r.; Piper 1963, p. 82, as by Jackson; Foskett 1974, fig. 59; Graham Reynolds, rev. of Foskett 1974, *Burlington magazine*, CXVI/855, .VI.1974, p. 340, ??Cooper; Reynolds 1999, p. 129 n.r. Attr. φαδθ



- ~cop. Bernard Lens, miniature (*olim* Ickworth)
~cop. Bernard Lens, miniature (Welbeck). Lit.:
Adlam 2013, p. 39 repr.; Cooper 2013, fig. 36
~cop., chlk, wash, 15.9x11.7, inscr. GV
(London, NPG 2891). Lit.: Cooper 2013, fig.
37
~grav. Thomas Chambers (c.1724–?1789), for
Anecdotes of painting in England, 1782