

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HALPIN, John Edmond

Dublin 1764 – p.1804

The son of the Dublin engraver Patrick Halpin, John Edmond (also Edmund; Halpen etc.) was a miniaturist. He was taught by Robert West and J. J. Barralet at the Dublin Society schools, and he exhibited a pastel as an amateur in the Society of Artists in Ireland in 1780 before moving to London for further training. He was married on 29.VII.1794, at St Marylebone, to a Rebecca Woodriff (1770–1845) of Deptford. Encouraged by Macklin, he had ambitions to be an actor. He appeared on stage in Dublin and London (Drury Lane, 1796), to little applause, before deciding to return to painting, and leaving London.

It has been assumed hitherto that he returned to Ireland. There he has been confused with two different Dublin printers called John Halpin, one at Drogheda Street (the 43 year lease was taken in 1762, and he was still there on 14.II.1797 when he was summoned to the Irish parliament to answer libel charges in a pamphlet he printed), the other at New Sackville Street, where died in 1810, survived by the wife, née Jane Stamer, whom he married in 1786. Neither can be the artist.

In fact Halpin went to Paris, and had been there for some nine months when war against England resumed in 1804, requiring him to apply for permission to continue his work from the minister of the interior, which he did with a letter of recommendation (dated 1 Nivôse an 12, or 1.I.1804) from Denon, directeur général du musée Napoléon, who attested that Halpin had been copying works there. Moreover, Denon added, he had come with recommendations from the houses of Hervey and Devonshire.

His widow died in Portsea Island, Hampshire; her will proved 2.VI.1845.

Bibliography

Breeze 1985; baron de Girardot, "Lettres...relatives à des artistes anglais", *Archives de l'art français*, 1872, pp. 446f; Highfill & al. 1982, VII, p. 53; *Lettre de la miniature*, 14, .IX.2012, p. 8

Pastels

J.3738.101 The traveller and satyr, from Croxall's *Æsop*, crayons, a/r West, Dublin 1780, no. 205