

**LONSDALE, Countess of, née  
Lady Mary Stuart**

London 1740 – Fulham 1824

Daughter of the prime minister, John, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute, in 1761 she married Sir James Lowther, Bt (1736–1802). Created 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Lonsdale in 1784, he was described as “a man of immense wealth and political influence...whose violence, arrogance, despotism, and caprice rose almost to the point of madness.” There were no children.

Lady Lonsdale was an accomplished amateur artist (her sister, Countess of Portarlington, *q.v.*, was also a pastellist). Four of her topographical drawings, in pencil, pen and ink and watercolour, are reproduced in Russell 2004 (figs. 14–17). A pastel self-portrait, said to date from c.1765, may be a version of a work sold as by Liotard (who portrayed her brother); it is reminiscent of the manner of Katherine Read (who portrayed her mother), and is similar to a pastel by Mary Black (*q.v.*). The two works apparently descended by different nieces of the artist. It is possible that the oval version was derived from the rectangular, or vice versa, and that one was by her teacher; but this cannot be resolved until both are compared.

Lady Lonsdale was the subject of a lost portrait by Hamilton, in 1771, while still Lady Mary Lowther.



**Bibliography**

W. E. Lecky, *A history of England in the eighteenth century*, 1890, p. 125; Russell 2004; Steegman 1962, p. 155

GENEALOGIES [Stuart](#)

**Pastels**

J.4966.101 SELF-PORTRAIT, in a flowered brocade dress with blue ribbons, holding a portecrayon, pstl, 76x64 ov., c.1765 ([?the sitter's niece, Lady Congleton, née Lady Caroline Dawson-Damer; desc.]: Col. Henry Somerset Parnell Hopkinson (1899– ), Llanvihangel Court, Abergavenny, 1957). Lit.: Steegman 1962, p. 155 n.r.

J.4966.102 ~?version, pstl/ppr, 80x65, inscr. √ “Countess of Lonsdale” ([?the sitter's niece, Lady Ranfurly, née Mary Juliana Stuart; desc.]: Earl of Ranfurly; London, Christie's, 21.VI.1929, Lot 80 repr., as Liotard, 155 gns; Gaskell; Milnes Gaskell family of Thornes House, Wakefield; desc.: London, Bonhams Knightsbridge, 29.IV.2015, Lot 264 repr., attr., £1875). Exh.: Heaton Hall, Manchester City Art Galleries. Lit.: Jeffares 2006, p. 574Biii; R&L R21, fig. 818 [new attr., ?] Φανσ