

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MANWARING, Robert

fl. London 1761–68

According to an advertisement in the *Public advertiser*, 6.IX.1766 (and repeated, e.g., in the *Daily advertiser*, 22.XII.1767 and *Gazetteer*, 3.III.1768), Manwaring was a drawing master and engraver and owned a map and print warehouse at 16 Great Russell Street. Here (and in the homes of the nobility and gentry) he taught drawing “in all its different branches”, including in crayons.

Reference sources identify him with the Robert Manwaring who was a cabinet maker and designer in the style of Chippendale, issuing the *Cabinet and chair-maker's real friend and companion* in 1765 and a *Chair maker's guide* the following year. The author calls himself a cabinet-maker, and the preface is dated from the Haymarket which secondary sources cite as his place of business as a cabinet-maker, but no independent confirmation is obvious. He or a homonym is shown in the Westminster rate books from 1747 on, first at Royal Ward, next the church over the sewer, in St Clement Danes, and later at various addresses in Holborn. (He may have been the Robert Manwaring acquitted at the Old Bailey in 1755 of receiving four pounds of brass nails, called bullins, stolen by Edward Dister and James Scarbrough.)

Although Manwaring himself designed many of the plates for these books, the plates were engraved by others. Three rather different prints are known: a reproduction of Holbein's Cromwell and portraits of two clergymen; they are of limited skill and might be the work of an amateur. While the professions of engraver and upholsterer are different, Manwaring may have made the transition: the *Register of duties paid for apprentices' indentures* records that, on 12.VI.1767, the “engraver” Robt Manwaring of St Andrew's, Holborn took on William Carrington (possibly the son baptised at St Andrew's Holborn 22.IV.1753 to Henry and Ann, née White, of Union Court; they had married in 1749) as an apprentice for 7 years for a premium of £30. Two years previously, on 19.II.1765, Robert Manwaring of the parish of St James, Clerkenwell married an Ann Carrington of St Andrew's, Holborn; among the witnesses was an Isaac Manwaring who had previously witnessed the marriage of Robert to Hester Nichols at St Martin-in-the-Fields on 30.IV.1761. Isaac, presumably a relation, was a sawmaker and inventor from Clerkenwell; his wife, Jemima Phillips, also witnessed the 1761 marriage. A son, Robert, was christened there on 5.VII.1767 (his parents' address being Union Court), and presumably was the homonym buried on 12.X.1767; Manwaring's press advertisements ceased in early 1768.

Bibliography

Alexander 2021; Bénézit