

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

MOLIS de Saint-Laurent, Eléonore-Léger, chevalier de

Toulouse 1761–p.1839

Also Mollis. Pupil of Suau from 1782; student at the École des ponts et chaussées in 1783; ingénieur des ponts & chaussées. He exhibited drawings in chalk and ink, miniatures and paintings in the Salons at Toulouse between 1782 and 1790. His final submission was a carte topographique. In 1787–88 he was recorded as a member of the masonic lodge *Uranie*. It appears that he initially adopted Revolutionary principles and took part in the storming of the Bastille, joining the Garde nationale. Disillusioned, he returned to Toulouse and, being talented in music as well as painting, he joined a circle whose lifestyle the Jacobins denounced. He was arrested and imprisoned for seven months notwithstanding his plea that he was the son of a poor man from the Rouergue with 22 children, and had never obtained the proofs of nobility with which he was charged. The “ci-devant noble” was also described as “fils d’un homme de lettres”, presumably the Molis aîné who exhibited at the same salons. He was provisionally released the following year (1793), despite being “d’un caractère vif, aristocrate dans toutes les circonstances tenant beaucoup à la cidevant noblesse”, and definitively freed 25.1.1795. He appears as an engineer in the membership lists of the Société d’agriculture de Toulouse in 1839.

Bibliography

Baron R. de Bouglon, *Les Reclus de Toulouse sous la Terreur*, Toulouse, 1893–95, I, p. 88; II, p. 119; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Sanchez 2004

Pastels

J.5414.101 Tête de Vierge, pstl a/r Subleyras, Salon de Toulouse 1785, no. 86 (M. Gilede fils 1785)