

PLOWMAN, Frederick Prussia

Dublin 1759–1820

Portraitist; worked in Dublin and Limerick. He first appeared in 1773 when he sent copies after Rosalba (medium unknown, but quite possibly pastel) to the exhibition in George's Lane, Dublin organised by a group of artists in competition with the Society of Artists of Ireland. He was then at the Dublin Society school, and his address was given as 1 Winetavern Street. A Frederic Plowman was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools on 6.X.1780, aged "21 next Nov", the only evidence of his birth, but near enough the 27.X.1756 on which a Frederick Plowman was baptised at St John's, Dublin, to Joseph and Jane, née Dobbins (however there was at least one homonym, a woollen draper). In 1781 he presented to the Dublin Society several copies of paintings executed under the supervision of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Around 1808 he visited Limerick, painting several portraits and religious pieces for the Franciscan church in Henry Street. He died at the Crescent, Marino, Dublin. An oil portrait in the manner of Hugh Douglas Hamilton is the only surviving work. An oil portrait in the manner of Hugh Douglas Hamilton or Anna Tonelli is the only surviving work signed work.

Although Strickland says he worked in crayons, there is no firm record of his use of the medium, although an unsigned pastel has been attributed to him on the basis of a signed copy of it he made in oil (his only surviving work), with some additions which might suggest it was the original. The pastel, which seems of higher quality, is more likely to be by either Hugh Douglas Hamilton or Anna Tonelli. The sitter appears to have been the wife of Logan Henderson, a chemist, surveyor and engineer who worked with Watt and Boulton until 1783 and died in Dublin in 1797; apparently he lived with a lady referred to as "Miss Peggy" (Uglow 2002, p. 303) whom he subsequently married in London in 1789.

Bibliography

Bénézit; Henry F. Berry, *A history of the Royal Dublin Society*, London, 1915, p. 111; Maurice Lenihan, *A history of Limerick*, Dublin, 1866, p. 633; McGuire 1939, p. 15; Myrone 2022; Strickland 1913; Michael Wynne, "Frederick Prussia Plowman: A Dublin painter of the late-18th century", *Irish arts review yearbook*, XVII, 2001, pp. 34–36; Whistler 2009, p. 188

Pastels

Mrs Logan HENDERSON (∞ London 1789), née Margaret Kertland, pnt., 31x25 ov., s *verso* "Fred. Plowman pin." (Sweden, 24.X.1996. Dr Michael Wynne; Dublin, Adams, 14.IX.2005, Lot 30). Lit.: Wynne 2001, repr.

J.596.051 ~version, pstl, 24x19 ov. (Castlecomer, Fonsie Mealy, 28–29.V.2024, Lot 821 repr., est. €1000–1500) [Attr.; cf. Hamilton or Tonelli] φ?βv



J.596.101 Six heads, m/u, a/r Carriera, Dublin 1773a