

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

PYM, John Barton

London 1775 – Gibraltar 1814

“B. Pym” exhibited miniatures and portraits in unspecified media at the Royal Academy 1793–1805, from King Street, Newman Street and Dover Street. Prints after Reynolds, Samuel James Arnold, James Ward and Samuel de Wilde are known. He was evidently the “Barton Pym alias Chosham” [*recte* Cosham] who was apprenticed as an engraver to John Raphael Smith (*q.v.*), on 2.I.1790, for 7 years at a premium of 100 guineas. He is likely to have been born c.1775. He has been identified as the illegitimate son of William Pym, a surgeon of Edmonton and St Paul’s Churchyard, London, by his servant Ann Cosham.

On 13.I.1798 a Mary Hill of the parish of St Marylebone testified that she was expecting an illegitimate child by “Barton Pym a Miniature Painter of No. 19 Exeter Street Brompton”; Pym followed the procedures under the 1575 bastardy act (18 Elizabeth C.3) to indemnify the parish from the resulting costs (Middlesex sessions, London Metropolitan Archives, MJ/SP/1798/02).

Pym attracted the notice of General Sir John Doyle, who gave him a commission as ensign in the 67th Foot in 1806 and arranged for his admission the following year to his masonic lodge on Guernsey. He later transferred to the 87th (1807) and then the 60th Regiment, rising to be captain by 1813. His drawing of the French imperial standard captured at Barrosa in 1811 was engraved by Cardon. The diplomat Francis James Jackson sat to him in 1811. He was commissioned to make a miniature of Wellington in Cadiz in .XII.1812. He served in the Peninsular campaign, and died of malaria in 1814. He was unmarried.

The basis of the attribution to B. Pym of a pastel in the 1927 sale is unstated.

Bibliography

Alexander 2021; Lewis Butler, *Annals of the King’s Royal Rifle Corps*, London, 1923, II, p. 206; Foskett 1987; Ed Pope History blog, “3 wives, 3 husbands living”, 25.VIII.2014

Pastels

J.6048.101 Young boy, pstl, 24x19 (Xavier Haas; New York, Anderson, 13–14.I.1927, Lot 206 n.r.)