

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

RAMAGE, John

Dublin 1748 – Montréal 1802

Miniaturist and goldsmith, and occasional pastellist. Pupil at the Dublin Society school in 1763; he worked in Halifax (1772–74 and 1776), Boston (1775), where he joined the Loyal Irish Volunteers. Soon after, to avoid the revolution, he moved to Canada. He returned to New York two years later, drawing his clientele from both the British and loyalist forces. Dunlap wrote disapprovingly of his “scarlet coat with mother-of-pearl buttons – a white silk waistcoat embroidered with colored flowers.” He was also accused of fast living, again fleeing to Montréal (from 1794) as a result of financial and marital difficulties. Illness and a long series of misfortunes were catalogued in an application in 1802 for a Loyalist land grant, but he died soon after. Several dozen miniatures are known, each with a gold frame by the artist. Sherman’s attribution to him of a pastel of Amos Doolittle (*v.* American sch.) seems speculative.

Bibliography

Bedyński & Hill 2002; Bénézit; Bolton 1923; Dunlap 1918, I, p. 265ff; Harper 1977; Frederic Fairchild Sherman, *Early American portraiture*, 1972, p. 50; Strickland 1913

Pastels

J.6088.101 George WASHINGTON, pstl, 37x30.5, sd “J. Ramage, March 2d, 1789” (Robert Fridenberg, New York, 1923). Lit.: Bolton 1923, p. 57 n.r.