

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

WORSDALE, James

c.1692 – London 1767

Also Worsdall; portraitist, actor and rake. Of humble origin he was trained in Kneller's studio. He moved to Dublin in 1735, became an actor and playwright, and was instrumental in forming the Hellfire Clubs in Dublin and Limerick. He returned to London around 1744. Although not known to have employed pastel, a pastel at Felbrigg inscribed "JW 1754" is traditionally attributed to him, although an alternative attribution to James Wills (*q.v.*) has plausibly been suggested. (The curious light reflections in the hair seem very similar to those found in Worsdale paintings (e.g. Earl of Harrington, London, NPG), and the absence of a known body of pastels by both artists makes the decision more difficult.)

Bibliography

Bénézit; Oxford DNB; Waterhouse 1981

Pastels

Mrs William WINDHAM, pstl, sd "JW 1754"
(Felbrigg Hall, National Trust. Ketton-Cremer), *v.*
Wills