

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

WEDDELL, Mrs William, née Elizabeth Ramsden

1749 – London 1831

The daughter of Sir John Ramsden, Bt, MP, of Byram, Yorkshire, and his wife, née Elizabeth Lowther, she was the half-sister of Lady Rockingham. In 1771 she married William Weddell (1736–1792), MP, of Newby, Yorkshire. They also lived at 6 Upper Brook Street in London. They had no children, and Weddell's heir was Thomas Robinson, Lord Grantham. Mrs Weddell was also a friend of Mary Hoare (*q.v.*) and of Lady Mary Yorke (Lady Grantham), who wrote to her mother from Newby (29.IX.1780):

Miss Black, the Drawings Mistress, who was come down to instruct Mrs W[eddell] in Oil painting which she has lately begun, having drawn before in Chalks & I should think well, by some heads I saw her doing.

In 1813 Maria Edgeworth reported to her brother a visit, presumably to Upper Brook Street:

Mrs Weddell is a perfectly well-bred, most agreeable old lady, sister to Lady Rockingham, who lived in the Sir Joshua Reynolds set: tells anecdotes of Burke, Fox, and Windham – magnificent house – fine pictures. We spoke of having just seen the exhibition of Sir Joshua Reynolds's pictures. "Perhaps if you are fond of paintings you would take the trouble of walking into the next room, and I will show you what gives me a particular interest in Sir Joshua Reynolds's pictures." Large folding doors opened – large room full of admirable copies from Sir Joshua Reynolds in crayons, done by Mrs Weddell herself. My mother says they are quite astonishing. Her conversation, as good as her painting, passed through many books lightly with touch-and-go ease.

Her obituary confirmed her "unbounded benevolence".

The Reynolds portrait which she copied was engraved by John Raphael Smith in 1783; it may have been the portrait lent by Lady Thomond to the Reynolds exhibition at the British Institution in May 1813. It is unclear when Mrs Weddell started to work in pastel: Mrs Delany mentions her without referring to her accomplishment.

Bibliography

Maria Edgeworth, letter to C. Sneyd Edgeworth, 1.v.1813; *Drawing from the Past: William Weddell and the Transformation of Newby Hall*, exh. cat., Leeds Museum and Galleries, 2004; obituary in *Metropolitan magazine*, .IX.1831, p. 32; Sloane 2000, p. 176

Pastels

J.784.101 Hon. Mrs Henry Fitzroy STANHOPE (∞ c.1783), née Elizabeth Falconer, in white, resting her head on her right hand, half length, pstl, 65x53 (2 Carlton House Terrace 1906). Lit.: Lord Hawkesbury, *Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society*, XIII/1, 1906, p. 43, no. 34 n.r., a/r Reynolds pnt., c.1783, Mannings 2000, no. 1699