

Lundberg, *Simon Hurtrelle*

NEIL JEFFARES



[Gustaf Lundberg](#)

Simon HURTRELLE (1704–p.1755)

Pastel on blue paper, 69.5x53 cm

c.1725 [Zoomify](#)

Private collection

PROVENANCE: Château de Vergières, Baille Beauvois, 25–26 November 2001, Lot 512, repr., as *École française du XVIII^e, Portrait d'homme*

LITERATURE: Jeffares 2006, p. 362 repr.; Merit Laine & Carolina Brown, *Gustaf Lundberg 1695–1786. En porträttmålare och hans tid*, Stockholm, 2006, p. 77, pl. 7 repr.; Robert Oresko, review of *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*, *The Art Newspaper*, February 2007, p. 40 repr.; *Dictionary of pastellists* online, [J.503.1379](#)

ICONOGRAPHY: Autoportrait, “Simon Hurtrelle Notaire à Paris”, engraving, 9.5x9.0 cm, BnF Ad. 8 rés. and N2. Inscribed “Se se ipsum sculp.”, lower right, and bearing the quatrain: “L’Amour propre n’eut point de part à cet ouvrage;/Ne m’en soupçonnés pas, J’occupay mes loisirs;/Né dans le sein des Arts, c’est ainsi qu’à tout âge/Je sceus me procurer de tranquilles plaisir.” Lit: Duplessis 22653; Le Blanc, II, p. 407; *Inventaire du fonds français*, XI, p. 546

GENEALOGY: [Hurtrelle](#)

THE ATTRIBUTION TO Lundberg of this anonymous portrait of an unknown man was first suggested by the author in 2001.¹ The costume is similar to Vivien’s portrait of a man (often identified incorrectly as Samuel Bernard) in the Getty museum, dated around 1725.² An even closer parallel is with Lundberg’s 1729 portrait of his patron comte de Tessin, in baron Leijonhufvud’s collection (fig. 1); this shows the sitter at about the same date wearing an almost identical costume. Another parallel is with Lundberg’s portrait of the artist Guillaume-Thomas-Raphael Taraval (1701–1750) in the Institut Tessin, Paris. Taraval was one of a number of artists brought over from France by Tessin’s father the architect Nicodème Tessin (1654–1728), who was responsible for rebuilding the royal palace at Stockholm after the fire of 1697.

Technically, the pastel shows a relatively light application of chalk with a smooth finish,

¹ It was confirmed by Merit Laine, *de visu*, and, on the basis of a photograph, by Magnus Olausson of the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm in 2003.

² Aileen Ribeiro (private communication, 3 January 2002) confirms that the costume can be dated to the late 1720s; it could be French or Swedish.



Figure 1

except where the artist has used a brush to apply some of the white and pink pigments to the chemise and tie. Parts of the white seem to be gouache or ground pastel mixed with fluid and applied with a brush. The working of the fabric is quite broad, again as with the Tessin portrait, but the state of preservation is better, leaving a striking three-dimensional effect. The treatment of the wig is unusual, appearing to be built up over a light brown wash; this is found not only in the portrait of Tessin, but also in other pastels by Lundberg.

The backing board bears an inscription “Hurel ou Hurtrelle?”, possibly a later transcription of an earlier label, now lost. The Hurel family were Parisian notaries: Antoine Hurel (AN MC, étude I, in practice 1692–1728) would have been too old, while his son Jean-Baptiste Hurel (1699–1758; étude L, in practice 1728–42, and a conseiller au Châtelet in 1751) could be a candidate. However the sitter is here identified as Simon Hurtrel, Hurterelle, Hurtrèle or, *recte*, Hurtrelle (1704–p.1755), also

a notary,³ and son of a sculptor. The confusion with Hurel may have arisen through his wife, Anne-Élisabeth Cochepin, sister of the Marie-Marthe Cochepin who was married to Jean-Baptiste Hurel in 1728. In the next generation, our sitter’s son Marie-Simon-Nicolas Hurtrelle, administrateur des domaines du roi, married Angélique-Adélaïde Hurel, his cousin once removed, in 1783.⁴ The close links between these families were evident from the presence of more than 15 male Hurels at that wedding. The Hurel and Cochepin families were also prominent freemasons.⁵

Hurtrelle’s father, also Simon Hurtrelle (1648–1724), was an important sculptor during the reign of Louis XIV⁶ working initially in Rome until 1682, when he returned with vases for Versailles. In 1686 he married Marie-Anne Leclerc, by whom he had at least five children, of whom Marie-Anne (born 1689) was the eldest; her godfather was the sculptor Martin Desjardins. The witnesses to Hurtrelle’s marriage were the sculptors Pierre Mazeline (1632–1708)⁷ and Noël Jouvenet, and the following year the three bought a plot of land in the rue de Bourbon from Hardouin-Mansart. With Mazeline, Hurtrelle executed the tomb of Michel Le Tellier at Saint-Gervais. Hurtrelle was *agrégé* by the Académie royale in 1687, *reçu* three years later and adjoint à professeur in 1704. He acquired the office of conseiller et procureur du roi des trésoriers de France au bureau des



Figure 2

³ He was apparently unrelated to the Hurels. The fact that these two different names were recorded suggests that the inscription was made by someone who was unsure of the exact name, but knew that the subject was a notary. For an account of the workings of this Paris notary, see Philip T. Hoffman, Gilles Postel-Vinay, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, *Priceless markets: the political economy of credit in Paris, 1660–1870*, Chicago, 2000. For biographical details (such as are known), see Souchal, *op. cit.*; Jal; Thieme & Becker; *Dictionnaire de biographie française*, article by H. Blémont; Marcel Roux, Edmond Pognon, Yves Bruand & Michèle Hébert, *Bibliothèque nationale, inventaire du fonds français, graveurs du XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, 1930.

⁴ Dispenses de consanguinité were obtained: AN Z1^o 194^A, 3 February 1783.

⁵ See Irène Diet, “Pour une compréhension élargie de la sociabilité maçonnique à Paris à la fin du XVIII^e siècle”, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 1990, 283/1, pp. 31–48.

⁶ See François Souchal, *French sculptors – the reign of Louis XIV*, Paris, 1981, II, pp. 150ff.

⁷ A portrait of Hurtrelle’s partner, Mazeline, was the *morceau de réception* of Alexis-Simon Belle in 1703; it disappeared subsequently.

finances de la généralité de Moulins from his brother-in-law Jean Leclerc in 1708; this conferred nobility on him and his descendants. In 1716 he left Paris for Niort, where he remained virtually until his death some eight years later. Among his most important works were the equestrian statue of Louis XIV (Montpellier; destroyed during the revolution) and a marble statue of *Saturne dévorant l'un de ses enfants* in the Louvre (fig. 2). A portrait of him in front of the former, by Claude-Guy Hallé, executed around 1695–1700, is in Versailles.⁸

There is considerable confusion over the sculptor's three sons, all called Simon, the elder two dying in infancy. The first Simon was born on 5 April 1692; his birth certificate was signed by his father and Mazeline, but unlike his sister, his godparent was a relative, Jeanne Hurtrelle (Jal). Simon-Hyacinthe (1696–1701) also died young. The youngest Simon, born c.1704 (as confirmed by his age in later documents), became a notary at the Châtelet in Paris (étude LXVII, in practice 1734–55 from rue de la Verrerie, près les Juges-Consuls).

One of the documents he drew up was the settlement dated 17 May 1738 by the prince de Grimberghen (*q.v.*) on his son-in-law, the duc de Montfort, of capital of 197,268 livres immediately prior to his remarriage, with Henriette d'Egmont-Pignatelli. Another minor role was played by Hurtrelle in the curious dispute over Balechou's print of Stanisław Leszczyński involving an evaluation by Mariette.⁹ Other documents suggest that Hurtrelle's conduct of his business was less than exemplary: a decision of 20 July 1743 concerned a suit brought by a sieur Duvivier because Hurtrelle had delayed making official copies of an important document.¹⁰

Parisian notaries' activities extended beyond the recording of their clients' legal contracts into a range of banking activities, using their knowledge of their clients' cash and collateral positions to match up borrowers and lenders within their études (and occasionally from outside) while circumventing the traditional restrictions on money lending using the instruments of obligation, *rente perpétuel* and *rente viagère*. In Hurtrelle's case, his activities broadened into principal transactions, taking short-term deposits from his clients (as much as 335,000 livres in 1735, his first full year in business) and investing his own funds in illiquid financial assets such as loans to purchase offices. Not surprisingly, this ended up with bankruptcy: quite suddenly, in 1755; documents up to 1 October in that year are signed as normal, but those dated the following day were left unsigned. The papers from the resulting enquiry (AN Y 18581) provide us with a rare level of detail into Hurtrelle's practices which would normally have escaped attention (since own-account dealings were illegal, they were not recorded in the notaries' archives). In 1750, for example, Hurtrelle received 15,000 livres from the sisters of the Sainte-Croix at Saint-Quentin which he sat on for several months before investing in government bonds. We know also from documents in the Archives nationales¹¹ (dealing with claims from creditors) that Hurtrelle was married to an Anne-Élisabeth Cochepin, from whom he was separated in 1761, when both were still living.

Hurtrelle *le jeune* was also an amateur draughtsman and engraver, of whose work only two examples are known. An engraving (fig. 3) of Hallé's portrait of his father¹² is signed "Hurtrelle filius", after "Hâlé" and "Putois" (another sculptor); the original painting was in fact presented to the Académie by Hurtrelle in 1752 under circumstances that are



Figure 3

⁸ Versailles, MV 5867; on deposit with the Louvre since 1921. See Nicole Wilk-Brocard, *Une dynastie: les Hallé*, Paris, 1995 p. 272f, no. C14; and François Souchal, *French sculptors of the 17th and 18th centuries*, London, 1993, IV, p. 124 reproduced.

⁹ See J.-J. Guiffrey, "Le graveur Baléchou et le portrait du roi de Pologne", *Archives de l'art français*, IX, 1882, pp. 142–210.

¹⁰ Jean-Baptiste Denisart & al., *Collection de décisions nouvelles et de notions relatives à la jurisprudence*, Paris, 1786, p. 68.

¹¹ AN MC, LXXXVII/1064, 30 September 1761; LXXXVI/692, 31 December 1761.

¹² "Simon Hurtrelle Esr^r Conser^r Procureur/du Roy au Bur^r des fin^{es} de Moulins et Professeur/à l'Académie Royale de Sculpture", 0.095x0.090, BnF Ad. 8 rés. and N2. Lit.: Duplessis 22654; Le Blanc, II, p. 406, no. 1; *Inventaire du Fonds français*, XI, p. 545; Wilk-Brocard, *op. cit.*, p. 273 reproduced; Souchal, *op. cit.*, reproduced.

not yet clear.¹³ What happened to Hurtrelle after his bankruptcy is also not known at present.

The other print is an engraving of his own portrait (fig. 4), set in the same oval surrounded by palm branches resting on a desk with drawers on either side (perhaps an allusion to his profession), and underneath an inscription within the same cartouche. Signed “Se se ipsum sculp.” [sic], the phrase suggesting that the author wanted to identify himself as the draughtsman as well as the subject, it bears the quatrain:

L'Amour propre n'eut point de part à cet ouvrage;
Ne m'en soupçonnés pas, J'occupay mes loisirs:
Né dans le sein des Arts, c'est ainsi qu'à tout âge
Je sceus me procurer de tranquilles plaisir.

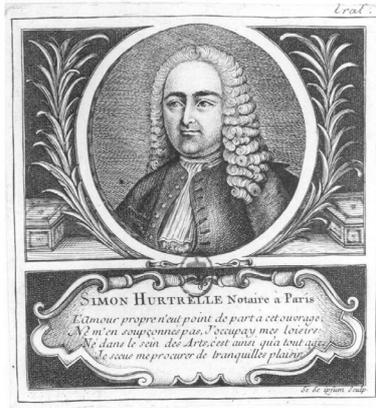


Figure 4

The inscription on the print implies a date of execution no earlier than 1733, when Hurtrelle became a notary, evidently some years later than the Lundberg; its subject, “en buste de trois quarts à gauche, en perruque et la veste ouverte sur un rabat de notaire”, has the same remarkable eyebrows, domed forehead, long straight nose and slightly dimpled chin as our sitter, whose age at the likely time of execution of the pastel, combined with his interests and the milieu in which he was brought up (“né dans le sein des Arts”), all provide convincing confirmation that he is Simon Hurtrelle.

¹³ “M. Hurtrelle, Notaire, fait présent à l’Académie du portrait de son père. – M. Slodtz, Adjoint, a dit à l’assemblée que M. Hurtrelle, Notaire à Paris, l’avoit prié d’offrir de sa part à l’Académie le portrait de feu M. son père, Sculpteur et Adjoint à Professeur, peint par feu M. Hallé, Recteur et Ancien Directeur. Ce présent a été fort agréable à la Compagnie, qui a chargé M. Slodtz d’en remercier M. Hurtrelle au nom de l’Académie, laquelle a aussi nommé M. Silvestre et le Secrétaire pour aller visiter M. Coyvel.” *Procès-verbaux de l’Académie royale*, ed. Anatole de Montaiglon, Paris, 1885, VI, p. 322.