CHEVALIER, Jean Godart, dit

Paris 1704–15.XII.1782

When the painter Jean Raoux died, according to Dezallier d'Argenville, he left "environ 40,000 livres à ses nièces de Montpellier, & ses études à ses élèves, dont les sieurs Chevalier & Mondidier sont les plus connus". Both are forgetten today, although Chevalier survives in the extensive lists of works (mostly portraits, possibly all in oil) he exhibited at the Salon de l'Académie de Saint-Luc. However the numerous homonyms have created extensive confusions that need to be unravelled with some care and greater length than the couple of pastels attributed to him would normally demand.

From the livrets, where he is listed without forename, and the *Liste de l'Académie de Saint-Luc* (presumably the 1764 edition) cited Guiffrey 1915, p. 223 (where he is given the forenames Jean-Godart, almost correctly, although it is not clear from what source: the portraitist's forename in prints etc. is simply Jean, but *v. infra*) Chevalier (or Chevallier), the pupil of Raoux, was *reçu* by the Académie de Saint-Luc, 17.I.1732, rue du Four-Saint-Germain, à l'hôtel impérial, an address which he maintained throughout his career until his final appearance, when he is listed as a history painter at this same address in the *Almanach des peintres*, 1776–77. This Chevalier appeared at all seven of the salons de l'Académie de Saint-Luc: no rank is given in 1751, but by 1752 he was already described as "ancien adjoint à professeur", and he never progressed beyond this rank. Between 1751 and 1774, he exhibited numerous portraits – some 20 pictures were sent to the Salon de Saint-Luc in 1752, including large group portraits and still lifes, but in none of the entries is the medium specified. Many of these were engraved by Gaillard, Aveline, Petit and Wille (the earliest of these being dated 1744); some of the plates identify the artist as Jean Chevalier, and were published and sold by Chevalier himself. "Jean Chevallier, peintre, demeurant rue du Four" was a witness at the marriage of the draughtsman and engraver Charles-Dominique-Joseph Eisen at Saint-Séverin, 20.IX.1745.

Guiffrey noted another Jean-Godart Chevalier, peintre, reçu 1.II.1752, also from the same address; he cannot however have been the pupil of Raoux. The explanation, with Chevalier's dates, first published here in 2022, is found in several documents. One, in the registre de tutelles of 2.VII.1765 (for André-Claude La Cour, AN Y4878B), was co-signed by Chevalier and his son Pierre-Jean, then living with his father in the rue du Four. A notoriété dated 20.II.1783 (AN MC/ET/XIX/857): lodged by the painter's son and sole heir, Pierre-Jean Godart dit Chevalier, a peintre en miniature then residing in Arras (evidently Guiffrey's homonym), concerning the uninventoried estate of his father "Jean Godart dit Chevalier, ancien maitre Peintre à Paris", who had died in the Hôpital des Incurables, 15.XII.1782. A death certificate, naming him solely as Jean Godart, was issued by the Incurables, giving his age at death as 68. The notoriété was required so that the son could collect arrears etc. of rentes viagères and tontines de l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris.

The portraitist's family name was therefore Godart; it is quite unclear why a pseudonym was adopted, or why he dropped the family name. He seems to have preferred the form Chevallier in most of these documents.

It is (if the age at death was slightly inaccurate) possible that he was the Jean Chevalier apprenticed to Pierre Lemaire, maître peintre, for 5 years for a premium of 200 livres (AN MC/XXVIII/108, 1.IX.1710). In 1734 Lemaire's son Jean-Claude Lemaire (*q.v.*) lodged an opposition at Raoux's death "pour sureté et avoir payement de la somme de 2740 livres pour ouvrages faits en les tableaux dud. Deffunt s. Raoux, depuis et compris 1717 jusques et compris l'année 1733.

On 19.II.1729 at Saint-Sulpice, Jean Godard married Catherine-Madeleine Burel (Fonds Andriveau); she was evidently the "Catherine Madeleine Burelle épouse de Jean Chevalier, peintre", marraine at the baptism of a daughter to Johann Georg Wille, graveur, at Saint-André-des-Arts, 8.VII.1749 (Fonds Laborde).

In 1745 Chevalier was commissioned, no doubt by the subject, to copy Nattier's pastel of Maupeou which the premier président never collected from the artist. Evidently several versions were made: a large one in oil, exhibited in 1753 but now lost, was engraved by Petit without reference to the original, while a pastel version has survived (it was exhibited in the *Cent pastels* exhibition of 1908). Thus the Jean Chevalier of the engravings is the Jean-Godard Chevalier of the salons de Saint-Luc.

Although none of the works he exhibited is described as in pastel, there are perhaps other examples. The portrait of the prince de Grimberghen in the Salon de Saint-Luc of 1756 (no. 25), "Le Portrait de M. le prince de Grimberghen, Prince du Saint-Empire Romain, &c., peint en 1755, dans la 84e année de son âge", was praised by the critic of the *Journal encyclopédique*, who "[s'est arrêté] avec plaisir à considérer [ce] portrait…Le contraste de sa bonne mine avec sa vieillesse et le pinceau de M. Chevalier ont partagé notre admiration." Critics of the time used "pinceau" even when referring to pastels, so this work may have itself been in pastel or may have been a later version of surviving pastel, bearing a label with Grimberghen's name and an unexplained date of 1732, which shares with the Maupeou copy (while absent in the Nattier original) the thinly applied pastel, the blueish-grey foundation to the flesh tones and the characteristic mouth with thin lips and heavily dimpled corners.

Chevalier acted as an expert to the various court cases brought by dissatisfied customers who disputed the cost or resemblance of their portraits; his reports all seem to have concerned oil paintings. For example, in 1763 "Jean Chevalier, peintre et adjoint de l'Académie de Saint-Luc" (no address, but probably Jean-Godard) adjudicated a legal dispute concerning Vialy's oil portrait of the marquis de Lascaris de Vintimille.

Among the homonyms, the greatest confusion arises with Jean-François Chevalier (1717–1793), peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, *reçu* "comme fils de maître et par expérience", 1745, and directeur in 1771. He never exhibited, perhaps because he was a peintre–doreur as described in one document, peintre des bâtiments de Monsieur in another. Various documents (which usually give both his forenames, Jean-François) show that he lived in the rue Bailleul between 1745 and 1785. According to documents in the Fichier Laborde, Jean-François Chevalier, me peintre, the son of Louvens Chevalier, laboureur à Lavincourt, was 27 years old when he married Geneviève-Françoise Chavard, daughter of the painter Antoine-Jean Chavard; the architect Jean Mansard was a witness (Saint-Germain-L'Auxerrois, 24.XI.1744): his claim to being "fils de maître" derived from his father-in-law (his mother-in-law, Geneviève Lefèvre, belonged to another dynasty of painters). In 1768, Jean-François Chevalier, peintre de l'académie de Saint-Luc, rue Bayeulle, was a witness to a wedding in the same parish. He was evidently the same Jean Chevalier, peintre, demeurant rue Bailleul, who witnessed the burial of Jean-François Chavard (1732–16.VII.1785).

There are several reasons why the confusions have arisen. First is the portrait Jean Godard exhibited in 1753 of M. Huët, professeur (medium unspecified). But in 1769 Huët's son Jean-Baptiste-Marie (*q.v.*) married, not Jean-Godard's daughter, but "Marie-Geneviève Chevalier, fille de Jean-François Chevalier, peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc et de Geneviève-Françoise Chavard"; the dowry was the not inconsiderable sum of 15,000 livres (the marriage contract was extensively renegotiated between two survinving versions). Assézat & Tourneux 1877 have identified Mme Huët's sister, Jeanne-Geneviève-Rosalie Chevalier, as the "Mlle Le Chevalier" who exhibited a portrait of Diderot in the Salon de la Jeunesse in 1761; this seems highly improbable as the girl was barely 8 when the portrait was examined at La Chevrette.

Another clue appears in the bizarre story of Rose Uncy and the chevalier de Nugues, which gave rise to legal proceedings whose byzantine complexities preclude summary; but in a crucial letter of 1.III.1761, a Sœur Françoise Gaudard or Godard, superior of the Filles de la Croix in Roye, wrote of her intention to stay with "M. le Chevalier, peintre, rue Bailleul, derrière le grand-conseil". It is tempting to infer that she was a relation of Jean-François, and that Jean Godard Chevalier must also be related. But this seems highly improbable, particularly since the latter's family name was in fact Godart.

Jean-François Chevalier was involved in various property and financial transactions, such as the annuity he sold to a veuve Ravenet in 1778, where he is described as "peintre et doreur". On 17.VII.1772 Jean-François Chevalier directed the deposition of a will by a Sébastien Abraham; it is unclear if this was an expert role indicating knowledge of portrait

painting (in contrast to the role that Jean-Godard seems to have played, *v. supra*). His property dealings commenced as early as 1757, the year in which he leased a house in the rue Saint-Honoré to a traiteur for 2700 livres p.a.; possibly the same house, "à l'enseigne de l'Étoile d'or" (67 rue Saint-Honoré), was relet the folowing year to a marchand mercier. Not all these transactions were satisfactory: in 1777 Jean-François Chevalier, described as "ancien directeur de l'Académie de Saint-Luc", let an apartment in his house in the rue Saint-Thomas du Louvre, opposite the hôtel de Longueville, to the "sieurs et dame Eunique, qui lui parurent à l'extérieur gens honnêtes et tranquilles". Unfortunately appearances were deceptive; the tenants set up a public gaming table, receiving large numbers of professional gamblers and "des mauvais sujets de toute espèce" from 6 p.m. to 4 a.m. The other tenants in his house gave notice to quit.

On 23.X.1775 Chevalier (evidently Jean-François, as his address of rue Bailleul is given) applied to d'Angivilliers for a reward of 3600 livres for designing a "moulin à broyer les couleurs". The Académie de Saint-Luc and the company of marchands-épiciers had been in dispute over the right to supply artists' materials; one of the arguments raised by the Académie was the toxicity of the pigments which were ground by hand, and his application was supported by hospital reports of 272 admissions in the preceding 21 months. Chevalier's machine was intended not ony to save money, but to spare lives. The device was sent to Trudaine de Montigny for a report; he thought the application was worthy of support, even if the design of the apparatus was not particularly new. It is unclear if the reward was paid.

Two Chevalier brothers are recorded in the rue Bailleul, both sons of Jean-François: Pierre-César was reçu peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc in 1773, and was described as entrepreneur des peintures du ci-devant Monsieur when in 1793 he established a porcelain works in the rue de la Pépinière with his brother Jacques-Léopold, also a painter.

The picture we have of Jean-François Chevalier is that of a "peintre et doreur" by trade rather than an artist, operating with colours on a scale that justified mechanisation, and perhaps branching out into property development. It seems unlikely that he could have made these investments on the proceeds of portraiture without leaving some trace.

A number of other homonyms are recorded; a Hubert Chevalier won second prize at the école de l'Académie royale in .VII.1735, while in .X.1735 and 1736 an N. Chevalier was also awarded second prize, initially in painting, then in sculpture; a Jean-Louis Chevalier was *reçu* in 1760; a Jean-Baptiste Chevalier, born in Paris, c.1754, the son of a house painter, was a pupil at the Académie royale from 1775, under Vien; an engineer and amateur engraver, Jean-Alexandre Chevalier, was active between 1762 (frontispiece to Dupain de Montesson's *L'Art de lever les plans*, after Delafue) and 1775 (profile of the engraver Robert Picault, after his own design). A Pierre Chevalier, peintre des bâtiments du roi et architecte, was recorded in 1760 with eight children, among them Nicolas Chevalier, peintre, probably the peintre de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, rue des Moineaux who paid over 4100 livres to a colourman in 1755, no doubt for industrial quantities of paint for house decoration. The records do not permit further identification or clarification of these relationships.

Bibliography

J. Assézat & Maurice Tourneux, *Œuvres complètes de Diderot*, 1877, XX, p. 114, iconographie de Diderot; Élisabeth Belmas, *Jouer autrefois*, Paris, 2006, p. 193, citing BnF MS 1413, .XII.1778, "Dénonciation supplique de Jean-François Chevalier"; Bénézit; Dezallier d'Argenville 1762, IV, p. 584; N.-T.-L. Desessarts, *Causes célèbres*, 1781, CXCII[e] cause; Genevay 1876; Guiffrey 1915, pp. 35, 38, 97, 101, 223ff; Hug 1998; Le Brun 1776; Saur; Scott 1995, pp. 51, 275f, citing AN O[1] 1294/303, 305; Wildenstein 1921, pp. 71f; Wildenstein 1966

GENEALOGIES Chevalier

Salon critiques: Saint-Luc 1751, 1756, 1774

Salon critiques

Anon., *Lettre de M. H… à M. P…, son ami en province, au sujet du concours en peinture et sculpture de MM. de l'Académie de Saint-Luc, ouvert dans une salle des Grands-Augustins, à Paris, le 20 février* ***1751***:
C'est au soin d'éviter un pareil défaut que les portraiteurs de notre temps doivent en partie la réussite de leurs ouvrages. Tels sont: MM. Vigée, Mérelle, Verdier, Allais, Chevalier, Barrère, M[lle] Saint-Martin et d'autres, qui tous contribuent à former un ensemble dont la beauté saisit, avec une satisfaction secrète, les personnes de goût et fixent celles disposées à en avoir. Malgré cela, je ne doute pas qu'il ne se trouve encore de ses petits auteurs d'insipides brochures qui, pour faire parade de leur esprit, viendront, perchés sur quelques-uns des chevalets de nos maîtres peintres; mais, pour les faire descendre, il suffira de leur présenter l'estampe où l'on voit un aveugle introduit au Salon du Louvre pour y juger des couleurs.

Anon., *Affiches, annonces et avis divers*, **1752**, p. 27:
Il y a un petit Tableau de M. *Chevalier*, qui nous a paru singulier par le choix & par l'exécution du Sujet qu'il représente. C'est l'invention du Dessein à la lumière. Une jeune Personne prête à se voir séparer de son Amant, trace son ombre sur une muraille, afin de conserver du moins cette foible image de ce qu'elle aime. Voilà, dit-on, ce qui a donné naissance à la Peinture. Ainsi c'est à l'Amour que nous devons ce bel Art. Si ce petit Trait d'Histoire, rapporté par Félibien & par plusieurs autres Ecrivains, n'est point vrai, il est du moins heureusement inventé. Le Peintre, à ce qu'il nous paroît, a très-bien rendu les Effets de la Lumiere. Parmi tant d'Ouvrages différents exposés à l'Arcenal, une chose sur-tout nous a frappé. Elle mérite l'attention des Connoisseurs & des Gens de goût.

Anon., "Observations sur cette exposition de peintures, sculptures et gravures à l'Académie de Saint-Luc", *Journal encyclopédique*, **1756**:
Nous nous sommes arrêtés avec plaisir à considérer le portrait du prince de Grimberghem, peint à l'âge de 84 ans. Le contraste de sa bonne mine avec sa vieillesse et le pinceau de M. Chevalier ont partagé notre admiration.

Anon., "Exposition des peintures, sculptures & autres ouvrages de MM. de l'Académie de St Luc, faite le 25 août 1774 & jours suivans, à l'hôtel Jabach…"; *Mercure de France*, .X.1774, pp. 184:
MM. Dumont, Viel, Dumesnil, le Févre, Bonnet-Danval, le Noir, Charpentier, le Duc, Sollier, de la Fosse, Chevalier, Jacquinet, de Mallié, Girard, Vallée, Miroglio, Fritsche, Lainé, le Crosnier, le Peintre, Coste, Kruger, ont aussi donné des preuves de leurs talens, chacun dans leur genre.

Pastels

J.224.101 [Louis-Joseph d'Albert de Luynes], prince de GRIMBERGHEN [(1672–1758)], m/u, 1755, Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 25

J.224.102 =?pstl/ppr br./toile/châssis, 56.9x45.5 (Charles-Antoine Gouffier, marquis de Heilly (1698–p.1752), neveu du sujet, sa fille, comtesse de Choiseul-Beaupré, née Adélaïde-Louise de Gouffier; son fils, Antoine-Louis-Octave, comte de Choiseul-Gouffier (1773–1840); sa petite-fille Alix-Sophie-Louise, princesse Charles-Marie de Faucigny-Lucinge (1835–1915); vente p.m., Paris, Drouot, Dubourg, Couturier, Féral, 26–30.XI.1917, Lot 3, éc. fr. Geneva, hôtel des Bergues, Habsburg, Feldman, 3.VII.1988, Lot 81/215 repr., circle of La Tour. London, Christie's, 19.IV.1994, Lot 155 repr., circle of Maurice Quentin de La Tour). Lit.: *Mercure de France*, 16.XII.1917, CXXIV, p. 753; Jeffares 2012b, fig. 1 [new attr., ?] Φνσ

ESSAY Zoomify

J.224.104 René-Charles de MAUPEOU (1688–1775), premier président au parlement de Paris 1743–57, garde des sceaux, vice-chancelier 1763–68, chancelier, pstl, a/r Nattier, 61x51, 1745 (comtesse de Maupeou 1908; comte de Maupeou 1934; Paris PC 1999). Exh.: Paris 1908a, no. 8, no pl.; Paris 1934, no. 50 n.r. Lit.: Brière & al. 1908, p. 228; Labat 1909, p. 313, "ce beau pastel ne détonne pas dans cette noble compagnie"; Jeffares 2001 Φνσ

LARGER IMAGE

J.224.106 ~repl. "en grand", pnt., 130x97, Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 114
~grav. Petit etc.

Portraits in unspecified media

J.224.109 François-Marie-Bruno, comte d'AGAY DE MUTIGNEY (1722–1805), intendant de Picardie, m/u, 1760
~grav. Louis-Jacques Cathelin

J.224.111 Charles, comte d'AUMALE, sgr de Mareuil (1688–1750), lieutenant général des armées du roi, commandant de l'ordre de Saint-Louis, chevalier des ordres de Notre-Dame de Mont-Carmel et de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem, m/u, 1749, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 117
~grav. Wille (FD 2417)

J.224.113 Christophe de BEAUMONT (1703–1781), archevêque de Paris
~grav. Gaillard, "Peint par J. Chevallier"/"chés Chevallier, Peintre rue du Four Faubourg St Germain à l'Hôtel d'Allemagne" (FD 764); Petit

J.224.115 La feue Mme BECHÉE, peint en clair-obscur, m/u, 62.1x51.3, Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 29

J.224.116 M. de CAMPAGNOLE [?Louis-François-Armand Roger de Campagnole, sgr de

Réauté], appuyé sur un livre de généalogie, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 115

J.224.117 Mme CHAPRON en bergère, tenant un agneau et sa houlette, m/u, 81x65, Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 120

J.224.118 M. CHARUS, apothicaire, tenant un livre, m/u, 81x64.8, Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 28

J.224.119 M. CHEVALIER, fumant sa pipe, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 108

J.224.12 Pierre DU BOSC (1623–1692), ministre à Caen (Mme Le Gendre, fille du sujet), m/u

~grav. G. Fr. Schmidt

J.224.122 Le R.P. Blaise DUCHESNE, abbé de Sainte-Geneviève, m/u, 81x65, 1752, Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 115

~grav. René Gaillard 1753 (FD 767)

J.224.124 Jean DU LAU D'ALLEMANS (1729–p.1777), curé de Saint-Sulpice 1748–77

~grav. Chevillet

J.224.126 Allégorie sur le cardinal de FLEURY [(1653–1743)]

~grav. Aveline

J.224.129 Le feu M. GALLIEN, tailleur du dauphin, m/u, 102.6x81, Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 30

J.224.13 Mme GALIEN, en robe blanche, appuyée sur un carreau, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 105

J.224.131 M. HUET, professeur de l'Académie, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 120

J.224.132 M. JANVIER de Flainville, avocat en parlement, exerçant à Chartres, en robe de chambre dans son cabinet, montrant de la main droite un livre de belles-lettres, groupé, avec le projet abandonné d'un dictionnaire universelle, et indiquant de la main gauche les attributs de sa profession, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 116

J.224.133 M. de LA CHÂTEIGNERAY, écuyer de main de la Reine, en habit de velours cramoisi, brodé d'or, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 104

J.224.134 Jean-Baptiste-Joseph LANGUET DE GERGY (1677–1753), curé de Saint-Sulpice, archevêque de Sens, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 102

~grav. Petit, 1752

~grav. René Gaillard, 1753

J.224.137 =?M. l'archevêque de …, m/u, 106.2x81, Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 24

J.224.138 M. LE COINTRE, officier du roi dans ses académies, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 114

J.224.139 M. LE LONG, chantant une chanson, et buvant bouteille, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 109

J.224.14 [?Pierre] LE PAUTRE [(1660–1744)], sculpteur du roi, tenant le modèle d'Énée et Anchise qui est aux Thuilleries, m/u, 97x65, Salon de Saint-Luc 1751, no. 108; Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 101

J.224.141 Henri LIÉBAUX, géographe ordinaire du roi et censeur royal, 1745, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 113

~grav. J. G. Wille 1747/49 (FD 2436)

J.224.143 M. MENESTRIER; & pendant: J.224.144 Mme Menestrier, ov., Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 119

J.224.145 La famille de M. MIRSIN, représentant Télemaque qui raconte ses aventures dans l'Isle de Calipso, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 103

J.224.146 François QUESNAY, médecin du roi, 1747, représenté dans son cabinet, m/u, 45.9x54 [sic], Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 26

~grav. Wille (P&B 75, 76), for *Traité des effets et de l'usage de la saignée*, Paris, 1750. Lit.: Toth 1931, repr. opp. p. 174

J.224.148 M. VANEK, officier de la connétablie, m/u, 81x65, Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 120

J.224.149 François-Louis-Anne de Neufville, duc de VILLEROY (1695–1766)

~grav. J. G. Wille 1744 (FD 2439)

J.224.151 M. de ***, en habit de velours noir, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 106

J.224.152 M. ***, habillé en Espagnol, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 107

J.224.153 M. de ***, dans son cabinet, caressant son chien, m/u, 35.1x24.3, Salon de Saint-Luc 1752, no. 111; Salon de Saint-Luc 1753, no. 118

J.224.154 M…., officier de la reine, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1756, no. 27

J.224.155 M. de ***, historié, habillé en Espagnol, m/u, 55x46, Salon de Saint-Luc 1762, no. 58

J.224.156 Deux portraits, m/u, 81x65, Salon de Saint-Luc 1762, no. 59

J.224.157 Plusieurs portraits, m/u, Salon de Saint-Luc 1764, no. 38