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A Group of Newly Discovered Sixteenth-Century French Portrait Drawings

THE Renaissance came to full tide in France some years after its tide had turned in Italy. The new style, in all its forms, had been at first a foreign importation, brought back from the Peninsula by the returning princes, knights, and soldiers who in the Wars of Italy had witnessed the flowering of its ideas and ideals. France was then ready, even eager for a change. Within a generation, the Renaissance was not only established in France, but in its new climate had taken on a distinct flavor and a special character which sharply distinguish it from its Italian counterpart.

A brilliant, self-indulgent, ambitious, and wealthy court dominated the country. In actual numbers that court was not great, yet its tireless taste for fêtes, for battles, and for intrigue — and for splendid settings and lavish costumes in which to play out its personal dramas — leads us to forget how few were the principal actors. Princes and nobles of only slightly lesser rank led the armies, negotiated the truces, made the treaties, and established the fashions. Their ladies enacted roles of hardly less influence and importance. Almost all were related by blood or marriage.

We know their names, we know their deeds, and we know their faces. Perhaps no other court of earlier centuries has been so thoroughly documented. Ambassadors and chroniclers, poets and painters, have left their varying accounts.

The architects and artists who built and decorated the royal châteaux did so at the express orders and directions of the King. The official portrait painters were attached not only to the royal household but to the person of the King himself. When Jean Clouet, who had been *valet de chambre* and painter to the King, died in 1540, François I appointed the son François to his father's place. As a foreigner — it is presumed he came from Flanders — Jean Clouet's estate had reverted to the crown. The King returned it to the son, who continued to hold

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both his property and his royal post under successive kings until his own death in 1572.

The taste of that court put its mark upon all the arts it sponsored. Within the span of a single reign and the lifetime of one artist, a portrait style of foreign origin had become distinctly French. The aristocratic conventions which courtly life exacted gave it, perforce, certain qualities and some limitations. The rank of the sitters (only rarely was a poet or a scholar portrayed; with a single fine exception, never do we find a bourgeois) demanded that criteria of elegance and distinction be met. Certain patterns of presentation were established as acceptable. Yet in spite of a set pattern, and except for copies (and copies of copies), French portraiture of the sixteenth century maintained an extraordinarily high standard of artistic performance within the limits of its formula. Undoubtedly there must have been flattery, for one finds no uglincss. Yet this flattery is neither easy nor insipid. The individual's distinctive characteristics of feature survive the imposition of the pattern. One would recognize all these men and women from their portraits, were one to meet them.

In the works of the father — it is presumed they are the works of Jean Clouet, for although they are not documented, it is unlikely that any but the royal painter would have given us this superb galaxy of nobles — there is even in the most summarily sketched heads a certain largeness and strength. In the son — whom Ronsard praised as the glory of France and for whom some documented works have now been found — in place of largeness, there is subtlety and refinement. In both there is an unfailing sureness of structure and an unforgettable interpretation of character, less broad perhaps than Holbein's but no less penetrating.

This development towards the refining of an art in full command of its resources was a natural one. By mid-century the first glow of enchanted discovery had passed; and with it, the early assertiveness. By 1550, Amboise, Blois, Chenonceaux, Chambord, and the Gallery of François I at Fontainebleau had been built. Lescot was rebuilding and expanding the Louvre, and Philibert Delorme, although he had not yet begun the Tuileries, had been appointed 'Surintendant des bâtiments.' Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay had met. The Pleïade had launched its program. François I had died. A new king and queen were setting their mark upon the country and the century. The Wars of Religion had yet to ravage France.

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Catherine de' Medici had not begun to display the powers and fears she was later to develop. Her role at first was principally that of the anxious parent — a role in which she relied heavily on the portrait artists. Under François I, they had drawn portraits as careful studies in preparation for painted portraits for which the noble patrons could not take the time to pose. Sometimes the colors were indicated on the page. Catherine, voyaging about the country with the court from one château to another, could not wait for painted portraits. She wrote constantly and worriedly to the governess of her nearly always ailing children, the 'Enfants de France.' One letter, dated 1552, orders the governess, Madame d'Humières, to have the children's portraits drawn, faithfully drawn, and then sent to her so that she could judge for herself the state of their health. Among them was to be included the portrait of the Dauphin's betrothed, little Queen Mary of Scotland, who was being brought up with the French royal children.

A surprising number of these and other portrait drawings have survived. Until this century they received little critical attention. Then came the enthusiastic and learned researches of such French scholars as Dimier and Moreau-Nélaton, whose erudite volumes have become standard works.[1] Their researches have uncovered a number of artists' names that had been lost in the passage of time. Applying critical standards of judgment to the hundreds of sixteenth-century drawn and painted portraits, which they have sought out and studied in all the museums and private collections of the world, they have identified a score of different hands. We know now that the Clouets must have had both assistants and followers.

Yet in spite of careful studies, many thorny problems remain and will remain. The documents which have been found give the names of artists attached to the court, but the paintings and drawings which these men made they did not sign. How shall we know precisely which artist did which portrait? For example, a certain Jean de Court became official painter to Mary Queen of Scots. Does that mean that we are to assign to him the unique and charming portrait drawing of her, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, which shows her as a young girl, a drawing formerly ascribed to François Clouet himself? A painter or family of painters named Le Monnier was attached to the 'Enfants

[1] L. Dimier, *Histoire de la peinture de portrait en France au XVI^e siècle* (3 vols., Paris and Brussels 1924–26); E. Moreau-Nélaton, *Les Clouet et leurs émules* (3 vols., Paris, 1924).

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de France.' Was it a Le Monnier who fulfilled the Queen's orders? Or was it Clouet, painter to the King, who carried out the royal commands?

Since the drawings themselves often show only the slightest differences of handling, differences which occasionally might be explained by a natural change in an artist's manner with the passage of time, the difficulties multiply. For us who are at least an ocean away from the great collections of originals, the impossibility of forming a definite opinion about the originals in Europe, with only photographic reproductions or facsimiles for comparison, is obvious. Even the critics who have spent years studying them do not always agree about the authorship of the drawings. An anonymous master, whose hand Dimier recognized in a certain number of portraits, he named for the sitter whose portrait furnished the basis for his judgment of similar portraits, 'the painter of Luxembourg-Martigues.' Another group he assigned to 'the anonymous master of 1550,' the date of the majority of the drawings by this hand. Other groups he named for their former owners.

The production of so many drawings is easily explained. What Catherine had initiated shortly became a vogue. As we desire photographs, the members of the French court wanted portrait drawings. As might be expected, the higher the rank of the sitter, the more copies exist. When several almost identical versions of the same drawing exist, how is one to know which came first?

Undoubtedly, as the demands increased, the artist's original, taken from life, stayed in his studio, the point of reference for other copies by himself or his assistants, much as a photographic negative remains today with the photographer. The same drawing still served also as the preliminary study for painted portraits. When Catherine ordered her ambassador to negotiate for the marriage of her son, the Duc d'Alençon (later Henri III), to Elizabeth of England, she sent to Clouet's studio for two drawings of the prince, which she forwarded to England. One showed his face, the other his full figure. Both had been made in preparation for a painted portrait, but the impatient Regent would not let her ambassador wait for the completed picture. In her eyes, the two drawings would serve the purpose well enough.

The drawings which were made at her own command, she hung in her rooms or gathered into albums. The court followed her example.

Considering the oblivion into which these drawings fell when the

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mode passed after her death, it is astonishing that so many individual drawings and so many albums still exist. It is even more surprising that after the thoroughness of Moreau-Nélaton's and Dimier's researches, any authentic drawings of the time not in their lists should turn up. Yet eight portrait drawings of people intimately connected with Catherine's court, drawings not mentioned in any of the catalogue lists, have recently come to light in this country and are now in the Boston region, four in the Harvard College Library, one at the Fogg Museum of Art, and three at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.[2]

Two at least are of outstanding historical and artistic interest, a portrait of François II and one of Mary Queen of Scots. François II is shown at about the age of eleven (Plate I; Department of Graphic Arts, Harvard College Library). He wears an open, fur-trimmed jacket over a slashed doublet, a plumed hat on his head. Another version of this drawing, a very well-known version, like this in black crayon with touches of sanguine, is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale.[3] In the Paris drawing, the Prince's cap is sewn with pearls and there are minor differences in the brim near the feather. For the rest, in the details of costume, the two drawings are nearly identical. In the expression of the face they seem absolutely identical. The Paris drawing, upon which is based the Medici miniature in Florence, is one of the comparatively few given by Dimier to the hand of François Clouet himself. He believes that it also served as a preliminary study for a full-length portrait formerly in the Gaignières collection,[4] but now lost. Could any but the same hand have repeated the watchful expression of the face so precisely? [5]

The portrait of Mary Queen of Scots shows her in white state mourning for François II (Plate II; Department of Graphic Arts, Harvard College Library). Mary Stuart had been crowned Queen of Scotland in 1543 at one year of age. In 1548 she had arrived in France. Ten years later in April, in a magnificent ceremony at Notre Dame, she had married François, then Dauphin, and saluted him as King of

[2] They join two distinguished examples already in the region: the portrait of Elizabeth of Valois, daughter of Henri II, later Queen of Spain, in the collection of Mr Richard C. Paine, a drawing which was formerly in the Hermitage; and the portrait of de Boisy in the Fogg Museum of Art, Paul J. Sachs Collection.

[3] Dimier, *op. cit.*, II, 116, no. 448.

[4] Assembled by Roger de Gaignières, who in the seventeenth century had one of the largest and most important collections of Clouet painted and drawn portraits.

[5] There is another copy in the collection of Mrs Herbert N. Straus, New York.

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Scotland. In November of that same year, Elizabeth succeeded to the throne of England. In July of the following year, Henri II died suddenly, from an accidental wound received in a tournament arranged to celebrate the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to Philip II of Spain and of his daughter Marguerite to the Duke of Savoy. François II succeeded his father. His was a brief and gloomy reign. His frail health could not support the weight of office or his pleasures. He died on 5 December 1560, leaving a widow of eighteen. His brother, Charles IX, a boy of ten, succeeded him on the throne. The following August, the young queen and widow, following the advice of her powerful Guise uncles, returned to her native Scotland, reluctantly leaving her beloved France — as she rightly felt — forever.

The romantic circumstances of her birth to a French princess, a Queen of Scotland (herself already a widow when Mary came into the world), her arrival in France as a queen since her babyhood, her natural grace, her keen intelligence, her winning ways and many talents, and her beauty brought Mary Stuart a lasting and lustrous popularity in France, a popularity that neither the tragedy of her Scottish history nor the passage of years has dimmed. Brantôme, who devotes one of his longest chapters to her, makes of it a cavalier's song of praise. He, who knew her well, for he was one of those to escort her back to Scotland, lauds her sweetness of voice and character, her wide learning, her gracious manner, and her exalted generosity of spirit. Whether she wore her 'barbaric' native Scottish dress, or the sombre Spanish mode, or the little Italian bonnet, to him she was beautiful to see, but in her white mourning she outshone all others, 'car la blancheur de son visage contendoit avecque la blancheur de son voile à qui l'emporteroit; mais enfin l'artifice de son voile le perdoit, et la neige de son blanc visage effaçoit l'autre: aussi se fit-il à la court une chanson d'elle portant le deuil. . . .' [6]

Here she is, still under twenty, in her white mourning veil. Her famous dark brown eyes and her reddish brown hair are both indicated by the artist, who has added a touch of yellow to the sanguine in her hair to suggest its chestnut hue.

Another version of this drawing also exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The two are identical in pose and nearly identical in size. They are not alike in expression. The eyes of the Bibliothèque Nationale version are lively, alert, almost calculating, the mouth is firm

[6] *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. L. Lalanne (Paris, 1864–82), VII, 408.

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PLATE I

FRANÇOIS II

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PLATE II

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

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PLATE III

PIENNE THE ELDER

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PLATE IV

LA JAILLE

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PLATE V

LAVAL

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PLATE VI

MARÉCHAL DE MONTMORENCY

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PLATE VII

LANSAC

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PLATE VIII

'SAINCTE CORNILLE'

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and determined. Even the folds of the white head-dress are crisper. The Harvard drawing shows a Mary Stuart more quiet than assertive, with tired eyes and a soft, gentle mouth. It is astonishing that within the limits of similar contours and coloring such variation is possible. One or the other, perhaps both, served as the basis for the numerous painted versions (Windsor, Edinburgh, the Wallace Collection, and the Carnavalet Museum, Paris). Only the Windsor painting, in which the expression resembles that of the Paris drawing, is now 'attributed to' Clouet. The very gentleness of expression and the softness of the mouth in the Harvard drawing recall the painting of Elizabeth de Valois in the Toledo (Ohio) Museum which is called Clouet without question.

If the other sitters are not quite of regal rank, the drawings of them are of comparable artistry and subtlety. We know their names through the inscriptions, written in ink in sixteenth-century handwriting. These inscriptions Moreau-Nélaton first believed to be in Catherine's own hand. Since he first made that suggestion, letters which she herself wrote have been found and photographed. They have made her peculiar angular handwriting familiar. It is to be found on only a few surviving drawings. There it is notable for its almost brutal brevity — no rank, no title, whether man or woman, only the sitter's name. The majority of the other drawings which have been attributed to the two Clouets carry inscriptions by two distinct and different hands. In each case, the name and rank of the sitter is given. It is now supposed that Catherine dictated the information to two different secretaries, probably during the reign of Charles IX. The two hands are differentiated as 'bâtarde' and 'cursive.' Each has its peculiarities. The 'bâtarde' has certain idiosyncracies of orthography, for example using an 'm' where one would expect an 'n.' Thus the drawing of François II is inscribed 'le roi framçois secomd.' The spelling is often unorthodox. Capital letters are rarely used. The portrait of Mary Stuart is inscribed 'la royne descosse.' The other handwriting, as well-known as the first, is one of flowing capitals, of loops and flourishes. It is the second writing, the 'cursive,' which identifies the subjects of the next two drawings to be considered. At some unknown date, when all the drawings were remounted, these two identifications were cut from the drawings and pasted to the mats just above the sitters' heads. The first reads: 'Mons^{r} de Pienne Laisne' (Plate III; Department of Graphic Arts, Harvard College Library). The sitter was undoubtedly Charles

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Halluin (Hallwin or Halwin), Seigneur de Pienne, the son of Antoine Halluin and Louise Gouffier, the widow of Bonnivet. In January 1559, Charles married Anne de Chabot, the fifth child of Philippe Chabot, who had been with François at Pavia and whom François made admiral in 1525. Anne, in the year of her marriage, was appointed lady-in-waiting to Mary Stuart. From 1562, after Mary's return to Scotland, until 1570, she was lady-in-waiting to Marguerite de France, the daughter of Henri II. The drawing of Anne, in the British Museum, Dimier dates about 1563. That makes it somewhat later in style of costume than this drawing of her husband. The portrait of Anne, painted from the drawing, is at the University of Illinois. There is an interesting note added to the identification of the drawing. It reads 'of the scale of Mad. de Sauve,' and seems to be a directive to the artist to paint Mme de Pienne's portrait on the same scale as a portrait of Catherine's own lady-in-waiting, Mme de Sauve. Moreau-Nélaton considered that only Catherine would have had the authority to give such an order.

Brantôme numbers 'Mons de Pienne' among the courtiers sent to Scotland in 1548 by Henri II to escort Mary Stuart to France. He does not indicate which one, but Lalanne supposes it was Charles.[7] The costume of this drawing seems to date it about 1545, or before that eventful journey. There are two portrait drawings of 'Monsieur de Pienne' at Chantilly, the first of about 1540, inscribed 'Feu Mon[r] de Pienne,'[8] and the second dated about 1550.[9] Moreau-Nélaton believed the first to represent Antoine, Charles's father, who withstood the siege of Metz with François, Duc de Guise, in 1552, but was killed before Thérouanne in 1553. In spite of the beard and hat, there is a striking resemblance to the face of Charles.[10]

In 1587 Henri III raised the Marquisate of Magnelais in Picardy and the properties of Montigny, Coivrel, le Plessier-sous-Fournival, Royaucourt, and Godainvilliers to the rank of a duchy in Charles de Pienne's favor, and created him a Peer of the Realm, the first Duc de Halluin. With the death, in 1598, of Charles's grandson, another Charles, at the age of seven, this peerage was extinguished. The fact that the in-

[7] *Op. cit.*, III, 389.

[8] *Le portrait à la cour des Valois; crayons français du XVI[e] siècle, conservés au Musée Condé à Chantilly*, ed. E. Moreau-Nélaton (5 vols., Paris, 1908), plate CCLX.

[9] Moreau-Nélaton, *Les Clouet*, III, 32, no. 261.

[10] A third portrait, said to represent Antoine de Pienne, is in the Hermitage (Moreau-Nélaton, *op. cit.*, III, 139, no. 46).

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scription reads 'Pienne' and not Duc de Halluin' indicates that it was written on the drawing before 1587.

Of all the drawings the portrait of Charles Halluin is the most delicate in the delineation of the head and the most exact in the details of costume. The sanguine, which is mixed with the black crayon in the hair and beard to make both seem blonde, is used in the costume to indicate the embroidery of the collar and the pearls which ornament his elaborately designed doublet. There is grace and a winning ease in every touch.

The portrait of 'La Jaille' (Plate IV; Fogg Museum of Art) is a worthy pendant to that of Pienne. The two were contemporaries, both distinguished for their military exploits, both closely connected at court. In 1520, René de La Jaille inherited the seigneuries of La Jaille, in Chahaignes, and Roche Talbot, in Maine. He was a descendant of that Pierre de La Jaille who fifty years before had been chamberlain to the Duc d'Anjou and master of the seigneuries of Angers, Loudon, and Rochefort, in Anjou.[11] In 1530 he married Madeleine de Montgommery, widow of Cathault de la Chesnaye and sister of that Gabriel de Montgommery who in 1559 was to wound Henri II mortally in the fatal tourney. The La Jailles had only one child, a daughter Françoise, who married a seigneur of Auvergne, the Baron Gabriel d'Apchon. With the death of her only daughter, the elder line of the La Jailles came to an end.

In 1536 René de La Jaille was lieutenant of a company of one hundred men of arms. He was made a Chevalier of the King. In 1547, he became Captain-General. In 1557 he was taken prisoner by the Spaniards and sent to Nantes. In order to pay his ransom he had to transfer much of his property, which he was never able to buy back, so great were the expenses of a Captain-General. He died at the end of that same year, 1557.[12]

He is represented in the drawing in simple unornamented dress. His short dark hair, which is inclined to curl, is brushed back from his face. There is a lively, almost mocking expression in his eyes, the faintest hint of a cynical smile on his lips. The head is one of extraordinary subtlety and surety of drawing. Both the crayon and the sanguine

[11] Dom P. L. J. de Bétencourt, *Noms féodaux . . . depuis le XII^e siècle jusque vers le milieu du XVIII^e* (Paris, 1867), Vol. III.

[12] For much of the information concerning La Jaille, I am indebted to M and Mme Paul Mallon, the present owners of the Château de La Jaille.

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were sharpened to very fine points. Delicate parallel lines, laid closely together, create the accents of modelling. The contours are drawn with a delicacy of touch that scarcely marks the paper.

Although the portraits of Pienne and La Jaille were not designed as a pair, they were executed by the same artist, one of consummate skill. They exhibit a similar artistry and subtlety. Both heads are projected on the page so that one feels space and air about them. The ears, noses, and eyes are drawn with extraordinary ease and accuracy. The expression of the mouths is mobile. The touch of the crayon is as light as it is assured.

In 1535, René de La Jaille was one of the witnesses of the marriage contract of the 'high and puissant' Guy XVII, Comte de Laval, and Claude de Foix.[18] This Comte de Laval was probably the 'Mom^{sr} de Laual' of our next portrait (Plate V; Department of Graphic Arts, Harvard College Library). The successive heirs to the property of Laval each assumed the name Guy upon taking possession of their inheritance. Pope Paschal II had granted them the privilege, one which led later to a long and historic lawsuit in France. So extensive were the Laval holdings and so varied their titles, that there was a kingly touch in their numbered names. Guy XVII had been born Claude de Laval, the son of Guy XVI and of Anne de Montmorency, sister of Anne, the Constable and Grand Master of France. To give him his titles he was Comte de Laval, Montfort, Quintin, Comminges, Rethelois, Beaufort-en-Champagne, Vicomte de Rennes, Fronsac, Lautrec, St-Florentine, Sieur de Vitré, La Roche, St-Verain, Seigneur and Baron of Donzy, Orval, Coulommiers-en-Brie, and Lescun. Claude, the second child of his father's second marriage, was baptized in 1522 on the same day that his elder sister Anne was married to François de la Trémoïlle. The daughter of his sister Catherine, Claude de Rieux, who was born in 1525, married in 1547 François de Coligny, the youngest of the famous Coligny trio, who is better known as Andelot. The Laval connections could scarcely have been more powerful. Guy XVII succeeded his father, who died in 1531 as a result of a hunting accident. The lengthy marriage contract states that Guy XVII was a minor; he was actually only thirteen. In 1541 he was made gentleman-in-waiting to the King, in 1546 a Knight of St Michael and captain of fifty lances, but in May, 1547, when he was twenty-five, his career

[18] Le Comte Bertrand de Broussillon, *La maison de Laval 1020–1605* (Paris, 1895–1903), IV, 127.

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which promised so much was cut short by death, some said as a result of illness, others that he was stabbed by Henri II during a quarrel. As his wife had presented him with no heir, the line of Montfort-Laval ended with Guy XVII. The estate passed first to his niece Renée de Rieux (Guyonne de Laval) and her husband Louis de Sainte-Maure, Marquis de Nesle (Guy XVIII), and then, in 1567, to the son of Renée's sister, Claude de Rieux, and of Andelot, Guy Paul de Coligny who became Guy XIX.

There is a possibility that the drawing represents this latter Laval. At Chantilly there are two portraits of 'Monsieur de Laval,' both believed to represent Guy XVII.[14] In the collection of Anatole France was a rather inept drawing inscribed in printed capital letters 'Feu M. de Laval' which has been called Guy XIX. All three seem too alike to represent different people. All three are clearly by different hands. The drawing now at Harvard, if by still another artist, is closer to the first of the Chantilly drawings, in both feature and costume, than to Anatole France's drawing.

Perhaps from the outset Guy XVII's health had not been the best. He made his will in 1544. In it he allows to his cousin Claude de Laval, younger son of the Bois-Dauphin branch, and to his wife Claudine de La Jaille, if she should survive her husband, the seigneury of Montsurs.[15] Certainly the sad-faced narrow-shouldered young man of the Harvard drawing has, in spite of his sharp and subtle expression, the appearance of a person of little physical energy. The costume is that worn toward the close of the forties.

The drawing is not by the same hand as the drawings of Pienne and La Jaille. It seems nearer the hand that Dimier describes as the 'Master of 1550.' For the sanguine has been stumped in the shadows. Only in the white highlights of the face is there no color. The line is not quite so sensitive, the sense of form not quite so sure, as in the other two. The inscription is in 'bâtarde.'

Portraits of the Maréchal de Montmorency (Plate VI; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) are not numerous.[16] François de Montmorency was the eldest son of the Constable of France, Anne de Montmorency, and

[14] *Le portrait à la cour des Valois*, plates CCXXIV and CCXXV. Dimier (II, 25, no. 101) says that the former represents Laval at the age of eighteen. He attributes the drawing to Jean Clouet.

[15] Broussillon, *op. cit.*, IV, 24.

[16] Dimier, *op. cit.*, lists one at Versailles (II, 346, no. 1416), two at Vienna (III, 209, nos. 41 and 42), and one at Beauregard (III, 189, no. 52).

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Magdalene of Savoy. As such he was the sworn enemy of the Guise faction, and a rival of the first Prince de Condé, who was married to his cousin Eleanor de Roye, for the position of Constable which he hoped to have after his father's death. He fell in love with Jeanne de Pienne, the sister of Charles de Halluin, whom he promised to marry. His father and the King had other plans for him. They wished him to marry Diane de France, the daughter of Henry II by a Piedmontese bourgeoise. Diane had been legitimized and raised at the French court. In 1553 she had married Orazio Farnese, the Duke of Castro, who one year later, at the age of twenty-three, was killed at the Siege of Hesdin. In 1557 François de Montmorency, who could see the advantages of being the son-in-law of the King, consented to marry Diane. In 1559 the Guise faction raised the objection that his father, Anne de Montmorency, held too many offices. They pressed the Constable to resign that of Grand Master. He protested, temporized — and yielded. As a sop to him, the Marshalship was given François, his eldest son, who had until then been merely Governor of the Ile-de-France, an office held only at the pleasure of the King.[17] When he died in 1590, François, like his father before him, had attained the title of Grand Master.

The drawing shown in Plate VI was probably made about 1555, a few years earlier than the full-standing painted portrait of François de Montmorency formerly at Castle Ambras.[18] The hand seems to have been neither that of the La Jaille and Pienne portraits, nor that of the Laval drawing. The portrait of Montmorency is less subtle than the former two, more assured in certain features than the latter. The head lacks the feeling for three-dimensional form that makes the heads of La Jaille and Pienne stand out so vividly, yet the drawing of the collar and shoulders is more firm and unhesitating than it is in the Laval drawing. The contours of the face are not accented as they are in the latter, nor are the features highlighted. The artist seems to have been a little less intent, a trifle more bemused by his task. The inscription, in the 'cursive' hand, was cut horizontally but pasted together again when the drawing was remounted.

The seventh portrait (Plate VII; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), was, to judge by the costume, drawn in the sixties, which makes it some-

[17] A. W. Whitehead, *Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France* (London, 1904), p. 74.

[18] Charles Buttin, 'Un portrait de François de Montmorency,' *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, XLII (1922), 91–99.

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what later than those so far considered. It is a very handsome drawing of a distinguished and tolerantly amused person. The sitter's name, in the 'bâtarde' handwriting, and somewhat obliterated in past remounting, was difficult to decipher. It has been read both as 'Armagnac' and 'Nouillac,' but a comparison of the drawing with a portrait in the Louvre [19] has unravelled the mystery. The man is Louis de St-Gelais, Baron de La-Mothe-Saint-Heraye and Seigneur de Lansac. He was a Councillor of State, Chevalier of the King, and superintendent of Catherine's household. He was half-brother of Mellin de St-Gelais, the Cardinal, who first led the opposition, but later capitulated to the charms of Ronsard's and du Bellay's poetry. Lansac was sent by Henri II to Rome in 1554. He was also the King's ambassador to the Council of Trent. In 1568 he received command of the one hundred gentlemen of the King's household. He died in 1589, the same year as Catherine. Brantôme, who owed much of his material to Lansac, said of him that he knew thoroughly the full history of the court. The fine Louvre portrait, which gives his age as forty-eight, is attributed to no known hand. It is possible that the Boston drawing was made in preparation for that panel portrait. Panel and drawing are identical in pose. The costume shows but little variation. In both there is the same side-long glance, the hint of a smile, a slightly raised right eyebrow, and a small unornamented cap. The Louvre panel comes from the Gaignières collection — yet the Louvre catalogue does not attempt to do more than attribute the painting to an anonymous sixteenth-century artist. To try to name the author of the drawing would be, under the circumstances, perhaps more daring than wise.

The last portrait (Plate VIII), also now in Boston, is according to the 'cursive' inscription 'Le S^r^ de Saincte-Cornille.' Who he was we have not yet discovered. The costume is that of about 1555. Both the drawing and the man represented are of impressive strength. It seems impossible that he should not be soon known to us, perhaps under one of his other titles. Every other personage in the group was so closely connected with the royal household that undoubtedly Monsieur de St-Cornille also played his part at court. His resemblance both to the Rheingraf Johann Philipp [20] and to Gaspard Coligny is notable, but not close enough to warrant any assumption of identity with either one or the other.

[19] *La peinture au Musée du Louvre, École française* (Paris, 1929), I, 52, plate 59.
[20] Moreau-Nélaton, *Les Clouet*, II, fig. 324.

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Even if the various hands which produced the portraits remain unnamed, we are not without considerable information regarding the drawings. The inscriptions have given the names of all the sitters — and the inscription on the portrait of Pienne has given us a terminal date as well. The fact that all the identifications are in writing that has been recognized as that of persons close to Catherine de' Medici has spoken for the circle in which the sitters moved. Their costumes have furnished clues to both time and rank. Laval and Pienne are dressed in the fashion of the late thirties and early forties. François II and Mary of Scotland can be more precisely dated. The portrait of St-Cornille must have been drawn in the fifties. The Louvre panel has told us that Lansac sat during the sixties.

Probably not more than twenty-five years separates the earliest from the latest drawing. Rank and age could have separated these personages but little in life. The artistic style of a certain moment in history and the excellence of each will keep them always close together.

What has been the history of these drawings? Let us move from the court of France in the sixteenth century to London in the second half of the eighteenth. If Francesco Bartolozzi had not done his part in recording that history, we should today know very little of their past.

It was in 1764 that Richard Dalton, the King's Librarian, persuaded Bartolozzi to go to England. The thirty-seven year old Florentine artist had been working for some years in Venice, where Dalton, on a journey abroad to buy pictures for George III, met him. He promised and obtained for Bartolozzi a three-year appointment as engraver to the King. At the end of his term with Dalton, Bartolozzi, an able engraver and an affable man, who was also a tireless worker, had made such a reputation for himself that he did not ask to have his appointment renewed. Instead he began to work independently. His studio soon became a shop humming with activity. Prints were then the rage. The well-trained Italian artist had an enviable command of both the old and the new techniques of etching and engraving, and was equipped by temperament and talent to meet the demands of fashion. He employed many assistants, whom he instructed, watched, and cautioned, and whose plates he often retouched. Several young noblemen, wishing to be in the forefront of fashion, studied under him. When Dalton died in 1791, the genial Bartolozzi was one of the well-known figures of London, a member of the Royal Academy from its founding in

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1769, a welcome visitor at court, a friend alike of nobles, painters, and men of letters.

Upon his arrival in England, his first commission from Dalton had been for a series of engravings after the drawings by Guercino in the Royal Library. His first commission from John Chamberlaine, Dalton's successor, was again for a series of engravings after drawings in the Royal Collection, an ambitious project planned by Dalton before his death. Chamberlaine proposed to publish the Holbein drawings now at Windsor 'in facsimile.' We today would find the phrase none too accurate, for considerable difference exists between the sketchiness of Holbein's originals and the occasionally fulsome detail of Bartolozzi's stipple engravings, but the difference passed unquestioned at the time. The engravings were published in fourteen numbers 1792–1800, with a title-page *Imitations of Original Drawings by Hans Holbein, in the Collection of His Majesty, for the Portraits of Illustrious Persons of the Court of Henry VIII. With Biographical Tracts. Published by John Chamberlaine*, dated London, 1792, but with a foreward dated 1800. The printing was done by W. Bulmer and Company. Bartolozzi's name did not appear on the title-page, but Chamberlaine paid tribute to 'the inimitable Artist' in his foreword, in which he also thanked Edmund Lodge, the Lancaster Herald, for the notes about the persons portrayed. In some bound copies, however, are to be found not only the personages of the court of Henry VIII, but an added series of eight engravings, also by Bartolozzi, of drawings of personages of the court of François II of France. Lowndes, in explanation of this unexpected addition, states that a continuation of the work was to include the court of France, but proceeded only to the extent of eight portraits, which remained unpublished until the plates were acquired by Bohn. These portraits were later appended to some copies of the original work, with memoirs by Mrs Jameson.[21]

The appearance of the eight plates of French personages presents a problem that invites considerable speculation. It is one of particular present interest since the eight original drawings from which Bartolozzi made his plates are the very ones we have been discussing.

The originals are listed in Tuer as the property of the Earl of Bessborough.[22] Which Earl is not indicated. William Ponsonby, the sec-

[21] W. T. Lowndes, *The Bibliographers' Manual of English Literature* (London, 1858–64), I, 405.

[22] A. W. Tuer, *Bartolozzi and his Works* (1st ed., London, 1882), II, 98; elsewhere

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ond Earl of Bessborough, died in 1793, and was succeeded by his son Frederick, Viscount Duncannon. Lord Duncannon and his Lady were travelling in Italy for the Countess's health when word came of the death of the second Earl. Duncannon immediately returned to England to settle the estate and assume his new duties, leaving his wife and daughter Caroline (later Lady Caroline Lamb) in Italy. The estate was not as large as he had anticipated and in his letters to the new Countess of Bessborough he very gently cautions her about expenses, saying that they would now need to live more economically than they had in the past [23]— a vain suggestion. Lady Bessborough and her sister, the famous Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, were never noted for economy. It has been said, perhaps unkindly, that the new Lord Bessborough was hardly the one to caution economy, in the light of his own two ruling passions: card playing and the collecting of old prints.[24] The present Earl denies that his ancestor was extravagant, and refutes the charges that Frederick Ponsonby 'nearly ruined himself' through buying prints. The origin of the charge seems to go back to a letter Lord Duncannon wrote to his wife in 1792. He had returned from the continent; she was still abroad. Reporting on the news in London, he wrote, 'I am ruined in the number of prints that have been published since I have been absent, but they are none remarkably beautiful. . . .' [25] Is not his wording but a manner of speaking rather than a statement of fact? Does he intend to say more than that a great number of prints, probably including many of Bartolozzi's more popular types, had been issued? The latter half of the statement does not sound as though he had bought heavily in London. He had been buying abroad, and when he rejoined Lady Duncannon in Italy the following year they continued to buy — but not always prints.

(I, 36) Tuer states that all the copperplates of the 'Holbein' series, including the eight referred to, 'were, after lying by many years, disposed of by Mr. Henry Bohn, a portion of whose stock they formed, to Mr. Bernard Quaritch, of Piccadilly, who has republished the work from the original plates.'

I am indebted to Dr Arnold Weinberger of the Harvard College Library not only for calling the Tuer reference to the Bessborough collection to my attention, but also for many other valuable bibliographical suggestions.

[23] *Lady Bessborough and Her Family Circle*, ed. Earl of Bessborough (London, 1940), Ch. VII.

[24] E. C. Mayne, *A Regency Chapter* (London, 1939), p. 34.

[25] Bessborough, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

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Unless still hidden in unpublished family papers, there is no record of the purchase of the eight portrait drawings of the French courtiers. Yet it is likely that it was the third Earl who acquired them, and that he found them in Florence. Several clues point in that direction. Lord Bessborough had a third favorite recreation: he loved to sketch. As a print collector and a draughtsman himself, the drawings of the sixteenth century might well have appealed to him even if they were not currently in style. It may even have been at his suggestion that the eight were engraved and incorporated in the Holbein volume. Further, they would surely have been appreciated by Lady Bessborough, whose knowledge of the French language, French history, and the French court was extensive.[26]

The first published folios of the Holbein drawings inspired an enthusiastic letter to the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The writer, who dated his letter 1 March 1794, and signed himself 'Palaeophilus,' not only commented upon the Holbein publication, but suggested a sequel.

> All persons of true taste must congratulate each other on the valuable acquisition to the present age in the inimitable engravings from the original drawings of Hans Holbein, in the possession of His Majesty. Their being thus offered to the publick reflects an honour at once upon the royal liberality of sentiment, upon the engraver Mr. Bartolozzi, who is, however, above my praise; and upon Mr. Chamberlain [*sic*], the editor. . . .
>
> I beg leave, through the channel of your Magazine, to suggest to the valuable Editor of Holbein's Drawings, that there exists a most beautiful collection of drawings of Portraits, much in the style, and perhaps from the pencil, of Holbein, (I may be deceived in the last conjecture, as I write from a distant recollection,) in the country residence of the Earl of Carlisle, at Castle Howard in Yorkshire.—This collection, wherewith one of the rooms is adorned, consists of masterly sketches of the principal persons of the Court of France, and, I apprehend, of that Court at a period coëval to the reign of our King Henry VIII. This circumstance, and their being executed in a masterly manner, would render them a most valuable continuation of Holbein's Drawings now publishing, if Mr. Chamberlain [*sic*], or any other person equally qualified, could be induced to have them engraved by so masterly a hand as that of Mr. Bartolozzi. . . .

[26] As a child, at Versailles, she had seen Marie Antoinette, who had petted her pretty sister. In her early diary she described Dubarry's Pavilion at Louveciennes. Her letters often mention the Terror in France and the piteous fate of the French nobility.

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The letter of 'Palaeophilus' provoked another:

May 5th

Mr. Urban,

The drawings at Castle Howard are portraits of the Court of Francis the First, and were made by Janet, the contemporary of Holbein; they were purchased by the late Earl of Carlisle, at Florence.

Yours etc.
A.B.

Perhaps Yorkshire was too remote for either the publisher or the engraver. Perhaps 'Janet' was too shadowy a name to arouse much enthusiasm. Very little was known at the time about French painting of the sixteenth century, and every portrait of that period, whether painting or drawing, was classified under the generic name 'Janet.' More than a hundred years passed before the researches of French scholars began to unravel the history of the Clouets.

In any event, the suggestion about the Castle Howard drawings fell on deaf ears — and yet not quite on deaf ears, because apparently a project to reproduce the portraits of the French courtiers was inaugurated and the eight Bessborough examples were reproduced, perhaps because they were available in London. Although the Bessboroughs were in Italy in the spring of 1794, it is possible that they had the letter of 'Palaeophilus' called to their attention. Was it the engraver who made the suggestion? Bartolozzi had long been acquainted with the family. In 1782 he had engraved a fan for Lady Duncannon after her own drawing. In 1787 Lavinia, Countess Spencer, had drawn the portrait of her sister-in-law, Lady Duncannon, and Bartolozzi had translated the drawing into a stipple engraving that is considered one of his best. A year later he engraved the portraits of the two sisters, the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Duncannon, after drawings by John Downman. *The Marlborough Gems*, with engraved illustrations by Bartolozzi, one section of which reproduced the Bessborough gems, appeared in folios between 1780 and 1791. If he had already seen the Bessborough drawings he would have shared the opinion expressed by 'Palaeophilus' that they were masterly and worthy of continuing the tradition which the Holbeins had established. Indeed, Bartolozzi seems to have believed that the Bessborough drawings were by Holbein himself for the published plates are all inscribed 'Holbein del . . . Bartolozzi scul.' [27]

[27] A. de Vesme and A. Calabi in their catalogue-raisonné, *Francesco Bartolozzi*

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The Castle Howard drawings remained little known in their remote and isolated grandeur until 1875, when they were published by Lord Ronald Gower.[28] In 1890 their ducal owner decided to sell them. Their purchaser was the Duc d'Aumale, an eager and enlightened collector, who had already gathered here and there what he could of sixteenth-century French portrait drawings. Nothing which he had previously obtained in that field approached, however, what he now brought to Chantilly from England. With the return of the 311 drawings across the channel, France, as Moreau-Nélaton phrases it, recovered one of her most sparkling jewels. Certainly no other collection can rival the Chantilly one in number, in quality, or in historical importance.

The drawings which have come to Cambridge and Boston are a small but not unimportant group which at one time clearly belonged with that exalted array. All the evidence is in that direction.

When he published the Carlisle drawings, Lord Gower wrote that no records of their history were to be found at Castle Howard, but that the French antiquarian Lenoir had reported that they had been acquired by the fifth Earl of Carlisle in Flanders. Moreau-Nélaton refers to 'A.B.'s' letter and writes that they were acquired in Italy by Henry Howard, the fourth Earl. The curt note of 'A.B.' in the *Gentleman's Magazine* seems written by one reasonably sure of his facts although he refers to 'the late Earl.' Henry Howard, the fourth Earl, was born in 1694 and died in 1759. Frederick Howard, the fifth Earl, was born in 1758 and died in 1825. Frederick Howard was travelling in Italy, on the Grand Tour, in 1768. Was not every gentleman supposed to return from that tour with some evidence of both his taste and his travels?

Clouet drawings were to be found in Florence in the eighteenth century. Many of the Clouet drawings in the Uffizi entered that gallery from the collection of Ignazio Hugford, who had attributed them to Holbein. The Uffizi drawings, like the Castle Howard and Bessborough drawings, also have the sitter's names inscribed in the 'bâtarde' and 'cursive' hands.

Hugford (it has also been written Hugsford and Hoxford, both

(Milan, 1928), p. 266, give the date 1798 for Bartolozzi's engravings after the Bessborough drawings, but do not give their source for that date.

[28] *Three Hundred French Portraits Representing Personages of the Courts of Francis I, Henry II, and Francis II, by Clouet* (2 vols., London and Paris, 1875).

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perhaps an Italianizing of the name Oxford) had been born in Pisa in 1703 of English parents. He was trained as an artist, especially as a historical painter, and was Bartolozzi's first teacher for three years at the Academy in Florence. His real talent, however, seems to have been as a connoisseur and not as a creator of works of art, although many of his paintings survive. After he died his collection of paintings, sculptures, and drawings went to the Uffizi.

Where had he found the drawings? Did some one of Catherine's Italian maids-in-waiting return with them to Florence after her mistress's death? Henri III was assassinated in the same year that Catherine died. With the accession of Henri IV a new line was established. It is possible that all traces of Valois interest were banished. Even before her divorce, Catherine's daughter Marguerite had little to do with Henri IV's court. During her life, Catherine's ties with her native city remained unbroken. If she never returned there, some of her possessions did.

Hugford died in Florence in 1778. This was some ten years after Frederick Howard's visit [29] and fifteen years before that of the Bessboroughs. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that Bartolozzi recommended the Earl of Carlisle to his own early teacher, whose judgment on works of art was so universally respected. Where and under what auspices the Bessboroughs bought their drawings, we do not know. If they acquired them in Florence after Hugford's death, why had not these, like the other drawings which Hugford owned, entered the Uffizi?

In the end we are left with speculation. How did this particular set of portraits of eight people, all connected with the same court, many actually members of the royal household, break away from the larger groups? When did they arrive in England and when did they leave? Their history since 1798 is nearly as obscure as their history during the two centuries which preceded that date. They were not included in the three Bessborough sales.[30] Although they are said to have passed through the hands of E. M. Hodgkins and Charles Wickert, they were not in the Wickert sale.[31]

[29] It must not be overlooked, however, that Catherine II of Russia acquired her Clouet drawings in Brussels in 1768, the very year of Frederick Howard's continental travels.

[30] Christie's, 5–7 February 1801, 10 July 1850, and 14 March 1861.

[31] Georges Petit Gallery, Paris, 3 May 1909.

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We do know their history, however, in the twentieth century. For more than a generation they hung on the walls of a house in New York, walls which they left a little more than a year ago. In the spring of 1946 they were exhibited in the Fogg Museum, where, together with the drawing of de Boisy in the Sachs Collection, they filled a single small gallery. After that exhibition they entered the different but neighborly collections which now possess them.

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