



52 HENRY STEWART, Lord Darnley, and his brother, CHARLES STEWART, Earl of Lennox

1562

Watercolour and oil on canvas

80 ¼ x 40 ½ in. (203.7 x 103.4 cm)

Holyroodhouse Palace, Edinburgh [Royal Collection]

RCIN 401227

Provenance: Baron John Lumley before 1609; Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury by 1612 until before 1645; Charles I by 1649, where it was hung in the ‘Bear Gallery’ Whitehall Palace; Purchased by ‘Jackson’ at the Commonwealth Sale, October, 1651; Recovered at the Restoration from Thomas Beauchamp; Then hung in the Queen’s Gallery, Hampton Court; By descent in the Royal Collection; Moved to Holyroodhouse Palace in the 19th century.

Exhibitions: Holbein Exhibition (London), 1950 (#43); Coronation Exhibition (London), 1953 (#9); Hans Eworth Exhibition (London), 1965 (#44).

Selected Literature: See Cat. No. 53.

Inscriptions: [Above, Proper Left] THES BE THE SONES OF THE RIGHTE HONERABLES THERLLE OF LENOXE AND THE LADY MARGARETZ GRACE COVNTYES OF LENOXE AD ANGEWYSE [Above, Center] AN^o DO M.D. LXII [Above, Proper Right] HENRY STEWARDE LORD DANRL. AND DOWGLAS, AETATIS SVAE X [Center, Proper Left] CHARLES STEWARDE HIS BROTHER, AETATIS SVAE VI,

Technical Data: An anonymous note in the files of the Royal Collection, dated 22 March, 1850, indicates that the “picture is in a very bad state” with “many gashes and holes through it” and the “faces entirely repainted.” There are no brands or other marks on the reverse of the picture, nor on its frame.

Attribution: This picture was painted on canvas and is the only extant work on canvas associated with Eworth’s *oeuvre*. It is, as well, the only watercolour work attributed to him.¹ Yet these materials were not unusual for this period among painters working in Antwerp and Mechelen, where canvas and linen

¹ I am grateful to Ms. Jennifer Scott and Mr. Brett Dolman of the Royal Collection for their help in accessing the archives. I am also grateful to James Bloom and Diane Wolfthal for their generous and thoughtful support and advice during the research for this entry.

pictures lower price and portability were desirable, especially among foreign collectors.² Caroline Villiers also notes that “Netherlandish painters...worked on a textured support—the mid-tone beige colour [of the canvas].”³ This may explain why the canvas is clearly visible where portions of the watercolour have been worn away, particularly on the left side of the picture.⁴ It may also explain why the portrait has an overall beigeish-brown tonal quality.

Oliver Millar asserts that the relationship between this portrait and Cat. No. 53 is “somewhat difficult to establish.”⁵ The two portraits do have similarities, among them the nearly identical depiction of the two brothers, including their dress, as well as the virtually identical textual inscriptions.⁶ There are, however, some differences, including the depiction of the brother’s daggers, here, that are absent in No. 53. Here, too, Henry wears a dog whistle and ruby ring, hanging from a black ribbon around his neck, which is missing from No. 53. Millar argues that the slight difference in the faces of Henry and Charles, as seen here, suggest that No. 53 was based upon “fresh sittings.”⁷ However, the faces of the brothers in this picture have been heavily overpainted in oil.⁸ It is possible that

² Niel de Marchi and Hans Van Miegroet, “The Antwerp-Mechelen Production and Export Complex,” in Amy Golahny et al., eds., *In His Milieu: Essays on Netherlandish art in memory of John Michael Montias*, 133-4.

³ Caroline Villiers, “Review,” *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 133, No. 1057 (Apr., 1991), 258.

⁴ Villiers also notes that “...Italians would have painted on a smooth, white ground, much more like a prepared panel.” (Ibid). For more on the history of canvas and linen supports in Netherlandish art see Catherine Reynolds, “The function and display of Netherlandish cloth paintings,” in Caroline Villiers, eds., *Fabric of Images: European Paintings on Textile Supports in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, London: Archetype Books, 2000, 89-98; Charles Eastman, *Methods and Materials of Painting of the Great Schools and Masters*, New York: Dover Publications, 1960, 95-99; and Diane Wolfthall, *The Beginnings of Early Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

⁵ Oliver Millar, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Vol. 1 (Text), London: Phaidon Press, 1963, 68.

⁶ Some of the watercolour and oil paint inscriptions on this picture are significantly repainted; Henry’s age, for example, is given as 10, when he was at least 16 when the portrait was completed.

⁷ Millar, *The Tudor*, 68.

⁸ Although there is now oil paint present on portions of the canvas, without technical studies it is unclear when this was laid on. Still, Netherlandish works on canvas or linen of this period often contain both watercolour and oil (Diana Wolfthal, personal communication, 21 Sept. 2010 and Eastman, *Methods*, 95-6). A visual inspection on 19 June, 2009 indicated that watercolour appears throughout the entire canvas and is laid underneath oil paint in places, particularly on the sitters’ faces and in the inscriptions.

these alterations, more than fresh sittings, are to blame for the facial differences, which include slightly differing hair styles and, in particular, the appearance of Charles proper left eye in No. 53, where it is markedly drooping.

Yet the most singular difference between these works, aside from scale and support, is that of their differing backgrounds. To Charles’ left the corner of a table, covered in a red velvet cloth with gold tassels, is just visible. The stone floor behind them is partially covered in a woven rush mat, although they stand before it on a grey-brown stone floor. They also stand in front of an unembellished wood paneled wall. In spite of its simplicity, however, this paneling is very carefully constructed so that its cross-members provide strategic space for inscriptions. The shape of these vertical and horizontal members also produces a series of smaller double crosses as well as a single, larger cross, perhaps making subtle reference to the Lennox’s religion.⁹

Catholicism was a central theme in the life of Margaret Douglas. Years earlier, in 1547, Henry VIII had removed her from the line of the English succession due to her religion.¹⁰ During the reign of Mary I, however, Margaret developed a close, almost sisterly relationship with the Queen and although her place in the succession was not altered, she was treated as the third highest ranking woman in the realm and allowed free exercise of her religion.¹¹ And during the reign of Edward VI, both Matthew and Margaret retired to their home in Yorkshire where they “harboured Roman Catholic sympathies and did what they could to foster the faith” in England.¹²

⁹ This kind of motif is found in other Eworth portraits, including Eworth’s portraits of Queen Mary I. For more see Cat. No. 9 & 10. For further discussion on this motif also see Joanna Woodall, *Anthonis Mor, Art and Authority*, Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2008, 279-80.

¹⁰ J. Leland, ed. (1770), *Collectanea de Rebus Britannicis*, IV, 399.

¹¹ Douglas was extremely close to Mary I, as both her first cousin as well as one of her closest friends at Court. They were, in fact, separated in age by only a few months and were trusted intimates, particularly when Mary came to the throne; when Mary married Philip II in 1554, it was Margaret Douglas who was her chief gentlewoman and keeper of the Queen’s purse and when she died, Margaret was her chief mourner. See J.S. Brewer et al, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, London 1864-1947, VII, Appendix 13, 634.

¹² Marcus Merriman, ‘Stewart, Matthew, thirteenth or fourth earl of Lennox (1516–1571)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/view/article/26497>, accessed 4 Sept 2010].

Another important and noteworthy difference between this portrait and No. 53 is that of perspective. Here it is somewhat shakily rendered, specifically on the rug-covered floor. The background is tilted precariously forward, toward the viewer, especially on the left side of the picture. In No. 53, however, the perspective is extremely well rendered, especially in the background presumably because Eworth consulted de Vries' *Scenographiae*, a newly published book whose theme was perspective.

Because of this work's condition, and given the lack of a modern technical examination, it is presently impossible to conclusively attribute this work to Eworth's hand.¹³ Still, the style of the inscriptions is certainly correct for Eworth's *oeuvre*. The techniques used in the creation of the picture, which suggest the hand of a Netherlandish painter, as well as the many similarities in the portrayal of the brothers here that are also found in No. 53, argue that, if not by his hand, this picture was created by another Netherlandish artist with whom Eworth had a close association; it may well have been created in his workshop.

Discussion: The early 1560s were a particularly challenging time for the parents of these two young men, Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, and Matthew Stewart, Earl of Lennox. In March 1562, the Earl was imprisoned in the Tower and his wife and two sons were sent to the home of Sir Richard Sackville, at Sheen, there to await the Queen's command.¹⁴ The articles against them, presented in Star Chamber on 7 May of that year, accused them of covertly involving themselves with several members of the Scottish court.¹⁵ The plan they devised, it was claimed, was to arrange the marriage of their son Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley to the Catholic Queen Mary Stuart without the consent of Queen Elizabeth.¹⁶ Margaret was also specifically accused of suggesting to Mary Stuart that by marrying Lord Darnley, he would become

¹³ Such examinations could help in an artist's monogram or other inscriptions, in furthering what is known about the techniques used in the creation of the picture, in determining what sort of oil and watercolour paints were used in their creation, and even, perhaps, in dating those materials. All of these details, when compared with the technical results of secure Eworth pictures, would aid in being more definitive in the attribution of this picture.

¹⁴ Thomas Finlayson Henderson, *Mary, Queen of Scots: her environment and tragedy, a biography*, Vol. 1, London: Haskell House Publishing, 1905, 285. A letter to Lord Cecil from Margaret (14 May, 1562) indicates that their problems began the previous Christmas. See Agnes Strickland, *The Lives of the Queens of Scotland and the Princesses of England*, Vol. 2, New York: Harper and Sons, 1855, 341.

¹⁵ SPD 12/23/f.9: May 7 1562. Articles against Margaret, Countess of Lennox.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

“King of England” and the “two kingdoms would become one.”¹⁷ These were inflammatory accusations and also quite dangerous. If proven true, such allegations may well have ended in their executions.

Throughout the summer and well into the fall, Margaret sent a flurry of letters to Lord Cecil, begging him to intercede with the Queen on behalf of her husband.¹⁸ She also began to complain about his health in the Tower and asked Cecil, as early as July, to release him to Sheen where he could recuperate.¹⁹ Much of the historical record from this period is missing, although Marcus Merriman indicates that the Privy Council fully investigated the allegations against the Earl and his wife and ultimately found them without merit.²⁰ And by late November Lennox had been released from the Tower and returned to his wife and sons at Sheen.²¹

Although there is no documentary evidence of the source of this work's patronage, the date, subject, and inscriptions suggest that the Earl and/or Countess of Lennox are the most likely candidates. In the early 1560s they were deeply involved in efforts to re-acquire their Scottish holdings and some of the inscriptions on this portrait, which are nearly identical to those found in No. 53, make direct reference to Scottish titles associated with these holdings. 1562 was also a fearful year for Margaret and her family and, as such, certainly a time when they would have turned to their faith for solace and deliverance. It was also during this year that the boys were under house arrest with Margaret and, later, with their father, providing an opportunity for the creation of a full-length portrait of the family's pride and hope for the future.²²

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Margaret sent Cecil letters from Sheen on 10 July, 24 July, 22 August, 23 October, and 25 October. See Robert Lemon, eds. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: Edward VI, Mary I, Elizabeth I, (1547-1580)*, London: Longman & Brown, 1856, 200-212.

¹⁹ *Op cit.* 24 July, 1562.

²⁰ Marcus Merriman, 'Stewart, Matthew,' accessed 6 August 2010.

²¹ Robert Lemon, eds. *Calendar of State*, 205, 24 November, 1562.

²² Roy Strong has suggested that, in light of the portable nature of canvas, this picture was meant as a gift for Mary Stuart. There is, however, no evidence that any portrait of Henry Stewart was presented to the Queen prior to their meeting in Scotland in June, 1565. And given the events of 1562, and with so many eyes upon their every move, it is unlikely that Matthew Lennox or Margaret Douglas would have sent such a large portrait to Queen Mary where it would have been noticed by, among others, Elizabeth's ambassador Thomas Randolph. A letter dated 31, March 1562, also made note of the fact that Queen Mary “likes not the marriage with Lord Darnley.” See SPD 52/7/f. 31r.