

XXIV.—*Further Observations on the Portraits of Arthur Prince of Wales, by*  
*GEORGE SCHARF, Esq. F.S.A.: in a Letter to JOHN BRUCE, Esq. F.S.A.*

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Read June 20, 1861.

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National Portrait Gallery,  
 June 13th, 1861.

DEAR MR. BRUCE,

The interest which you so kindly took in the communication that I made to the Society at the beginning of the present year<sup>a</sup> upon the portrait at Windsor Castle, presumed to represent Prince Arthur, eldest son of Henry VII., induces me to address this letter to you. I do so the more willingly as it enables me to state the result of a few investigations begun at your suggestion, and also to acknowledge the liberal assistance I received from various sources whilst prosecuting my researches.

In furtherance of these views you kindly called my attention to two other portraits, designated Prince Arthur; one of them formerly at Strawberry Hill, and the second mentioned by Sir Henry Ellis as being at Wroxton Abbey, and "very fine."

The first of these is described in Walpole's Catalogue of the Strawberry Hill collection, as "Arthur Prince of Wales and Katharine of Arragon, on board, in the original frame, a present from Colonel Myddelton of Denbighshire, in which county it had remained from the date of the Prince's death." It was afterwards No. 79, page 201, of the Sale Catalogue in 1842; but I cannot trace its history further than ascertaining that it was sold to Mr. Rodd for the sum of six guineas. My research respecting the other picture at Strawberry Hill has been attended with much more satisfactory results. This was a small drawing in water-colours and catalogued in the same day's sale, page 200, No. 56, "A small portrait of Arthur Prince of Wales;" it was purchased by the late Earl of Derby for £4 14s.

I therefore wrote to the present Earl inquiring whether his Lordship remembered such a drawing at Knowsley, and I received the welcome announcement in reply that it had been sent up to London for the purpose of affording me the advantage of a careful inspection.

The drawing is now by Lord Derby's kind permission exhibited before the Society,

<sup>a</sup> Archæologia, Vol. XXXIX. p. 245.

and the careful engraving in the accompanying plate will give a very exact idea of its merits. (See Plate xx.)

The following memoranda appear on the back of the frame in the handwriting of Horace Walpole.

Arthur Prince of Wales, copied by E. Edwards, 1781, from the original that was at Mr. Sheldon's, of Weston, Warwickshire, and now Mr. Child's, at Osterley Park, Middlesex.

But it is more probably Henry Duke of Richmond, natural son of Henry Eighth, whose original portrait in miniature in the library at Strawberry Hill it much resembles, and not at all the portrait of Prince Arthur with Catherine of Arragon in the yellow bed-chamber in the same house, and which came out of Denbighshire, where it had remained from the time of the prince's death.—H. W.\*

On the back of the paper itself is inscribed:

The original in the possession of R. Child, Esq., bought from Mr. Sheldon's at Weston.  
33½ inches high by 23 inches, size of the picture.

Having thus obtained so direct a clue, I was naturally anxious to gain access to the original picture, and ascertained that it was still in the possession of the Dowager Countess of Jersey, but that it had been removed from Osterley to Middleton Park, Oxfordshire. I gladly availed myself of a permission granted for an inspection, and proceeded by the first opportunity to Middleton Park.

I found it to be a large round-headed painting, on old oak panel, corresponding in size with the portrait of Wolsey now in the National Portrait Gallery, and which had also come originally from Weston. Another picture of similar shape and proportions, representing Walter Devereux Earl of Essex, and formerly at Weston, is likewise at Middleton Park. The Prince Arthur portrait has evidently gone through the usual vicissitudes of cleaning and restoration. I feel, indeed, firmly convinced that the surface has been entirely repainted. These changes appear to have taken place subsequently to 1781, when Edwards took his copy in water-colours.

Under these circumstances I would consider the drawing in Lord Derby's possession as of greater real value than the original panel picture as it now stands; since, judging by internal evidence, Edwards's copy must have been very accurate. Many parts which have now disappeared from the original picture are carefully retained in his water-colour drawing. The pattern of the diaper on the background, and the name PRINCE ARTVR, have entirely disappeared.<sup>b</sup> The pattern on

\* The miniature here referred to is now the property of C. S. Bale, Esq. It has been engraved in Harding's Biographical Mirror. Very little reliance can be placed on the genuineness either of this portrait or the inscription round it.

<sup>b</sup> For further notes on this picture see Appendix C.



ARTHUR PRINCE OF WALES.

*from a drawing by F. Edwards.*

*Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1865.*

the sleeve and mantle corresponds pretty closely with that in Edwards's copy, but it has evidently been worked upon by some ignorant painter, who combined opposite colours in such a way as to effect what is technically called "backlining," producing such a style as would never be met with in works of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The hands in particular are clumsily repainted, and all traces of the original modelling have been destroyed. No gilding whatever appears on the portrait. The colours in the water-colour picture are unfortunately faded by continued exposure to light, but their relative degrees and the general tone of the picture seem to have been faithfully preserved. There can, I think, be very little reasonable doubt that this picture was from the first intended to represent Prince Arthur. The objection raised by Horace Walpole, and recorded on the back of his copy, is at once met by the striking difference of costume observable between a young nobleman of the reign of Henry VII. and one of the reign of Henry VIII. and by the fact of the picture from Denbighshire, to which he specially refers, having fallen at once into obscurity, at the Strawberry Hill sale, for the paltry sum of £6. 6s.

Mr. John Gough Nichols, F.S.A., has been good enough to send me a few notes on the so-called portraits of Prince Arthur; but these notes do not include any of pictures, beyond those which have already been mentioned. He however shewed me a carefully executed little miniature, in his own collection, by G. P. Harding, that had evidently been copied from some original portrait.\* Mr. Harding had written the name "Prince Arthur" at the back; but unfortunately gave no clue to the original picture from which his copy was taken. On comparing this miniature with the picture now at Middleton, several points of near resemblance present themselves, and striking differences and omissions are also observable. The sword is entirely omitted from the left hand; notwithstanding which the fingers retain the same cramped attitude. The flower held in his right hand is changed from a pink or carnation into the head of a dandelion running to seed, or puff-ball. The background in the miniature is a deep rich blue colour, quite flat and without pattern. The face is rounder and fuller than in the other pictures, and the hair is of a rich deep brown, tending in this respect to confirm the presumed portrait at Windsor, of which an engraving has appeared in the *Archæologia*, Vol. XXXIX. Pl. xiv. I rather infer that this miniature has been taken from some rude old repetition of Lady Jersey's picture (for many adherents of the Tudors must have possessed portraits of the heir apparent of those days), in which the delicacies and pains-

\* See Appendix B.

taking of the better masters, such as Mabuse, Holbein, and others, were clumsily imitated and only too frequently perverted.<sup>a</sup>

The other portrait of Prince Arthur, referred to by Sir Henry Ellis, who found an incidental reference in the notes of Sir William Musgrave to a portrait of the Prince, is thus mentioned: "Arthur son of Hen. VII. at Wroxton—very fine."

Sir William Musgrave's MS. volumes, containing an enumeration of royal portraits, were bequeathed to the British Museum in 1799. Upon obtaining this reference to Wroxton Abbey, I at once sought the assistance of Colonel North, and received permission to examine the collection. No portrait however, whether bearing that name or seemingly intended for the prince, was to be found. After going through the whole collection, I met with only one picture which appeared to me in any way likely to have been connected with the name of Prince Arthur. It now hangs on the staircase, and represents King Henry VII. at an earlier period of life than any other portrait which I remember to have seen of that monarch. It is a genuine old picture; but, even here, the age of the person represented appears to be considerably beyond that at which Prince Arthur died. The face is very round and plump, and may be regarded as a very rare and curious portrait of King Henry.

These further investigations strengthen my conviction that the portrait at Windsor Castle is really a representation of Prince Arthur the elder brother of Henry VIII. It certainly is remarkable that no other authenticated portrait of him is at present known to exist in the Royal Collection, and of all places Windsor Castle is the one where such a portrait would most probably be found.

Believe me yours ever faithfully,

GEORGE SCHARF.

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## APPENDIX A.

Since communicating the foregoing paper I have met with another royal portrait professing to represent Prince Arthur. On the 26th of August, 1864, a picture was pointed out to me at Buckingham Palace, as representing "Prince Arthur, Prince Henry, and Princess Margaret, children of Henry VII." A single glance sufficed to satisfy me that the picture belonged to a much later period, and was very different, in point of costume, from persons flourishing at the close of the fifteenth century. The arrangement of the picture was very peculiar, consisting of three oval medallions placed side by side, each containing the portrait of a child dressed according to the

<sup>a</sup> This opinion has since been modified, as will be seen by a reference to Appendix B.

fashion of the early part of the seventeenth century, the reign of James I. One child only, in the left-hand medallion, was a boy. The two girls were distinguished by wearing white laced skull-caps, and tuckers edged also with lace. All three wore stiff flat wired bands, and looked exceedingly formal. At the top of the picture, in the centre, were two large roses placed side by side, the left one red, and the other white. Notwithstanding an inscription, written very conspicuously on the frame, stating that they were the children of King Henry VII., I at once recognised the picture as one that had belonged to King Charles I., and had been accurately described in Vander Doort's Catalogue. These children are the nephew and nieces of Charles I., being the son and daughter of the Palatine princes, the King and Queen of Bohemia. The entry in Vander Doort's Catalogue runs thus:

No. 72, p. 122. "Item, The picture wherein is painted the red and white rose above the Palsgrave's three first-born children at Heydelberch, being only heads in three several oval places. In an all over gilded frame. Brought from Heydelberg and given to King James by Sir Henry Wotton." Vertue adds, "Now at Kensington, over a chimney."

The picture so clearly pertains to the Palatine family that scarcely anything remains to be said on the subject. It is only to be regretted that such instances of misapplied names as this paper incidentally refers to, were ever tolerated by those in charge of the pictures belonging to the Crown.

A glaring instance of careless statement, even in direct opposition to a prominent inscription, including dates on the picture itself, has been for many years suffered to remain uncontested in the Queen's Gallery at Hampton Court Palace. Two pictures, called "Queen Mary when a child," and "Queen Elizabeth when a child, by Holbein," have naturally attracted considerable attention from the general mass of visitors. The dates are certainly not easy for casual visitors to read at once, because they are carried in a curve round the oval bordering which incloses the portrait. But with a small amount of care they can be very satisfactorily made out. The costume of these children, who are evidently sisters, from the prevalence of ruffs, and from a certain peculiarity of braiding, clearly belongs to a period subsequent to the date when Mary and Elizabeth were children. The countenances also exhibit somewhat of a foreign character. Even the Christian names as well as the dates inscribed on the pictures do not closely agree with those belonging to the Sovereigns quoted in the Hampton Court Catalogue. They run thus:—

No. 282 of the Palace Catalogue. "Maria Christiani Aetatis suæ 3, Mencis 9. 1578."

No. 281 of the Palace Catalogue. "Elizabeta Aetatis suæ 1, Mencis 5, anno Domini 1578."

It is quite clear that these inscriptions cannot refer either to our Queen Elizabeth, who ascended the throne in 1558, or to her sister Mary, born 1515, and married to Philip of Spain in 1554; a glance however at the historical tables of the principal reigning families of Europe will readily indicate the personages really intended. We thereby ascertain beyond all question that *Mary Christierna*, daughter of the Archduke Charles, who was born November 10th, 1574, and *Elizabeth* her sister, born March 13th, 1577, and died January 1586, were the ladies whose portraits have been so singularly misrepresented.<sup>a</sup> It is a matter of satisfaction to learn that Mr. Redgrave, the

<sup>a</sup> They were of the imperial house of Austria, and sisters of Margaret, who married Philip III. King of Spain. Mary Christina married Sigismund Batthori, Prince of Transylvania, August 1595; and died without issue April 1621.—See Anderson's *Royal Genealogies and Tables*, p. 463, and *Histoire Généalogique des Maisons souveraines de l'Europe*, vol. ii. pp. 130 and 136. (Maison d'Habsbourg-Autriche.)

present Keeper of Her Majesty's pictures, has undertaken to prepare a careful catalogue of all the various works of art committed to his charge, and we may rest confident that his knowledge and habitual spirit of careful investigation, working by the aid of a photographic reduction of every picture, may yet rectify many errors and tend to elicit many curious facts, so as to establish still further identifications of personages in whom the historical student finds a particular interest.

## APPENDIX B.

### NOTE TO PAGE 459.

An old picture on panel, and in all probability the only existing remains of the original from which Mr. Harding took his miniature, was recently offered to the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery. The panel, independently of the frame, measured 1 ft. 10½ in. by 1 ft. 5½ in.

The general form and composition of the original picture seem to have been left undisturbed; but every portion of the colours is a recent addition by some ignorant and comparatively modern hand. The appearance of the picture, both in colour and general forms, corresponded exactly with that of the miniature exhibited by Mr. Nichols.

The boyish face in both pictures has long brown hair, arched eyebrows, and grey eyes. A black cap with gold jewel on it, gold brocade robe, edged with fur and slashed at the sleeve, over a dark red vest, compose the costume. His right hand in the panel picture held a white flower made to resemble something between the puff-ball of the dandelion and the pink or carnation, with long petals, and the fingers of the left hand rested on the front edge of the picture. The name PRINCE . ARTHVR appears in yellow capitals (once gilded) in the upper part of the very dark brown background. Nothing hardly could exceed the very rude sign-board painting of the larger picture; although it was still obvious that the daubster had done his best to maintain the design of the original picture.

This unsatisfactory performance was rejected by the Trustees in February 1864. The person who offered the picture for sale declined absolutely to give any information of the source from which he had received it, or to afford any reference to its former possessors.

## APPENDIX C.

### NOTE TO PAGE 458.

The large portrait of Prince Arthur, removed from Osterley to Middleton Park, and originally at Weston, is so important in an historical point of view that I venture to offer a few more detailed and technical observations on it.

Painted on panel, with an arched top, life-size; the figure seen nearly half-length. The eyebrows and eyes are of a warm dark grey, the flesh shaded very blue in the middle tints. The red on cheeks consists of two patches of pink placed very low down, and on a line with the nostrils. The lips are

deep solid vermilion. The modelling of the features is very defective. No gold is employed on any part of the picture. The jewels on the cap and the swordhandle are daubed over with Naples yellow. All the precious stones are black and mingled with pearls. The string round the neck is black; the shirt grey, with white lines on it. The under-vest crimson with vermilion-red lights, and edged with a broad border of very dark yellow ochre patterned with black rings on it. The sleeves of the outer garment are of dark-yellow ochre, patterned with dark indian-red lines, *backlined* in the clumsiest manner with bright vermilion. The flower held in his hand (whether a pink or carnation) is white, with a red ring, and grey cross in the centre of it. The two projecting stamens are white. The blade of the sword is of steel, and the gold ring on his little finger has a red stone. The ring on the other hand carries a black stone pyramidally cut. The fur trimming to the dress is very dark brown. The background is dark, and all indications of pattern have disappeared. Even the inscription "Prince Artur" is no longer traceable. The name of "Prince Arthur by Mabuse 1502" appears separately on a modern tablet appended to the new gilt frame. The chesnut-brown hair appears lighter than the intensely dark colour of the background. The cleft on the chin and a furrow between the eyebrows are stronger in this picture than in the watercolour copy by Edwards. The face, taken altogether, seems considerably thinner.

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