'Annihilated in His Presence': Legitimacy and Use of Images by Second-Generation Monarchs in the Royal Portraits of Henry VIII, James II, and George II

Amber Anna Colvin

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‘ANNIHILATED IN HIS PRESENCE’: LEGITIMACY AND USE OF IMAGES BY SECOND–GENERATION MONARCHS IN THE ROYAL PORTRAITS OF HENRY VIII, JAMES II, AND GEORGE II

by

Amber Anna Colvin

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Abstract


This dissertation seeks to compare the ways in which Henry VIII, James II, and George II, along with their families, used their images to react and respond to challenges to their legitimacy and rule. I argue that these kings used images in a way unique to the early modern period – a time in which the search for legitimate authority was a primary concern – and that they can represent continuity and change in how legitimacy was represented and the early modern period as a whole, a period generally understood as roughly spanning roughly 1500 – 1800 CE in Europe. I also contend that they were in unique situations as “second–generation monarchs” who came to the throne as the second monarch in a dynasty after a major political, religious, societal, or cultural (or all four) upheaval that threatened the very institution of the monarchy in Britain. The ways in which these kings and their families used image – including portraits, personal representations, collecting, and patronage – speak to their needs as second–generation monarchs and their intense concern with their image and legitimacy.

I will be examining a wide variety of images, along with selected texts, to show that a comparison of these kings and their families does more than tell a story about them as individuals. Rather, Henry VIII, James II, and George II demonstrate the power of the monarch and the royal family in the early modern period, about the power – real and imagined, perceived and actual – of the women surrounding the throne, about how we conceptualize the institution of the English monarchy, and how we can understand three vastly different eras, kings, reigns, and families through the way they used, and were forced to use, cultural politics.
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Chapter One: Introduction

In 1604, Karel Van Mander, a visitor to Whitehall, once the primary court of Henry VIII, reported that, when faced with the larger than life Whitehall Mural by Hans Holbein the Younger, “the king as he stood there, majestic in his splendor, was so lifelike that the spectator felt abashed, annihilated in his presence.”¹ In the late–seventeenth century, at James II’s French Stuart court in exile, Saint–Germain–en–Laye, a portrait of the exiled king and queen, “occupied an entire wall in James VII and II’s antechamber and was so positioned that it confronted any visitor to the court who was allowed beyond the king’s guard chamber.”² Sir Godfrey Kneller, court painter for several kings and their families, once described a portrait of a queen which was so large it had to be, “set up in an afternoon when the Hall is empty of any people” as, “the scaffolding should be ready before” the painting’s arrival.³ In the mid–eighteenth century, George II’s wife, Queen Caroline of Ansbach, found Holbein’s portrait drawings of Tudor monarchs and nobles, lost since the reign of James II, in a bureau at Kensington Palace. She had the sketches framed and hung in her personal rooms, where they were on display for her inner court and visitors as a reminder that her family, the Hanoverians, were the rightful successors to the larger–than–life hero of English Protestantism and epitome of “Englishness,” Henry VIII – however skewed their perception of that monarch was, however tenuous their relationship.


² Edward Corp, The King over the Water: Portraits of the Stuarts in exile after 1689 (Edinburgh: Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 2001), 35. This painting, by Pierre Mignard, measures 247 cm x 293 cm, and is currently held in a private collection. A smaller modello (46 cm x 80 cm) is held in the Royal Collection. See Plate 43.

³ Sir Godfrey Kneller, Letters and financial papers of Sir Godfrey Kneller (London: National Art Library, Victoria & Albert Museum, NAL Special Collections 86.OO.16). Although the specific queen is unfortunately not specified due to the lack of date and the broad range of the collection, it could have been Mary of Modena, Mary II, or Anne.
This dissertation seeks to compare the ways in which Henry VIII, James II, and George II, along with their families, used their images to react and respond to challenges to their legitimacy and rule. Although they have not been compared directly in any thorough way before, I argue that these kings and their families used images in a way unique to the early modern period – a time in which the search for legitimate authority was a primary concern – and that they can serve as important case studies for the continuity and change, as well as the search for legitimacy, taking place during the period. This was a time of immense change in Britain, Europe, and the world, and these kings represent it in important ways. I also contend that they were in unique situations as “second-generation monarchs” who came to the throne as the second monarch in a dynasty after a major political, religious, societal, or cultural upheaval – or a combination of these crises – that threatened the very institution of the monarchy in Britain. The ways in which these kings and their families used images – including portraits, personal representations, collecting, and patronage – speak to their needs as second-generation monarchs and their intense concern with representing their legitimacy. Comparing monarchical self-representation in the early modern period, at the beginning with Henry VIII, the middle with James II, and the end of the period with George II, allows for a new way to see and frame their reigns and the time period as a whole.

In the following chapters, I will be examining a wide variety of images, along with selected texts, to show that a comparison of these kings and their families does more than tell a story about them as individuals. Rather, Henry VIII, James II, and George II tell a story about continuity and change, the power of the monarch and the royal family in the early modern period, about the power – real and imagined, perceived and actual – of the women surrounding the throne, about how we conceptualize the institution of the British monarchy, and how we can
understand three vastly different eras, kings, reigns, and families through the way they used, and were forced to use, cultural politics.

British kings have long been a source of fascination. Their images hold us in sway, awe-inspiring and overwhelming, reminders of a time gone by that we can safely long for, guarded by 500 years of space and time. Historical fiction, romance novels, musicals, time travel television and movies – much of it returns, naturally, to early modern England and Europe in general. My own name comes from a book about a courtesan in Charles II’s court, and the number of historical or quasi-historical works grows every year. But beyond the popular stories, images of these kings and their families are especially telling for historians looking to further understand the early modern period in England and in Europe in general. Henry VIII (b. 1492 – d. 1547), James II (b. 1633 – d. 1701), and George II (b. 1683 – d. 1760) lived and reigned in different centuries and, in some ways, very different Great Britains (and worlds). Rarely compared and distantly related, on the surface these kings have little that makes their reigns worth discussing in the same paper. They each had problems and opportunities unique to their reign, and their families were as varied as any families are.

And yet, I contend that they should be compared. Each king was a second-generation monarch, coming a king after a major – and, in some cases, violent – upheaval in the monarchy and general order of things. Each dealt with revolt and rebellion. Each had marital or family issues that seemed to threaten their reign, whether that threat was real or simply perceived. Moving from Henry to George, an entire age is born, grows, and passes away in England, an age

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4 It will become clear in the following pages that they were also fascinated with each other, with George II and Caroline hearkening back to their (very distant) Tudor lineage in order to prove they were “English” and “British.”

that has fascinated and frustrated historians. And through it all, images were used by each king and their families, to varying degrees, to establish, maintain, and grow their power and legitimacy.

Kevin Sharpe notes that, “The authority of monarchy in early modern England was not founded on any new institutional or military developments. The business of government was the art of securing compliance...compliance depended to a large extent on images and changes in the perceptions of authority.” For Henry VIII, James II, and George II, this statement absolutely rings true. This work is not meant to upend centuries of English history or create comparisons where none can or should be made. Instead, I have one primary question that I believe a comparison of images of these kings and their families can shed further light on for future studies on and a more nuanced understanding of monarchical representation. How (and why) did these particular kings and their families, as second–generation monarchs, represent themselves to create, shore up, and continue their own legitimacy and the legitimacy of their dynastic family?

First, as mentioned, these kings were second–generation monarchs, the second kings in a dynasty, tasked with maintaining and growing the dynastic ambitions of their predecessor while simultaneously creating their own image and laying a foundation for (hopefully) future generations of Tudors, Stuarts, or Hanoverians. Failure? Not an option. But fail – and succeed – they did, and the similarities are more striking than the differences. This definition creates a framework for comparison, and certainly narrows down my field of inquiry, but it also allows for a very particular type of study. In many ways, these kings were the most susceptible to the challenges facing a king in early modern England. They were not new and novel, but not established and ensconced in history (however mythical that history may be). All three, more

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6 Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, xxv.
than any other English kings during this time period, faced challenges to their legitimate authority and suffered from the chaotic nature of the time.

In addition to the fact that they are unique representatives of their age, there is a practical consideration to this comparison as well. All three kings have been written about extensively (if somewhat unevenly, as I will discuss) and have hundreds of thousands of archival sources, images, documents, and artifacts available. It would take an historian several lifetimes to collect it all, much less write about it. Luckily, many have come before me, writing about the images, the documents, the concepts that are so important to understand. My framework of second–generation monarchs will also allow me to sift through the primary sources and tell a larger story from a unique perspective while showing that there was both change and continuity over the early modern period, as evidenced by these kings and their families.

Second, I take representation and image to mean several things. I am primarily interested in the images themselves – a picture is worth a thousand words, as they say – but also in the growth of collecting, the roles of royal women as both subjects and collectors, the ways in which the monarchy manufactured glorious pasts and connections through images. Of particular importance to me are the roles of royal women at court, and how these roles changed as women moved further from being primarily “relational” women to collectors and patrons in their own right. While I will discuss the use of images more fully below, including their use as “text” for the purposes of this dissertation, they will be an essential part of the methodology I will use here.

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7 It is worth noting here that women at the beginning of the early modern period, like Henry’s wives, and certainly like the powerful noble women who lived in Tudor England, were almost certainly patrons and collectors, but did so less publicly and with perhaps less impact, although the lack of knowledge we now have about how much power they possessed could stem from a lack of sources, of their participation in the “public sphere,” or any other number of things. For the women I discuss here, true comparison is difficult, but understanding their influence is crucial.
Finally, as part of my central question, attention must be paid to external political, social, and cultural factors outside the monarchy, even outside of England and Great Britain. For Henry, one of the most recognizable British monarchs, pressure from France, the Catholic Church, and problematic nobles, not to mention his inability to father a male heir, added to the pressure already created by his dynastic status. James, one of the most ignored kings, had familial problems that rival modern sitcom plots, an incredibly powerful cousin who helped and hurt in equal measure from France, and religious loyalties that indirectly resulted in his exile/abdication. And George, overshadowed by his grandson George III, was pulled and pushed throughout his reign by his dual role as king and Hanoverian elector, by the Jacobite rebellions, and, as it seems is becoming a theme, his complicated family. These factors are crucial to understanding the images of the royal family, but also to understanding the period as a whole. Although it is dangerous to create causal connections, these internal and external issues must be discussed and should be a part of the larger question.

Outline and Approach

As with any work that compares, contrasts, and follows change over time, my approach is important to understand. Although it is impossible to use exactly the same sources and data for each king and his family, and they lived in vastly different worlds in many ways, a consistent approach has helped to organize the vast and varying sources, data, and situations discussed here in order to make my larger argument, that these kings and their families faced unique challenges as second–generation monarchs, and that those challenges – and opportunities – informed their visual representation reactions to various incidents during their lives.

First, I begin with a chapter about the early modern world – with a focus on England and Great Britain – to give context on the time period and the world in which these monarchs and
their families lived. This chapter will dive deeper into what early modern means, how I see Henry and George as bookends of the period in England (with James as a turning point in many ways), and how historians have generally discussed the period and representations of the monarchy. I will also discuss changing representations – and changing realities – of the family, the body, and marriage, as well as the evolving practices of patronage, collecting, and antiquarianism. It is important to also note that the early modern period saw immense changes in art – everything from materials to production to styles – so context is crucial for understanding not only how we can read art as text, but also, and maybe more importantly, how these monarchs and their families understood the art that surrounded and represented them.

Next, I will discuss each king and their family in turn, moving basically chronologically, through six parallel chapters. I will begin discussion of each king with a chapter that focuses on a short biography of each king’s early life and, where appropriate, the lives of his family or wives, and the state of the world and their court as it existed during their minorities. In these chapters, I will also discuss the historiography that surrounds each king and his reign. In a second chapter on each king, I will then look at individual and family portraits of the king and his family, describing and analyzing the images through the lens of second-generation monarch status and the specific challenges faced by each king. Here I will show that, in a general sense, images and actions concerning representation correlate with challenges to the legitimacy of the king or events that challenged the monarchy in some way, and that each of these kings was actively using the image of the royal family to push their political and cultural agendas from the difficult position of second-generation monarchs. It is important to note that I am not implying direct causation between crises and images – images were not necessarily direct responses to crises. In addition, in these chapters I will look at activities like collecting, patronage, the creation of
dedicated art spaces, medals, and garden and home design – these are all ways beyond the portrait that monarchs and their families interacted with art and images, particularly for royal women. Lastly, I will conclude each case study chapter with a brief summary and look forward to the next king.

Finally, I will conclude with a return to my original question. How did these particular kings and their families, as second–generation monarchs, represent themselves, and what does a comparative study of that representation say about changes – and continuities – in the British monarchy and the ways they represented and understood their legitimacy (and challenges to it) during the early modern period? I will also, in my conclusion, draw some final connections between early modern monarchy and the celebrity of the monarchy today, and propose further areas of study.

My approach for looking at and analyzing images – a medium I will address more fully in the following chapter – consists of several steps. First, when choosing images, I’ve included images that are representative of the king or the royal family, and that correspond roughly to challenges, changes, or events in the lives of that family. For example, the Whitehall Mural was painted shortly after Jane Seymour’s death (and perhaps begun before), a major event in Henry VIII’s reign. I’ve also chosen to analyze images that show major events or symbolism that speaks to the king’s power and challenges to that power, or to the power they wished to convey. I have purposefully, for the most part, eschewed “popular” images that were almost certainly out of the control of the king and court, such as engravings, woodcuts, and prints, although I have included a few particularly illustrative examples.

Next, I will describe the images themselves, noting any relevant details about the subjects, artist, time period, and style. I have included most of the images discussed as well, but a
discussion of the symbolism in each image can be useful. I will also, where able, provide an overview of the artist and provenance, both of which are important as well. After this, I will discuss texts surrounding the image – letters, commissions, mentions of the painting or image – and how those textual sources enhance our understanding of the image’s use, purpose, and meaning. Finally, I will note any political or cultural events that might have influenced the creation of the image, or that the image may speak to, whether directly or indirectly. These steps may not always occur in order, but I have endeavored to look at each image in a logical, consistent manor while still acknowledging that each image – and each family – is different. In addition, although it doesn’t fit squarely with the images in most cases, any discussion of images in the early modern period must include at least a cursory discussion of antiquarianism and the art of collecting.

**Conclusion**

Here, I will leave readers with a story that, in many ways, illuminates the opportunities, challenges, and joys of this research. In 2014, I was researching at the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, Connecticut. As many students of history can understand, I was at the end of a long day, trying to read but not trying to get into a major new project or research avenue so late in the afternoon. My last document request of the day was going to be, I was sure, a disappointment. Titled “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ's Hospital, circa 1837,” it had James’ name, but being from 1837, I didn’t have much hope for anything particularly useful. Opening the letter, struggling with the nineteenth-century handwriting, my head began to spin. It described, in great detail, a painter painting James II’s head onto Charles II’s body after Charles’ unexpected death in 1685 – *at James’s request*. A nearly completed portrait of the late king was altered; Charles’ head was “obliterated” from the
painting, and his younger brother, the new king James II, was painted in instead.\footnote{Multiple authors, \textit{Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ's Hospital}, ca. 1837, pen and ink with wax seals, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize.} I will discuss this letter and portrait in much greater detail later, but my hope, dear reader, is that in addition to gaining knowledge and seeing the connections between these kings and their need for legitimacy and representations of that legitimacy in my argument, that at least once in this work, you find a moment, an image, an argument, that makes you catch your breath and, for a moment, feel more than an academic connection with these people and their lives, dead and gone though they are.
Chapter One:

The Early Modern World, Images, and Second–Generation Monarchs

England, Great Britain, and what would become the United Kingdom – and for that matter, the whole of Europe, and much of the world – was a chaotic place during the early modern period, the time period falling roughly between 1500 and 1800. There were substantial changes in culture, science, religion, technology, and politics. Images, particularly portraiture, grew in importance, and were representative of all the changes taking place. These three kings and their families used images of themselves in unique ways that spoke to this unique time and to their very specific circumstances, and the world they lived in was vastly different from our own. My major questions about these three kings and how they, as second–generation monarchs, represented themselves, and what that representation and my comparison says about the changes and continuities in the English monarchy during the early modern period, and my argument that these kings used images in specific ways, with very specific reactions to challenges to their rule, should be put in context of the early modern world and its major struggle, the search for legitimate authority. Particularly for readers less familiar with the early modern world and its history, general comments and discussion about the time period and the ways in which historians have studied it may be useful here.

Why Images?

This is a work of history, but images – and the documents, events, people, artists, and subject that surround and create them – can be important primary sources and, in many cases,
can be read much like texts to create a lens through which to view the past.\footnote{Although I am an historian, and this is a history dissertation, a large part of my sources, as I will discuss, are pieces of visual art. Art history examines the aesthetics, artists, the art pieces themselves, and the major movements in art, using the study of history to understand the art people have created. I, however, am less concerned with the aesthetics of art and major movements in art history – although there are some connections, and certainly a background in this type of work has been useful – and rather more concerned with reading art to understand how historical figures portrayed themselves, how they saw their world, and what they wanted to world to see in turn. It is a subtle difference, but an important one.} Images, and the collection of those images, are complicated things, but can tell us so much about the people in them, the people who collected them, and the ways in which they both saw themselves and wanted others to see them, as well as who those “others” were, and why they mattered. Portraiture in particular was produced for very specific reasons and captures both a moment in time and an idealized image over a longer period of time. Although it may seem like looking at pictures is an easy way to examine my central questions – and it is an admittedly enjoyable way – images can also tell us things text doesn’t, can support – or deny – what text does, and can add to the knowledge we already have. While there are many records and documents surrounding the commissioning, collecting, and patronage of art and artists, those written documents are often incomplete, brief, focused on cost versus purpose, or assume a level of knowledge that contemporaries would have had, but which we do not. There are also images that have assumptions but no firm evidence surrounding their commission, that have letters and memoirs written about them by court gossips, that have letters written decades after their creation about what they may have meant, or that have no provenance at all.

Images are, in fact, in some ways more difficult to read than text. They have the opaque imagery of sermons, the veiled meaning of poetry, the mystery of a document from the past – but with eyes, sometimes familiar, sometimes unknown, staring at us while we interpret the meaning of every symbol, every pose, every nuance or glance or gesture. We stare at the people in images, and they stare back, challenging and convincing us to understand and accept the fiction.
they are selling. When reading a text, one might imagine – as a professor of mine once said he imagined his grad students doing – that the author was writing by a dim light, in a leather chair, surrounded by books and drinking whisky, with a dog curled sleepily at their feet. When reading a painting, the reader plays the part of voyeur, watching the painter and the subject, the setting, the discussions before and during and after, seeing a moment as well as a memory.

The form of painting, as a type of art, is important. As T.J. Clark notes, “One thing that makes…painting interesting…is that usually it is done slowly.”\textsuperscript{10} He continues that, “Even if paintings partly pretend to keep up with the poster’s or the photograph’s hard instantaneity…they expect the viewer to know that the effect is make–believe, and to savor the dissonance between a painting’s intractable means and its casual, available overall look.”\textsuperscript{11} Painting, and an image that is not instantaneous, creates an illusion – the key is that both sides of the equation are party to the trick. Clifford Geertz rightly points out that, “all political authority requires…a ‘cultural frame’ or ‘master fiction’ in which to define itself and make its claims.”\textsuperscript{12} This cultural frame creates a reality through perception; perception of what is real, rather than what is actually taking place, can be crucial to understanding a time period, events, or even people. Perception is especially important when studying art and representation. As Margaret Aston argues in her study of an early modern allegorical painting of Edward VI, art can both

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\textsuperscript{11} T.J. Clark, \textit{The Painting of Modern Life}, xix.
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supplement and clarify textual sources. Aston goes on to discuss her use of images as sources, noting that, “pictures are sometimes like documents, conveying messages about the events or people they delineate.”

In early modern Britain, “printed images were ubiquitous.” However, as Michael Hunter also argues, despite their broad appeal and the fact that images, “served a multiplicity of purposes in people’s lives,” it is still the case that, “by comparison with the texts with which they are often juxtaposed, the printed images that have come down to us from early modern Britain have until recently been surprisingly neglected.” The visual is connected to the textual, but despite this interweaving of meanings, interpretations, and purposes, visual images and material culture objects – not to mention the act of collecting and how historical figures like antiquarians, as well as the families discussed here, perceived and collected images – have not received the same attention from historians, rather being left to the very different (but still important) skill sets of art historians. People have, “lived in close proximity to images created by earlier generations,” for almost all of human history, yet, “serious historians showed themselves to be increasingly reluctant to use the evidence offered by art or artefacts when trying to interpret the past,” according to Francis Haskell. Haskell goes on to note that while historians have often been the subject of disdain for using images and iconography as historical documents, art has,

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14 Aston, *The King’s Bedpost*, 1.


many times, been created with exactly that purpose in mind – while the portraits and images I deal with here were certainly works of vanity, political clout, and so much more, they were also fundamentally created to capture a moment in time, often replete with symbolism, and show it to others. Whether those “others” saw it that day or 500 years later, art can, and should, still be used as historical documents.

Why is the art of early modern period so important – not just for this dissertation, but as a tool to study the time period? Art, according to Hugh Trevor–Roper, “has many functions,” and in the early modern period, art functioned as yet another way of ordering the world.\(^{18}\) Nowhere does this assertion hold more truth than in portraiture – an art form that includes paintings, medals, engravings, sketches, and tapestries. Painting, specifically portraiture, became increasingly important in the early modern period. Art in the early modern period has also impacted the modern world; Edward Muir argues that “the modern intolerance toward ‘mere ritual’ originated in the ritual revolution of the sixteenth century and deritualizations of the eighteenth.”\(^{19}\) Historians like Clarissa Campbell Orr, Kevin Sharpe, and Susan Foister have, in recent years, built on the foundational works of Roy Strong, David Howarth, and many others to broaden the field and illustrate more clearly the relationship between the early modern conflict between innovation and tradition. Kevin Sharpe, for example, argues that the legitimacy and authority of the monarch in early modern Britain was not based on institutional or military power so much as, “the art of securing compliance” through patronage, images, and the “perceptions of

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\(^{19}\) Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 274. Muir cites the “great social thinkers of modernism” as hypothesizing that “ritual behavior was incompatible with modern values”; although I don’t completely agree with this statement, particularly given the importance of tradition as shown by one of the “great social thinkers of modernism,” Eric Hobsbawm. However, the disassociation of religious ritual with the modern era is a part of “modernity” and, interestingly, given the emphasis here on innovation versus tradition, a supposed hallmark of “modern” nations against the “traditional” nations today.
authority." Images created for compliance and legitimacy also extended, as we will see in many of the painting I will discuss, to historical royals as well. Rather than simply representation, or communication tools, portraits of the ruler and royal family became propaganda tools used to create recognizable figures and further particular political agendas. The virtues of a king, of his family, had to be communicated, as did the connections – however tenuous – between the ruling monarch, his family, and the past deeds of glorious kings, whether they were living or long-dead.

While art can sometimes be difficult to study because it is a, “special class of evidence, shaped by imagination as well as tradition and purpose,” it is clearly important. In England, “a political struggle led rapidly to a social, ideological revolution,” and the act of art collecting was on the rise among the aristocracy and monarchy, whether due to real artistic love or the need for glory and impressive works. The linking of art with war, the apocalypse, and the shifting power

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20 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, xxv.

21 It is worth noting here that the word “propaganda” is loaded with meaning, and means different things in different time periods, places, and situations. Here, I mean propaganda as images that were created to convey a certain political ideology or concept. I also acknowledge that propaganda, particularly in the modern era, tends to be perceived as untrue, or trying to push a particular idea or ideal. While all these kings, and to an extent, their families, used image to further agendas, they were they were not widely distributed in the same way modern propaganda is.


bases of the early modern period is a clear indication that it should be studied. Court culture was “indisputably” connected to cultural shifts, and that can be seen in several art forms that were patronized by the upper classes. Art in the early modern period points to the tension and chaos of the time. The use of art as historical evidence and for analysis of the past is particularly important because, as Rabb and Brown argue, “Painters, sculptors, and architects are able to give us clues (and sometimes answers) about the universe they inhabit that are available nowhere else.”

David Howarth, in his work on British Renaissance art, which he argues is inextricably tied to political power, argues that the, “emphasis art historians have tended to put upon the modest accomplishment of the visual arts of the Renaissance in Britain…has obscured a much more important achievement,” namely the world of “patrons in the highly competitive world of

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24 Trevor–Roper, The Plunder of the Arts in the Seventeenth Century, 8. Trevor–Roper uses the examples of Charles I, who had a “genuine love of art and a fine or original taste in it,” and Philip II of Spain, “that cold bigot of the Escorial, whose inflexible Catholicism nevertheless rested on twisted pillars (his most intimate intellectual advisers – his librarian, his geographer, and his printer – were all secret heretics) was a passionate aesthete, with a particular taste for the tortured fantasies of Hieronymus Bosch” (12). While it is true that Philip was a collector of art, his status as a “cold bigot” has recently been called into question by Henry Kamen in his excellent biography of the Spanish king. Henry Kamen, Philip of Spain, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). J.H. Elliott has also revisited the lives of and relationship between Cardinal Richelieu of France and Gaspar de Guzman, the Count–Duke of Olivares; both men were advisors to their respective kings but have been treated very differently by historians, much like Philip II. This type of revisionist history has become very popular as of late, with a recent, excellent biography on George II, one of the least studied English kings, appearing in 2013. Richelieu and Olivares (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984) and Andrew C. Thompson, George II: King and Elector (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).


the court in London” who “understood and exploited what artists could achieve.”

Howarth’s work was a response to Roy Strong’s *Art and Power*, and Sharpe saw it as a valuable contribution to the “performance of images.”

Sharpe argues that historians should “remap” their conceptions of politics as, “the business of institutions, bureaucracies and officers to the broader politics of discourse and symbols, anxieties and aspirations, myths and memories.”

If art, and its more daily and pervasive cousin, architecture, were important components of political power in early modern Europe, in what ways can they contribute to the innovation and tradition debate? Does art represent crisis and the search for stability? Several historians have argued that, indeed, the significant cultural changes in the early modern period are indicative of a world in flux. Art, the act of collecting, and the lives of the artists themselves can show a struggle for stability and an environment influenced by the past but opening to the innovations of the future.

The body – displayed prominently in portraits – also became more important and the king and his family embodied their roles, became both family and *royal family* in a new way. Portraits, “were the pictures most essential to the monarchy” in early modern Britain.

Also, “portraits of the monarch for distribution to foreign embassies, for propaganda at home, for the affirmation of the ruling dynasty, and for the identification of potential royal spouses are all well

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27 David Howarth, *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance, 1485–1649* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 4. Howarth also devotes a significant portion of his work to collecting, a major part of the relationship between early modern art and political authority, arguing that the “buying of pictures was part of the currency of rivalry: pursuits which defined and inflamed jealousies, promoted forgotten careers, recorded distinctions of rank, and illuminated moments of glory” (Howarth, *Images of Rule*, 260).

28 Sharpe, *Remapping*, 455.


documented as essential” in the British royal landscape of this time.\textsuperscript{31} Early modern paintings also publicize and politicize the body of the monarch and his family. As Kevin Sharpe notes, “the sexual royal body was a potent symbol, especially after decades of failed heirs and disputed successions, because it promised dynastic continuity and national security.”\textsuperscript{32}

I believe, then, that images can and should be used in similar ways to texts. My analysis of the art included here, like any analysis of texts, is not looking for quality or beauty, but rather for what it can tell us about the past. Texts have authors, subjects, audiences, intent, collectors, commissioners, and so on – just like images. A painting, like a text, has a creator (or creators), and while it is often hard to determine, both for texts and images, why something was created, and if someone asked for it to be created, and why, digging into these questions can be vastly rewarding. There are many types of texts, just like there are many types of images. Knowing the who, the why, the what, the where, the when – those bits of knowledge are important for any kind of historical evidence, whether they are text, images, or something else entirely. For families that did not leave memoirs, just official papers and letters (at best), and whose descendants continue to be shrouded in mystery, even today, could images not be another way,


\textsuperscript{32} Sharpe, \textit{Selling the Tudor Monarchy}, 75. Portraits up until this time had been more filled with symbolism, such as jewels and symbolic flowers; a comparison of images of Henry VII to those of Henry VIII (Holbein’s unmistakable creative genius notwithstanding) are very different. Henry VII looks like a stock figure holding a Tudor rose, while Henry is unrecognizably himself. Portraiture became increasingly popular during the early modern period, despite derision by guilds like the Painters–Stainers Company, perhaps driving this shift. Also, as rulers attempted to create more centralized rule, the person of the monarch also became more important, rather than the institution of monarchy. The growth of portraiture and propaganda in early modern England and its relation to attempted centralization, as well as its connection to the growing power of Parliament versus that of the king, is a subject which discussed by Kevin Sharpe, but is an area which should be analyzed at length in future works.
another piece, of trying to understand who these people were, what they did, and why they were important to the history of Great Britain and the early modern period.

**Periodization: What is the “early modern” period – and why does it matter?**

What exactly does the term “early modern” mean? When asked to define the early modern period in Europe, very few historians can give a short answer, and it’s likely none of their answers will be exactly the same. Periodization is both an essential tool and an unavoidable curse for historians, and the early modern period presents a unique challenge. Why is it so difficult to define what is “early modern?” Theodore Rabb argues that the, “two centuries very roughly between Reformation and Enlightenment have traditionally been the most shapeless in European history.”33 Between roughly 1500 and 1800 the world, including Europe and the British Isles, changed significantly, and the world certainly looked very different in the nineteenth century than it had in the sixteenth – in the dominions of the English king, some aspects would be entirely unrecognizable.34

Periodization is one of the more difficult tasks facing historians, but it should be discussed, as it is a necessary evil. We have to put historical events into categories to make sense

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34 This was a time of change throughout the world. I will be focusing on Western Europe, specifically what will become Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland) here, and primarily on my main area of study, early modern England, although I will discuss other areas where appropriate, particularly France, who had consistently close, if contentious, relations with England and the English king. The early modern period saw the rise of the Reformation, and with it, the reform of the Church, which had “a profound effect on the production of art: on its appearance, its market and its use.” Kate Heard and Lucy Whitaker, *The Northern Renaissance: Durer to Holbein* (London: Royal Collections Publications, 2013), 18. Theodore Rabb argues that the “two centuries very roughly between Reformation and Enlightenment have traditionally been the most shapeless in European history” in *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), vii. My very broad definition of crisis, supported by Rabb, is that the overarching crisis of the early modern period, both throughout Europe and in my own specific area of study, Britain, was one of the location, or holder, of authority. Crisis, then, is the basic concern of, “in a world where everything had been thrown into doubt, where uncertainty and instability reigned, could one attain assurance, control, and a common acceptance of some structure where none seemed within reach?” (Rabb, *Struggle*, 33).
of it all, even if those categories are amorphous and events, people, places, and ideas can move back and forth. If we did not, it would be impossible to write deeply about topics, to teach in a way that makes sense to students, to keep track of the scope of it all. But it can also cause challenges, both practically and theoretically. Where, for example, does “modern” Europe begin, and “early modern” end? And how does labeling an age as “early” modern versus just modern impact the ways we interpret the lives, ideas, and events that occurred during each? These questions are not unique to early modern Europe, or England, or Great Britain, but the focus of this study demands special attention be paid to this area. One difficulty with labeling something “modern” and everything else as “early modern,” “pre–modern,” “medieval,” or “primitive” is that the term “modern” both implies that anything before that period was not as advanced and appears as an inevitable step up in the progression from the other terms – like the Whig historiography that creates a villain of James II, this view makes history seem inevitable but also makes it seem as though people before our modern era were somehow “less than.” How is “modern” determined, and what “non–modern” entity came before it?

Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpakli also situate their examination of Ottoman love and sexuality through difficult periodization, noting that:

“European historians refer to a period running from the late fifteenth century through the early seventeenth as the long sixteenth century. This was also the time when Ottoman Turkish culture established itself and flourished in the Middle East and Southeastern Europe with Istanbul as its undisputed center. The history of this period, as it comes to us through the stories of historians past and present, tends to focus on Ottoman military might, on the explosive growth of the empire, and the development of an economy and a system of government that would administer vast territories down to the early twentieth century.”

The line between the Renaissance, the medieval and the early modern is particularly unclear and, in Europe, varies from region to region. Although, as Rabb has argued, periodization is necessary, or the “past will lose all focus,” he also notes that periodization should be “loose” and based more on large changes than an arbitrary line or single event. Thus, periodization, while problematic, is necessary, but understanding the world and its concerns is also necessary to avoid labeling the early modern period – a different world than ours, to be sure – as a time when people were somehow less capable, less creative, or simply less. Early modern people had different concerns, different attitudes, but their world was also one that required them to ask different questions. It was a world in crisis, a world trying to find the sources of legitimate authority in a very confusing time. Even for historians writing during the times of these kings – and there were some, although they might be called antiquarians or biographers – their histories were, “recast…within dynastic terms.”

Throughout this work, I will be defining the early modern period as roughly the mid–1510s to the 1760s, but also according to the kings whose reigns correspond with the major changes of the age. Although Henry did not pay a major amount of attention to his image in any new ways between taking the throne in 1509 and the late 1520s, he did make substantial changes

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36 The early modern period is confused in popular culture as well. For example, Renaissance Fairs (or Faires, depending on which one you look at) are often quite a mess. Tudor England – often including Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII, or Elizabeth I – is represented in fashion and style, while many also include mermaids, rock climbing walls, men and women in Italianate dress of the Italian Renaissance, Robin Hood–esque archery competitions, etc. This is just one example of how popular culture today misunderstands popular culture of the early modern period, and how easy that culture is to misunderstand.


in the structure of English government and the relationship between the king and the arts, and later in his reign he revolutionized the importance of the shape and body of the monarch. But people did not wake up on June 24, 1509 and sigh in relief that the medieval period was over in Britain because today they would start the early modern period, and it’s important, particularly when a period starts, to recognize that we’re imposing that lens, that worldview, on people in the past. For the beginning of the early modern period in England, I contend that Henry was both a leader in the search for legitimate authority and concern with “image” and a hallmark of the needs of his people and time, starting with his coronation in 1509. I’m making this claim with the understanding, again, that I am imposing this periodization on a people who would not have classified themselves as “early modern.”

James II, while not the first or last English king of this era, is a fantastic touchstone when evaluating the periodization of the early modern period I’m advocating in this work. An analysis of his reign, which lasted from 1685 – 1688, shows the increasing importance – the crucial importance – of image and representation in a world and monarchy significantly more legalistic than Henry’s, but also one that was still quite obviously concerned with who had legitimate authority and, importantly for James, who did not. Although I will delve much deeper into this idea in both this chapter and in my chapter on James and his images, James is a particularly interesting king. He shows the “early” early modern period in England had changed – the rise in the power and influence of Parliament, the legalism of the late–seventeenth century, the even larger importance of portraiture – and how much it had not, as the legitimacy of the monarchy, the religious character of England, and the general chaos surrounding these questions were still hotly debated.
For the end of the early modern period, which most historians tie to the rise of nationalism or the French Revolution, I’m arguing that, in England at least, the period ended with the death of George II in 1760. George was – as noted in the introduction – the last English king to personally lead an army into battle, he was the last foreign-born king, but more importantly, with the reign of George III, English political life changed dramatically, removing any doubt about who truly held power in government – and that power belonged, in reality, to Parliament, not the king. George II’s reign also saw the last gasp of widespread religious conflict in England (although Ireland and Scotland would remain a different story) as the Jacobite rebellions of the mid-century were put down. After George II, very few conflicts – at least among elites – took place over religion, and the Protestant nature of the royal family was never in serious doubt. A clearer concept of the nation, and a move away from the chaos of the early modern period also occurred, along with bureaucratic restructuring that set the British Empire up for dominance in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The world, for Henry, for James, and for George, was – albeit in different ways and to different extremes – one that was undoubtedly in crisis.

A World in Crisis: Religion & Belief

Unlike the “modern” era, which is generally defined by the advent of nationalism, the French Revolution, or the beginning of “total war,” the early modern period, as discussed, has no universally agreed upon beginnings or any definite end. Some hallmarks of the era, however,

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39 The argument that “total war” is the beginning of the modern era is made by David A. Bell in The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2007). This book is an excellent study on how warfare changes in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, but also addresses the myriad ways in which periodization can happen. It’s also a useful read for understanding both a convoluted time in history as well as a time when conflicts in belief, in science, and in who held legitimate authority were brought to the forefront again, albeit with machine guns rather than Papal Bulls.
are apparent. Religious strife impacted all of Europe through the Reformation, the English Civil War, and the Thirty Years War. In England, which broke away from the Catholic fold that had so long dominated the political and cultural life of Europe, these changes were even more apparent. First, the Reformation, the movement against the Roman Catholic Church that officially began with Martin Luther’s movement, and ended, after a Counter-Reformation, with war and various redivisions of European power. Rabb argues that, “of all the events that gave the decades from 1490 to 1520 their world-historical importance none...was as dramatic as Luther’s protest against the Church.”40 Also, “every major conflict that broke out from the 1530s to the 1640s – and there were dozens – was exacerbated by religious passions.”41 This is certainly true for many of the conflicts and crises Henry, James, and George faced.

The idea of “crisis” in the early modern period, first presented by Eric Hobsbawm, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Paul Hazard, and several others, was somewhat, as Rabb points out, vague.42 That a crisis, or several crises, occurred in early modern Europe seems clear, although historians have rarely agreed on what crisis or type of crisis characterized the period, or when such crises occurred. What is certain is that people were searching for a means of ordering their lives, of understanding the changes taking place in their world, and to make sense of their lives in a world dominated by the struggle between tradition and innovation. This was reflected in all areas of

41 Rabb, Last Days, 112.
42 Hobsbawm approached crisis from the standpoint of a Marxist historian in the 1970s, seeing a transition to a, “new economic system” around 1700, which was presented as, “a decisive stage in the progression from feudalism to capitalism.” (Rabb, Struggle, 17.) Trevor–Roper saw crisis as primarily a religious and economic one, a series of revolutions that people of the time would have seen as based in religion more than anything else. (Hugh Trevor–Roper, The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Religion, The Reformation and Social Change (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1967), 32.)
society, but particularly in religion, science, and culture, including art and the increasingly important medium of portraiture. To borrow a phrase from eminent historian Christopher Hill, the world was turned upside down.43

As John Arnold points out in Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe, “belief is a very elusive concept: difficult to describe, and hence difficult to analyze.”44 Lucien Febvre noted that “it is of course always difficult to know a man, a man’s true visage,” and that, in the early modern period, this problem is particularly difficult.45 One of the central features of belief (or unbelief, or dissenting belief) in the early modern period was, “a preoccupation with the explanation and relief of human misfortune,” often in form of religious or supernatural belief.46 In the late medieval, Renaissance, and early modern periods, religion was an incredibly important and divisive subject.47

All three kings I will discuss in this work had their own personal religious beliefs, but also had to “deal with” religion and religious strife – some of it clearly of their own making, admittedly – during their reigns. Henry had been named a Defender of the Faith by Pope Leo X in 1522 as recognition for Henry’s book, Assertio Septem Sacramentorum (Defense of the Seven Sacraments), in which he argued against Martin Luther’s assertion that there were only two sacraments. Henry – somewhat ironically – vehemently defended marriage as sacrament and


reaffirmed his belief in the supremacy of the pope. However, in 1533, Henry broke with Rome, divorcing Catherine of Aragon and marrying Anne Boleyn. This action set off a chain of events during and after his reign, and religion was to become a central question in England and Britain – and Europe – for the next 300 years.

James II also struggled with religion as a Catholic king of a Protestant (and decidedly less “high church” Protestant than in Henry’s day) realm. His reign, exile, and subsequent attempts to regain power resulted in the Act of Settlement in 1701 that basically excluded Catholics from the throne and many political positions. George II was not impacted as much by his own beliefs – he was avowedly Protestant – as by the attempts during his reign by James’s descendants to restore the Stuart dynasty to the throne, rallying Catholic supporters to their cause. George’s reign also saw continued discrimination against Catholics and dissenters in general, as the Papists Act of 1778, which provided some relief for British Catholics, was not passed until after his death.

To many of us today, this concern over religion might seem preposterous or extreme, but the Bible and the church were the primary sources of authority for the majority of English and British people, and for the king himself. Unlike much of the rest of Europe, particularly in France, the British king was not an absolute ruler, ordained by God and not bound by the laws of man. Rather, while the English acknowledged that God had some hand in the ordination of the


49 History has treated Anne unkindly in many ways, but one of the most untrue portrayals, which I will discuss later in more detail, is that she was a secret Protestant. Yes, she was exposed to Luther’s ideas at the French court, and yes, she did likely own an English translation of the Bible. But that England and Britain became Protestant overnight is an oversimplification. In effect, England was cut off from the Pope’s authority – and protection – with this one action, but the Church of England under Henry, and Anne’s own worship, looked and was Catholic in all but the connection with Rome.
king, the king was not the direct representative of God, and was still subject to the law of the land, the English Constitution, and, importantly, Parliament. This relationship between king, religion, and the powerful nobility and legal authorities made for a system of government that did place limits on the king, but also made religious opinion—particularly dissenting opinion—a more fractious element. Adding to this was a constant concern about the passage and end of time (apocalypticism) that caused considerable upheaval and continued uncertainty in belief and

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50 Fringe religious groups and heretics were also widely seen in the early modern period throughout Europe, and England and Great Britain were no exception. Although fringe religious groups, including those who believed that the world would soon end, or at least irrevocably change, were also present in earlier centuries, throughout the early modern period, these groups caused widespread, if often brief, panics, and were inexorably tied to changing social and political norms. One excellent example of a recent work on earlier heresies is Louisa Burnham’s *So Great a Light, So Great a Smoke* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). Burnham looks at the Beguins of Languedoc, followers of Peter Olivi, who had a “radical interpretation of Franciscan poverty” and an “apocalyptic take on contemporary history” which included the idea that the “last days were virtually upon them, and the apocalyptic battles of good and evil were to begin any day” (2–3). This work clearly shows the growing historical trend of using small groups or areas, like the Beguins, in order to more fully understand both the dynamics and history of the smaller group and the larger, contextual history of their world. Burnham notes that, “when we look at the stories of the Beguins of Languedoc, we enter into the world of fourteenth–century religious controversy and can draw many conclusions” (181). Also, an understanding of these earlier movements and the tradition of apocalyptic thought is crucial for an analysis of later groups and their political and social importance. R.I. Moore notes that, although heretics certainly existed in medieval Europe, as they had in ancient Rome, the Byzantine Empire, and almost every society in history, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, there was a “permanent change in Western society” in which “persecution became habitual.”

He goes on to argue that this reaction was not “simply that individuals were subject to violence, but that deliberate and socially sanctioned violence began to be directed, through established governmental, judicial and social institutions, against groups of people defined by general characteristics such as race, religion or way of life.” (R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 1990), 5.) Although it may seem a deviation from the plot of this story to discuss apocalyptic beliefs and fears in early modern England, I believe it is important and interesting, if only to dispel the concept that the early modern world, and this time period in Britain, was a time that created order and reason out of chaos in a linear fashion. Looking back, we see a movement from popular revolt over religion to one that moved towards public secularism, or at least compliance, but several incidents from the early modern period in England show that that journey was not, in any way, a straight line. Religious belief in one authority or another wasn’t the only source of anxiety for people during this time either; Trevor–Roper notes that during this time period there was persistent, “talk of the dissolution of society, or of the world…justified sometimes by new interpretations of Scripture, sometimes by new phenomena in the skies. With the discovery of new stars, and particularly with the new comet of 1618, science seemed to support the prophets of disaster.” (Trevor–Roper, *The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, 32.)
where legitimacy was held. Science, belief, magic, superstition, alchemy, tradition, and education – all fought against each other for supremacy in the hearts and minds of people living in the early modern period.

**Conflict in Science & Society**

Science, like religion, was a source of conflict in the early modern period, partly due to, “international trade and increasing demand for consumer ‘worldly goods’ on the part of the wealthy triggered the European Renaissance in art and learning. The intellectual advances of the scientific revolution took place in the context of the broadened horizons of that consumer revolution.” Scientific discoveries created opportunities which upended the established order and called the world into question. This resulted in innovation and adaptation, the desire to incorporate new finds into the established understanding of the universe. Like artists, who were courted by the great courts of Europe, scientists at court were seen as status symbols, a sign of a progressive and worldly royal court. During this period, Royal Societies of Science became common and often state–funded, and the sciences became more accepted in general – kings and queens consulted scientists rather than just astrologists, museums and libraries grew in importance, size, and prestige. As Lisa Jardine notes, “the problems that interest scientists are, inevitably, an extension of the problems that fascinate everyone.”

The forward–looking scientific revolution was, according to Rabb, in part “a product of the obsession with antiquity.” One of the most important aspects of the early modern period was the rediscovery of and focus on classical learning and, particularly for Henry VIII, humanism, which not only encouraged learning, languages, and the classics of Ancient Greece and Rome, but also the sciences and rational thinking. Rabb sums up the importance of the “scientific revolution” by noting that what is important, “is not the eventual triumph of these
Debates continue about whether apocalyptic belief was still widespread and impactful in the seventeenth century in particular. Hill does see the chaos of the early modern period, particularly in the seventeenth–century, but also argues in his article “John Mason and the End of the World,” that, by the 1690s, in England at least, the “age of reason” had arrived, and that fringe religious groups were no longer persecuted in any real way or even acknowledged by the vast majority of English citizens. He goes on to state that, “religion had at last been divorced from politics,” because John Mason, an apocalyptic preacher in the 1690s, had not been prosecuted for his heresy; we now know this was not the case, as Mason was prosecuted (although not imprisoned, simply censured) in 1691. (Christopher Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century* (New York: Schocken Books, 1958), 333.) In 1691, John Mason, vicar of the Church of St. Giles in Water–Stratford, Buckinghamshire, England, preached to his congregation that the end of the world was coming soon, that Jesus was returning, and that all should “Be less in the World; your Hearts out of the World, and your Hands less in it; contract your Business; do not regard the Stuff so much” (John Mason, *The Midnight Cry. A Sermon Preached on the Parable of the Ten Virgins*, printed for Nathanael Ranaw, 1694, 32). This was not an unusual sermon necessarily; the idea that Jesus would return, and that Christians should throw off their worldly goods in anticipation of his return, were both accepted, if not commonplace, theological concepts. These prophecies would not have been so extraordinary, but Mason’s followers multiplied and soon began to move in groups to Mason’s residence and surrounding areas. There, his followers, including two “witnesses” who spoke for Mason, lived communally, dancing, singing, and waiting for the end, which they believed would come in 1694. Mason himself claimed that he would die but would rise from the dead to help his followers find salvation when Jesus arrived. When Mason died in May 1694, his followers remained in the village, waiting for his resurrection. Had the “age of reason” arrived in England, as Hill claimed, or did Mason simply cross an invisible line between heretical threat and harmless lunatic because of political and religious stabilization? Mason’s work has not been studied in any detail in several decades and has never been examined for its political content. Hill argued that the “age of reason” had arrived based on the presumption that Mason was never punished for his heretical preaching, but new documents, unavailable and unknown to Hill, have been discovered recently which reveal that Mason was suspended from preaching in 1691.

ideas but how disconcerting they seemed for more than a century.”\textsuperscript{57} This was in part due to the Reformation and loosening of Church censorship, and partly due to the quest for glory and prestige by monarchs of the time. As Jardine notes, scientists and philosophers were members of the society they sought to change, and thus benefited not only intellectually, but also socially and as a part of their changed world, and, “…these defining scientific moments were inseparable from the rest of early modern day–to–day life.”\textsuperscript{58}

While I will discuss this more later, particularly when analyzing George II’s reign, the royal family also played a part in the changing scientific landscape of the early modern period in Britain. Royal salons and court society encouraged discussion and new ideas – Caroline of Ansbach, George’s queen, entertained scientific luminaries like Isaac Newton and Gottfried

\textsuperscript{52} Although it seems, incongruous here, and is certainly not the main topic of this dissertation, fringe beliefs and concerns about the supernatural, like witchcraft, were also major sources of religious dissent and conflict. While scholars today, “typically no longer regard magic as a fearful threat to society, nor do they intend their works to be used as weapons in a war aimed at extirpating perceived magical practices and those who might perform them,” the study of witchcraft – a type of religious dissension – has grown and significantly expanded in the later–twentieth century. (Michael D. Bailey, \textit{Magic and Superstition in Europe: A Concise History from Antiquity to the Present} (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 2.) Recent trends have attempted to revise the narrative of witch hunts from one of hysteria or of an “aberration” on Europe’s “march toward modernity,” hearkening back to the problem with seeing history as a natural progression and labeling what came before us as somehow “less modern” than our current society. Alan Kors and Edward Peters argue that, “the witchcraft persecutions, whatever our estimation of their conceptual and noetic components, represented not an insane ‘aberration,’ but a desperate attempt to apply a system of putative knowledge towards restoring order in the world.” (Alan Kors and Edward Peters, \textit{Witchcraft in Europe, 400–1700: A Documentary History} (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 10.)


\textsuperscript{54} For more on paradigm shifts and the processes involved in innovation and invention, see Thomas S. Kuhn, \textit{The Structure of Scientific Revolutions} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

\textsuperscript{55} Jardine, \textit{Ingenious Pursuits}, 364. For more works on the scientific revolution in the early modern period, see:

\textsuperscript{56} Rabb, \textit{Last Days}, 117.

\textsuperscript{57} Rabb, \textit{Last Days}, 118. I would again point out that this is a problematic issue in periodization and seeing history as a natural progression, with continuing “progress,” to where we are now.

\textsuperscript{58} Jardine, \textit{Ingenious Pursuits}, 7.
Liebniz. She also inoculated her children against smallpox, starting the popularization of smallpox inoculations among the nobility in the eighteenth-century. James certainly supported scientific exploration, and England in the late-seventeenth century was undeniably modernizing and, “rapidly becoming a modern society,” with a growing economy, population growth, expanding trade, and modernizing army. Henry’s court embraced humanist principles, which would have included discussions of science, alchemy, and natural philosophy. The reigns of these kings saw a world desperate to find a source of legitimate authority, to be ordered in some way, and to organize the family, the public, and society as a whole.

_Early Modern Culture: Another Way of Ordering the World_

Change in Culture, an amorphous thing that can only be broadly defined, changed as a part of this changing world; T.C.W. Blanning argues that, during this period, “a new cultural

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61 For works on the changing family and the ways in which the world and family were structured, see: Robert Darnton, _The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History_ (New York: Basic Books, 2009); Robert Darnton, _The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History_ (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990); Robert Darnton, _The Devil in the Holy Water; or, the Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon_ (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Simon Schama, “The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture, 1500–1850,” _The Journal of Interdisciplinary History_ 17, no 1 (1986): 155–83, https://doi.org/10.2307/204129; Philippe Ariès, _Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life_ (New York: Random House, 1962); Lawrence Stone, _The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800_ (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993); Natalie Zemon Davis, _Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays by Natalie Zemon Davis_ (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979); _The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society_ (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991); Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, _Women in Early Modern England, 1550–1720_ (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). I very much like Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford’s definitions of status in the hierarchical English society of the early modern period. They use “elite” to describe the wealthiest and most educated members of society, from the nobility to the minor gentry” and “middling” to describe “the group of men and women whose relative prosperity distinguished them from about one–third of the population who lived in poverty.” (Mendelson and Crawford, _Women in Early Modern England, 5_.) Although the middling classes were certainly aware of the king’s image through engravings, coins, medals, and festivals, they were not collecting portraits and were certainly not commissioning them, and it is unlikely it was this middling class that were considered as primary audiences for portraits.
space developed, which posed new challenges to regimes and their ruling orders.” It is true, certainly, that at times, all three of the kings I will be discussing did find it necessary to cultivate positive public opinion with those outside the Court and the nobility, and one of the purposes of putting the king’s face on coins was so that everyone who saw a coin would see his face, but most of the portraits analyzed here were not for the poorest of the public, and it’s likely that most people never saw them – and if they did, it’s likely that they did not see the original, but a copy, engraving, or woodcut version. Still, even without most images reaching the “common” people, it is clear that the “fiction” or “cultural frame” of royal portraiture was essential and transcended the style and form of art and patronage that changed vastly between Henry VIII’s accession to the throne in 1509 and George II’s death in 1760.

Returning to the discussion on using art and material culture as historical evidence, Kevin Sharpe praises other disciplines (like art history) for leading an, “insistence on…the porous interactions of culture and politics, representation and authority, in the present and the past.” William Bouwsma, in his examination of John Calvin, agrees, noting that historians have a tendency to, “shy away from major figures in cultural history; great artists, writers and thinkers are left, for the most part, to specialists who rarely ask a historian’s questions.” Examining the conflict debate, Sharpe argues that early modern art was a part of the “model of early modern authority as negotiation rather than autocratic enactment.” But was early modern art entertainment, or something more? Sidney Anglo also writes that “he is no longer convinced of

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65 Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 7.
the propaganda role of festivals and rituals” because “though they were enjoyed as ‘entertainment,’” they were “ineffective as a ‘means of communication and influence.’” Rabb asks the question: “Who really understood the symbolism of Renaissance art?” and, while this is a valid question, he presents little evidence as to who he thinks understood it, or why.

Sharpe heavily criticizes Rabb for this, arguing that he asks an intelligent question, but “there was little of intelligence or evidence in his attempt to answer it,” and refers to Rabb’s article as “a weak piece.” I agree with Sharpe when he writes that, while historians should not ahistorically read meaning into art or spectacle, “allegory and symbol, after all, were not just an elite preoccupation; they were also a characteristic of popular literature and culture, of woodcuts as well as fables and tales.” However, Rabb’s article is anything but weak, even if it is brief and vague – rather it makes a strong argument for analyzing art as representation in the early modern period more carefully, something I propose to do here.

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68 Sharpe, Remapping Early Modern England, 456.

69 Sharpe, Remapping Early Modern England, 457.

70 As Sharpe notes, “as the experience of world wars and Cold War receded, historians appear to be less uneasy about the phenomenon of propaganda, and again willing to use the word non–pejoratively in discussions of representation of authority,” a trend that I hope will continue, as the word is too useful to be discarded completely. (Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 19.) Sharpe cites A.K. McHardy, “Some Reflections on Edward III’s Use of Propaganda,” in The Age of Edward III ed. J.S. Bothwell (Rochester: York Medieval Press, 2001), pp. 171–92, as an example of recent useful works which have rehabilitated the use of “propaganda.” Jonathan Brown, while discussing primarily Spain, makes a strong case for the rise of portraiture as a reaction to crisis when he notes that, “by the mid–1650s, the favored portrait type accurately reflected the inability to adapt to the shifting world of early modern Europe and the impending decline of Spain within that world.” (Brown, “Enemies of Flattery,” 154.) Peter Burke argues that Louis XIV was, “very much concerned with the royal image,” and that this concern was not simply aesthetic, but highly political. (Burke, Fabrication of Louis XIV, 2.) In his biography of Philip II of Spain, Henry Kamen argues that, “in the fifteenth century the European Renaissance made Italy its principal magnet for scholars, writers, and artists who took new ideas back to their noble and princely courts in France, Germany, Burgundy and England. A circuit of cultural interchange was created.” Henry Kamen, Philip of Spain, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 178. Philip was a great collector of art and brought Spain more fully into the European cultural fold. After his death, the absolutism of his reign gave way to a more constitutional form of government.
Three Second-Generation Kings, Their Families, and Portraiture in the Early Modern World

The question must be asked, now that the structure of the early modern world, or at least early modern Britain, has been described – why should we compare these three kings and their families, and in particular, their images? While all deserve a more nuanced look at their relationship with art and how they presented themselves in reaction to upheaval, there are several similarities between the reigns of Henry, James, and George that make a comparative approach worthwhile. At first glance, they have little in common – they ruled in different centuries, for vastly varying lengths of time, and were disparate in many personal ways. However, each king faced similar circumstances surrounding his role as heir and his succession, and each faced similar types of crises during their reigns. This is not to say, of course, that the Peasants’ Revolt, the Monmouth Rebellion, the “Glorious Revolution,” or the 1745 Jacobite Uprising were similar events – but they were similar types of events, namely political and religious uprisings that questioned the legitimacy of the king, his family, and his dynasty. A comparative examination of how each king and his family reacted to these crises and their unique dynastic positions through their images can show changing perceptions of the royal family and its role in England throughout the early modern period.

These kings, uniquely among post-medieval British monarchs, faced the political, religious, and social problems of being the second king to rule after a major and often violent shift and upheaval in the British political order – they were “second-generation” monarchs, having to continue a new dynasty (that they did not establish) while also creating a lasting legacy for themselves and later descendants. Without too much historical “what-if” work, it should still
be noted that none of these kings was born as the heir, and all of them were expected to both continue the new dynasty while establishing their own rule and strengthening their dynastic legacy. Henry VIII was one king removed from the dynastic struggle of the Wars of the Roses, James II from the English Civil War and Stuart Restoration, and George II from the end of the Stuart dynasty and the Hanoverian Succession. These kings shared these types of challenges, with their political and social upheavals, even if they occurred before they were born, as in Henry’s case.  

I will discuss this at more length in each king’s respective chapter.

Henry, the first early modern king of Britain, was the second son of Henry VII, creator of the new “Tudor” dynasty. After the death of his brother Arthur, Henry became Prince of Wales and his life changed dramatically. Later, as king, he had to manipulate a strong nobility while lacking, for much of his reign, a truly secure claim to the throne or a male heir, as well as navigating the rough waters of religious strife, international turmoil, and the opinions of Parliament and the nobility. James, another second son, had to follow in the memory of his executed father, the Interregnum, and his incredibly popular brother while practicing an unpopular and borderline treasonous religion, Roman Catholicism, which led indirectly to his exile. For much of his adult life, there was no reason to think James would be king; it was only in

71 These kings were not the only kings in the history of England, or anywhere else in the world, to be “second–generation” monarchs, of course. The argument could be made that Charles I falls into this category, for example. However, I am arguing that each of these kings followed a violent or major upheaval that changed the order of succession and the ruling dynasty. While Charles was the second king of the Stuart dynasty in England, his father’s ascension to the throne was not due to rebellion, but rather to a process started by Elizabeth and supported by Parliament – the Tudor dynasty was dead, with no closer relatives, and thus James I was the logical choice, and, when he was born, it was generally assumed he had a chance at becoming king. This type of king, stuck between a dynasty creator and leaving the legacy of dynasty for later kings, is certainly found in the medieval period in England, but I contend that it has not been seen since George II, making, again, the early modern period such a unique time in English, and world, history. The case could be made for Anne I as well, but the “Glorious Revolution,” while not bloodless, was also not a violent, dramatic shift.

72 John Ashdown–Hill notes that royal lineages are almost never certain, and the Tudor’s history as major political players was short, convoluted, and plagued by questions of legitimacy. John Ashdown–Hill, Royal Marriage Secrets: Consorts and Concubines, Bigamists and Bastards (Stroud: The History Press, 2013).
the 1670s, when Charles’ queen failed to conceive and was understood to be almost certainly barren, that James appeared destined for the throne. George, the last foreign–born king of England, and, as I argue, the last “early modern” king of Britain (the United Kingdom, by that point, as well as the Elector of Hanover), had to be both an English, and British, king of a contested throne while still maintaining his Hanoverian responsibilities and connections. George also had the challenge of following a distinctly “foreign” king – with whom he did not get along, very publicly – and converting his dynasty into a British one.73

Each king also faced an incredible amount of familial strife – not unusual for a monarch, but these were extreme problems exacerbated by the challenges facing their reigns. Henry is of course famous for his multiple marriages and inability to father a healthy male heir, James was a famed womanizer who also made unpopular marriage choices, and he was removed from the throne by his daughter and son–in–law. George, while in a seemingly generally happy marriage, was constantly at odds with his father and son, and had to navigate the European marriage market for his numerous children, with varying degrees of success.

Their roles as second–generation monarchs and dynastic pawns, combined with religious strife, political chaos, and family problems make these kings and their reigns more similar than they appear at first glance. All English royals have used images to create their own fiction of rule. However, starting with Henry, images of the king and his family – their bodies and relationships to each other – became crucial. Art, in particular portraiture, was used to create, perpetuate, and legitimate rule and dynasty. Comparing the images these rulers used, and how

73 The first “early modern” king of England was, I argue, Henry VII, a distinction David Starkey also makes. He notes that, “as Henry VII’s artists were less good than Henry VIII’s, he rather pales beside his son. But he glows in contrast with his medieval predecessors, most of whom, whatever their achievements or however powerful their personalities, survive in our collective memory as little more than faceless wraiths.” David Starkey, Lost Faces: Identity and Discovery in Tudor Royal Portraiture (London: Phillip Mould LTD, 2009), 8.
they controlled their images and court patronage of artists, permits a clearer picture of early modern dynasty, legitimacy, and family as well as a more complete examination of these unevenly studied royals. Their similarities can be seen and understood through art, specifically paintings which portray the kings with their families, surrounded by the artistic propaganda they utilized in order to convey their power, authority, wealth, and, perhaps most importantly, the legitimacy of their rule. The analysis of artwork approved or commissioned by these kings reveals striking similarities between them, despite obvious changes in both personal and artistic style.

Second–Generation Families

Although the primary subjects in paintings of the king and his family were, generally, the king, women played an important role. Images of the king alone are important, but it is safe to assume that in early modern paintings, commissioned by the king, painted by an artist with royal patronage, nothing (and no one) was painted without purpose, including portraits of wives, children, and the family as a whole. How much control did these women, and children, have over their own images, their patronage of various artists, and their collections of art? These paintings, and a further analysis of the royal family in early modern Britain, can show historians about the real power of early modern English monarchs, the importance of legitimacy for kings in unstable times, and start to question the key, but complicated, roles of women in these images. The British monarchy was never an absolute monarchy, unlike some of their counterparts on the continent –

74 I will refer to James II as “king” throughout this paper, despite the fact that he was not yet king when the painting by Sir Peter Lely was completed. Beyond eliminating excessive word use, this distinction also refers to the fact that James was, however unsecure he might have been at times, Charles II’s heir presumptive. It is safe to assume that, by 1674 when the painting was begun, and certainly by 1680, when it was finished, James was at no danger of being displaced by legitimate children of Charles’. Although he did face challenge from outside the royal family, in the form of Parliament, Protestant religious leaders, and from the Duke of Monmouth (Charles’ illegitimate son), there is no indication that James was not considered the heir presumptive by Charles himself, nor that James considered himself any less than the next lawful king.
the ruler had to secure cooperation from nobles and Parliament to levy taxes, declare war, and manage the operations of the kingdom. From the reign of Henry VIII onwards, “there was new emphasis on, and new attempts to control, images of power – through the royal word, portraits, buildings and festivals.” Through analyzing these paintings and the similarities in their composition, artists, and their use of symbols, particularly those involving empire and dynasty, it is clear that the purpose was ultimately the same for each king, even if the form was different: to show the power and legitimacy of the monarch and of his dynasty.

Second, how are these representations related to the evolution of British conceptions of the royal family – a family who had to fill the roles of political, social, and cultural leaders in various ways throughout the period? Of significant importance is not only how the “public” perceived the royal family, but also how the family thought of itself, and how its members portrayed themselves, using art and image to create their own representations. Also, this type of comparative study can further illuminate the major changes taking place in the institution of marriage in the early modern period, and how the royal family influenced and responded to those changes. Marriage, both “the form and nature,” has “not been something fixed and immutable in English history,” and the significant changes in the concept and reality of marriage, even in the royal household, played a role in changing ideas of who and what the royal family was. It is my hope that by comparing these cases in the context of the period and through the images produced, each case will shed light on the others, and cause a larger story to emerge.

Although Henry VIII has been the subject of significant scholarship, very few historians have examined the recent art history scholarship surrounding portrait identification and analysis

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75 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, xxv.

76 Ashdown–Hill, Royal Marriage Secrets, 12.
of his queens, and very little academic work has been done on the art and representation of James II or George II or, particularly, their families. Families are crucial, and, although some historians argue that personal relationships are of little or no importance in the course of history, I disagree with this assessment of family relationships. John Ashdown–Hill also disagrees, and notes that, “private emotions certainly affect people and when they are the emotions of people in power they can change the course of events.” As John Condren notes that, “no study of the early–modern state can afford to ignore the principals of dynastic patronage,” or, “the ways and means by which kings…sought to further the influence of their families.” This generally, “included the offering of relatives (usually female) as matrimonial partners to a suitable scion of the allied or rival family.”

Studying these elite families using the methodology social historians have applied to the study of “common” families in the early modern period will be highly beneficial, as the royal family was, in many ways, the model family for all of England. As Clarissa Campbell Orr notes, most historians of women in the early modern period focus on the majority of women, those in the “lower and middling social ranks.” There have been “few studies of the British court in this period,” an irony, given that “royal women were at the centre of ‘celebrity culture.’” While the changing family has been examined in several works, the evolution of the royal family and the

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80 Clarissa Campbell Orr, “Court Studies,” 1.

81 Orr, “Court Studies,” 7.
ways representations reflected that change have not been addressed. Elite women, these arbiters of celebrity culture, in early modern England have traditionally been underrepresented, or, at best, presented as characters with little agency. Popular biographies of royal women are numerous but tend to focus on one-dimensional narratives rather than on the lives, patronage, and representations of female members of the royal family.

Royal women were a crucial element in early modern portraiture. Not only were they essential parts of the family, but they also represented legitimacy and the continuation of dynasty and stability and were often collectors or patrons in their own right. Orr examines the roles of royal women as patrons and collectors, noting that:

On the face of it, royal women represent an extreme case of ‘relational’ women, whose importance is determined by being the daughter, wife or mother of a royal man. But were women as ‘incorporated’ as this implies? Did their cultural patronage complement, contrast or conflict with that of their husbands? And even if they accepted that their chief role was to produce legitimate offspring and be as supportive of their husbands as possible, how did they actually accomplish what was a very complex task? …individual women managed a similar role very differently, depending on their education, personality, circumstance, and evolving relationship with the men in question. They both contended with and conformed to the roles expected of women in their own lifetimes, and subsequent historical assessment has been invariably filtered through the preconceptions and prejudices of historians.

The constant search for legitimate sources of authority in the early modern period often made women victims if they failed to produce a male heir, although it could also give them immense

82 Both Lawrence Stone in The Family, Sex and Marriage: In England 1500–1800 (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984) and Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood (New York: Random House, 1962), discuss the early modern (primarily non–elite) family in detail, but, to my knowledge, apart from a few references, no other works have discussed the changing composition and relationships of the royal family in early modern England in any detail.

83 In Sara Heller Mendelson and Patricia Crawford’s Women in Early Modern, women and the family are discussed at length, but they avoid discussion of elite women. While the story of non–elite women is, of course, important, elite women, particularly queens and other female members of the royal household have suffered from the social history focus on non–elites.

84 Orr, “Court Studies,” 1. I would also argue that, in addition to the differences between individual queens, another reason for our understanding and ability to examine these queens lies in the materials available. For example, there is far more evidence for Caroline of Ansbach’s patronage than Katherine of Aragon’s.
power. These women, all in the highest position of power a woman could occupy in early modern Europe, still had their bodies appropriated for the advancement of propaganda. As Sharpe notes, “the sexual royal body was a potent symbol, especially after decades of failed heirs and disputed successions, because it promised dynastic continuity and national security.”

How did these three kings, and their families, represent themselves as both “family” and “dynasty,” and is there a difference between these two concepts? Of particular importance to me are the roles of royal women at court, and how these roles changed as women moved further from being primarily “relational” women to collectors and patrons in their own right. These relational women have, particularly in the case of Henry and James, been largely ignored as patrons and cultural influences in their own right, but I believe that they, to varying degrees, were also concerned with the representation of themselves as members of both the royal family and a particular dynasty. Women, children, and the primary ruler were all used in this way, but unfortunately, few examinations of royal women in portraiture as tools of legitimacy exist.

Again, I have applied the term “second–generation monarch” to the three kings – Henry VIII, James II, and George II – that I will be discussing in this work. But if these kings and their families faced a crisis (or multiple crises), how did they use visual representations of themselves as well as their wives, mothers and daughters as symbols to alleviate anxieties and speak to the crises they faced? Although I will examine each family in turn, a general note about royal women and children in portraits is valuable here. These royal women are, in many cases, used in these works as “semi–allegorical” figures, or women who were real, identifiable women, but used in a way that retains their social and familial positions to prove legitimacy, but which did

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85 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 75.
not allow much of their individual personalities or image to come through. Semi–allegorical women are real women, but women whose images are used to further an agenda; they are, to achieve this, shown even when deceased at the time of the painting, or portrayed younger or older than their actual ages.

Many of the women painted here were deceased at the time the works were finished; they were put in to show something, not because they were a real part of the royal family any longer. The other two women, the Princesses Mary and Anne, are shown at significantly younger ages than they would have been when the painting of them with their mother and father was completed. “Portraits of the dead are common form in literature and by no means unknown in drawing and painting.” The use of deceased royals in portraiture turned death “into an act of birth and resurrection, becoming the elixir of political life.” Through art, “the dead were reincorporated and revitalized into the living world of the political order.” Even though images of the deceased and of people represented at different ages are common, they have special meaning in these paintings.

Women’s roles changed dramatically in the early modern period and, although these changes did not happen in the same way in the noble classes, they are still important to discuss. Alice Clark – a pioneer in women’s history, particularly of this period – argued that the seventeenth century especially represented a turning point in the history of women due to the

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86 Men can also occupy semi–allegorical roles; Henry VII is shown in the Whitehall Mural, despite being deceased. However, Henry is the only man shown who was not actually present or the correct age in these paintings, and his presence is both necessitated and validated by the inscription. A study of semi–allegorical women and men in early modern paintings would be an interesting, if exhaustive, study.


move from household to capitalist forms of work where women as individuals, not part of a family unit, were employed.89 Susan Dwyer Amussen sums up Clark’s argument well, noting that her, “central insight was that a society in which production took place in households embodied fundamentally different relationships both within and outside families from one where individual employees worked for individual employers.”90 While Clark’s argument may be a bit one–dimensional in some ways, and royal women certainly weren’t working outside the home (although I would argue that being a “working royal” was and still is an incredible amount of work), and while the royal family was not shifting to a middle–class life in reality, changes in the structure of society were still taking place, and representation of the royal family in England was changing as well.91

89 Alice Clark, Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century (London: Routledge, 1992); this book has been reprinted several times after the 1919 edition – I am using the reprint with an introduction by Miranda Chaytor and Jane Lewis from 1992, but Clark’s argument is unchanged.


91 Although histories of “the common people” are crucial, and their popularity has created a much fuller picture of the early modern period, there are very few, if any, works that directly address the changing roles women in the royal household played in the period as a whole. Amussen does note that the Anglican Church (The Church of England, of which the king was at least nominally the head) did use the royal family as an allegory for what the family should look like in relation to the church, but she does not address how the nobility or royal family changed with the changing economic structure of the working classes. Amussen, An Ordered Society, 56. J. Russell Major also notes that the most dramatic shift in the family was found in noble and royal families, and that the shift from centralized power in the king to decentralized power in – in the case of England and Britain – Parliament meant that the royal family had to change, to evolve, and to become an embodiment of royalty, not just its representatives. Russell Major, From Renaissance Monarchy to Absolute Monarchy: French Kings, Nobles, & Estates (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), xix, xx. Portraiture, patronage, and collecting were all major ways these “clientage systems” worked and, although that was not Major’s focus, it’s clear that military and economic power alone would not be enough. Also, Major is very specifically discussing France and the French Monarchy in his work, but the idea that there was a major change in how the ruling classes related to each other and within society as a whole is absolutely applicable to England and Europe as a whole. I also find Major’s definition of absolute monarchy useful. He argues that an “absolute monarchy” is, “one in which there were no theoretical limitations on the king’s authority other than those imposed by divine, natural, and a few fundamental laws, and in which the king controlled the vertical ties necessary to hold society together and had an obedient army and bureaucracy of sufficient size to enable him to impose his will under ordinary circumstances.” Major, From Renaissance Monarchy to Absolute Monarchy, xxi.
Men were not the only citizens, the only subjects – in paintings or literally – and Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford seek to dispute traditional histories which, “were written on the assumption that men were the only citizens, and consequently the only true political actors, aside from four female monarchs.”

Queen consorts and female members of the royal family were no different, in that they occupied roles that were inherently both political and depended, in large part, on their very bodies. Political influence was not just vested in the king, and “there were numerous points along the pyramid where power was distributed.”

Gossip and patronage were political realms in which women at court could gain power, and for many women – like Anne Hyde or Anne Boleyn, who “won” their pre–marital sex gambles – sexuality could be a source of power. Queens could use their power to influence religious matters as well through persuasion of the king, patronage, and supporting clergymen, whether through gifts, patronage, public displays of faith, or all three. Mistresses were sometimes a threat to queens but could also be controlled in some ways – Mary of Modena disliked James’s French mistresses, and sought to influence his tastes more toward the Italian arts and culture she brought to court in order to steer him away from them. Antonia Fraser notes that it was often wiser for queens to learn to live with royal mistresses, but, as Mendelson and Crawford argue, this is still somewhat uncharted historical ground, as “the ways in which royal wives gained or lost influence over their husbands’ policies by their manipulative behavior has yet to be explored.”

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92 Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550–1720* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 3. It is also worth noting that women’s roles in the royal family were political, even if that political power came from influence rather than direct authority, and this influence and power has been dismissed for centuries by mostly male historians writing about the early modern period.


Royal women were, in fact, key figures in the political landscape at court, and were also a crucial element in early modern portraiture. Not only were they essential parts of the family, but they also represented legitimacy and the continuation of dynasty and stability. The constant search for legitimate sources of authority in the early modern period often made women victims if they failed to produce a male heir, although it could also give them immense power. Queens, who occupied one of the highest positions of power a woman could occupy in early modern England, and princesses, who were useful for forging alliances, had their bodies appropriated for royal image, no matter how much influence they had over the arts. Women, children, and the king were all used in this way, but unfortunately, few examinations of royal women in portraiture as tools of legitimacy exist outside studies of women like Elizabeth I, who ruled in her own right. While this study is not focused on royal women specifically, it is my hope that their true influence will become clearer.

*Art, Artists, and Patronage*

Artistic style changed in the early modern period – that much is indisputable – but the artists who were employed by the royal family changed as well, due to style, certainly, but also at least partially due to patronage. In Britain, the early modern period saw a move toward using foreign artists, or at least those trained outside of the island. Portrait painters who held royal commissions, like Hans Holbein, Peter Lely, Benedetto Gennari, and others were part of an overall trend towards offering patronage to foreign painters, often as a way to pay homage to

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95 Although it is perhaps not relevant here for my argument, the history of the guild system for painters in England is fascinating. For more information on the Painter–Stainers Company, see Susan Foister, “Foreigners at Court: Holbein, Van Dyck and the Painter–Stainers Company” in *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts: Essays in honour of Sir Olivar Miller*, ed. David Howarth (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
powerful allies or relatives of the queen consort or members of the royal family. This shows the influence of elite women and their patronage, an accessible form of political power. Style is not just for looks—it, "possesses meaning," as Rabb and Brown point out. The importance of foreign artists in England becomes especially clear when court patronage is seen as a part of political power. While women in early modern Europe were often "relational women," whose importance was, "determined by being the daughter, wife or mother of a royal man," royal and noble women could often use artistic patronage as a way to control their courts. The court was "less a fixed place than a body of men and women in attendance on the monarch," and could include everyone from "consorts and children, mistresses and ministers, attending aristocrats and foreign dignitaries, down to barbers and pastry chefs, guards and gardeners." It was thus a large and important, if somewhat amorphous and shifting, political and cultural institution.

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96 Why? These foreign painters were not fully accepted by English art guilds but were welcomed and encouraged by the growing group of collectors and patrons who wanted and relied on portraiture. These artists did not have allegiances to powerful British patrons paying for their training and supporting their early careers, posed less of a threat to the monarch. There was less chance that a foreign painter, even one who, like Lely, had hundreds of commissions that did not come from the royal family, would have opinions on political events. Foreign painters also, at least at this time, had better training than English artists. Finding a foreign painter of quality was both cheaper and easier than sending a native painter to Italy or Holland or France to study and sending a painter to those places often depended on the international situation. Better, then, to hire a reliable and talented foreigner who would not only steer away from allegiance with a particular family out of any motivation besides money, and who was trained already, without the pesky business of negotiating training in a potentially hostile foreign country. The importance of foreign artists in England, then, becomes especially clear when court patronage is seen as a part of political power. However, foreign painters had not always been popular in England; "complaints against foreign painters had a very long history in England...in 1517, the rioters of Evil May Day had demanded an end to the threat posed by foreign workers in many trades, including foreign painters." (Foister, "Foreigners at Court," 33.) Susan Foister looks at the Painter–Stainers Company and their influence, concluding that they attempted to foster the practice of training native English artists and continued, "energetically over two centuries to defend its interests against foreigners...and others outside the Company who might infringe on its members’ livelihoods." (Foister, “Foreigners at Court,” 42.)


99 Orr, “Introduction,” 1. This is particularly interesting because queens were often foreign and regularly had no agency in many other areas of court life, but wielded immense power in the social and cultural life of the court.

100 Sharpe, Remapping Early Modern England, 201.
Edward Corp gives the example of Catherine of Braganza, queen of Charles II, who was “the only queen consort of England between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries who failed in her primary function of providing an heir to the throne.”

Catherine has been overlooked and underestimated by many historians,” and, although she “did not and could not overcome the problems she faced,” she did have a major influence on the court life of England while she was queen. One of the ways she did this was by cultural patronage, in particular in the patronage of artists who were in opposition to Charles’ various mistresses; as Corp points out, “if the Queen could not compete with the royal mistresses in the King’s bed, she was at least a match for them as regards cultural patronage…she did not succeed in ousting her rivals…but by substituting cultural for sexual politics Cather found an alternative method of attracting the attention of her husband and countering the influence of the favourite mistresses at court.”

Catherine accomplished this task in several ways. When Charles took a French Catholic mistress, Louise de Keroualle, Catherine began to reject French artists and musicians. Although “Catherine did not introduce Italian music to England…her achievement was to patronize the Italians so thoroughly that she succeeded in identifying herself with the music they offered,” in opposition to the French musicians favored by de Keroualle. With her “choice of portrait

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101 Corp, “Catherine of Braganza and cultural politics,” in Queenship in Britain 1660–1837: Royal Patronage, Court Culture and Dynastic Politics, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 53.

102 Corp, “Catherine of Braganza,” 53.

103 Corp, “Catherine of Braganza,” 64. There are several works on Charles II and his images and life (including his veritable parade of mistresses), but one interesting book by Richard Ollard, The Image of the King: Charles I and Charles II (London: Hodder and Stoughon, 1979) compares the images of Charles I and Charles II, who, although father and son, “are not often brought before the public in a double bill,” as “one is tragedy, the other comedy” (19). However, Ollard argues that they should be considered together because “both Kings created images of themselves which had a power and durability that outrange all competition” (19). This is one of the few truly comparative works I have found on members of the English monarchy, and thus will be immensely useful in my own work. Sharpe also examines Charles I, and notes that there is a “want of good political biographies” of many English kings in The Personal Rule of Charles I (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), xvii.

104 Corp, “Catherine of Braganza,” 60.
painters Catherine made a similar attempt to create an independent cultural identity.”\textsuperscript{105} She was painted by Lely several times, but, as Lely was a Protestant, she stopped sitting for him and began patronizing Jacob Huysmans, a Catholic, and the Italian Benedetto Gennari, who was employed primarily by the Queen and by the Duke and Duchess of York.\textsuperscript{106} That Catherine was able to wield influence at court through her art patronage is important; this shows that art could be a major component and reflection of politics, and Catherine’s insistence on artists who would work against the interests of the French mistresses had at least some impact on foreign relations. While Catherine of Braganza is not my focus here, this example shows the immense power cultural patronage could have on influencing who was at court – and the influence artists themselves wielded.

\textit{Some Notes on Geography}

A short note about the use of England, English, British, Britain, the British Empire, the English Empire, the United Kingdom, and Britons is appropriate here. Technically, Henry VIII would have claimed to be, “By the Grace of God, King of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and of the Church of England and (also) of Ireland in Earth Supreme Head,” in the last years of his life.\textsuperscript{107} While he was never King of France in any real way, it was part of his title and the image he promoted of himself. With the accession of James I to the throne of England in 1603 – he was already James VI of Scotland – the personal union of England and Scotland occurred and we begin to see King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, along with the

\textsuperscript{105} Corp, “Catherine of Braganza,” 60.

\textsuperscript{106} Benedetto Gennari also painted James II and his family, and will be discussed further later in this work.

\textsuperscript{107} These titles shifted often, but these were the last Henry claimed. The fascinating, if unfortunately, now defunct, website archontology.org is a wealth of titles and information for many nations and ruling dynasties. “Henry VIII,” accessed October 16, 2022, http://www.archontology.org/nations/uk/england/king_england/henry8.php. Accessed October 29, 2022.
numerical naming for England and Scotland. For example, James II was James II of England, James VII of Scotland, but still also King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, a confusing number of titles and places to be sure. With the Act of Settlement in 1701, and the subsequent death of Anne, the arrival of the Hanoverians, starting with George I, and the later accession of George II, a personal union between Great Britain/the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and Hanover also occurred. George’s full title – although it was not used in England – was, “George the Second, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, Duke of Brunswick–Lüneburg, Archtreasurer and Prince–Elector of the Holy Roman Empire.” For simplicity, I believe it is best to use the terms “Britain” and “Great Britain” most often when discussing all three kings and their families, unless discussing a specific place or term, such as France or Ireland, or difficulties related to ruling a particular part
of the realm, like Scotland. This terminology has been debated, but for this work, a basic understanding is all that is truly needed. Linda Colley argues that the British nation was forged between, “the Act of Union joining Scotland to England and Wales in 1707 and the formal beginning of the Victorian age in 1837,” and I don’t disagree, but do believe that this view may discount earlier unions that also helped forge the unique character of Great Britain and the

108 It is also important here to note that these kings had various official titles – and that the very names of the places they ruled over changed as well. I believe this is also an opportune moment to discuss language, particularly the language surrounding the titles and places involved here. With Henry VIII and James II, the languages of England and the court were English and French, primarily, with Latin smattered throughout. While Henry and James, and their courts, used several languages, both kings were raised in England, at least in part. George II, however, was, “born and bred in Germany to a French–speaking aristocratic family” and, “came to the throne of his English–speaking kingdoms in middle age.” Norman Davies, George II: Not Just a British Monarch (Allen Lane: London, 2021), xi. Davies dives into the linguistics struggles surrounding a monolingual work about a multilingual king (and time), noting that, “the essential colour and tone of his life are undermined by the exclusive use of Anglocentric terminology.” (xi) While I agree, and language is crucial to historical understanding, this is a study of English kings, and their roles as English kings is first and foremost in my mind here. Even Davies agrees that historians and biographers of George II, “cannot possibly use all his titles all the time.” (xi) George II was a prince–elector of the Holy Roman Empire, Herzog or Duke of Braunschweig–Lüneburg, and King of England (and Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and, as was tradition, nominally France). Davies notes that because of this, it is most accurate to call him “king–elector” instead of king. He argues that this is not without precedent, as Victoria was sometimes referred to as “empress–queen” or “queen–empress.” Although I agree that George II did value and participate in both of these roles, for the purposes of this work, I will be using “king” or “Prince of Wales” or “elector” where appropriate. George was very concerned with his image, particularly when it came to looking “English” and, while he occupied many spaces, this is the space I am focusing on. More importantly for this work is the term “house of Hanover,” or even “Hanoverian.” While George has been referred to as, “the Elector of Hanover,” his family would have been more comfortable with the family name Guelph. Guelph – an ancient name and an important one in the Holy Roman Empire – however, had Catholic connotations that were unpalatable to Parliament as they were drafting the Act of Settlement in 1701. Davies suggests an, “artificial hybrid of Great Britain–Hanover” as, “less unacceptable than other alternatives.” Again, I agree with Davies, but for the sake of brevity, and to avoid the confusion in United Kingdom/Great Britain/England, I’ve chosen to use “Hanoverian.” Not only is it the commonly accepted term amongst most historians, but for the sake of brevity, it works here. This note on language, however, is important, and should be considered when thinking about the House of Guelph/the Hanoverians and what their dynasty truly meant to them and their contemporaries. I will, when appropriate, use what I feel is the most correct term. For England, it is somewhat more complicated. England is currently a country within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This is confusing, because the island that England lies on is called Great Britain, but it contains the countries of England, Wales, and Scotland, as well as small islands off the shore, like the Isle of Wight. James I was the first king to officially use the title “King of Great Britain” in 1604 (see the now–defunct, but still useful website “archontology.org” for more information: http://www.archontology.org/nations/uk/england/king_england/01_kingstyle_1604.php), but he – like other kings before him – also claimed the throne of France. Although I will generally refer to these kings as kings of England or of Great Britain/Britain, which they all were, it is important to note that they were not just kings of England and the island of Great Britain, but rather were kings of England, Wales, and Ireland, sometimes of Scotland, later of the United Kingdom (1707), and never truly, but always claimed, kings of France. Where necessary, I will distinguish their various titles, but it is safe to say here that all three were, in fact, kings of England and Great Britain, and they conceptualized the base of their power as London.
British monarchy. Therefore I will continue to use, I believe appropriately, the above terms basically interchangeably, although with the caveat that special attention will be paid to location and to the understandings these historical actors had of their own titles, realms, and peoples.

Conclusion

As Theodore Rabb argued, “Europe entered a new era very roughly during the middle third of the century…there was a change in direction more dramatic and decisive than any that occurred in a forty–year period between the beginnings of the Reformation and the French Revolution.” But what did conflict and chaos look like to a people who experienced so much of it? As Kevin Sharpe asks, “What did order mean to those who witnessed the execution of a king in 1649, or the erection of a new monarchy in 1660, or the deposition of a divinely appointed king in 1688?” I would add my own question – what sense could the world make to someone who witnessed Henry VIII go from Defender of the Faith to titular head of the Church of England? To a person witnessing the suppression of the Jacobite rebellion? To anyone who witnesses such events? For historians to argue that there was one single crisis – or one single


111 Sharpe, Remapping Early Modern England, 390–391. Sharpe has also written one of the most comprehensive and intriguing studies of seventeenth century English art, representation and politics available, Image Wars: Promoting the Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603–1660 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). While this book is, in many ways, too specific of a work to be useful in a general study such as this, it has quickly become an indispensable resource for students of early modern English culture. His primary argument is that “far from rendering them secondary, the civil war made the arts of representation and the cultural foundation of legitimacy more important than ever” (xv). I agree with this argument and hope to use it as a basis for much of my own work.
outlet for that conflict – would be inaccurate and a misunderstanding of the complicated and varied political and cultural world I will discuss here. Similarly, to say that crisis in early modern Europe was only expressed through political or economic reactions would also be incorrect, as cultural reactions and creations were both outlets for this conflict as well as ways we can more clearly and completely understand the early modern period.

The history of, and the struggles faced by those in, early modern Europe indicates a world in flux, where expressions of uncertainty over the place and type of power were expressed in political and bureaucratic institutions, but also came through in art, ritual, religion, and science. Looking to the divine, whether to God, the Church, or princes, was a characteristic of the early modern period, but the conflict over who was the true authority created a crisis that has been interpreted and reinterpreted over and over by historians. If we can agree that conflict arose out of a desire to order the world, to find the legitimate source of authority in a confusing world, and that this was a hallmark of the early modern period, the stories we tell about the time make more sense; in addition, the ending of the period, whether we choose to call it “modern” or another name, comes more clearly into focus. There are thousands of quotes from historians about the chaos, the conflict, the general confusion of the early modern period in Europe as a whole, and they all contain truths about and insights to this time. It is my hope that this chapter has created a basic “cultural framework” for my readers, and that this world – and its confusion, as well as the desperate quest of Henry, James, and George to portray and embody legitimate authority – has become clearer.
Chapter Two:

Henry VIII and His World

Introduction

Henry VIII is today, almost without question, the most famous and easily recognizable English monarch of the past. David Starkey relates a lecture by Tudor historian G.R. Elton, who declared, “Henry VIII…is the only king whose shape you remember.”112 Henry’s image is larger than life, his own personal charm – as well as his ruthlessness – has been examined by historians and displayed in popular fiction, and his actions as king between 1509 and 1547 would have a lasting impact that is still, in many ways, felt today. He is perhaps the most studied and famous of England’s kings, but his motivations in the ways he crafted his image and that of the family that surrounded him are still elusive. As Lucy Wooding notes, “Henry VIII is easy to caricature as a monarch, hard to understand as a man.”113 Like the early modern period as a whole, there seems to be a tension, a conflict, running through Henry’s character for historians. A.F. Pollard – whose 1902 biography Henry VIII may be the first modern historical analysis of Henry’s life and reign – famously argued that, “every inch a King, Henry VIII never attained to the stature of a gentleman.”114 Was a humanist prince? A lover of bawdy plays? A religious scholar? A murderer? A writer of love songs? Or, as I contend, was he a king very concerned with image and influence who could convince almost anyone that he was all, none, or some of these things, often at the same time?

113 Lucy Wooding, Henry VIII (New York: Routledge, 2009), 1.
Henry and his family – including his heirs, all of whom ruled for a time, and his famous six wives, many of whom met unfortunate fates – begin this study of the early modern period in Britain not only because he is the most recognizable British king, but also because his concern with image marks an important beginning in the early modern British fascination with and dependence on portraiture in its various forms. Henry is recognized and referenced often by later kings and their families, particularly in the reign of George II, as a bulwark of legitimacy. Part of this study, and one of the reasons Henry is so crucial, is the use of Henry’s image and reference to him as a legitimizing connection by later kings and queens. That these other “second-generation” monarchs used Henry’s image shows a long and expansive connection between these three kings. Henry also, as an analysis of his art will reinforce, was the first early modern British king, and, as such, serves as an important role in bookending this study.\footnote{As Tatiana String notes, unlike during his father’s reign, “the reign of Henry VIII…was a period of growing sophistication in the range and complexity of communicative art, which was called upon to express profound religious and political change.” Tatiana String, Art and Communication in the Reign of Henry VIII (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 3.}

In this chapter, I will begin with a brief discussion of Henry’s early life and what the world – and the representations of kings – looked like upon his birth in 1491, then move on to a very short biographical narrative of Henry’s early life before he became king. Although biographies of Henry are plentiful, a brief discussion of his life and the family he was part of as a child is important here, both for background knowledge and to assist with later analysis of his images. Again, like the other kings discussed here, Henry was not born as heir to the throne, but rather inherited that position later in life. Next, I will discuss the historiography surrounding Henry’s life and reign, before moving on to the next chapter, where I will analyze portraits from Henry’s time as heir and then king, following a generally chronological discussion of the political and personal moments of upheaval and the paintings that coincided with or, as we are
able to interpret, perhaps spoke directly to these events. This will show that many images and actions concerning representation correlate with challenges to the legitimacy of the king or to events that challenged Henry’s rule and dynastic ambitions. Much of the art created during Henry’s reign was the product of reacting to crisis, and although it is almost impossible to point to a direct causal relationship between paintings of Henry and the crises of his reign, that he communicated power and legitimacy through art is difficult to deny.

There is a wealth of information relating to image in Henry’s reign, and it would be almost impossible for one study to encompass it all. As with James and George in later chapters, the images I will analyze are limited, generally, to portraits. That said, I will also briefly discuss ways beyond direct representation that Henry bolstered his legitimacy, power, and legacy, such as collecting, patronage, ceremony, and design. Finally, I will include a brief summary of the key points of the chapter and a look forward to the next chapter, where we meet James II and see a world much changed – at least in part due to Henry’s actions. Throughout, I will be seeking to answer my original questions: How did these particular kings and their families, as second-generation monarchs, represent themselves? What can those representations tell us about the early modern period in Britain and the search for legitimate authority? And, when compared, what can their unique experiences tell us?

Henry and his family, to perhaps a greater extent than the other royal families I will discuss here, suffer from popular and academic curiosity. While hundreds of monographs and articles detail the minutiae of his life, his role as a collector and commissioner of art within the dynastic system, as well as his representation as a member (albeit an important one) of a family, has largely been ignored, even by professional historians. In popular history, Henry and his famous wives and children often appear as caricatures, reduced to either a fickle, vigorous,
amorous king and his series of lovers or a sad, aging, obese king and his procession of younger wives being forced to bear the king’s attention for breeding, with the constant possibility of death or divorce from the gout–ridden monarch. This stems partially from their popularity with later writers and monarchs (both James and George would use Henry’s image and imagery when convenient) as well as a maddening lack – and overabundance, all at the same time – of sources, particularly concerning images of his wives. Where does the “truth” of Henry’s reign, of his family’s lives, and his interest in dynasty and rule lie? How can his family’s artistic consumption, collection, and patronage create a more textured and nuanced picture? By examining the images of Henry’s family as they related to the overall needs of ruling and the crises of Henry’s reign, as well as the collecting habits and patronage acts of Henry and his family, these questions, and a broader understanding of the royal family and their images in early modern England, begin to be clearer.

A Brief Biography

Henry was born in 1491 to the first Tudor monarch, Henry VII, and Elizabeth of York. His parents’ marriage, like most in the early modern period, was to create a political alliance. In order to end the bloody, drawn–out series of conflicts, known as the Wars of the Roses, which dominated the fifteenth–century, Henry Tudor, a (tenuous) Lancastrian claimant to the English throne married the Yorkist Elizabeth of York, effectively bringing the conflict to an end. Although primarily a political affair, the Wars of the Roses were violent, and certainly impacted the country as a whole. As Elizabeth Burton notes, the Wars of the Roses, “were a great

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116 Although there is substantial evidence that Henry VII and Elizabeth were a very happy couple. This happiness, and the Henry VII’s grief at the loss of his wife, must have had an impact on Henry VIII, who was, by all accounts, a hopeless, if somewhat vengeful, romantic.
destroyer of ancient nobility,” and caused, “intense discomfort, disorder and damage.”117 By the
time of Henry’s birth, Henry VII had technically secured power, and that is certainly how history
has remembered it, but he was still considered an usurper, a false king by many, even after his
decisive victory at Bosworth Field.118 The Wars of the Roses were not only complicated and
protracted, but also showed the power of the nobles in England and affected their memories and
conceptions of kingship. Allison Weir rightly notes that, “from 1399 to 1499 the crown became
the object of feuds, wars and conspiracies.”119 It was left up to Henry VII and his tenuous claim
to the throne, with his victory still contested, to establish his claim to the throne and court the
support of the nobles after his victory.120

In sixteenth–century England, Britain, and Europe as a whole, those who were “nobility”
were a tiny percentage of the population – the peerage, which consisted of about fifty families.121
Although this was a very minor part of the population, the impact of the Wars of the Roses on
the nobility spread to the rest of the country, impacting the nobility, the gentry, and even the
lower classes, who lived with war on their lands and financial ruin of their lords. Out of this

the Wars of the Roses and the conflict between the Lancastrian and Yorkist claimants to the throne, see: A.J.
Pollard, The Wars of the Roses (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2001), Michael Hicks, The Wars of the Roses (New
Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), Sean Cunningham, Richard III: A Royal Enigma (London: The National
Charles Ross, Edward IV (The English Monarch Series) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), Susan
Higginbotham, The Woodvilles: The Wars of the Roses and England’s Most Infamous Family (Stroud: The History

118 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 66


120 And, if one was looking only at family trees, Henry VII was an incredibly weak claimant.

conflict, which called into question the powers of the nobility, the monarch, and the hereditary nature of the crown itself, rose a stronger, but hardly absolute monarch in the form of Henry Tudor. This shift was not immediate, and the wealth, influence, and manpower of the nobles still mattered considerably, and managing the wants, needs, expectations, and desires of this group became a large, important part of the role of the monarch. The crown, Neil Cuddy argues, was part of the nobility, and that it, “could appear to be little more than an additional title, to be claimed, and won, by peers and their retinues.”

But, under Henry VII, the crown had been elevated above the nobility; while it was not absolute, and the king had different (and less) legal power than popular conceptions of early modern kings today, it was above the nobility, centered firmly on two, intertwined, physical manifestations of power: the court and the king. The court, or the official royal household, was the place in which the king resided, and the king was the place in which the power of the crown resided. The Tudors “created a household that outstripped all others.” Henry VII began to attempt to emphasize loyalty to the person of the monarch, the dynasty, rather than to the institution of monarchy itself, but he could not fully succeed, due to continued challenges, dynastic troubles, and a lack of desire or ability to make that “household” glorious enough to be beyond compare. Despite these changes, or perhaps because of them, the next king, Henry VIII, would also need to consolidate power, show his might in order to keep his throne, and impress and outshine his powerful nobles.

122 Cuddy, “Dynasty and Display,” 11.

123 Cuddy, “Dynasty and Display,” 11.
Henry: Second–Generation Monarch

One major reason for comparing Henry VIII, James II, and George II is, as discussed in the previous chapter, their status as second–generation monarchs – the second monarch in a dynasty to rule after a major shift in the dynastic nature of the royal family. Although Henry VIII had, particularly when compared to his ancestors and previous kings, come to throne without bloodshed or battle, he did face challenges that were exacerbated by his inability to sire a male heir.124 He not only had to continue the line which his father had created, but Henry was also required to create his own propaganda as the second king after the conflict while still looking to his father’s legacy for legitimacy.125 After the battles were over, Henry VII had to bring peace to a, “distracted country” – and to do this, he used a combination of personal charisma, a close circle of supporters, the Privy Council, and propaganda.126 His son would continue using this combination when he ascended to the throne in 1509.

It is easy to look back and see the patterns and qualities that would lead to Henry VIII becoming a revolutionary king, but, “to the men and women living in 1509 the future would not have seemed so certain. Civil war was still a visceral memory for many and…Tudor rule was associated not with harmony and plenty, but with oppressive interference.”127 For Henry, this presented a challenge and an opportunity. His father was not well–liked, despite his marriage to Elizabeth of York that cemented the alliance between York and Lancaster. When Henry VIII

124 Kevin Sharpe notes that the Wars of the Roses had been disruptive to both the monarchy and the country itself; there is “certainly no doubt that violence and lawlessness flourished” during the conflicts. Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 67. See also Weir, The Wars of the Roses, 416–417.
126 F.E. Halliday, A Concise History of England from Stonehenge to the Atomic Age (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1980), 84.
took the throne— and subsequently removed many of his father’s unpopular ministers Dudley and Empson, the unpopular and allegedly corrupt ministers – his rule and marriage to Catherine of Aragon was celebrated.  

In addition to the recent memories of violent conflict, Henry, like James and George, was not intended, from birth, to be the English king. While historians are generally cautioned to avoid psychological analysis of historical figures for fear of ahistorical imaginings, the early upbringing of these kings, with this major commonality, cannot be ignored. Until the age of 10, Henry was second in line to the throne, after his older brother Arthur. Henry received significantly less attention from chroniclers during his early life because he was not expected to become king; Arthur was, by most accounts, a relatively healthy young man, and there was no reason as a young child to doubt that his brother would someday be king. Steven Gunn and Linda Monckton argue that, when Arthur was born, he was “the great hope of a new royal house.”

Arthur’s birth united the warring houses of Lancaster and York in a way even the marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York and his death must have been difficult both for the family as well as those looking to the new Tudor dynasty to bring peace to Britain.

While there is no written record of Henry’s thoughts as a child or young king, some assumptions can be made. Henry was not prepared to become heir apparent when Arthur died, and the match between Henry and Catherine of Aragon, Arthur’s widow, must have driven home the secondary status of Henry in the line of succession up to that point – that no bride had been seriously considered for the second son was perhaps simply a diplomatic oversight, or something

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that would have occurred later, but even if Henry truly loved Catherine, getting the “leftover” infanta had to sting a little, for both parties involved. The many celebrations surrounding Arthur’s birth included allusions to his quasi–mythical ancestor; Arthur was born at Winchester, a city associated with the mythical Arthur, and alchemists believed, “the union of red king and white queen that had given life to Arthur had been prophesied by Merlin.” When Arthur died, therefore, Henry was left to fill a very large gap in the cultural imagination of Britain.

This is not the first appearance of a “second–generation” monarch, but it is the first in early modern Britain, and Henry was the first of these rulers to use his image in the way unique to this type of ruler. As the second British king after the Wars of the Roses, he was faced with the dual task of acknowledging and continuing the dynasty his father began while creating his own image and function. Henry had succeeded his father without major challenge – and certainly with no real violence – but he still faced instability during his reign that was related, at least partially, to the newness of the Tudor dynasty. How would Henry, a second son who was not born to be king, face the challenges of continuing his father’s legacy while creating his own recognizable and loyalty–inspiring image?

**Historiography**

Although Henry’s story, and the state of the world and England at the time of his reign are important aspects to discover, the historiography surrounding Henry VIII is massive, varied, and of uneven quality. Suzannah Lipscomb and Thomas Betteridge note that Henry should be

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130 W.J.B. Crotch, *The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton* (London, 1928), 110. I would also note here that mythologies and beliefs surrounding Arthur are not, and were not, new in 1928. Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain* was published in the 1130s, so it’s entirely possible, and likely, that fifteenth and sixteenth–century British kings were well aware of Arthurian legends.

studied through interdisciplinary means, because he was larger than life – he, “refuses to be decorous or good–mannered, demanding to remain the centre of attention.” One could write an entire book just on the books written about Henry, but I will attempt to outline the major themes – political histories, religious histories, histories of his marriages, and the substantial amount of work done on Henry’s image and worldly possessions – as succinctly as possible.

Writings about Henry’s life and reign appeared during the reigns of his children, and he continued to be a source of legitimacy and a symbol for the strength of the monarchy for later kings and queens in later centuries, as well as symbol of royal rule in England even today, almost 500 years after his death. For example, in 1707, when the Society of Antiquaries was established, “the remit that it gave itself was to collect, record, and preserve all memorials from before the reign of James I (1603–25).” Sir Joseph Ayloffe, an eighteenth–century antiquarian and member of the Society, provides both description and commentary on a painting of Henry in An Historical Description of An Ancient Picture in Windsor Castle, published in London in 1773. Although I will discuss Ayloffe’s analysis of this “ancient picture” in more detail in the next chapter – and also when looking at the Hanoverian use of Tudor images – Ayloffe’s work is important for understanding the ways Henry has been discussed by antiquarians and historians. Ayloffe presented this paper at the Society of Antiquaries, March 29, 1770 and, for a second

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time, “by Order of the Society,” on March 7, 1771. Sir Joseph Ayloffe, An Historical Description of an Ancient Picture in Windsor–Castle Representing the Interview Between King Henry VIII and the French King Francis I. Between Guines and Ardres in the Year 1520 (Read at the Society of Antiquaries, March 29, 1770; And a Second Time, by Order of the Society, March 7, 1771), 1. Although I will relegate most of my discussion of antiquarians, and the Antiquarian Society of London, to later chapters, these historians were fascinated with Henry, and their writings provide much insight into both the art of Henry VIII and how his image was used and understood by later kings.

Historians have always been fascinated by Henry’s life and legacy, as well as his larger than life image.

The nineteenth–century also saw a huge growth in interest in and enthusiasm for Tudor history and visualization. Steve Parissien claims that George IV – who died in 1830 – both purposefully and unconsciously mirrored Henry in some ways, with his divorce scandal, mistresses, his size, and even his dress and image, which he sought to reinvent for himself in, “a knowingly Tudorist manner.” Tudor architecture was popularized by George as well, with a remodel of Windsor Castle resulting in a, “late–medieval–cum–Tudor fantasy, complete with an ‘early Tudor’ centre for Garter ceremonial in the form of St. George’s Hall.” Although none of these stylistic choices could be called academic historical works, it is important to note here that

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135 Sir Joseph Ayloffe, An Historical Description of an Ancient Picture in Windsor–Castle Representing the Interview Between King Henry VIII and the French King Francis I. Between Guines and Ardres in the Year 1520 (Read at the Society of Antiquaries, March 29, 1770; And a Second Time, by Order of the Society, March 7, 1771), 1.


Henry’s image (and Elizabeth I’s) have never fallen out of favor or, maybe more importantly, out of memory. The nineteenth–century fascination with the Tudors, and the monarchy’s use of Tudor images and style for legitimizing connections to the past, do not fully belong in this work, but they are difficult to separate from the historiography. And, perhaps, they shouldn’t be.


Renewed attention has been paid to politics and religion during Henry’s reign – and his role in the events surrounding the crises and conflicts that occurred – as well as his image and the ways in which he used art, collecting, and patronage as image–building tools in the past few decades but, as Steven Gunn points out, “Henry spent much of the twentieth century in the background of his own reign, being swept along by the general will in reformation or nation–building, bypassed by the rise of capitalism, instructed ministers more able than himself, or manipulated by courtiers more cunning.”\footnote{Steven Gunn, “Henry VIII: The View from 2009,” in *Henry VIII and the Court: Art, Politics and Performance*, eds. Thomas Betteridge and Suzannah Lipscomb (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 309.}
Particularly in political matters, Henry has been treated alternatively as a master of political manipulation, ruthlessly playing the puppet–master to all those around him – or a plaything of his ministers, a man who was larger than life but incapable of ruling without the powerful influences surrounding him. Derek Wilson argues that Henry was primarily reactive, not proactive, to the crises he faced and situations he found himself in, ruling with charm and charisma as well as intelligence.\(^{142}\) Biographical studies have pointed to various influences on Henry’s life and personality – David Starkey points to his childhood as a major influence in later decisions, while Suzannah Lipscomb focuses on gender relations and masculinity (and the demands placed on women and femininity in her assessment of his queens, particularly Anne Boleyn). Kevin Sharpe has focused on the need for Henry to woo compliance through his image, and how that lack of absolute role impacted his conception of himself as king. Nadine Lewycky notes that modern historians pay so much attention to Henry and the Henrician period because, “scholars have customarily situated the origins of modern Britain to this period, when a British national consciousness, a professionalized and modern bureaucratic government, and the Anglican Church all started,” and I agree.\(^{143}\) Henry’s reign did begin what we call the early modern period in England, and in his use of imagery and representation was a significant break from the kings who came before him.\(^{144}\)

\(^{142}\) Derek Wilson, *A Brief History of Henry VIII: King, Reformer and Tyrant* (London: Robinson, 2009), 3.


Political histories about Henry are fascinating and abundant. The political world of early Tudor England was complicated, but the three primary points of contact between the king and the “people” were Parliament (although a weaker and less formally organized Parliament than James or George had to work with later), the Council, and the court. The court was a powerful political entity in its own right, but its political focus was one of favors, pageantry, and theater. The court, David Loades argues, was actually quite representative of the entirety of England’s nobility – although professional courtiers and servants may have stayed at court all year, there were also part–time visitors to court, and nobles came to Henry’s court (a moving, living thing in its own right) from almost all of England and Great Britain.145 The Council, on the other hand, was filled with advisors who were significantly less representative and picked more personally by the monarch, and was, “a working executive with a heavy burden of routine.”146 Political histories of Henry have tended to focus on the Privy Council and these advisors, and they were an amorphous, constantly shifting group of powerful men, which has made their place and treatment in Henry’s historiography unequal. Many of the advisors to Henry VIII are familiar to us – Thomas More, Thomas Wolsey, William Compton, Thomas Cranmer, the Duke of Norfolk, and many more – but historians have been divided on how much influence these men had over Henry.147

Modern political histories of Henry – and the debate about who really ran government – really began with G.R. Elton’s focus on the power of Thomas Cromwell in Henry’s

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147 Between the 1950s and 1980s, Steven Gunn notes, discussions were about the, “nature and significance of change in the institutions of central government” but they, like the, “disputes about the degree of the king’s control over policy and the influence of factional divisions at court,” have, “run out of steam.” Gunn, “Henry VIII: The View from 2009,” in *Henry VIII and the Court*, 313.
administration in his work *The Tudor Revolution in Government: Administrative Changes in the Reign of Henry VIII*. Elton argued that the bureaucracy of the central government – particularly in the administrative and financial realms – changed dramatically during Henry’s reign. The driver of this revolution was not Henry himself, but rather Thomas Cromwell, who Elton argued almost single-handedly created – at the same time England was undergoing a religious revolution – new financial institutions and administrative processes to manage the growing amount of income coming in from the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s.

This thesis has come under criticism from several angles. Some historians have pointed out that Cromwell was a single individual, and it is unlikely that one person could have imagined and enforced such changes by will alone – not to mention that many of the systems in Henry’s government already existed, but were perhaps underutilized by less competent ministers. One of the most important contributions Elton’s work has made, however, is simply setting the parameters for discussion about Henry’s reign and the importance of it in the larger discussion of early modern England. Although I disagree with Elton’s argument that Cromwell was completely responsible for these sweeping changes, and that this signaled a complete change from medieval forms of government, his work did set the stage for the study of Tudor England beyond the biographies of Henry already being written in the twentieth century.

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150 Elton’s work is reexamined by Natalie Mears in “Court, Courtiers and Culture in Tudor England,” in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (September 2003), 703–22.

151 Lewycky, “Politics and religion in the reign of Henry VIII,” 2.
In the later decades of the twentieth century, historians like David Starkey began moving their focus on Henry from his bureaucratic innovations and improvements (or the ones that occurred during his reign, whoever the real power behind those decisions was) to the personal nature of government and the ruler, including the ruler’s household. Starkey argues that the Privy Council, the royal household, and the court were the true centers of both political and cultural power and that Henry was a more powerful figure than many have given him credit. Who held political influence was also an important theme for E.W. Ives in the 1970s with his work *Faction in Tudor England*. Ives argued that factions at court were the real political players and, while those factions were often led by powerful administrators, these factions were patronage–based. Patronage for Ives was not just patronage of the arts, but rather a system in which Henry was the apex of a pyramid of power, with everyone at court vying for the political and social power that emanated from him – basically, it was a relationship, rather than bureaucratic, system.

Another key part of Ives’s work is his insistence on the personal nature of patronage, and on its importance as part of the conflict between factions at Henry’s court. He notes that men were interested in and willing to act as patrons for two reasons: to promote their own standing by attracting and promoting others, and for economic, tangible rewards. While I agree with Ives that Henry and his courtiers were intimately involved in the patronage system that existed, and that system was based on a need for factions to gain influence and power, I have to take some issue with Ives’s contention – however subtle – that men were the only participants in the patronage game. Henry’s personal rule (along with his obsession with producing a male heir)

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was based, at least in part, on his identity as a man. Masculinity runs through Henry’s images, through his court, and through his life in general. That said, women undeniably participated in the patronage system, even if that participation was less formally recognized by contemporaries and historians. For example, we know that Catherine of Aragon surrounded herself with Spanish ladies and influences, while Anne Boleyn patronized Hans Holbein and encouraged religious reform – even if her Protestant leanings have been overstated – during her relationship and marriage with Henry. All of Henry’s queens had influence over who their personal servants and household consisted of, and although I will discuss the problems with attributing direct commissions of art to Henry’s queens shortly, it is sufficient to say here that Ives’s dismissal of women as part of the patronage system is a serious flaw.

Another important aspect of the political landscape in early modern England that has been examined by historians in the last few years has been the focus on the interactions between and within the British Isles. There was a complex interaction between and within England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales – Henry, as mentioned, claimed to be king of Ireland (a place he never visited) but also remodeled the Welsh government to match that of England and attempted to gain more influence in Scotland through taking advantage of family relationships and dynastic marriages. Although recent scholarship has focused in on the relationship between Charles II

155 Steven Gunn, “Henry VIII: The View from 2009,” in Henry VIII and the Court, 314–315. For more on this topic, see: R.R. Davies, The first English empire: Power and identities in the British Isles 1093–1343 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber, Conquest and union: Fashioning a British state, 1485–1725, ed. Steven Ellis and Sarah Barber (London: Routledge, 1995); The British Problem, c. 1534–1707: State formation in the Atlantic archipelago, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996). And, eventually, Scotland was brought into the fold because of these marriages. Remember that Henry’s sister, Margaret Tudor, married King James IV of Scotland in 1503 – before Henry became king. Their son, James V, married Mary of Guise, and they in turn had several children, including Mary, Queen of Scots. While Mary was executed during Elizabeth I’s reign, her son, James VI of Scotland, would eventually become James I of England. Henry also tried to marry his son Edward to Mary, Queen of Scots when she was a child, but that plan fell apart before it could come to fruition.
and James II and their various kingdoms, it is important, particularly when analyzing the symbolism in Henry’s portraits, to understand that Henry claimed governance over all these various territories under one crown.

If the political landscape of Henry’s rule was complicated and has a rich historiography, it cannot be separated from another major theme in early modern Britain, and Europe as a whole: religion. Many historians, including Susan Brigdon, tie the English Renaissance and the English Reformation together, and it is true that they are, in many ways, inseparable. Henry is of course famous for the English Reformation, but how responsible for this break with Rome was he and – a major question for historians – how much of a break was it truly? Particularly in studies of Henry’s rule, the break with Rome is a major turning point and, as Kevin Sharpe notes, “the English Reformation brought about a crisis of representation.” Histories of the English Reformation – much like histories of Henry himself – have tended to skew towards extremes.

Was the English Reformation, the break with Rome over Henry’s desired divorce from Catherine of Aragon and the formation of the Church of England with the monarch as its head and supreme authority, a break with Catholicism itself, and all its trappings, or simply with the authority of the pope? Was it influenced by Henry’s humanist learning or brought about by a selfish desire for something Henry was denied repeatedly? Although there are still writings that describe this movement as an extreme of one kind or another, historians of Tudor England have recently moved towards a more moderate stance, and many now see the “English Reformation” as more of a political and, particularly, cultural shift rather than a religious revolution.

157 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor, 68.
In short, the English Reformation refers to Henry’s break with Rome that began in 1527 and was made official in 1534 with the Act of Settlement. Henry had been a Catholic king, and one interested in theology as well as the political and cultural benefits of Catholicism, writing his own treatise on – ironically – the supremacy of the Catholic Church and the sacraments. However, in 1527, he began to look for a way to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, his wife who he had married in 1509 at the age of seventeen, because she had “failed” to produce a male heir. Catherine’s family included Catholic leaders from across Europe, including the Holy Roman Emperor, and these powerful rulers did not want Catherine set aside. Henry likely feared a Wars of the Roses–type scenario if he did not have a legitimate male heir – a fear that was not totally unfounded – and he did have a technicality he could argue made his marriage to Catherine invalid. Catherine had been married to Henry’s older brother, Arthur, who died in 1502, but she claimed that they had never consummated their marriage. Because of Leviticus 20:21, which reads, “If a man takes his brother’s wife, it is an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother’s nakedness. They shall be childless,” marrying your brother’s widow was generally not allowed, and Henry and Catherine had to acquire a papal dispensation to marry.

When Henry asked the Pope, Clement VII to annul the marriage, he refused, at least in part because he had previously been held prisoner by Charles V, Catherine’s nephew and Holy Roman Emperor, but also because, at least in theory, a pope cannot annul a marriage that was

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158 Although some historians think Thomas More contributed more than Henry, the authorship of Assertio Septem Sacramentorum (1521) has still been attributed to Henry. See the Royal Collection Trust (RCIN 1006836) at https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/trails/the–art–of–monarchy/assertio–septem–sacramentorum–adversus–martinum; for a very readable digital scanned version, see Hathi Trust at https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/102282206.

159 Leviticus 20:21. This is the language used in the King James version of the Bible, and probably the one most people are most familiar with today, but the gist of the verse remains the same across versions. Several versions can be found at Bible Hub, https://biblehub.com/leviticus/20–21.htm.
granted a canonical dispensation before. Historians have also debated on whether Henry actually believed that he was cursed with “childlessness” – or at least male children – because of the prohibition in Leviticus or because he was smitten with a newcomer to court, Anne Boleyn. Anne had been at the French court previously, and was the daughter of Thomas Boleyn, an ambassador to France and member of the English nobility. I will discuss Anne in much more detail later, but her story, particularly as it relates to religion, has been varied in its treatment by historians. Although Anne did undoubtedly come into contact with religious reformers at the French court, it is very unlikely anyone who was advocating a break from Rome would have even been allowed at that court, and she certainly was not Protestant herself.\textsuperscript{160}

Many historians have written about the break with Rome – not just in studies of Henry and his family – and the general consensus is that divorcing Catherine of Aragon to marry Anne Boleyn and hopefully get a male heir was the driving force.\textsuperscript{161} But how did people react to this new religious authority, to the king now being the leader of the church in England? Was the English Reformation a movement that had no popular support but that was imposed on the people by political and dynastic considerations of the king and nobility? Or was it a needed and


wanted change that fell in line with the progress away from magic and toward reason? Although I am not an historian of religion, per se, I believe that it was a combination. While the idea of “progress” smacks a bit of the Whig historiography – and the inevitability of Protestant triumph in England – there were, as discussed in the previous chapter, substantial changes taking place in religion and the desire of people to order their world.\(^\text{162}\) As Steven Gunn notes, the general consensus is that the break with Rome came as a shock to most of Henry’s subjects, reform, if not outright Protestantism, was more popular than assumed by historians.\(^\text{163}\) Ethan Shagan has agreed, arguing that Henry’s reforms and the English Reformation itself could not have happened, much less been successful, without the “complicity” of at least a sizable minority of the English people – and nobility – no matter what their motivations were.\(^\text{164}\)

Henry did face one of his greatest challenges with the division between England and Rome. As Sharpe notes, “Henry was faced with a dreadful challenge: not just of restructuring and redefining his royal position but of re-presenting his authority, of rewriting and refiguring his kingship, and kingship itself.”\(^\text{165}\) Luckily, historians of Henry’s reign are beginning to view the English Reformation as a true starting point for Henry’s cultural legacy.\(^\text{166}\) From coins – coins that Henry had left with his father’s image, rather than creating a new one of himself before this new movement to break with Rome – to employing artists like Lucas Horenbout, to

\(^{162}\) The Whig historiography will be discussed in depth when talking about James II, but the basic concept is that the Whig party – the party that supported excluding the Catholic James II from the succession, and who supported inviting William of Orange to invade in 1688, resulting in the Glorious Revolution – wrote histories and influenced historiographies that made the triumph of English Protestantism seem like progress and the obvious and inevitable conclusion.

\(^{163}\) Gunn, “Henry VIII and the Court,” in Henry VIII and the Court, 314.


\(^{165}\) Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 68.

\(^{166}\) See, in particular, Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 69.
commissioning portraits that emphasized his legitimate rule of both country and church, Henry created the, “first propaganda campaign in English history.”\textsuperscript{167}

Henry, like James and George who will be discussed in later chapters, created these campaigns because they had to survive. Henry likely did have an actual interest in the arts – he certainly had an interest in theology, performance, and writing, as his own writings and treatises show – but he also had to, according to Mary Polito, build upon his father’s legacy while creating a government that strengthened his position through, “innovative legislation, the dissemination of propaganda…and new and sometimes spectacular rituals of statecraft.”\textsuperscript{168}

Where his father had emphasized the relationship with Rome – and that of his family and heirs – and Henry had begun his reign in the same way, Henry now had to retool his image so that he was both a secular leader and spiritual leader, and one of the major ways he did that was through his image and the representation of his family as legitimate rulers and power players in the patronage system of government. In addition, as Maria Hayward shows, Henry’s policies toward the material goods of the Church and nobility – including his own ministers – look, “as much like a monstrous kind of collecting mania as anything else, while the turbulent history of the reign was there for all at court read in the possessions that had fallen into royal hands.”\textsuperscript{169}

Because of Henry’s voracious collecting and the clear connections between the political, spiritual, and visual realms of his life, one of the major themes in the reevaluation of Henry that’s taken place in recent scholarship has been a focus on his material culture, including palaces, tapestries, clothes, musical instruments, food at court, and of course, paintings. Material

\textsuperscript{167} Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 69; Roy Strong, Holbein and Henry VIII, 7.

\textsuperscript{168} Mary Polito, Governmental Arts in Early Tudor England (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 131.

\textsuperscript{169} Steven Gunn, “Henry VIII: The View from 2009,” 311.
culture at Henry’s court has been influenced not only by the availability of materials, including inventories, but also the larger intellectual trends towards examining early modern politics through the lens of early modern political culture.170 This realm has been given a massive boost by the invaluable work done by David Starkey on Henry’s inventories, as well as Maria Hayward’s work on the 1542 inventory of Whitehall.171 These works examining Henry’s inventories are not only useful as readable accounts, but also as tools for understanding how Henry was actually involved in his own image and rule. Because the move in the past few decades has been towards looking at cultural and social – from tapestries to food, from palaces to gardens – aspects of Henry’s court as demonstrations of political power and tools for both wielding and maintaining this power, these works are invaluable.172

There is no doubt that Henry valued the artists he employed, like Holbein – I will discuss Henry’s patronage and the state of art in Britain during his reign in the next section as well.

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170 See: Tudor political culture, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); The Tudor monarchy, ed. John Guy (London: Arnold, 1997); Culture and politics in early Stuart England, ed. Kevin Shapre and Peter Lake (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993). As Steven Gunn notes, “the powerful Henry of recent scholarship is also a material Henry, surrounded by objects that expressed his personality and power but also formed an environment within which he lived and ruled.” (Steven Gunn, “Henry VIII: The View from 2009,” 310.)


172 One key caveat should be mentioned here, however. Many historians have examined art and imagery in Henry’s court and the homes of the nobility. That does not mean that there is no room for contribution, but this large body of work also comes with some limitations. String points to Susan Foister’s work on Hans Holbein’s art and reputation as a great example of using surviving records and letters that, “bear on events and people of art–historical interest,” but also notes that it is, “impossible to pursue comprehensively” that the, “government of Henry VIII had a policy or policies toward art.” String, Art and Communication in the Reign of Henry VIII, 7. String references Foister’s work on Holbein here, which I will also discuss later. For more on this subject, see: Foister, Holbein and England; Susan Foister, “Humanism and Art in the Early Tudor Period: John Leland’s Poetic Praise of Painting,” in Reassessing Tudor Humanism, ed. J. Woolfson (Basingstoke, 2002), 129–50. This is not to say that Henry did not have an interest in art, but is an important commentary on sources. While we can see inventories, look at records of payments, read some commentaries on the images, artists, or events themselves, no one in early Tudor England was creating marketing plans, no one was writing about the importance of art. Like many of the symbols in the paintings I will discuss here, the magnificence and importance of image was understood as part of the world Henry lived in.
Henry even once supposedly warned that, “I shall look on any injury offered to the painter as to myself.” Holbein was not, as far as we can tell today, paid for any works by the royal accounts until 1538, but Sharpe argues that it was likely that Holbein’s first portrait of Henry was actually created in 1534 to accompany the Act of Supremacy. Tatiana String notes that the relationship between Henry and Holbein was important, but it shows more than just that Henry appreciated art and artists – rather, he was using patronage as power. Changes in the portrayal of the monarchy, with Henry as the supreme power, were undoubtedly, “more at the king’s than the artist’s direction,” with Henry’s image becoming, “highly successful in establishing the monarch in a consistently recognizable way.”

Although historiography of Henry himself and his reign are important, understanding the writings about his wives and family is crucial as well. While almost all of his wives have become the subjects of popular historical works, they have received uneven historiographical treatment by professional historians. Henry is, particularly in popular history, perhaps most famous for his numerous marriages. He was married six times to six different women – Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard, and Catherine Parr, the last of whom survived him. Each queen’s image seems to have changed as her value as a dynastic

173 Helen Farquhar, “Portraiture of our Tudor Monarch on their Coins and Medals,” in British Numismatic Journal 4 (1908, 79–143: 91. Although Farquhar doesn’t cite this quote’s origin, it seems to me she is attributing it to the Venetian ambassador Ludovica Faliero and notes that we should see the Albbri letters. See translation in Marion Crawford's Salve Ventia: Gleanings from Venetian History, Volume I (London: Macmillan, 1906), 87.

174 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 69.


176 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 70 and Foister, Holbein, 194.

177 There are many different spellings at play when discussing “Henry’s Catheries” but, for the sake of readability and consistency, I have chosen to spell Catherine of Aragon, Catherine Howard, and Catherine Parr’s names the same. Katherine, Kateryn, Catherine – all could have been used and likely were, but clarity prevails in this decision.
pawn changed due to Henry’s wandering attentions and desire for a male heir, and this speaks to a pattern of these queens being erased or glorified with their changing status as members of the dynastic family. These representations could change from a dignified queen to an unattractive burden, for example, or from a picture of modesty and grace to one of posthumous Queen Mother, or even from beautiful and much–loved queen to persona non grata. As callous as this sounds, each of these women was defined by her place in the royal family, both as part of the literal blood family and the dynastic family unit – as discussed in the introduction, these were the ultimate “relational women.” Their places were often decided by the king and were certainly always dependent upon their relationship to the monarch.

While other women like Elizabeth I and Anne I ruled as both king and queen, in their own right, Henry’s queens (and, to an extent his daughters, son, and sisters) were defined through their relationship with the king. Henry used these “relational women” in commissioned art to serve the purposes and will of the king (which, as mentioned, was an office inseparable from the body of the king) – they appeared as Henry needed them to appear. Perhaps Henry’s wishes and those of his family lined up at times, but all evidence points to Henry having at least a passing influence in how his wives and children were represented. As we have very little evidence of Henry’s wives as royal patrons or collectors, their images, painted primarily as

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178 Some recent scholarship has, however, focused on Catherine Parr and her interest in culture, portraiture, and reformation policies. Parr has, as Susan E. James notes, often been, “marginalized in much of the literature of the period due to a lack of research into her life and activities and a consequent lack of understanding of her seminal importance to the power politics in the final years of Henry VIII’s reign.” (Susan E. James, Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1999), 2.) I will discuss Catherine Parr’s significance and her recent surge in historical popularity more when analyzing her portraits, but this is a fantastic example of the unevenness Henry’s queens – and their images – have faced in scholarship.

179 See Orr, Queenship in England.
enticements for marriage or to show the magnificence of the dynasty, must suffice when examining women’s roles in dynastic portraiture.\textsuperscript{180}

Part of being recognizable was creating a recognizable body. Many works on the body of the king (and, less so, his queens) have appeared in recent historiography, and these ideas are important to understanding the images Henry commissioned and the aura of rule he sought to create. Although I disagree with Derek Wilson’s somewhat one–dimensional argument that Holbein’s depiction of Henry was only propaganda and that we should dismiss him image because it was likely both exaggerated and overly flattering, he is correct in arguing that this was how Henry \textit{wanted} to be seen.\textsuperscript{181} But the body was more than just an icon for Henry, and here we see a major contribution to the early modern concept of kingship in England. The body as a visual tool is not the only important piece of this historiography. In recent years, historians have also placed focus on the king’s medical history and how his concern with his body played into the use of his body as a vessel of power. Gunn cites a \textit{Hidden Henry} program that showed how Henry’s medical history, “drew together his physical and mental state with the herbal and chemical resources of his realm and the intellectual currents of the day.”\textsuperscript{182}

As we can see, the historiography surrounding Henry, his reign, his wives, and his family as a whole is both extensive as well as varied – and includes an entire subset of historiography

\textsuperscript{180} Anne Boleyn, as I will discuss shortly, is a possible exception to this. Catherine of Aragon certainly influenced court culture and fashion as well, and it’s a reasonable assumption that all Henry’s queens did to varying degrees but, unfortunately, these weren’t “official” decrees or transactions.

\textsuperscript{181} Wilson, \textit{A Brief History of Henry VIII}, ix. Henry really was a large man, as his armor in the Tower of London shows – when I visited in 2013, the tour guide pointed out how large the armor was – and even as a slender young man, he must have cut an impressive and imposing figure. See the “Line of Kings” exhibit page from the Historic Royal Palaces at https://www.hrp.org.uk/tower–of–london/whats–on/line–of–kings/#gs.m2x0ma and the fascinating look back at displays of Henry’s armor at the Royal Armouries, part of the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) at https://royalarmouries.org/stories/tower–of–london/henry–viii–1540–at–large/.

about aspects I have not given significant time to here, like Henry’s writing and the writings of those he supported or associated with at court and across Europe.\textsuperscript{183} Texts and speeches, of course, were important, and Henry attempted to control the story being told through text in a variety of ways. But I agree with Kevin Sharpe that this process, and in fact the process of rule for Henry’s entire reign, “had also to be a visual process.”\textsuperscript{184}

\textit{Collecting, Commissioning, and Patronizing Art and Artists under Henry VIII}

Before turning to any representation of Henry’s dynasty, it is important to consider the artistic “scene” of Henry’s court. In the early sixteenth–century, English painters were considered less talented and cultured than those of the rest of Europe. There were no public museums, and the act of collecting was relegated only to the very wealthy, and even then with very little organization or purpose. Henry, however, “lived in a new way,” using his own body and that of his family to create a new type of court culture, which in turn impacted the way he practiced diplomacy.\textsuperscript{185} Henry’s inventory, recently compiled and indexed by David Starkey, perfectly illustrates this new way of life for an early modern monarch and shows that he was more than just someone who appreciated art, but was actually a real collector.\textsuperscript{186} Henry’s ancestors had been wealthy, of course, but Henry was a great collector, as shown in the inventory. Also, while his predecessors had moved relentlessly, traveling from court to court

\textsuperscript{183} For an excellent overview of this work, see Brian Cummings, “Reformed Literature and Literature Reformed,” in \textit{The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature}, ed. D. Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 824.

\textsuperscript{184} Sharpe, \textit{Selling the Tudor Monarchy}, 69.


\textsuperscript{186} Starkey, “The Inventory and the Henry VIII Inventory Project,” ix.
across Britain (and abroad), Henry, particularly in the later parts of his reign, turned the private apartments at Whitehall into a more permanent, opulently decorated, home.\footnote{Starkey, “The Inventory and the Henry VIII Inventory Project,” ix–x. Although I take some issue with Starkey’s use of “oriental” here as a synonym for luxuriousness, his point stands – this was a rich, wealthy, and permanent court centered around the king himself.}

These items were not collected and displayed simply because he enjoyed them, although that probably contributed to his choices. Henry’s collection was art as well as a representation of his public policy, presenting his wealth through his collection to impress others and show how well he could collect powerful artists and afford to give patronages and commissions. Starkey notes that, “ambassadors saw the royal treasures when they were given audiences in the private apartments, particularly at Whitehall, while the hoard was put on more public display in the receptions and joust that were held to celebrate the signing of peace treaties and other great events,” such as the 1527 public exhibition of the Banqueting House at Greenwich, where all invited could admire Henry’s collection.\footnote{David Starkey, *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), 8.} Henry VII, notoriously frugal and dour when compared to his son, seems to have avoided displays such as this.\footnote{Although Henry VIII did put a dent in the rich treasury left to him by his father, primarily through war, Starkey notes that the Inventory modifies the historical assessment of Henry VIII’s court as bankrupt. That argument has been based primarily on the royal income and status of the treasury, in works such as Richard Hoyle’s “War and public finance,” in Diarmaid MacCulloch’s *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety* (London: Red Globe Press, 1995). However, by examining the real value of the royal holdings, the picture looks much brighter – Henry was a wealthier king than historians have given him credit for. Starkey argues that “far from impoverishing the crown…Henry had endowed it.” Starkey, “The Inventory and the Henry VIII Inventory Project,” xi.}

Of Henry’s painters, Hans Holbein the Younger is the most famous, and, rightly, the most revered. I have discussed Holbein above, but more details on his life and how he came to be Henry’s primary painter are appropriate here. Holbein was born in 1497 or 1498 in Augsburg, and was the son of Hans Holbein the Elder, himself also a painter.\footnote{Oskar Batschmann and Pascal Griener, *Hans Holbein* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1997), 7.} Holbein and his brother,
Ambrosius, were trained in Basle, but in 1524, Holbein’s father died and he went to France, learning the portraiture trade at the French court.\textsuperscript{191} Between 1526 and 1528, Holbein visited England, with a letter of introduction from Desiderius Erasmus, where he painted several portraits, including one of Thomas More. Holbein had certainly returned to England by 1532, although it is unclear when he became a commissioned artist at court, as the documents are missing before 1536. However, it is probable that from 1533 on he was employed by Henry, possibly to design jewelry for or paint Anne Boleyn, who was to become an enthusiastic patron and supporter.\textsuperscript{192} From 1536 onwards, Holbein was officially the King’s Painter, and in 1537, Holbein painted the Whitehall Mural, making a commission of £30 annually.\textsuperscript{193} Holbein continued as Henry’s court painter, living in England despite continuing to claim citizenship of Basle, and died in October 1543, perhaps of the plague.\textsuperscript{194} During his time at Henry’s court, Holbein produced a large body of work, from portraits to sketches to murals, all of which displayed the grandeur and wealth of Henry’s center of administration. Holbein’s portraits will be discussed in the next chapter, but they also become important when looking at George II and Caroline of Ansbach’s attempts to shore up their legitimacy as British rulers. Although this is not a biography of Holbein – and his work will shed more light on his importance in the next chapter – some background will hopefully help my readers understand the major shifts occurring in art patronage during Henry’s reign.

\textsuperscript{191} Batschmann and Griener, \textit{Hans Holbein}, 8.  
\textsuperscript{192} Batschmann and Griener, \textit{Hans Holbein}, 9.  
\textsuperscript{194} Batschmann and Griener, \textit{Hans Holbein}, 10.
Conclusion: Notes on Henry’s Early Reign

Henry VIII’s reign officially began in 1509 when his father, Henry VII, passed away. Henry was only seventeen when he was crowned that summer and did not immediately begin working on his image or changing the cultural landscape in any real way. He certainly made some changes at court and in the political realm of his rule – removing ministers of his father’s court, increasing the number of tournaments, collecting tapestries and other material goods – but his own image was largely ignored, visually, until later in his reign when he had to remake it for his political and religious agendas. A short note about portraits seems appropriate here, before we begin a dive into very early images of Henry and his family and his own use of images. While this is not a study of the individual portrait as an individual portrait specifically, these images can contribute to a view of the early modern royal family, particularly during a period where double portraits were not common, and group portraits were very allegorical in nature.195 Henry, throughout his reign, used his individual portraits to enhance his own personal glory, an image he made inseparable from the glory of the office of king, and his portraits reflect how he wished to be portrayed at various points during his reign – the young scholar, the humanist thinker, the brave soldier, the virile lover, the loving husband, the proud father, the wise law-giver, the magnificent King. These roles were meant to show Henry as a continuation of the Tudor dynasty of his father and to represent the implied promise to continue the dynasty further – a task Henry took to heart and which ultimately changed much of the cultural and religious, as well as political, landscape.

195 A study of this type, taking into account every individual image of the ruler, would be far outside the scope of this study, and would also be several books rather than one comparative work.
Chapter Three:

“Annihilated in his presence”: Henry, His Wives, and Their Images

Introduction: Early Tudor Art and The Beginning of a New Era

In the previous chapter, I presented a brief biography and historiographical overview of Henry VIII, along with a discussion of his status as a second–generation monarch and why he, along with the other kings examined here, should be compared. Henry represents a true break from his predecessors – both his father, who began the Tudor dynasty and the kings of centuries past – in several important ways, but it is anachronistic to look at 1509, the year of Henry’s coronation, as a moment of immense change in and of itself. While Henry’s reformation – of religion, of image, of government – was a major remaking of the monarchy and the early modern period in Britain, there were few indications that he would be such a revolutionary to be found in his young life. 196 David Starkey even asks, “Was the young Henry a sort of aberration? Was he ‘really’ what he was to be in old age? Or was it all down to changing circumstances…should we read him backwards, from what he became? Or forwards, from what he was?” 197

Of course, modern historical thinking tries to avoid imposing our hindsight, our knowledge of what was to come. 198 The young Henry did finally heal the wounds of the Wars of the Roses, both through his parentage – descended from both the houses of York and Lancaster – and his general policy of avoiding retribution or prosecution when it came to the political factions that had torn the country apart. 199 However, while Henry’s early reign had some

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198 Starkey, *Henry: Virtuous Prince*, 6. Starkey actually notes that to do this “persistently” is, “the ultimate sin of Whigishness,” referencing the Whig historiography that will become so important – and so damning to James II – in the next chapter. (Starkey, *Henry: Virtuous Prince*, 6.)

interesting moments, it is his life and reign after 1527, when he began what would be the English Reformation and the creating of his own unique image that are of more interest for this study. However, Henry was certainly influenced by – and keenly aware of – the art and use of images his father employed and the cultural world he found when he became king. Prior to Henry’s reign, and particularly before the 1520s, images of the royal family were commissioned, created, stylized, and collected much differently. The key difference here, a difference that would continue throughout the early modern period, culminating with George II, is between representation of position as power and representation of body as power. The idea of the king’s physical body, his individual self, being represented as a symbol of power that speaks to several topics, such as legitimacy, cultural power, international power, and political power) has been discussed in previous chapters, but the change was truly immense.

Using Henry’s reign as an example, it is very easy to see the break both from his father and his older brother’s use and need for images. Arthur’s surviving images most likely do not show, with any degree of accuracy, what Arthur or Henry VII actually looked like as individuals.\(^{200}\) Partially to blame for this impersonal representation is the quality of artist living in Britain at the time, as well as the quality of artists, a problem which persisted through much of the early modern period, as I discuss in previous chapters. Henry VII did, of course, use art and representation; Kevin Sharpe points out that Henry built a new palace and, “filled it with portraits of kings, attracted Flemish artists and commissioned tapestries and pageants…”\(^{201}\) There is no doubt that Henry VII established both a new dynasty and a new “cultural” dynasty,


\(^{201}\) Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 62.
blending the symbols of Lancaster and York – most famously in the Tudor rose – and appearing, throughout his reign, as the unquestionably legitimate successor to both those houses. However, despite this interest in art and the desire to succeed through majesty, symbolism was significantly more important than the actual image of the king and his family.

While Bendor Grosvenor points out that, “the history of the English face begins with Henry VII,” and Henry VII was the, “first to import artists skilled in new techniques of representational painting and the first to make use of them in the business of governing,” Henry VIII took that growing skill, that new appreciation for artists, and grew portraiture, patronage, and collecting in a way his father never did – and almost surely a larger sense of grandeur in regards to his own image. With Henry VII and Arthur, art approved by the king or prince was supposed to glorify the position of the subject; the act of being king, whomever that king might be, was where power centered. For example, in the earliest surviving image of Arthur, from a stained–glass window in the north transept of the priory church at Great Malvern, Worcestershire, Arthur is dressed in armor, with a sword, showing that he is a, “knight, a manner of representation which carried with it all the traditional associations of knighthood with chivalry and Christian virtues,” but, for all this symbolism, he doesn’t look much different, physically, from anyone else in the image. Henry VIII, however, used both symbols and his own body

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202 Starkey, _Lost Faces_, 6, quoting Grosvenor, _Lost Faces_, 27. Starkey notes, and I agree, that while Henry VII pales next to his son, he “glows in contrast to his medieval predecessors, most of whom, whatever their achievements or however powerful their personalities, survive in our collective memory as little more than faceless wraiths.” _Lost Faces_, 7–8.

203 The history of Henry VII or Arthur commissioning images is thin at best. Although there are images of both the king and Henry VIII’s older brother, there is little evidence that they commissioned their own images. While some of this is undoubtedly because of the chaotic nature of Henry VII’s early reign and Arthur’s short life, there is a dramatic change in the availability, amount, and nature of both written records and portraits under Henry VIII.

(and that of his wives and children) to center the power of kingship on his physical person and the physical reality of his family.
In Plate 2, below, Arthur is only truly recognizable because he is with his family (directly behind his father and mother) and because his name appears. As a person, he’s relatively interchangeable with all the other figures. Similarly, in a panel depicting Henry VII’s family below a scene showing the moment the Virgin Mary was conceived, it is only clear which of the praying figures is Arthur because of his position in the family. In another image, showing the family in an allegorical painting with St. George slaying the dragon (a common theme in English history) recent analyses of the painting allow historians to “now say for certain that these distinctly unprepossessing faces were never intended to be portrait likenesses.” While Henry used symbols and position, during his reign, and throughout the early modern period, the king and his family were no longer interchangeable figures who occupied positions of power. Instead, the kings and queens after Henry, including the three kings in this work, stressed that power lay very much in their body, rather than in their position. In addition, royal women stressed this same power, or, in the case of Henry, had this power and position placed upon them much more heavily than previously.

Hepburn, 34.
Another clear difference between Henry VIII and his older brother comes to light when discussing the amount of surviving images of Arthur. All three of the images discussed above were commissioned by non–royal art patrons – even if they were approved by the crown, they were not currency for the crown to use. While Henry certainly appeared in images commissioned by others, and Arthur may have commissioned his own images (or Henry VII may have commissioned them himself), again we can see the difference between a portrait or image of the king and a portrait or image of Henry, the specific king. Also, the painting of Henry VII’s family and St. George has several mistakes in the depiction of the royal crowns and contains no reference to the Order of the Garter. The, “inauthentic nature of detail such as this can only suggest that the painting was done at some distance from the court and its usual centres of artistic production,” while the lack of reference to the Order of the Garter implies that this painting was not meant for court, where the Order of the Garter would certainly be a focus. Henry, as I will show here, commissioned, and certainly approved, images that depicted his specific body and then displayed those images, or used them as political currency where they would be almost forced upon any visitors to court.

*Henry’s First Queen: Catherine of Aragon*

Although it is unclear how much political power Henry’s wives had, they definitely had cultural power, and influenced Henry to what seems to be a great degree. For this reason, following his wives as we follow Henry’s image makes sense here. Catherine of Aragon (1485–

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1536), Henry’s first queen, was married to Henry’s brother Arthur at the age of sixteen.\textsuperscript{207} The daughter of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, Catherine was part of a powerful family on the continent, and both Catholic and a Hapsburg, alliances Henry VII desperately wanted and needed as a new monarch. When Arthur died, just months after their wedding, Catherine, who claimed her marriage had not been consummated, was betrothed to Henry VIII, and they married in 1509. Catherine was six years her new husband’s senior, but the marriage appeared to be happy on both sides, with Catherine embracing her role as both Princess of Wales and Queen.\textsuperscript{208}

Catherine appears in her portraits as a figure dressed richly, but also conservatively, as though she was displaying her piety through her clothes as well. There are, at the time of this writing, no verifiable portraits of Catherine from before 1520, but a painting from 1505 could be Catherine, although even that is in question. The years between 1501, when she arrived in England and married Prince Arthur, who died only a few months later, and her marriage to Henry in 1509, were spent in a sort of limbo for the princess. She lived at Durham House, isolated from court, and uncertain – due to the death of her mother, her dowry, the wait for a papal dispensation to marry Henry – when or if she would be married or sent home. While we have little in the way of evidence to show how Catherine felt about her image, we do know that she had favorite painters, and historians have noted that she enjoyed working with artists who

\textsuperscript{207} Throughout this work, I will refer to queens and kings who have various spellings of their names accepted by historians – that Henry married three different Catherine’s certainly adds to the confusion! It is important to note that other portraits of Catherine do exist, such as her betrothal picture to Arthur, in which she holds a red rose, but these are not “English” dynastic portraits, and thus will not be discussed at length here. A further study on the exchange of portraits across Europe would be fascinating, but beyond the scope of this work.

\textsuperscript{208} For works specifically on Catherine of Aragon, see previous discussed works as well as Theresa Earenfight, *Catherine of Aragon: Infanta of Spain, Queen of England* (State College: Penn State University Press, 2021).
spoke Spanish or had worked at the Spanish court. Giles Tremlett argues that Catherine’s favorite court artist was Michel Sittow, who had worked in her mother’s court as well.209

209 Giles Tremlett, Catherine of Aragon, Henry’s Spanish Queen: A Biography (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 2010), 122. Although the painting Tremlett identifies as being of Catherine may be of Mary Tudor – and, according to the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, where the painting is held, is of Mary Tudor, almost certainly – it is still indicative of the styles in which royal women were painted in the early sixteenth century.

In 1520, in a painting by an unidentified artist, she wears red garments with pearl, gold, and red jewels, looking severe, with a very strong jawline and folded hands, but not unattractive.\textsuperscript{210} By that time, of course, Catherine had had six children, all of whom but Mary had died at or near birth – she had seen both aging and grief. She was nearing what was considered the end of childbearing years by then, but the King’s marital attentions, despite his various mistresses, were still focused on Catherine. In 1525, portraits began to capture a much different image. A miniature from around this time, attributed to Lucas Horenbout, shows Catherine as much heavier, with a receding hairline and thickening neck, as well as prominent cross and far fewer jewels.\textsuperscript{211}

Was this simply because of age, or the reduced accuracy of miniatures, particularly those done in watercolor? Another miniature from this time, also attributed to Horenbout, shows a similar picture. Here, Catherine wears a similar gown and headdress as the 1520 portrait, but her hairline has all but disappeared under her cap, and she is noticeably larger. Who commissioned these images, and why? Miniatures were generally painted to be given as gifts, but for and to whom? These are not questions with easy, or clear, answers. There are no surviving portraits – and no record of them ever existing – of Henry and Catherine together, so these could have been

\textsuperscript{210} Unknown artist, “Catherine of Aragon,” oil on oak panel, circa 1520. 20 ½ inches x 16 ½ inches (520 mm x 420 mm). National Portrait Gallery, Lent by Church Commissioners for England, 2011. By permission of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church Commissioners; on loan to the National Portrait Gallery, London. This portrait was thought, until recently, to be a portrait of Henry’s sixth wife, Catherine Parr. However, when National Portrait Gallery experts examined the portrait, in the collection of Lambeth Palace, they found that, “First, the portrait was in a frame that pre–dated the rotund monarch’s sixth wife, second; her clothes were from an earlier period, and third, well, the woman also bore a startling resemblance to Henry’s first wife, Catherine of Aragon.” Harriet Arkell, “Catherine of Aragon reunited with King Henry VIII…but only as an oil painting,” Mail Online, 25 January 2013. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2268192/Lambeth–Palaces–Catherine–Parr–portrait–actually–Henry–VIIIIs–wife–Catherine–Aragon–says–National–Portrait–Gallery.html

\textsuperscript{211} There are actually two miniatures, both from Horenbout circa 1525/26. Both show this older version of Catherine. “Catherine of Aragon,” watercolor on vellum, circa 1525, NPG 4682. 1 ½ inch diameter. “Catherine of Aragon,” watercolor on vellum, circa 1525/26, NPG L244. 1 ½ inch diameter.
gifts for Henry or other family members or important nobles at court. But the change in Catherine’s image is evident. That this is when Henry’s fascination and obsession with Anne Boleyn began cannot be discounted. As Queen, Catherine had little need to present herself as a marriage prospect, but she did need to show herself as a wife and mother, as well as a potential mother to a male heir. In 1520, she is still this potential mother, but in 1525, she is clearly being painted as a much older woman who was both past child-bearing age and had lost appeal for Henry.

The Break with Rome and Marriage to Anne Boleyn

Toward the end of the 1520s, Henry was at an impasse. He needed a legitimate male heir and, although he had mistresses and an illegitimate son, that was not enough. This is a difficult period to analyze when discussing Henry’s life and image. Almost certainly, Showtime’s The Tudors got it wrong – in so many ways – and Henry did not break with Rome, leave his beloved wife, and start executing his friends just because Anne Boleyn refused to be his mistress, withholding sexual activity until she could be his wife, and queen. The story is much more complicated, and it’s not just the story of Henry’s marriages.

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212 This is not something unusual, really, though. Portraits in the sixteenth–century tended to be individual, family groupings, or miniatures – a medium particularly popular during Elizabeth’s reign – so we shouldn’t read too much into the lack of double portraits.

213 But why did Henry feel so strongly that he needed a male heir? Part of it could absolutely be his own personal need to have a son, his pride in that accomplishment. But also, British history has not been kind to female rulers or unsettled successions – something Henry, a student of history, surely knew. As Henry must have known, the only other female ruler – official ruler, not women with political power but unofficial roles, like Margaret Beaufort – was the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I. The opposition to her rule led to a civil war in the 1130s, and although her son did eventually become king (Henry II), this conflict was incredibly violent and disruptive to life in England and France. For more on Matilda, see Catherine Hanley, Matilda: Empress, Queen, Warrior (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), Marjorie Chibnall, The Empress Matilda: Queen Consort, Queen Mother and Lady of the English (London: Blackwell, 1991), Stephen Bradbury, Stephen and Matilda: The Civil War of 1139–53 (New York: The History Press, 2011), and Matthew Lewis, Stephen and Matilda’s Civil War: Cousins of Anarchy (Philadelphia: Pen & Sword Books, 2019).
Henry had run into financial difficulties in the 1520s, and the Amicable Grant of 1525 was a display of both his power and his ability to avoid blame for any missteps. The Amicable Grant was essentially a forced loan from the clergy and laity to the crown. As discussed in the previous chapter, Henry had been – at least outwardly – a very devout Catholic who was devoted both to the Church and the Pope, and who turned to the Church for financial support when needed. G.W. Bernard notes that asking for the grant came on the heels of several other taxations in prior years, and it was a, “a huge financial demand, not sanctioned by parliament,” and thus, “ran into refusals and outright resistance.”

In addition to the financial and political challenges Henry was facing, he had likely met Anne Boleyn in 1526 – her sister Mary had been Henry’s mistress for several years before this – and had noticed and likely become infatuated with her. By 1527, Henry was trying to have his marriage to Catherine annulled so that he could marry Anne; Henry’s love letters don’t speak of theology or the practicalities of accomplishing this feat, but they do indicate he was not only serious about courting Anne but was also sending her images of himself. That summer, he wrote that, “as I cannot be with you in person, I send you my picture set in bracelets.”

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214 G.W. Bernard, “Reflecting on the King’s Reformation,” in Henry VIII and the Court, eds. Thomas Betteridge and Suzannah Lipscomb (Burlington: Ashgate: 2013), 10. Bernard cites Edward Hall, Chronicle (London: 1809), 697–8, 700–01 and his own article with R.W. Hoyle, “The instructions for the levying of the Amicable Grant, March 1525,” in Historical Research, lxxvii (1994), 191–202. While Cardinal Wolsey claimed responsibility for the demand, Edward Hall doubted that Wolsey acted alone, and G.W. Bernard has pointed to a letter that shows Henry was, at the very least, involved in, “assembling the commissioners at court, and telling them ‘by his own mouth’ why he needed the money.” (G.W. Bernard, “Reflecting on the King’s Reformation,” 20.)

215 G.W. Bernard, “Reflecting on the King’s Reformation,” 20. The traditional story goes that Anne refused, unlike her sister, to be Henry’s mistress, and would not sleep with him until he married her. Bernard disputes this and, although I find his argument that Henry could have overpowered Anne easily, due to his size, somewhat distasteful, I don’t totally disagree. However, Henry could have wanted to wait once they had decided to marry so that any children Anne bore would be legitimate.

of his marriage to Catherine would have been both the simplest and most irrefutable way to be free to marry Anne and have a legitimate male heir, but this has been oversimplified by many historians – and certainly by popular history. Henry wanted an annulment and invoked Leviticus’s prohibitions about marrying your brother’s widow not to deny or destroy the supremacy of the Pope, but to be free of his first marriage. Neither Henry nor Anne were Protestant Reformers and, although Anne had been exposed to some reform-minded French religious writings, they were not Protestant in nature. She certainly was not an evangelist, and she did not support any Protestant reformers at court that we know of. Henry’s final break with Rome came only after years of trying to secure papal dispensation.217

Ultimately, in 1529 Henry summoned Parliament – a Parliament that included the very reform-minded – if diametrically opposed in what types of reform – Thomas Cromwell and Thomas More.218 In 1530, that Parliament decided that they had no authority to make religious authorities in England grant a divorce or annulment. Henry proceeded to harass Catherine’s

217 This is not to say that Henry was not reform-minded. He wasn’t a Protestant but, until at least the late 1520s, both his writings and circle of friends and influencers indicate that he believed reform was necessary – as long as it did not undermine the ultimate authority of the Catholic Church. He wrote to – and certainly read the writings of – German philosopher and writer Desiderius Erasmus, who famously criticized several aspects of the Church, including the profits being made off of pilgrimages.217 This speaks to the overall tenor of the early modern period and it’s overarching questions. Who had legitimate authority? And how was that authority decided upon? For Henry, authority over religious matters had rested, ultimately, with the Pope for his whole life. His worldview was shaped by his devout father, a Europe that had not yet rebelled against the religious authority of Rome – although, of course, discontent was present and the Protestant Reformation was on the horizon – and a political milieu that required the support of other European monarchs and the legitimizing authority of the Pope. For Henry to break that mold was not, it seems obvious, something that he took lightly, no matter how much he wanted the wealth of the English Church, to marry Anne Boleyn, or the birth of a legitimate heir.

personal clergy, to overstep his bounds in both punishing and pardoning the clergy of England, and to approve small steps towards an official break with Rome. The *Supplication Against the Ordinaries* was brought to Parliament in 1532 and listed grievances against the Church; later that year the *Submission of the Clergy* was introduced as well, which basically stated that the crown had complete power over the church and that the church could not make or enforce canon law without the king’s permission. Little by little, Henry used Parliament to pass small laws that added up to a complete shift of authority from the church to the crown. The *Act in Restraint of Appeals* was one of the final nails in the coffin of church authority. It declared that:

> This realm of England is an Empire, and so hath been accepted in the world, governed by one Supreme Head and King having the dignity and royal estate of the Imperial Crown of the same, unto whom a body politic compact of all sorts and degrees of people divided in terms and by names of Spirituality and Temporality, be bounden and owe to bear next to God a natural and humble obedience.\(^{219}\)

Finally, in January 1533, Henry – who had made Thomas Cranmer (who had eventually approved the annulment of Henry’s marriage to Catherine and declared it, “against the law of God) the Archbishop of Canterbury – married Anne in Westminster Abbey.\(^ {220}\) The Pope excommunicated both Henry and Thomas Cranmer in July of 1533, Henry and Anne’s daughter, Elizabeth, was born in September that same year, and in 1534, the *Act of Supremacy* was passed

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\(^{220}\) See Jasper Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962). Although it is now several decades old, Ridley’s analysis of Thomas Cranmer – a fascinating figure, if one who doesn’t play much of a role in the portraits and images of Henry – is one of the best for a basic understanding of both Cranmer and the legalities of the English Reformation.
by Parliament, officially making the king of England, “the only supreme head on Earth of the Church of England.”

Knowing that Anne was a controversial figure, and that this was a time when Henry—who hadn’t been particularly controversial up to this point—had to reinvent himself as both king and supreme religious authority, it is unsurprising that portraits of both Henry and Anne are complicated to analyze. Henry’s from this point forward are filled with both the dominance of his own royal body and the symbols of political and religious rule, both of which he must have felt a growing pressure to prove were legitimate. Although it would be both oversimplifying the issue and frankly impossible to prove that political and religious crises during Henry’s reign caused certain images to be painted, displayed, and distributed, I do argue here that for Henry (like James and George in later chapters), images were a very conscientious way of promoting his agenda. But also, Henry’s was an agenda that was fluid and changed in reaction to the events taking place during his reign—events he had to respond to in a variety of ways in order to maintain authority.

Around the time Henry married Anne, he began to pay significantly more attention to his image, on everything from coins to portraits, and to creating a diverse collection of objects, from tapestries to murals to housewares. It is also true that Anne’s image reflected this concern. She did, after all, occupy a variety of roles in both Henry’s life and that of the court. She was sister to

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221 This was the first of several Acts of Supremacy passed. In 1537, an Act of Irish Supremacy was passed, making Henry the supreme head of the Church of Ireland. In 1558, Elizabeth’s first Parliament passed a new Act of Supremacy that undid many of the Catholic reforms of her older sister Mary and tried to pacify Catholics by declaring Elizabeth the “Supreme Governor” of the church, rather than the “Supreme Head.” For a full text of the original Act of Supremacy, see: “Act of Supremacy, Public Act, 26,” Parliamentary Archives. https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives RELIGION/collections/common-prayer/act-of-supremacy/#:~:text=In%201534%20Parliament%20passed%20the,severing%20ecclesiastical%20links%20with%20Rome.
one of Henry’s mistresses, she had grown up partially at the French court, but was, unlike her predecessor, an English lady, not a foreigner who was courted for her international dynastic importance. She was also blamed – or praised, depending on the day – for Henry’s new claim of supremacy over the church in England. Anne’s story, as we know, did not have a happy ending, as she was executed in 1536 for treason and Henry embarked on a thorough, if not entirely conscious or successful, mission to eradicate her existence and importance in his life after her death.\textsuperscript{222} Complicating this story is the fact that portraits of Anne are also difficult to verify. Was she painted by Holbein? How many sketches exist of her? What did she actually look like – a plain but seductive woman or the great beauty seen by Henry? Historians and art historians have pondered these questions for decades, but recent scholarship has shed some light on the infamous queen’s appearance.

In 2006, historian David Starkey guest curated an exhibition for Philip Mould entitled “Lost Faces: Identity & Discovery in Tudor Royal Portraiture.” In this exhibition, the question of finding an authentic portrait of Anne Boleyn was addressed. Bendor Grosvenor, an art historian, wrote about Anne and her Hever Castle portrait for exhibition catalog, noting that, “There is only one of Henry VIII’s wives for whom we have no life portrait, and ironically, she is the most famous of them all: Anne Boleyn.”\textsuperscript{223} This painting, a large oil on oak portrait inscribed “ANNA – BOLINA ANG – REGINA,” shows a young, very pale woman with a large “B” gold and pearl

\textsuperscript{222} Interestingly, a similar thing happens with James II in the late–seventeenth and early–eighteenth century. After fleeing England for a court in exile in France, his possessions that were left in England were sold or destroyed – although as I will discuss in later chapters, it seems that this purge was not particularly thorough, and the court in exile did just fine on the collecting front.

\textsuperscript{223} Starkey, Lost Faces, 39.
necklace, holding a rose, and wearing a dark dress. But Grosvenor argues that this painting was certainly posthumous – accurate perhaps, but not painted from life.


224 Two other portraits are close copies of (or vice versa) this painting. Both are at the National Portrait Gallery – see NPG 668 and NPG 4980.
This painting is currently displayed at Hever Castle, and Curator Anna Spender has also cast some doubt on whether this is an accurate portrait of Anne Boleyn, noting that, “many portraits would have originated from sets of Henry VIII’s wives” in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and were likely commissioned, “as part of an historical story, often shown in the Long Galleries of wealthy families.”

Although it would make a great deal of sense for portraits of Anne to be in fashion during the rule of her daughter, Elizabeth (r. 1558–1603), some of these representations do seem to adhere to what Spender calls, “the wicked witch character that had such influence over Henry that he broke with Rome in order to marry her.”

Here, Anne conforms to this idea, popularized by Catholic writers like Nicholas Sanders, who wrote in 1585 that Anne had, “an oval face of a sallow complexion, as if troubled with jaundice… a projecting tooth under the upper lip, and on her right hand six fingers. There was a large wen under her chin, and therefor to hide its ugliness she wore a high dress covering her throat.”

However, Sanders was a child when Anne was executed, and his statements are contradictory, as he earlier in life said that Anne was, “handsome to look at” and, “she was the model and the

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mirror of those who were at court.”

This would have played well with the role she was given by Henry and historians after her trial and death – that of a manipulative witch and adulterer.

That Anne was “given” this role after her death is even more likely given that this description does not match her contemporary descriptions. In 1531, Anne was described as, “good looking, of a rather dark complexion.”

That said, the contemporary sources for Anne’s appearance are limited. Grosvenor notes that, “there appears to be only one certain contemporary image of Anne that survives – a portrait medallion inscribed ‘A.R. The Most Happi. Anno 1534.’” This medallion, probably a coronation medallion, is unfortunately badly worn. Anne does appear to have a long face and prominent lower jaw (which Grosvenor notes is similar to Elizabeth’s, although Elizabeth’s countenance is another study in and of itself), but any facial

228 Sander, Rise and Growth, 25.


230 Roy Strong, Tudor & Jacobean Portraits, 2 vols (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1969), i, 6. Comments by Simon Gryne in September 1531, writing to Martin Bucer. I would also point out here that while modern standards of beauty are certainly different from those in the sixteenth–century, there was enough written about Anne during her lifetime by people who had no reason to be generous that we would likely have gotten a clear picture of her deformities if she had been thought of as grotesque.

features that could easily be recognized are missing.\textsuperscript{232} It as though Anne, the most infamous of Henry’s queens, truly has lost her head, even to historians. Grosvenor argues that it simply cannot possibly be true that there were no contemporary images of Anne; she was, “highly cultured, interested in the arts, and schooled in continental courtly manners.”\textsuperscript{233} She was likely Holbein’s first royal patron when he designed an arch for her coronation, “numerous items of jewelry, and a New Year’s gift for Anna to give to Henry.”\textsuperscript{234} Finally, she was the wife of one of the most visually conscious monarchs of the early modern period. So why are there so few surviving images of her?


\textsuperscript{232} “Anne Boleyn regains her head”; a recent article in “Art History News” relates the efforts of a stonecarver, Lucy Churchill, who has “made a commendable effort to recreate the medal as it might have been.” Interestingly, Grosvenor notes that the, “nose looks rather like that seen in the ‘Anna Bollein Queene’ Holbein drawing” that he and David Starkey believe is actually of Anne, and which the Royal Collection now accepts as a contemporary drawing of the queen. While Grosvenor notes that the recreated medal should not be considered a contemporary drawing, even restored, the effort to rehabilitate this important artifact is helpful and needed in the study of Tudor portraits. http://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/1337_Anne_Boleyns_medal_restored.

\textsuperscript{233} Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head.”

\textsuperscript{234} Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head.”
Grosvenor does provide compelling evidence for a drawing by Holbein being a contemporary image of Anne. There are two images by Holbein inscribed with Anne’s name, but they are very dissimilar. The first, in the British Museum, is a drawing by Holbein that shows a young woman, facing right, with an inscription from the seventeenth-century reading “ANNA BVLLEN REGINA ANGLIAE / HENRIVE VIIui Vxor 2da Elizabeth Regine / Mater, fuit decollate, Londini 19 May Ao 1536.” Grosvenor argues that this portrait, while conforming to our idea of Anne as a temptress, shows a woman far too young to be Anne, especially in 1536, the year of her death at age thirty-five. The inscription was thus probably added later, perhaps to improve the prestige of a later collection.

235 Wenceslaus Hollar made an etching of this drawing in 1649, when the Holbein drawing was in the collection of the Earl of Arundel, one of the first great early modern collectors. The Curator’s comments on the British Museum’s online entry for this drawing note that while John Rowlands and Starkey have argued that this is not actually Anne Boleyn, others believe that it is. See “Henry VIII: Man and Monarch,” exhibition catalogue, ed. S. Doran (London, British Library, 2009).
The second Holbein, currently in the Royal Collection, shows a less comely woman, of slightly older age. As Grosvenor puts it, “it appears, on first inspection, to be a most unqueenly portrait.” Here, rather than a full gown, the sitter wears an undercap, an informal gown (maybe a chemise, or nightgown), and a wrap or robe. Through a further examination of the inscription, “Anna Bollein Queen,” however, Grosvenor believes that this is Anne, and I am inclined to agree. The inscriptions are from a later date, but they were inscribed by Sir John Cheke, who personally knew Anne, beginning his career under patronage when she was queen, and who certainly would have known if a portrait was of Anne Boleyn or not.

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236 Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head”.

237 Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head”; Grosvenor also notes that this portrait has often been thought to be of the Wyatt family, because there is a Wyatt coat of arms on the back of the image. However, he does not believe this connects it to the Wyatts in any real way:

Too much emphasis has been placed on the coat of arms Not only is it a mere doodle, but it is also that of a man. Secondly, Holbein was not averse to re–using paper – see his drawing of Sir Charles Wingfield (Royal Collection, Parker 36) for the inclusion of a female (?) wrist, top left. The coat of arms was first identified by Clare Stuart Wortley in 1930, when she quite rightly stated ‘the heraldry must not as yet be held to have any connection with the lady…’; see ‘Holbein’s Sketch of the Wyat Coat of Arms’, Burlington Magazine, LVI (1930, pp. 211–12.)”

238 Grosvenor rightly notes that “it seems inconceivable that he would get Anne’s identification wrong.” Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head”; Also, although there are inconsistencies in Cheke’s work, most are easily explained (such as a drawing from a bust, rather than from a sitter), or are also questioned by Grosvenor, like the drawing of Mary Tudor. Grosvenor argues that this is Mary due to the jewelry the sitter wears. The only two actual errors, according to Grosvenor, are two drawings; one is labeled “The Lady Barkley” but is actually Elizabeth Dauncy, Thomas More’s daughter, and the other is inscribed “Mother Iak,” but “shows Margaret Giggs, More’s adopted daughter.” Grosvenor argues that these errors can be forgiven, “for the drawings date from Holbein’s first trip to England between 1526–8, well before Cheke came to court.”
So, is this a portrait of Anne, ascribed to Holbein between 1533–36? Grosvenor provides compelling evidence, even beyond his reassessment of the accuracy of Cheke’s inscription, noting that even if a later inscriber wanted to have a portrait of Anne Boleyn, why would he or she choose this one? I also believe that this image’s representation of Anne is close – taking into account its age and condition – to the ruined medallion discussed above. The jaw is swollen, but Anne was known to have a swelling in her neck, although it did not impact her beauty sufficiently to cause much comment. Finally, and perhaps somewhat contrary to our conceptions of how women of the court dressed, Grosvenor argues that, “the unusually simple costume is another argument in favor of Anne, for only a woman of the highest rank would have taken such a liberty in court circles” Images of Henry in the 1530s are primarily relegated to military images and miniatures, as well as images commissioned by others for specific purposes. It is important to remember that Henry and Anne were married in 1533, the final death knell of Rome’s supremacy over England came in 1534, and by May of 1536, Anne was dead, executed for treason. There simply was not much time to produce images during this period of frenetic activity, which also included the birth of Elizabeth (which was rejoiced, by the public and Henry,

239 Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head.”

240 Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head”; although Lucy Churchill’s restoration of the medallion is not historical evidence for Anne’s appearance, there is a striking similarity between the restored medallion and this portrait of Anne.

241 For example, a French account of Anne’s entry into London in 1533 at her coronation described her as “scrofulous,” or suffering from scrofula, a form of tuberculosis that affects the lymph nodes, and wearing a dress which was fastened high enough to hide the swelling. Starkey and Rowlands note that “in the drawing her double chin is so pronounced as to suggest such a swelling of throat glands, which is indeed partly hidden by a high neckline.” John Rowlands and David Starkey, “An old tradition reasserted: Holbein’s portrait of Queen Anne Boleyn,” The Burlington Magazine 125, No. 959 (February 1983): 88–92, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/881170.pdf.

242 Grosvenor, “Anne Boleyn regains her head,” quoting Rowlands and Starkey, “An Old Tradition Reasserted,” 91. He also notes that, “Privacy and royalty rarely went together. The Queen’s Privy Chamber was in fact a rather public place. Henry too was known to receive visitors ‘in a nyght gown.’” (91)
but there had to have been some disappointment that she was not the much–anticipated male heir) and the miscarriage of a son in early 1536, as well as the constant threat of war from Catholic countries loyal to the Pope and Catherine’s cause.

If a ruined medallion and a sketch are the only surviving contemporary portraits of Anne, it does not mean that more were not produced. Holbein could have produced a larger portrait, given his existing commissions from the queen, who, like Henry, was clearly interested in her appearance and perception. Certainly miniatures, most likely meant as gifts for Henry, must have existed. Anne was a known patron of Hans Holbein, who because the most famous and, it seems, a beloved court painter for Henry, but contemporary images of Anne, or of Henry, were either not produced – or even destroyed. It stands to reason that Henry would not want images of Anne – the woman he had loved, who he had broken with Rome for, who he left Catherine for, a woman he likely blamed the execution of his dear friend Thomas More (and others, given his propensity to pass the blame to those around him) on – at court or at any of the great houses he visited. It is important to remember that Henry did not divorce Anne based on the belief that their marriage was invalid, forbidden by God, or even, on paper, because she failed to give him a male heir. His official reason for her trial and execution was treason, which would have made it even easier to justify removing her image.

243 And many engravings were produced in the seventeenth–century, possibly off of these lost paintings. Anne was a source of fascination for later artists, including Wenceslaus Hollar, as discussed by Paul Ganz in “Henry VIII and His Court Painter, Hans Holbein,” in The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs, 63, No. 367 (October 1933): 144–155.

244 Anne and Cromwell had serious disagreements over several matters, including the distribution of seized church assets, foreign policy (with Anne arguing for French alliances), and more trivial matters at court. It is clear from Cromwell’s letters to the Holy Roman Empire’s ambassador Eustace Chapuys that he was at least a supporter of Anne’s removal, if not the instigator of it. Most historians, including E.W. Ives, subscribe to this theory.
On May 2, 1536, Anne was arrested and charged with adultery (a treasonous offense for the queen, after the Treason Act of Edward III, because of the potential for false claimants to the throne) with seven men at court, including an incestuous relationship with her own brother, George Boleyn. After a “trial” on May 15, Thomas Cranmer declared Anne and Henry’s marriage invalid on May 17 – making Elizabeth a bastard and illegitimate just like her sister Mary. On May 19, 1536, Anne Boleyn left her cell at the Tower of London and was executed by a swordsman from Calais – the location of her pre-marital honeymoon with Henry – with a single stroke. Is this violent end, after a sordid trial, why so few images of Anne exist?

245 It is, in my opinion, highly unlikely that all, if any, of these allegations were true. Although the point of this study is not to rescue Anne from her charges, or to defend her at all, the chances of a Queen of England, arguably the woman with both the most to lose and the least amount of privacy in the country, having extramarital affairs with seven men without getting caught is absurd. In addition, some of the charges simply could not have been true. In my undergraduate thesis, completed on April 16, 2007, I argued that it was actually Anne’s influence over Henry that led to her downfall, divorce, and execution, not the impossible charge of adultery. First, she not only had cultural influence at court, but also religious influence, convincing Henry to assist with the rescue of Nicholas Bourbon, a reformer from France. (E.W. Ives, “Anne Boleyn and the Early Reformation in England: The Contemporary Evidence.” The Historical Journal, 37, No. 2 (June 1994), pp. 389–400.) Thomas Cromwell, in particular, took offense with this influence. In early spring 1536, Bishop Gardiner was, “alleged to have brought…the suggestion of adultery as a means to achieve” divorce from Anne. (Joanna Denny, Anne Boleyn: A New Life of England’s Tragic Queen (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2004), 256.) In my work, I noted the ridiculousness of the adultery charge, noting that, “many of the accusations of adultery can be proved untrue just by looking at a timeline of the Queen’s whereabouts; this shows even further that the guilty verdict was assured, no matter the verdict.” (Amber Colvin, “Anne Boleyn: Doomed by Religion and Politics in the Court of Henry VIII,” Directed Research Thesis at Lyon College, 2007., 15.) As I argued then, “all of the purported lovers were supposed to be insanely jealous of one another, but had, according to the court, all worked together to try and remove the King; after Henry had been removed, Anne had allegedly promised to marry one of them…all the men other than Norris were also accused of sodomy, a moral crime and shocking taboo…Norris was spared this accusation, but was named as the conspirator whom Anne would marry once Henry was dead.” (Colvin, “Anne Boleyn,” 15.) Other historians have disagreed about whether it was possible, or likely, that Anne did commit adultery (which, coincidentally, was not an act of treason – what truly doomed her was the accusation that she had plotted to kill Henry). G.W. Bernard errs on the side of believing Anne was bored with her aging husband and may have had extra–marital affairs. Retha Warnicke argues that if Anne hadn’t miscarried in January 1536, she would have been immune to Cromwell’s plotting. E.W. Ives says the whole thing was court politics. We’ll likely never know the actual truth, but her death was almost certainly the result of pressure and politics at Henry’s court, and not directly because of any dalliances. See: E.W. Ives, Anne Boleyn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), Retha Warnicke, The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), E.W. Ives, The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn (Maiden: Blackwell, 2006), G.W. Bernard, Anne Boleyn: Fatal Attractions (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

246 This inglorious end, while not as drawn out as Catherine’s separation from Henry, was also more final and shameful – Leviticus may have forbidden their marriage, but Catherine was never accused officially of treason, adultery, or incest (nor were quiet accusations of witchcraft leveled at her), and although the rest of her life had been unhappy, she lived in relative material comfort until her death in January 1536.
It’s also possible, jumping ahead a bit, that Catherine’s daughter Mary (r. 1553–1558), who held no love for Anne Boleyn or the English Reformation, had images of Anne destroyed, or that they were put away and simply forgotten about in later decades. There are also numerous other explanations for very few contemporary images of Anne, including natural disasters (like the fire that destroyed the Whitehall Mural), images staying in private collections (or attics, perhaps still awaiting discovery), and the simple fact that it has been almost 500 years since her death. Although the ultimate fate of the images that may have been produced of Anne is unknown – they do not appear in Edward’s inventory of Henry’s possessions, a fact that argues for their destruction or divestment – that doesn’t discount their existence. If Henry’s wives served their purposes for the king and his image, Anne’s ultimate purpose may have been to disappear, replaced by the virtuous Jane Seymour.

Henry and Jane Seymour: A Short–Lived Marriage and a Famous Family Portrait

One of Henry’s most criticized decisions was the haste with which he married his next wife, Jane Seymour. They were officially betrothed on May 20, 1536, just a day after Anne Boleyn was executed, although Jane had been at court for at least a few years, serving as a lady–in–waiting to Catherine and Anne. Part of the powerful Seymour family, Jane was a distant cousin of both Anne Boleyn (and Catherine Howard, through her grandmother) and of Henry, although even if England had still been under the authority of Rome, their marriage, as fifth–

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247 Popular perceptions of Anne today make it almost unbelievable that more portraits do not exist. This is surely, at least in part, due to her role as the most controversial, and certainly most interesting, of Henry’s queens. Recent television shows and movies, such as The Tudors and The Other Boleyn Girl (based on a book series which also romanticizes much of early modern England’s court intrigue) portray Anne as an extremely complicated, very attractive, charming young woman, while Catherine is generally portrayed as old, pious, and unloving. The Creation of Anne Boleyn... Anne’s name does appear in the Inventory, but only five times, as opposed to twenty–six items with Jane’s name (although only one with Anne of Cleves’ stamp). A glass (178), a pair of gilt bottles with Anne and Henry’s arms (1046), three candlesticks (1134), one chair (12054), and a bed at Winchester (12162). There were surely many more items with her arms and initials, but none were in Henry’s possession at the time of his death, a convincing statement on her role after her execution: to be forgotten, a mistake never to be repeated.
cousins, would not have required papal dispensation. Jane was likely not as educated as Catherine – the daughter of two very educated and powerful monarchs – or Anne, who had been educated in France as a young woman, but she was pious and virtuous and, most importantly for Henry’s quest for an heir, was pregnant within the year. Although she miscarried in late 1536, she was pregnant again by January of 1537 and on October 12, gave birth to a son, the future Edward VI. Less than two weeks later, Jane was dead, likely from an infection or embolism following a very long labor and hard birth.248

Jane’s tenure as queen consort was short, but she was still immortalized in images, and it is during this time that Henry began to be painted in the way we recognize today.249 The most famous example is the 1537 Hans Holbein portrait that inspired historian G.R. Elton’s quote that, “Henry VIII…is the only king whose shape you remember.”250 In this portrait, Henry is large, but still athletic and impressive. He is wearing fine clothes and stands, like in the Whitehall Mural (which I will discuss shortly) in front of sumptuous surroundings. Although Henry has no traditional props of rule, like a sceptre, orb, crown, or sword – other than a small dagger – it is clear that he is king. This portrait, possibly commissioned by Edward Seymour, Jane Seymour’s brother and currently held at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, Henry stands nearly life

248 For works on Jane and this time period, see: David Loades, Jane Seymour: Henry VIII’s Favourite Wife (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2013), Elizabeth Norton, Jane Seymour: Henry VIII’s True Love (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2009), and R.W.Hoyle, The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). It is interesting to me how many works on Jane – which vary in academic quality – paint her as Henry’s true love, or the love of his life.

249 This, for me, also argues the point that Anne certainly had images painted, as did Henry, during the 1530s, but they were lost or destroyed. If Jane – who was queen less than two years – was sketched and painted by Holbein, then Anne, who was queen for almost four and certainly occupying the place of queen for at least 3 before that, had to have been the subject of at least some portraits.

size. The jewels running down his shirt, along with the pose of his arms and even the small dagger he carries in place of a sword also point to his codpiece, as noted, and he wears the insignia of the Order of the Garter on his left leg. Henry’s face stares defiantly out, and is immediately recognizable, but also, his codpiece is directly in the literal center of the painting. Jane was almost certainly pregnant or had already given birth to Edward by the time this portrait was painted, and if it was commissioned by Jane’s brother, it would make sense – their family had finally produced an heir for Henry. Could there be a more obvious clue to Henry’s pride in, and the importance he placed on, his reproductive prowess?

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251 Walker Art Gallery holds this painting in their collection and it is currently on display. The painting is oil on panel and measures 239 cm by 134.5 cm, or about 7 feet 10 inches high by 4 feet 4 inches wide. WAG Inventory Number 1350, digital image available at https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/henry–viii.

252 Other versions of this portrait exist with, as mentioned, varying degrees of merit and faithfulness to the original, which we have an idea of from the Whitehall Mural sketch. Other copies exist at Trinity College, Cambridge, at Petworth House, the National Museum in Warsaw, and several other museums.

253 It’s interesting to note here the long history of reproductive science that we take for granted as fact now. For example, we know that it was likely Henry’s “fault” that he was not producing a male heir, not in any way the fault of Catherine of Aragon or Anne Boleyn. It’s also possible, I should note, that just like in the Whitehall Mural, Jane had already passed away by this point, and her reproductive success was a point of pride for her family in a slightly more macabre way.
It is also important, before delving too deeply into portraits of Henry in the late–1530s, to also examine what was happening politically and religiously in England, particularly in the aftermath of his marriage to Anne Boleyn. The break with Rome did not go completely smoothly for Henry, and he faced two uprisings primarily in response to the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The first, The Lincolnshire Rising, started in October of 1536 and was led by Roman Catholics – mostly clergy – who were protesting the suppression of the monasteries, along with increased fees, taxes, and seizures of church property. While this uprising was quickly put down, and its leaders executed, it did inspire the much larger Pilgrimage of Grace that began on October 13, 1536. The Pilgrimage of Grace has been written about extensively, but it is sufficient to say here that it resulted from a combination of factors, including a poor harvest that led to high food prices, a distaste for Henry’s setting aside of Catherine of Aragon (who was both beloved and Catholic), and a backlash to the Dissolution of the Monasteries, which not only lined Henry’s pockets, but also took away a vital aspect of many towns and villages in England. Monasteries had long provided work, shelter, and opportunities for social and religious gatherings, like weddings and baptisms, that many worried would end completely or be taxed. Robert Aske led the rebellion, which numbered about 9000 when they occupied York, and which grew to almost 40,000 “pilgrims” before being finally suppressed in late–1537 and early–1538.254

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Although in hindsight it’s easy to see that the Pilgrimage of Grace had very little chance of success, and that the reaction from the crown would be swift and harsh, the outcome had to have seemed far from certain to Henry and his courtiers. It’s impossible to say if the Pilgrimage of Grace, the Dissolution of the Monasteries, and the various uprisings in England and abroad led Henry to recreate his image, to commission portraits that were grander than grand. That said, it is hard to imagine that paintings like his Holbein portrait or, particularly the Whitehall Mural, were not meant to show the grandeur and power of the monarchy in general, and Henry in particular.

A much smaller bust portrait of Henry (above), currently held at Museo Thyssen–Bornemisza in Madrid, is from around the same time period, but is the only surviving portrait of Henry actually painted by Holbein’s hand.\textsuperscript{255} Although this portrait is not as grand as the Whitehall Mural or the full–length portrait, it is still impressive. In this portrait, while it’s obvious that Henry is king based on the wealth and ornamentation, it is his body and face that hold the power. This is not Henry VII, whose personal image was generally a placeholder for power, not necessarily an individual person imbued with power – it is an easily recognizable man who defines his role through his body and presence. Here, Henry is placed against a plain blue background, wearing jewelry and fine clothes, with a hat rather than crown, but, despite the lack of symbolism, and the diminutive size of the painting, he is still an extraordinarily impressive subject. Although I disagree with many of his points about Henry VIII, historian Derek Wilson says it best when he says that the Holbein paintings from this era, in particular the Holbein copies, were, likely, “the best piece of propaganda ever.”\textsuperscript{256}


\textsuperscript{256} Derek Wilson, “Was Hans Holbein’s Henry VIII the best piece of propaganda ever?” \textit{The Telegraph}, April 23, 2009. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/5206727/Was–Hans–Holbeins–Henry–VIII–the–best–piece–of–propaganda–ever.html. I should note that, while Wilson does an impressive analysis of the Holbein images, his assessment of Henry VIII is incredibly skewed and completely ignores the artistic and cultural achievements of Henry VIII, focusing instead only on the political failures and economic troubles Henry created. While Henry should be studied objectively, and certainly had his problems, Wilson opens with, “Whatever corner of hell Henry VIII currently occupies, one fact must give him some comfort: he is still bamboozling us.” Later, Wilson states that, “The truth is that Henry VIII was never more than a pale reflection of Henry VII. But thanks to the genius of Hans Holbein, he has managed to convince posterity otherwise.” I, of course, find this to be a confusing statement, especially given Wilson’s lack of reasoning for why he believes Henry VII shone so much more brightly. Wilson does have a degree in history, but also writes popular history and historical fiction, perhaps contributing to his sensationalist take on Henry VII, who, outside of his meteoric and improbably rise to the throne, was not a terribly interesting king from a visual perspective.
Plate 11: Hans Holbein the Younger, "Queen Jane Seymour." Black and coloured chalks, pen and ink, and metalpoint, on pale pink prepared paper, ca. 1536–7. Royal Collection Trust, London; currently on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. RCIN 912267.
Jane Seymour was also painted by Holbein. Her lack of contemporary portraits—there are only two that are confirmed and have survived, a portrait drawing by Holbein, in the National Portrait Gallery, and an oil on oak portrait in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, in Vienna—can almost certainly be attributed both to her very short life and brief time as queen. Jane was, as mentioned, almost a foil to Anne Boleyn—pious rather than seductive, apolitical rather than politically-minded (or manipulative), and free from any stain of previous impropriety like broken engagements, being sister to the king’s mistress, or time at the French court. This representation carried over into her portraits as well.

The first portrait, Holbein’s sketch from 1536/37, is a half-length portrait with Jane facing three-quarters to the left. There is an eighteenth-century inscription which reads, “Jane Seymour Queen” in the top left corner; it is unlikely that this is a misidentification, as this drawing is very similar to (and was probably used as a model for) the Whitehall Mural and the other Holbein portrait. The second, also by Holbein, is a larger, oil portrait that is clearly modeled on the Holbein drawing. Her pose (facing three-quarters to the left) and demeanor are much like the Whitehall Mural, and she wears several jewels, a red and gold dress lined with pearls, and a cap framing her pale face. Her hands are clasped in the common pose of the time. There is very little remarkable about either the sketch or the painting, beyond the skill always

257 Although, as we have seen with Anne, while identification is key in these portraits, this drawing has a very clear history according to the Royal Collection Trust, who can identify both its original acquisition (after Holbein’s death) by Edward VI and its subsequent owners, including the Earl of Arundel. As with Anne’s drawing, it is unlikely that this portrait would have been passed down under an incorrect name, as many who still remembered Jane would have been alive during Edward’s reign. Royal Collection Trust, 912267, https://www.rct.uk/collection/912267/queen–jane–seymour–15089–1537.

258 This painting, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, “is first mentioned in the imperial record in 1720,” and was restored for an exhibition in 2003; it is now in a climate-controlled cabinet to prevent further damage. The question of how an authentic Holbein portrait of Henry’s most successful (and possibly most stable) queen came to reside in Vienna is a question for another scholar, but the journey was surely fascinating.
exhibited by Holbein in his paintings.

Again, this is likely a combination of several factors. It’s unlikely that Jane commissioned her own portraits, given Henry’s patronage of Holbein combined with her youth and brief time as queen, but Jane certainly knew the painter, or had at least met him both at court and during sittings for these images. Little of her personality shows through, although it is clear she is an important member of the nobility by her rich clothing – much like Henry in his individual portrait – but there is very little symbolism in her images. That these are not particularly interesting, from an analytical standpoint, is probably not the fault of Jane, however, but the combined difficulty of her early death and Henry’s need for a quick remarriage and repurposing of her image for the Whitehall Mural.259 However, as Grosvenor points out, “the appearance of religiously conservative Jane…was a demonstration that the Royal Supremacy was here to stay.”260

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259 And, it seems, his genuine grief for Jane. However, a quick remarriage was needed to guarantee more male heirs – Henry knew first-hand that first sons could easily die.

The Whitehall Mural

As both a family image and an allegorical story of the legitimacy and continuation of the Tudor dynasty, the Whitehall Mural is important—and is also one of the most famous images of the king himself. The Whitehall Mural was painted in 1537 by Hans Holbein, almost certainly under the patronage and direction of Henry VIII. It was originally a very large fresco or canvas, with the figures represented as “rather more than life–scale.”\(^{261}\) This work—displayed at Whitehall, Henry’s primary residence from at least 1536—was intended to impress and awe visitors to court, and given its subject matter, to convince and remind everyone who saw it that Henry was not only the legitimate king, ordained by God to rule England, but also was part of a legitimate and continuing dynasty. Whitehall would remain an important royal residence and administrative center until 1698, when it burned during the reign of William III. In reference to the mural, Xanthe Brooke notes that, “when Whitehall Palace burned down in 1698 it took with it one of the most stunning and definitive depictions of an English monarch that has ever been created.”\(^{262}\) Although the banqueting hall designed by Inigo Jones in the early–seventeenth century did survive, the majority of the original structure and its artwork were almost completely

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\(^{261}\) David Piper, *The Genius of British Painting,* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), 76. While Sharpe refers to the Dynasty Portrait as a fresco, Lionel Cust argues against this characterization. He states that “there is no evidence that Holbein ever executed any painting in pure fresco on wet plaster” and that two other painting by Holbein for the Steelyard in London “are done in tempora on canvas stretched upon the wall, so that they could be removed and rolled up…” (223). The Whitehall Mural’s surviving cartoon “has been pounced through, so as to transfer the design upon the wall,” so it would “seem as if this great painting was executed on the wall itself, so that it could not be removed with the palace was destroyed by fire, but it might also have been pounced through on to a canvas already stretched upon the wall” (223). Whether or not the Whitehall Mural was a true fresco, simply in the style of a fresco, or on a removable (yet still very cumbersome and large) canvas will most likely never been known. It is also interesting to note that the mural had been noted as needing repair and restoration as early as the mid–1660s. Lionel Cust, “Notes on Pictures in the Royal Collections—XXXIX. On the Portraits of King Henry VIII” in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* Vol. 31, No. 177 (Dec. 1917), pp. 217–224.

\(^{262}\) Xanthe Brooke and David Crombie, *Henry VIII Revealed: Holbein’s Portrait and its Legacy* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2003), 9. This work is not only an excellent study of Holbein’s portraits of Henry, but also of Holbein’s life in England as a figure at court.
lost. Fortunately, Holbein’s sketch of the left side of the painting remains, and Remigius van Leemput, a Flemish artist, made a copy in 1667. This copy, commissioned by Charles II, is significantly smaller than the original, but is generally accepted as a faithful copy.263

As Kevin Sharpe notes, the Whitehall Mural is, “the mural to which all discussions of the image of Henry VIII must return.”264 Tatiana String points to the Whitehall Mural as, “the portrait…that set this cascade of information, ideas, and association about the king in motion.”265 It is an impressive image even without any understanding of the players, the political nature of the grouping, the symbolism it contains, or an understanding of the Latin inscription, and even at its vastly–reduced size, so it’s easy to imagine what the full–size image would have done to the psyche of those waiting to see the king. The Whitehall Mural is a fascinating portrait of Henry VIII but also a larger commentary on how the king wanted to be presented as well as on early modern British conceptions of dynasty, legitimacy, and the importance of a male heir. While the original no longer exists, it certainly was well–known and held some importance to the later Stuarts – including James II – and even the copy can give us meaningful insights into the Tudor world and the central questions of this study.

263 The Leemput version measures 35 inches by 38 inches and is oil on canvas. We are also fortunate to have Holbein’s sketches, found and displayed by George II’s wife, Caroline, of Henry’s portion of the mural. I will discuss this discovery and display in subsequent chapters. Much work has been done on this particular image although as of this writing, no other work has used it in a comparative study of Henry VIII, James II, and George II. For other works on the Whitehall Mural specifically, see: Tatiana C. String, Art and Communication in the Reign of Henry VIII (Burlington: Aldershot, 2008); Tatiana C. String, “Projecting Masculinity: Henry VIII’s Codpiece,” in Henry VIII and His Afterlives: Literature, Politics, and Art, ed. Mark Rankin, Christopher Highly, and John N. King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 143–59; Roy Strong, Holbein and Henry VIII (London, 1967).

264 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 135.

Before analyzing this portrait, and the circumstances in which it was commissioned and painted, a further note on the painting’s size and placement is important. The original painting was massive, most likely taking up an entire wall or most of a wall, and vibrantly colored. The sheer size of the painting, combined with its likely location in the Privy Chamber (which, despite its name, was a section of Henry’s near–permanent residence which people had to travel through or visit to see the king), made the painting highly effective as a piece of propaganda. Sharpe notes that, “it was a portrayal that not only radiated majesty and personal authority but one that inspired awe, even ‘fear’ in those who viewed it” – meaning it had to be large and visible.\textsuperscript{266} In 1604, Karel Van Mander reported that, “the king as he stood there, majestic in his splendor, was so lifelike that the spectator felt abashed, annihilated in his presence.”\textsuperscript{267} It is clear that the Whitehall Mural was created not only to impress and awe, but also to intimidate – and that it succeeded in this purpose.

\textsuperscript{266} Sharpe, \textit{Selling the Tudor Monarchy}, 70.

\textsuperscript{267} Sharpe, \textit{Selling the Tudor Monarchy}, 137.
Plate 13: Remigius van Leemput, “Copy of the Whitehall Mural.” Oil on canvas, ca. 1667. Copy of Hans Holbein the Younger’s mural at Whitehall Palace. Royal Collection Trust, Great Watching Chamber, Hampton Court Palace. RCIN 405750.
This portrait is also important – and unique – because it is a rare “family” painting. Individual portraits existed, and some of these may have been intended to be hung or displayed together, like double portraits, but, for the first time during Henry’s reign, the royal family is grouped together. They are displayed in a way that is explicitly dynastic in nature, with recognizable figures all included as part of the royal family and as representatives of that family’s power and position, but they are grouped as a family nonetheless. Earlier portraits, like those of Henry VII’s family instead showed the royal family – including Arthur and the younger Henry – as subject to a higher power, such as the Church or the symbols of rule themselves. In reality, Henry, in the mid–1530s, was still constrained by many authorities, like Parliament, his nobles, conflict with the church and international powers, but in the Whitehall Mural, Henry VIII is subject to no one. He and his family are subordinate to no one. Not to the Catholic Church, or the powers of Europe. And there is no question as to who each figure is and what their roles are. Although this is not an informal family grouping, or a portrait meant to show a loving family, it is the first true dynastic portrait of the early modern period in England, with every player slotted in their assigned place in the accepted fiction of the royal family.

The Whitehall Mural is full of symbolism and meaning, and its symbolism that ties religion, dynasty, legitimacy, politics, and marriage together. Most striking, and most explicit, is the column in the center, with the figures of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Elizabeth of York, and Jane Seymour surrounding it. The column, which dominates the picture, asks “whether father or son was the greater victor.” It continues:
...both indeed are supreme. The former often overcame his enemies and the fires of his country and finally gave peace to its citizens. The son, born indeed for greater tasks, from the altar removed the unworthy, and put worthy men in their place. To unerring virtue, the presumption of the Popes has yielded. And so long as Henry the Eighth carries the scepter in his hand, Religion is renewed, and during his reign the doctrines of God have begun to be held in his honor.  

The theme here is dynasty, and the, “inscription links dynasty to the true faith.” The true faith, of course, was a church with Henry as its head and supreme leader, even if it still looked very much like Roman Catholicism at this point in history. 

The text of the inscription is also telling the history of the Tudor dynasty and alludes to historical events that were important to the rule and legitimacy of Henry’s family. Henry VII, “giving peace” to the people of England refers to the conclusion of the Wars of the Roses and Henry’s stabilizing of the powerful factions of the nobility, something that Elizabeth of York, shown on the other side of the pillar, was also partially responsible for through their marriage. Henry VIII’s contributions, however, are proclaimed to be greater, and include the removal of his father’s corrupt ministers as well as freeing England from the tyranny of the Pope. My favorite part of the inscription, and something that would have been obvious to anyone reading it during Henry’s reign, is the veiled threat that the Pope’s rule, the ineptness and corruption of bad ministers, and even the loss of God’s favor could come back to haunt and terrorize England if Henry was not in charge. 

The inscription is only the beginning of the story this image is telling. It’s important to remember that in 1536–37, when the Whitehall Mural was commissioned and painted (along

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268 I am using Sharpe’s translation of the Latin inscription here. It is important to remember that at this time, although the court spoke French and English, Latin was still the language of ceremony and power in many ways. Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 136.

269 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 136
with the smaller portrait in 1538 of young Edward VI, which was meant to continue the dynastic image), Henry was facing serious threats to his reign. Although his reign hadn’t been entirely smooth sailing, there was little opposition when he took the throne in 1509, his marriage to Catherine was popular, and other than wars on the continent, his reign had been mostly peaceful and filled with jousting, intellectual pursuits, and prosperity. For the first time, then, Henry faced real domestic rebellion in the form of the Pilgrimage of Grace, and he had lost many of his trusted ministers and friends, like Wolsey and More, as well as the relationship he had enjoyed as a Catholic monarch with Rome and the other heads of state in Europe. Although we have no writings on Henry’s personal feelings towards Catherine at the end of their marriage, ending a nearly twenty–year marriage to someone he had loved since he was a teenager had to hurt both emotionally and almost certainly damaged his pride. That, combined with the disastrous marriage to Anne and the death of Jane Seymour right after delivering a male heir, must have made Henry realize that he would have to convince people of his majesty more than he had during the early parts of his reign.

This is not to say that the Whitehall Mural was a direct response to any of these events. We of course cannot know that with absolute certainty, and even if we could identify a payment to Holbein that explicitly stated that this painting was supposed to respond to one of these events, that would be too simplistic an explanation for the amount of symbolism – and overt displays of power – in the portrait. However, before turning to an analysis of the Whitehall Mural, it is

270 Although this is not a psycho–analysis of Henry VIII, it is well–documented that divorce is one of the most stressful life events a person can experience. The American Institute of Stress provides an online stress survey, The Holmes–Rahe Stress Inventory, that ranks the most to least common stressors. A score of 300 or more predicts an, “80% chance of health breakdown in the next 2 years, according to the Holmes–Rahe statistical prediction model.” If Henry had taken the stress survey in 1537, considering the past year, his score would have been 586. Note that the survey does not include, “break with the major religion of Europe and become head of the church in England,” so the 19 points given to, “major change in church activity” will have to do. See https://www.stress.org/holmes-rahe-stress-inventory.pdf.
important to ask what specifically about Henry’s role – and responsibilities – as a second-gener
generation does the image address.

When looking at the Whitehall Mural, it is almost impossible not to see the – literal and
figurative – position Henry is in as a second-generation monarch. Henry and his father are
grouped together on one side of the painting and, although Henry does stand slightly lower than
his father, one step down, he’s the larger, more impressive figure. The arrangement is almost like
a family tree, with the parents at the top of image – important, but not the ultimate result. The
two men don’t look much alike, and are dressed very differently, but Henry VII is also smaller,
and really only recognizable because of his Tudor rose emblem and fashion. Interestingly, Henry
VII is the only figure touching the central pillar, leaning on it with his left arm and clutching the
fabric that’s been pulled back from it with the other. Did he and Elizabeth of York – whose
hands are demurely crossed in front of her, but look like she could have just crossed them after
an action – pull the cover back? Is this symbolic of Henry VII tacitly (and posthumously)
approving the message his son is sharing, that he is continuing the Tudor legacy that brought
peace, but also moving towards a more perfect peace at the same time?

Henry VIII, the new head of the English church, who had thrown off the yoke of Roman
Papal authority, stands, conspicuously on the right, almost, “at the right hand of God.”271 Again,
while we can tell who all the figures are, Henry VIII is, in particular, “no generic king here, not
simply the latest occupier of an office submerged beneath the institutional markers of status,”
and is clearly meant to be the most imposing human figure, and the one to whom all the other
figures are relational.272 Henry VII is also shown on the right side (although in the same basic

271 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 136; although Henry is at the viewer’s left, he stands on the right side of the
pillar, which, through its inscription, leaves no doubt as to Henry’s opinion on God’s favorable opinion of him.

three–quarter position as the two women in the portrait, rather than staring straight ahead at the viewer like his son), a sign that Henry’s legitimacy as both the hereditary ruler and the spiritual leader of the English people descended from his father. Why is Henry the only one looking at the viewer straight–on? Does he perhaps fully face us because he was, when the painting was finished, the only member of the royal family depicted here that was still alive? Why, David Starkey asks, include Henry VII at all? Perhaps as comparison to his father, or perhaps to show his dynastic legitimacy – but the answer is surely not as simple as that. While Henry VIII certainly looks more capable than his father, with his athletic build, defiant stance, expensive jewels, and large dagger, his prominent codpiece is again meant to symbolize his continuation, “drawing attention to dynasty, masculinity and fertility.” Much like in other images of Henry, the large codpiece, which was also a fashionable accessory at the time, is both literally and symbolically representing the dynastic family, a reading which is reinforced by the large column in the middle, and a later painting of Edward VI, also by Holbein.

On the opposite side of the column, Jane and Elizabeth appear, dressed as many women at court would have been. Their clothing perhaps holds little for analysis beyond a study of

273 Although this is certainly the most gruesome answer, I believe that it’s at least partially true, along with Henry’s desire to be the center of attention in the painting.

274 Starkey offers this explanation that ties the inclusion of Henry VII to the Pilgrimage of Grace: “Once again, the Pilgrims’ indictment of the Henrician regime supplies the answer. For the Pilgrims had accused Henry of innovation (then a dirty word) and a willful turning back on his royal ancestors. Henry could give the lie to this by co–opting his famously pious father and presenting Henry VII’s political reform of imposing a stern peace on all his subjects as the precedent for his own more radical Reformation of the Church.” In other words, Henry was responding to the charge of innovation by the time–honored method of inventing tradition. This invention, this co–opting of figures that added legitimacy and connection, was not new in sixteenth–century England, but Henry is being very blatant about it here. By showing the connection to his father and mother – both of whom were popular and pious, he could argue against the criticisms of “innovation” and instead show that he was simply carrying on his family’s legacy. However, this image is doing more than looking to the past. It’s also hearkening to the future. Starkey, Lost Faces, 50. See the Introduction to this work for a discussion on the invention of tradition and its importance for all three kings and families discussed here.

275 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 136.
Tudor fashion and Holbein’s treatment of costume in his portraits, but some of their garments and accessories are particularly striking. Both women are dressed in easily identifiable royal jewels, in similar colors, reinforcing the similarity between the long dead but much beloved Elizabeth and the recently deceased and popular Jane. Both women had fulfilled their dynastic role in bearing a male child, guaranteeing the futures of their husbands’ dynasty. Elizabeth looks much as she would have when Henry was a child, with fashions not in vogue in 1537. She wears simple pearls and more somber colors than her daughter–in–law, Jane, but still her clothing represents the wealth of the Tudor dynasty. Elizabeth, like Henry VII, is posed in a way that is almost dependent on the column. She does not lean on the pedestal, but she holds her skirts, looking as though she is about to take a step down the stairs. Jane, like Henry VII and Elizabeth, was deceased at the time of its completion – although she may have been alive when it was commissioned – and unlike Henry VII and Elizabeth, however, Jane was very recently, no more than a year, deceased. She appears in the painting for an obvious reason – to show the mother of the new male heir, the future Edward VI – but her presentation is telling.

Women in Tudor royal portraiture, as we have seen, were often symbolic. Jane is not present in the Whitehall Mural as Jane Seymour – she is present, for all intents and purposes, as a visual representation of successful, and acceptable, breeding of the next generation. What are the private thoughts of this short–lived queen, of whom we know both so much and so little? Her place, both in history and this painting, is as a mother and submissive wife, shadowed, never shadowing, the glory of her husband. In this work, she fills her role perfectly. Jane wears a modest, but fashionable and rich, dress, with jewelry that manages to be very contemporary but

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not at all flashy. She holds her hands, almost in silent repose, and, unlike Elizabeth and both
Henry’s, she seems almost totally motionless, and, at the risk of morbidly, bound to stay that
way. Her long skirts match both Elizabeth’s and the rug on which the group stands, the rug being
a, “symbol of secular wealth.”

There is also a small dog at Jane’s feet. Dogs in early modern portraiture are relatively
common, but its placement here seems to serve a specific purpose. Beyond showing wealth, dogs
were seen as symbols of loyalty and fidelity – something that Jane, unlike Catherine (who could
be accused of being more loyal to Catholicism, her family, or Spain than to Henry) or Anne (who
was tried for adultery and executed for it), had in abundance. The dog is of indeterminate breed,
with a simple collar and no special characteristics, perhaps save one – it is a completely white
dog. White, the color of purity, associated that closely with Jane, is interesting. While it is, of
course, possible that Jane, or someone in the royal household, had a white dog who Holbein
chose to feature, it is also possible that this is another allusion to Jane as the most pure and loyal
mother of the new royal heir – a woman who, much beloved by Henry, finally gave the English
their male heir with no whiff of scandal. Unlike Anne, who was accused of sexual depravity and
witchcraft, and certainly unlike Catherine, who committed a biblical sin by marrying her
brother–in–law, Jane was, as shown here, pure and true.

The column presents the clearest expression of power and legitimacy, followed by the
appearance of Henry VIII, but other symbols in the painting also have meaning.278 The rug is a
symbol of wealth, and, as mentioned, both men are on one side, and both women on the other, in

277 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 136.

278 I would also argue that the column is incredibly phallic, reinforcing the various masculine symbols like Henry’s
codpiece and sword.
a “secularization of a standard Italian Renaissance composition, this time of four saints about a central Madonna and Child.”279 The architectural details of the painting are also interesting. In the background of the room, a dragon and a lion sit atop ledges, both of which were integral parts of England’s crest. The year of the painting is also shown, and many Classical details are also present. Also represented are the Welsh dragon and, importantly, the fleur de lis, the symbol of France. The bust directly over the column is facing away from the viewer; it is possible that, as this is a reproduction of a painting that was originally an integral part of a room, this bust in what appears to be a window was actually a bust looking out from a window.280 These details again point to the opulence of Henry’s court and his legitimacy and power as the successor and progenitor of the Tudor dynasty.

279 Piper, The Genius of British Painting, 76.

280 Piper, The Genius of British Painting, 76.
Plate 14: Hans Holbein the Younger, ") "Edward IV as a Child." Oil on panel, ca. 1538. Andrew W. Mellon Collection at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Accession Number 1937.1.64.
In addition to the family grouping – however fictional it was – Holbein also painted Edward VI as a young child. While Mary, and certainly Elizabeth, created their own images after Henry’s death, they were rarely painted as children, and certainly were never put in an image with Henry as children. Holbein however, painted Henry’s other legitimate child, Edward, and this painting is directly related to the Whitehall Mural. The future Edward VI was painted by Holbein in 1538, and, as David Starkey notes, was probably a “conscious pendant to the Whitehall mural.” Holbein’s image of the young prince shows a child who is certainly Henry’s – the resemblance is striking, something that Holbein must have emphasized, even if the resemblance existed in real life. Under the prince, dressed in fine red and gold robes with a feathered cap and holding a small golden rattle, is a poem by Richard Morysine, which reads:

PARVVLE PATRISSA, PATRIÆ VIRTVTIS ET HÆRES / ESTO, NIHIL MAIVS MAXIMVS ORBIS HABET. / GNATVM VIX POSSVNT COELVM ET NATVRA DEDISSE, / HVIVS QVEM PATRIS, VICTVS HONORET HONOS. / ÆQVATO TANTVM, TANTI TV FACTA PARENTIS, / VOTA HOMINVM, VIX QVO PROGREDIANTVR, HABENT / VINCITO, VICISTI. QVOT REGES PRISCVS ADORAT / ORBIS, NEC TE QVI VINCERE POSSIT, ERIT. Ricard: Morysini.

Little one, emulate thy father and be the heir of his virtue; the world contains nothing greater. Heaven and earth could scarcely produce a son whose glory would surpass that of such a father. Do thou but equal the deeds of thy parent and men can ask no more. Shouldst thou surpass him, thou hast outstript all kings the world has revered in ages past.

These verses were seemingly meant to continue the legacy promised in the Whitehall Mural.

Henry VIII had shown himself to be greater than his father, the originator of the Tudor dynasty,

281 Their images, particularly those of Elizabeth, are certainly worth study, and have been the subject of numerous historians’ works, they are, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this work. Also, Elizabeth and Mary were put in a portrait with Henry much later, in approximately 1645, as young adults. I will discuss this portrait shortly.

282 Starkey, Lost Faces, 51.

and was now passing on the glory to his long-awaited son. These parallels must have been deliberate; in the two paintings, Henry (through words and images he almost certainly approved), is warning young Edward, “of the difficulty of the task” but also promising, “the summit of praise if he succeeds.” This, then, is the pinnacle of Henry’s life as a second-generation monarch: he has succeeded in continuing his father’s new legacy, building his own, and having a male heir to whom he can pass the torch.

Although I will discuss the symbolism and grouping of this portrait later, it is also interesting to note here that Jane Seymour is used yet again as a mother figure and queen in another painting, “The Family of Henry VIII.” This painting, by an unknown artist in around 1545, shows Jane Seymour much as she appeared in the Whitehall Mural, again on the left of Henry, with their son. Disturbingly, while Jane has not changed – and had been dead almost a decade by that point – her son, who she would never see grow up, looks like a young man. While Henry’s other wives were certainly used to tell the narrative Henry wanted and had little voice of their own in these portrayals, Jane’s image is particularly tragic. She is forever the young mother of the heir, her body and image used for legitimacy well beyond the confines of her brief life.

Anne of Cleves

Anne of Cleves, despite her very short (less than seven months) tenure as queen, deserves mention here if for no other reason that, more clearly than any of the other women Henry married, her marriageability and dynastic value were represented in art directly at Henry’s request. Henry had dispatched Holbein to paint the Protestant princess in 1539 (perhaps – even some of this process is shrouded in mystery), desiring a match with a Protestant power, but

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284 Starkey, *Lost Faces*, 51. Henry – or perhaps Morysine, who was very politically savvy – doesn’t shy away from glorifying Henry in this image, however. If you should surpass your father, Edward VI, you will have “outstript all kings the world has revered in the past.”
wanting to see his bride first. Who better to draw potential princesses than the great royal painter, Holbein?

Plate 15: Hans Holbein the Younger, “Portrait of Anne of Cleves (1515–1557), Queen of England, fourth wife of Henry VIII.” Vellum pasted on canvas, ca. 1539. Louvre Museum, Department of Paintings. INV 1348.
Although Holbein’s drawing of Anne appears, today, to show the most attractive of Henry’s wives, Henry was not impressed when he met Anne. She was painted facing fully forward, which may have been a more flattering pose for Anne, but if there was flattery in her portrait, “it is not a consequence of lapsed memory” as Holbein, “painted over an oil sketch on paper, which he had taken from the life in Cleves and pasted down on panel when he returned to England.” This front-facing pose was used for “problem” sitters, according to Grosvenor, but what was the problem? Although it is not the purpose of this study to judge whether Anne of Cleves was attractive or not, it is interesting that Henry clearly relied so much on Holbein’s paintings – even choosing Anne sight unseen based on one – but then felt he had been tricked by the image he saw before his marriage to Anne. It is interesting, then, to ask what the problem actually was. Some clues can perhaps be found in a second painting of Anne.

285 Grosvenor relates the scene on January 1, 1540: Henry VIII left London and hurried to Rochester to meet Anne of Cleves for the first time. Despite never having seen her, he was already in love, for he had heard nothing but encouragement and praise from those who had. But, ‘I like her not’ was his curt verdict. He desperately sought a way out of the marriage, but, realizing events that events had moved too far too fast, reluctantly went ahead. He elaborated further on his displeasure after their first night as man and wife; ‘…I have felt her belly and her breasts, and thereby, as I can judge, she should be no maid…I had neither the will nor the courage to proceed any further in other matters.’ Grosvenor, Lost Faces, 67. Here Grosvenor is quoting David Starkey’s Six Wives – The Queens of Henry VIII (London, 2004), p. 627. The “no maid” comment has puzzled historians, but, as Grosvenor notes, it has been suggested that Henry did not think Anne was a virgin. Perhaps he was also dissatisfied with the seemingly petite Anne after the much more curvaceous (at least in images) Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour.

286 Grosvenor, Lost Faces, 67. Grosvenor does point out that this pose was adopted by Holbein for “problem” sitters like Henry, but does not elaborate.
A portrait at St. John’s College Oxford was identified, tentatively, as Anne in the nineteenth–century, when similarities between the headdress on this painting and that of Anne’s in Holbein’s painting were noticed. In the 1990s, a restoration and examination of this portrait was begun, using x–ray technology. This x–ray revealed an inscription: “ANNA D.G. REGINA ANGLIAE FILIA IOHANNIS 3DU…”

The panel could date from the sixteenth century, and further examination at Oxford revealed that the, “jewelry in the Oxford painting is identical, if less well painted, to that of Holbein’s portrait.” This portrait shows a woman who is not as attractive, to the modern eye, as Holbein’s Anne, but, even if Holbein flattered Anne, he did not fall from Henry’s favor, as he went on to paint Catherine Howard.

While Anne was not married to Henry for long, and her role as queen was almost non–existent, some interesting points do stand out in the Holbein portrait. It was officially commissioned by the king, and thus, even if not blatant flattery, was meant to please, or at least appeal to, Henry. Again, we see hands clasped, with the fashionable red and gold color scheme.

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288 Grosvenor, Lost Faces, 67. This painting is attributed to Barthel de Bruyn.

289 I would also note here that the trouble Henry went through to obtain a portrait of Anne of Cleves, as well as his distaste for her when she did not, as he claimed, match that picture, shows that Henry, at the very least, placed importance on art as a means of representation. This portrait has been the subject of some controversy as well. Its provenance starts, truly, in 1734, according to Peter Hacker and Candy Kuhl, but in the 1970s, a “dendrochronological analysis of the panel” was started at Oxford, with the conclusion that the portrait, “must postdate 1650.” (Hacker and Kuhl, 172–173). Why would someone make a copy of a portrait of Anne of Cleves, if this was indeed a copy of a sixteenth–century original? The panel was later subjected to further testing, and although some of its elements appear to be seventeenth–century in origin, studies showed that its, “pigments and ground are uniformly consistent with sixteenth–century practice.” (Hacker and Kuhl, 173). It is therefore likely that this was a contemporary portrait that was dislodged from its original frame and damaged, or perhaps added onto later. Hacker and Kuhl do attribute this portrait to either Barthel Bruyn or his circle or studio. Why is this important? While the Holbein painting may be more famous, and is certainly of a more conventionally attractive woman, this may be one of the portraits of the daughters of the Duke of Cleves (Anne and Amelia) that were meant to be shown to Henry in the spring of 1539, which were either rejected or perhaps did not make it to him at all. While it is clear that Henry – like James and George – understood the importance of images, and certainly had his own personal taste, this is a fascinating look at how art was created and presented at Henry’s court, and how important an image could be in sixteenth–century England. See Peter Hacker and Candy Kuhl, “A portrait of Anne of Cleves,” in The Burlington Magazine 134, no. 1068 (March 1992): 172–175. http://www.jstor.org/stable/885027.
This is no Catholic princess with dour Spanish colors, or vivacious mistress, or even tragic mother – Anne is shown as a respectable, Protestant, and very proper princess. If Anne’s appearance was disappointing to Henry, her value as a dynastic tool, which is clearly seen in this image, was not. After his annulment from Anne (who remained friendly with the King, living in England the rest of her life) in July 1540, Henry married his sixth wife, a seventeen–year–old cousin of Anne Boleyn who had been at court as a lady for Anne of Cleves.

Catherine Howard

Catherine Howard presents an interesting problem for historians of Henry’s family images; during her brief time as queen, Jane Seymour was still very much “alive” in the material goods at court, and certainly in the Whitehall Mural, which was prominently displayed at court. Even as late as Catherine Parr’s tenure and Henry’s death silver pieces with “H I” (the inscription for Henry and Jane) were in circulation in the royal household.

Also, she was only queen for slightly over a year, and was only nineteen when she was executed, so portraits of her would be scarce in any event. Her short life, “is a tragic tale of Tudor sexual morality,” notes Grosvenor. Her rise was meteoric – the French Ambassador Marillac wrote that, “The King is

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290 Starkey, Inventory, 19. I would point readers to several different items. First, Item 333 (page 19) is, “one paier of Cruettes of Siluer gilte with aunglels yppon their garnettes and H I in their busselles…” Cruettes are water or wine pitchers, often used for the Eucharist. It appears that these were silver, adorned with angels and the initials of Henry and Jane. Next, at Westminster, “one paire of lesser pottes gilt small chased hauing H I in their busshells.” (Item 962, page 36). Starkey points out the difficulty of many inventory entries as Henry married several women with similar names. Although Jane’s name appears several times in the inventory, it is often impossible to tell which “Anne” or “Catherine” is being references. For example, at Westminster, “one paire of guilt pottes small chased hauing H and A…” (Item 961, page 36). Does this refer to Anne Boleyn or Anne of Cleves? One assumes Anne of Cleves was not at court or married to Henry long enough to have commissioned much, but it could have been a gift either to or from her. Jane Seymour does have several entries in the Inventory, which I believe is telling. A “cup of golde garnished with Diamountes and perles and this worde bounde to obeye and serve and H and J knytt togethers…” (Item 55, page 8) was listed, as were gold spoons (Item 151, page 12), a gold basin (Item 157, page 12), two gilt candlesticks (Item 282, page 17), more cruetttes, gilt cups (Item 465, page 23), and books (Item 3086, page 85 and Item 9365, page 200). It is interesting to note that most of Jane’s items in the inventory have her initials intertwined with Henry’s, even when they contain her own coat of arms as well.

291 Starkey, Lost Faces, 70.
so amorous of her that he cannot treat her well enough and caresses her more than he did the others.”

Catherine also fell out of favor quickly; in 1541 evidence surfaced of her promiscuity, and Henry, “hurt, dismayed, furious” ordered her execution.

Marillac, Correspondence politique de MM. de Castillon et de Marillac, ed. J. Kaulek (Paris 1888), 218. Starkey also cites this passage in Six Wives, 651. It is important to note that while Catherine was seventeen, and by all accounts an attractive (to a fault) woman, Henry in 1540 was forty-nine, and growing quite large—he had also already divorced a queen, beheaded another, had another queen die after childbirth, and annulled his most recent marriage only weeks earlier. A sarcastic tone when reading “all the others” would not be unfathomable in Marillac’s letter.

Starkey, Lost Faces, 70. Unlike Anne Boleyn, who was convicted on charges generally accepted by historians as false, or at least wildly exaggerated, Catherine was guilty of at least some unfaithfulness to the king. Henry’s own extramarital affairs (including the one begun with Catherine before their marriage) were no excuse in Tudor England; as shown from the importance of both image and dynastic legitimacy, an unfaithful woman was a far greater threat than a king with mistresses.
For a woman who accomplished such a rise at court, and who was generally thought of as attractive in her own time, it is unfortunate that so few images of her exist today. As of this writing, there is only one accepted portrait of Catherine, a miniature by Holbein from approximately 1540. In it, Catherine wears a number of jewels listed in the inventory of jewelry given to her by Henry; Henry was “besotted” with his new young queen, and “lavished” jewels on her. These jewels and their descriptions have allowed historians to determine that this miniature is in fact of Catherine, fortunately.

294 The Royal Collection identifies this portrait tentatively as Catherine Howard, also noting that it is difficult to be certain because there are no contemporary portraits of her in existence today. There is another version of this miniature in the Buccleuch Collection (The Strawberry Hill Collection) which is slightly smaller, but which seems to be a copy of this larger (6.3 cm) miniature, but these are the only portraits of Catherine from her own life. The Royal Collection argues for this being Catherine, saying, “The earliest likely reference to the present miniature in the Royal Collection is in the Inventory of goods recovered at the Restoration by Col. W. Hawley, 1660–61, where it may be identifiable as: ‘A small peice Inclineing of a woman after ye Drese of Henry ye Eights wife by Peter Oliver’. In neither instance was the name of Catherine Howard attached to the miniature. However, by c.1735 – 40, the Buccleuch version, by then in the collection of Jonathan Richardson, had been engraved by Jacobus Houbraken for Thomas Birch’s Heads of Illustrious Persons of Great Britain (1743) as Catherine Howard, Henry VIII’s fifth queen. When the present miniature was first recorded beyond doubt in the Royal Collection c.1837, it, too, bore this identification. They also note that her necklace is a compelling argument for this portrait to be Catherine: the most compelling argument in favour of her regal status is that the large ruby, emerald and pearl jewel which the sitter wears is the same as that shown in Holbein’s panel portrait of Henry VIII’s third queen, Jane Seymour (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) and that this, and the jeweled band around the sitter’s neckline, may have been given to Catherine Howard by Henry VIII on their marriage in 1540. However, Jane Seymour made gifts of her jewelry to her ladies-in-waiting, one of whom, Mary, Lady Montague (c.1510–40), has also been suggested as a possible subject for the present miniature. Lady Montague’s features, as shown in Holbein’s drawing in the Royal Library, Windsor Castle, (RL 12223) bear some resemblance to the present sitter.

295 Grosvenor, Lost Faces, 70.

296 “On her head her French hood is trimmed with the ‘upper habulyment of Goldesmytheswerke ennumeled and garneshed with vij ffeyr daimondes vij ffeyr rubyes and vij ffeyr Perles’ which is the first item listed in the inventory. On her bosom, over a translucent chemise, she wears a shaped necklace called a square ‘conteyning xxix rubyes and xxix clustres of Peerlles being iiij peerlles in every Clustre’ and an ‘ooche [that is a pendant] of golde hauyng avery ffeyr table diamond and a verey feir ruby with a long peerle hangyng at the same.’ On her fingers are three rings, two of which may have been among the sixteen given to her by Henry VIII.” Grosvenor, Lost Faces, 73.
Using this inventory to identify this mysterious Holbein miniature has opened the door for further portraits to be possible images of Catherine – as well as other major Tudor figures. Another Holbein portrait, with two copies surviving, could also be Catherine, based on the jewels she wears. In both the certain portrait and these “possible” portraits, Catherine appears as a very attractive, if young (particularly when compared to images of Henry from this time), brunette woman with fashionable gowns and jewels. Catherine hardly had time to be used as a dynastic tool during her short reign, but these images show that, even in this short time, Henry was proud of his young queen – a fact that makes her ultimate betrayal and downfall even more tragic.

Catherine Parr

Henry’s final wife, Catherine Parr, outlived him, as the famous rhyme to remember all his wives reminds us. By the time Catherine Parr married Henry (a dangerous proposition given his previous marriages), he had become something of a caricature of the young jousting

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297 Although Henry VIII’s inventory is very interesting and incredibly useful, I use it with caution here. It is a list of possessions owned by Henry, but it is unlikely he came into contact with all his possessions on a daily basis, as they were spread throughout this various homes and court locations. Also, it is important to remember that the inventory was ordered six months after Henry died. So while it shows his prowess and interest in collecting – particularly tapestries – and certainly shows that he was concerned with his image, it tells us little about how he used or why he commissioned or collected these items. That said, it is clear, from the nearly 18,000 items listed, that Henry certainly cared quite a bit about presenting his court and himself as rich, sumptuous, and grand. David Starkey, ed., The Inventory of King Henry VIII (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1998).

298 Grosvenor makes a compelling case for this painting, with one copy at the Toledo Museum of Art (Ohio) and the other at the National Portrait Gallery, being Catherine based on a jewel she wears which matches a drawing of a piece of jewelry by Holbein. Although that argument is far too complicated to delve into here, I consider both portraits to be of Catherine, and will describe them as such. Catherine was very young, but she was also a member of the important Howard family, who – although somewhat diminished by their connection to Anne Boleyn – Henry wished to court as well, and that she would have no images, or very few, is doubtful, particularly for someone who basically grew up at court.

299 I would also note, based on images of Catherine, Anne, Jane, and Catherine Howard, Anne of Cleves does stand out – both in her portrait and in her slender frame.
Catherine married Henry in 1543, at the age of thirty – still younger than Henry’s fifty–two, but Catherine had been married and was significantly older than Catherine Howard, and was considered a stable, steady woman with a spotless reputation. Although Henry must have certainly desired another male heir at this point, Catherine Parr was not a sure bet, as she was, for the time, older than normal child–bearing age and had never born children in her previous two marriages. Catherine was, however, a companion for the king, being highly intelligent, interested in politics and religion, and able to rule as regent for Henry on his last campaign to France in 1544. Unlike his previous queens, with the exception perhaps of Catherine of Aragon, Catherine Parr was closer to Henry’s age and shared many of his interests. She was also a widow, having been married previously to Sir Edward Burgh (1529–1533) and John Neville, 3rd Baron Latimer (1534–1543).

Catherine Parr is an often overlooked, but very interesting, character in this story and a brief examination of her life and marriage to Henry can tell us much about the lives of elite women in Tudor England and the early modern world in general – she also left us her own voice, not just Henry’s, as I will discuss shortly. She was raised in relative opulence, at least partially at court, as her mother Maud was a lady–in–waiting to Catherine of Aragon. As Susan James notes, “by the time she was five years old, Kateryn Parr had led an itinerant childhood, the lot of many children whose parents were in service at court.”

Her family was affluent and, of course,

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300 Also, Catherine was involved with Thomas Seymour, who she married after Henry’s death, but, when Henry became interested in her, she seems to have decided it was prudent to marry the King, despite his spotty marital history.

301 Susan E. James, Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 13. The issue of how to spell each queen’s name comes up again here. Kateryn? Katherine? Catherine? I have chosen to use “Catherine” for simplicity, but this is certainly not a perfect system.
became more affluent and influential with her marriage to Henry, of course – and one that valued female power. Her mother, Maud Parr, managed her family’s lands and titles after Catherine’s father died, and was the, “supreme authority in her own household,” teaching Catherine and her siblings skills in diplomacy, management of their fortune, and education, skills that would prove useful for Catherine’s life and her marriage to Henry.\(^{302}\)

Her marriage to Henry was likely not, at least on Catherine’s end, a love match. She knew the king, having grown up at least partially at court and being a lady–in–waiting as well as the wife of nobles who would almost certainly have come to court often. Her sister, Anne, had, “entered court service about 1531 as a maid–in–waiting and had served in the households of Henry’s successive queens.”\(^{303}\) Susan James notes that Henry was likely restless without a wife, but he was not going to make the same mistake for his next marriage that he had made with Catherine Howard. He would not, “marry a young and flighty girl who could for a third time put public cuckold’s horns on his head.”\(^{304}\) He instead, “examined the ladies about the court and his eye fell on a member of the household of Princess Mary, a lady who was the daughter of a friend from the past, had a soothing way with elderly, ailing men, and who although still married, had a husband whose health was failing fast.”\(^{305}\) In December of 1542, Chapuys (the same ambassador who had so disparaged Anne Boleyn) wrote to Mary of Hungary that Henry, “Who since he learnt the conduct of his last wife, has continually shown himself sad…but now all is changed.

\(^{302}\) James, Kateryn Parr, 20.

\(^{303}\) James, Kateryn Parr, 88. I quote this line primarily to point out the strangeness, the unease that ladies–in–waiting who served multiple queens must have felt. Although the focus of this study is on the royal family, some of these ladies–in–waiting – Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, and Catherine Howard – became queens themselves, and it bears reminding that these women lived and died with the whims of Henry and the changes in powerful factions at court.

\(^{304}\) James, Kateryn Parr, 112.

\(^{305}\) James, Kateryn Parr, 112–113.
and order is already taken that the princess [Mary] shall go to court this feast, accompanied with a great number of ladies.”

Henry, it seems, had found his next wife in the court of his first daughter.

Of course, there were problems on both sides. Catherine had failed to produce children for her first two husbands, and Henry was likely still concerned with having a male heir – he knew first-hand that first-born sons did not always live to take the throne.  

Catherine was still married when Henry first began to show interest, and she was likely already in love with, and intending to marry, Sir Thomas Seymour. She was reported to have cried out, “Better to be his mistress than his wife,” when told of Henry’s intentions, although that is not substantiated anywhere officially. However, for all the potential problems, there were some benefits for both Catherine and Henry. Catherine’s family strongly supported reform – an irony considering her place at Mary’s court – and, “she could not long hold out when the reformer group, friends of her brother’s and her erstwhile lover’s, made the argument that her marriage to the king should be interpreted as God’s will,” and that that she could have a reforming influence on Henry and his ministers, despite the influence of the decidedly anti-reform Bishop Gardiner. Also, it would greatly benefit her family and, with the king in somewhat poor health, she had to know that this


307 James points out an interesting thought here. We know that Catherine did not have any living children (unless she hid her pregnancy and the children themselves very well) but Chapuys also said that there was “no hope of issue” with Catherine since she had had no children with her former husbands. But, “as both of these marriages had occurred in the north, far from court, it is unlikely that Chapuys had any real knowledge of Kateryn’s gynaecological history and was simply describing the present state of her childlessness.” James, Kateryn Parr, 114 and Letters & Papers, Volume 18, i. no. 954.

308 James, Kateryn Parr, 114.

309 James, Kateryn Parr, 115.
would not be a long–lasting marriage but would have long–lasting benefits. Henry also needed a
wife and – perhaps – a caretaker, and had reason to hope, whether realistically or not, that
Catherine could still bear him children. She was a respectable, still young enough for
childbearing, and while she was intelligent and reform–minded, she also likely had the good
sense not to push her agenda too hard on the king.

How then, did Catherine Parr appear to the world as Henry’s wife? Her first rooms,
Susan James tells us, at Hampton Court were apartments, “which had been built for Jane
Seymour on a grander scale over the bones of Anne Boleyn’s more modest range of lodgings,”
although she soon moved her quarters away from the ghosts of the old queens.310 While she and
Henry both had private chambers – or as private a space as one could have when the king and
queen of England – the privy chamber had, by this point, become a more public area used for
public occasions and functions, a major reason for the placement of the Whitehall Mural in the
privy chamber entrance at Whitehall.311 She was, by all accounts, efficient and responsible, and,
“determined to fulfill all expectations of her and proved to be an exceptionally adept queen.”312
This was not an easy task, either. The court moved frequently to avoid illness, make sure that
residences were clean, and stay on top of limited food supplies for such a large household.

Catherine, it seems, did have more agency over the actual running of the royal household
than her predecessors, and she also had a significant amount of control over her own image.
During her first few months as queen, she did not order jewels and stuck to more, “subdued

310 James, Kateryn Parr, 118. Anne, of course, had not lived to see the renovations, and Jane Seymour lived barely
long enough in them to give birth to Edward.

311 Simon Thurley, The Royal Palaces of Tudor England: Architecture and Court Life, 1460–1547 (New Haven:

312 James, Kateryn Parr, 121.
gowns of black and purple” but by 1544, she had ordered, “sumptuous clothes.”313 She moved into her new role and, “her clothes and jewels consciously began to reflect the florid, nearly mythical image of a Tudor monarch built up by Henry VIII,” which, “flaunted magnificence as a way of impressing citizens at home and visitors from abroad.”314 Catherine changed her appearance to suit her new position and the opulence of court, and this is seen in her portraits as well.

Catherine was the subject of several portraits – five certain portraits of the queen survive today, with three from her time as queen.315 Although Holbein was older and ill, and did pass away in 1545, many other artists were working at court, many in the style of Holbein, and Catherine’s portraits are important to examine. First, her portraits do contain symbolism that shows both her status as queen and her connection to Henry; although they are not as striking or obvious as the Whitehall Mural, these symbolic gestures clearly exist. Second, Catherine was a collector and patron in her own right, which I will discuss shortly, and this certainly had an influence on her portraits while queen as well. Catherine’s life and images should definitely not be summed up simply by her survival of being married to Henry.


314 James, Kateryn Parr, 122.

315 “Catherine Parr,” Philip Mould Gallery, http://www.philipmould.com/gallery/all–works/155. The final portrait, a miniature probably by Lucas Hornebolt, was in Horace Walpole’s collection in the eighteenth–century. I am still working to locate a color image of this miniature from a reliable source; an engraving shows Catherine as slightly heavier, but very similar to the portraits discussed above.
The first portrait of Catherine as Queen, from 1545, is attributed to Master John, and shows a full–length image of Catherine. It is a rather large portrait, in oil on panel, measuring seventy–one by thirty–seven inches. Catherine looks older than her predecessor, but still very handsome, with a gold and red gown, hands clasped, and standing on a rich, heavily patterned rug; in addition, she wears several jewels, including a large pearl and gold necklace very similar to that worn by Jane Seymour in her portrait by Holbein. This necklace is symbolic, as it is a, “crown–headed brooch” that, “states unequivocally who she is and underlines the power that accrues to her royal position.” Catherine looks the part of a member of the Tudor nobility, as well as a competent leader and companion for Henry.


Crimson was Catherine’s signature color throughout her life as queen and beyond – it was the color of her clothing, household, and eventually, when she was finally able to marry Thomas Seymour, the hangings, “for her infant daughter, Mary Seymour’s, nursery.” Another portrait from 1545 by an unknown artist shows a similar image of Catherine, although she does look somewhat older here, and the fashions seem to have changed – or maybe Catherine simply had more control by this time over what she wore in portraits. This smaller portrait shows Catherine from the waist up, again in red and gold with hands clasped. In this image, Catherine wears far fewer jewels but does wear a large feathered cap. In all her images, she is regal, but hardly the seductress Catherine Howard, or even Anne Boleyn, appeared to be. Instead, Catherine’s portraits as queen look exactly as history tells us she was: Henry’s equal, an attractive but also intelligent woman, and his last queen.

It is also important to remember that Catherine was not just Henry’s queen, but that she also served as Regent–General during his final military campaigns of 1544. Henry had left Catherine of Aragon as regent in 1513 but had not shown the same trust to any of his other wives since, until Catherine Parr. Catherine used her powers while Henry was away to do several things, including bringing her young stepdaughter Elizabeth back to court and quelling panic surrounding a possible French invasion. Portraits painted after 1544 were painted not just of a queen, but also a successful leader of England who had fulfilled her duties as Regent–General admirably – duties that had some necessary military overtones, like keeping the peace with Scotland, with whom Henry had been at war since 1542.

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318 James, Kateryn Parr, 123. Although she did not get to see these hangings for long, as she passed away, likely from “childbed fever” only 6 days after giving birth.

319 See the British Library (BL): Lansdowne MS 1236, f.9 and Lansdowne MS Otho C X f.235r and f.236v for documents and letters concerning Catherine’s time as regent.
The military campaign of 1544 could have books upon books written about it in its own right, but the brief summary is this: in 1539, the alliances and treaties Henry had built with Francis, King of France, and Charles, the Holy Roman Emperor, had fallen apart. However, with the death of Anne Boleyn, relations between the Holy Roman Empire and England had improved, and Charles and Henry allied to invade France, which Henry finally did in 1544. He had some successes, but the campaign fell apart when Charles signed a peace treaty with France. This campaign – the last Henry was ever to undertake – makes the portraits of Catherine and Henry from this time period even more interesting.

In addition to the military campaign in France and the ongoing conflict with Scotland, 1544 was an important year for religion in England and Britain as a whole. Catherine Parr anonymously published her first book, *Psalms or Prayers taken out of Holy Scripture*, a translation of the Latin Psalms from John Fisher in 1525.\(^{320}\) Catherine was a reform-minded influencer, and she was trusted as Regent–General, which made her powerful in her own right, in addition to the power she had as queen. Although we can’t say that they were direct responses, generally, to the conflict, Catherine’s portraits certainly her as a capable leader, and as Susan James rightly notes, “at Henry’s court, art was frequently employed as a tool of propaganda and its use in the promotion of the English military efforts of 1544 would be unsurprising.”\(^{321}\)

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\(^{320}\) Katherine Parr, *Katherine Parr: Complete Works and Correspondence*, ed. Janel Mueller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014). She would go on to publish two more reform-minded books, making her the only one of Henry’s queens who was also an author in her own right.

\(^{321}\) James, “Lady Jane Grey or Kateryn Parr?” *Taylor and Francis Online*. This can be seen in several painting that may date from around 1545–46 that focus on Henry’s earlier campaigns in France: “The Embarkation of Henry VIII from Dover” (RCIN 405,793), “The Field of Cloth of Gold” (RCIN 405794), “The Battle of the Spurs” (RCIN 406784), and “The Meeting of Henry VIII and the Emperor Maximilian” (RCIN 405800). “The Field of the Cloth of Gold” is an interesting portrait that resurfaces as an important piece in the eighteenth–century as well and will be discussed both shortly in this chapter and in the subsequent chapter on George II.
Catherine’s portraits as queen are interesting not just for the images themselves – the first, by Master John, is a somewhat standard portrait of a noble lady or queen, similar to portraits of Jane Seymour in particular and the second is more unusual in composition but, other than the repeated use of crimson and the large feather, which show that Catherine was interested in fashion, it doesn’t speak much to her actual role as queen – but because they support the idea that Catherine was provably a patron of the arts in her own right and may have had some influence on the way she was painted. The choice of colors, the fashionable outfits, the poses – these all speak to what Catherine wanted, and her portraits from the end of her time as queen and her later life support this. While Anne Boleyn certainly patronized Holbein, Catherine is in a unique position because after she died, her belongings were not simply absorbed into the holdings of the Crown, and she was not the subject, at all, of a campaign to remove her influence and image after her time as queen. After her death in 1548 – a death that was mourned by Mary and Elizabeth, despite their falling out with their stepmother over her hasty and secret marriage to Thomas Seymour only a few months after Henry died in January 1547 – she was not seen as disgraced, and her household inventory is, at least partially, available to us today.

Catherine left behind a large collection of paintings, and several portraits were painted of her, both large portraits like the one by Master John above and smaller miniatures. In 1547, after Henry had died, she wrote to Thomas Seymour – who she may have been secretly married to already – that:

I have sent in hast to the painters for one of my little pictures which is very perfect by the judgement of as many as hath seen the same; the last I had myself I bestowed it upon my lady of Suffolk; this letter had been sooner with you but for tarrying the coming of the picture the which I am not certain to receive at this time.\textsuperscript{322}

\textsuperscript{322} University of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS D1070, art. 2, fols 41–51. This source is also cited by Jane Mueller in her collection of Catherine Parr’s works, \textit{Katherine Parr: Complete Works and Correspondence} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 2014.
This picture was probably one by John Bettes, who submitted a bill to Catherine in the winter of 1546. Another miniature, likely by Lucas Hornebolte, is also certainly of Catherine and was likely paid for and commissioned by Catherine herself. After Elizabeth I, as Susan James points out, “Parr commissioned more individual portraits of herself in her short, three-and-a-half–year reign than any other noblewoman of the sixteenth century, and she was the first English queen to use portraiture as a major propaganda tool.”

Although it can be tempting to view Catherine Parr as a long–suffering wife to men she tolerated, pining away for her true love, Thomas Seymour – who she would eventually marry in May 1547 – and spending much of her life in quiet northern estates before being thrust into a brief spotlight as queen, that is certainly not the entire story. Yes, Catherine Parr is the wife who survived Henry, but she’s more than just a footnote. She, more than any of Henry’s queens, had control over her image, and was definitely a patron of portraiture. That she wore her favorite color and the fashions she popularized would be enough to set her apart as a queen who managed the affairs of her image, but she also wrote books, patronized court musicians, and was left in charge of England, for all intents and purposes, when Henry went to France. Catherine shows the massive changes taking place to queenship in early modern England. Although most queens did

323 James, Katerine Parr, 419.


325 Susan E. James, The feminine dynamic in English art, 1485–1603: Women as consumers, patrons and painters (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2009) and James, “Lady Jane Grey or Kateryn Parr?” Taylor and Francis Online.
not publish books, the role of queen as consort and co–leader, at least in a visual sense, started, with Catherine, to be accepted.\footnote{326 Catherine’s role as a military commander, however brief and vague, was also unique, as was her habit of signing her name with family name even when she became queen. For more on her signature, see Linda Porter, Katherine the Queen: The Remarkable Life of Katherine Parr, the Last Wife of Henry VIII (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2010), first plates section at page 112, Plate 10.}

Catherine did, as mentioned, marry Thomas Seymour in 1547, and in 1548, at the age of 35, gave birth to her first and only child. She had had a falling out with Princess Mary – who was upset by the secret marriage of her stepmother and ally – and Princess Elizabeth, who had what may (or may not) have been scandalous liaisons with Thomas Seymour. When she died on September 5, 1548, her funeral was solemn and magnificent, and she was interred as a former queen at Sudeley chapel. Although her royal stepchildren did not make a monument to her or publicly mourn her – her chief mourner was, somewhat ironically, the doomed Lady Jane Grey – England had lost a great mind and steady queen, and certainly a valued and much–loved member of the family.\footnote{327 Jane Grey, of course, would go to her death only a few years later as a – probably unwitting – pretender to the throne. Thomas Seymour was soon caught up in a coup attempt and was executed on Tower Hill in 1549. As for the young Mary Seymour, Catherine Parr’s only biological child, Susan James argues that she was almost certainly deceased by 1550. She was eligible to receive property, although the lands her father’s family had owned were forfeit at his execution and had, “already been snapped up by new owners.” (James, Kateryn Parr, 339). However, her maintenance grant – which she received every 18 months – “was not renewed on 17 September 1550,” meaning that she, “almost certainly died at Grimsthorpe sometime around her second birthday, and she is probably buried somewhere in the church at Edenham, which still contains memorials to the family of her guardian, the Duchess of Suffolk.” (James, Kateryn Parr, 339.)}

Final Campaigns, The Last Years, and the Succession

Although Henry’s glory days of military heroism were – mostly – behind him in the 1540s, he did, as mentioned above, go on one final campaign to France in 1544 after military overtures in Scotland (an ally of France, and a thorn in Henry’s side) that began in 1542. This conflict with France did not hold the same glory for Henry as his earlier campaigns, and he was forced to negotiate with the French to recoup some of his financial losses. It seems, also, that this
later campaign could not have held the same promise of excitement and glory for Henry as his earlier one in 1520 when he was young and athletic. Henry in his late–twenties and early–thirties was a far cry from Henry in his fifties. He was obese, suffering from gout and an old jousting wound, and certainly not in peak physical condition. He had had – and lost – five wives, only one of whom gave him a male heir, and while his sixth wife, Catherine Parr, was capable and competent, and much loved it seems by Henry, but she, too, had failed in helping Henry perpetuate his dynasty. So, is it any wonder that, in 1545, he would commission a painting that hearkened back to his glorious détente with France in 1520, depicting his earlier success?

Plate 20: The British School, “The Field of the Cloth of Gold.” Oil on canvas, ca. 1545. Royal Collection Trust, London. RCIN 405794. (Detail)
Writing in 1770, Sir Joseph Ayloffe, a noted antiquarian, states that the painting above, “The Field of the Cloth of Gold,” is, “an Ancient Picture in Windsor Castle.”³²⁸ This painting was once attributed to Hans Holbein, but not only is it stylistically somewhat different than Holbein’s works – in particular, the figure of Henry VIII is in no way similar in skill to even Holbein’s earliest works depicting Henry – it is now attributed to an unknown artist in the British School and dated by the Royal Collection to 1545, although it depicts an event from twenty years previous. This painting, at the time of Ayloffe’s writing, had, “happily…escaped wreck” but, while it was in Windsor castle, it was, “placed in the king’s private apartments below stairs, which are seldom permitted to be shown, and hath long remained in great measure unknown to the public.”³²⁹ The painting was known, at least to some, as Ayloffe describes Horace Walpole’s analysis of it. Walpole, in Anecdotes of Painting in England, doesn’t speak at length about the painting, but notes that the painting might be by Holbein – a theory Ayloffe dismisses – but is, “beneath his excellence.”³³⁰

The details of this meeting are relatively well–known, and although it resulted in very little lasting diplomacy, Henry’s meeting with Francis was a highlight of his early reign. Hall’s Chronicle discusses the meeting in detail, but Ayloffe goes a step further, arguing that this painting was done, “by King Henry’s command,” and that the, “painter hath, in a most extraordinary manner, strictly and minutely adhered to fact, and made truth and accuracy the sole

³²⁸ Ayloffe, An Historical Description, 9. Ayloffe also shares the lament of historians that many Tudor portraits and images were lost in the Reformation and, “the demolition of our monasteries and religious houses; the ruins of time; and the outrages committed during the civil wars and subsequent usurpation; have undoubtedly deprived the present age of many valuable performances of this sort.” Ayloffe, An Historical Description, 9.

³²⁹ Ayloffe, An Historical Description, 9. I have chosen here, dear reader, to cite the words of Ayloffe in modern English, rather than with seventeenth–century spellings. You’re very welcome.

guides of his pencil.” Francis also commanded that a “Monsieur Peyresc” should record the proceedings, and later ordered the carving of a set of marble reliefs based on the meeting. Francis, later, ordered the carving of a set of marble reliefs based on the meeting. Henry, according to Ayloffé, went a step further and ordered, “the whole of the interview…to be described in painting; which was according executed in the picture now remaining in Windsor Castle.”

That Henry, according to Ayloffé, directly commissioned the painting of his meeting with Francis, is important to consider. While it is not a “family” or “dynasty” portrait, that Henry directly commissioned an image intended to glorify his rule shows the new interest in art as propaganda that Henry would popularize – and he did this in his later rule, when his days of being a military hero were long over. Ayloffé describes the painting’s symbolism as well:

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331 Ayloffé, *An Historical Description*, 10, 16.

332 Ayloffé, *An Historical Description*, 10, 15. See Father Montsaucon, *Monumens de la Monarchie Francaise* (vol 4). Also, it is interesting that Ayloffé describes these reliefs as well, disparaging them as fraught with the, “defects of the French sculptor.” (15)

333 Reliefs which Ayloffé describes as fraught with the “defects of the French sculptor” (Ayloffé, *An Historical Description*, 15).


335 Ayloffé notes that the painter commissioned was Edward Hall (Ayloffé, *An Historical Description*, 23).

336 Ayloffé – again, writing in the eighteenth–century – also considered the painting far superior to the works of the French artists, and describes it in great detail. Ayloffé writes that, “The great superiority of the English painter over the French statuary appears evident, when their respective performances are compared together. The marbles, of which P. Montfaucon and Dr. Ducarel have favored the public with exact engravings, are confined solely to the cavalcade of the two monarchs, and their first meeting on horseback; the whole ill–designed, and worse executed. The figures are but few, and those meagre, disproportionated, ungraceful, badly–disposed, and in no respect resembling the personages they are intended to represent. These faults, as well as the defects of the French sculptor, are carefully avoided by the artist to whom we are indebted for the picture. He therein gives us, in a masterly manner, a spirited representation of almost every progressive circumstance…” (Ayloffé, *An Historical Description*, 15)
 Upon the crown or key–stone of the arch stands a male figure, with a pair of expanded wings on his shoulders, and on his head is a skull cap, with a small cross on its front. In his right hand he holds a long–shafted cross, shaped like a pilgrim’s staff; and in his left a shield, the bottom whereof rests upon the head of an expiring dragon, on which he tramples. These figures, which in all probability were intended as an emblem of the king’s then new acquired title Defender of the Faith, are gilt with gold. On each side of this figure is a large union rose of York and Lancaster…

It is hard to conceive that this painting was not a deliberate work of propaganda, but what is even more telling is that Henry, for all the symbolism in the portrait, is absolutely recognizable. It also shows that toward the end of his life Henry was looking towards his past victories to both continue his reign and create a glorious dynasty for his son and heir.

During the last few years of Henry’s life, and shortly after, several portraits were painted that alluded to the succession and his glorious reign as a religious leader and military commander. As a reminder, Henry had three living children by the time of his marriage to Catherine Parr who had, at one point or another, been legitimate, in addition to children who were never legitimized. Mary, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon, was born in 1516, Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn, was born in 1533, and then finally Edward, son of Jane Seymour and long–awaited male heir, was born in 1537. By the time of his marriage to Catherine Parr, certainly, Henry was no longer the youthful humanist prince he had been. He was over 50, obese, and in constant pain due to his 1536 jousting injury, and his health continued to decline. He died at age fifty–five on January 28, 1547 and was buried next to Jane Seymour in an unfinished sarcophagus in St. Paul’s Cathedral.

337 Ayloffe, *An Historical Description*, 219. Of course, with the understanding that the painting was painted much later – even if it was a copy – these symbols take on new meaning. Henry would use familiar symbols, such as the pilgrim’s staff, to convey his role as the leader of the church, while maintaining the symbols of superiority and right over England with a figure of St. George.

338 While, of course, Henry was a bit of tyrant, there is something romantic and sad about his choice of burial place. How must his later wives have felt about his continued feelings for Jane Seymour, who died far too young? This could also have been a move to continue to lend legitimacy to his son and heir from beyond the grave, which would have been shrewd, cunning, and completely unsurprising for Henry to do, but it is still a touching gesture.
Henry’s image was portrayed a little differently in paintings from the 1540s. Without the influence and talent of Holbein, and with his growing age and infirmity, Henry was no longer the Renaissance prince of his earlier portraits and did not appear as such in portraits. However, portraiture was still important for Henry – whether it was paintings of previous successful military campaigns, religious images, or images that alluded to the succession, Henry needed, and probably wanted, to maintain his use of images even as he was ailing. One of these paintings was The Family of Henry VIII by an unknown artist in probably about 1545.339 This painting was almost certainly approved by – and probably painted for – Henry, as it was first displayed in the Presence Chamber in Whitehall, where Henry would have spent a significant amount of time.


339 This painting is currently held by the Royal Collection Trust in the Haunted Gallery at Hampton Court. RCIN 405796: https://www.rct.uk/collection/405796/the–family–of–henry–viii.
This painting – in the style of Holbein, judging from the architecture and the gold–foil details, as well as the general shape of the king – shows Henry seated on the throne, wearing a gold jacket and tunic and directly underneath the royal coat of arms. He looks much as he did in the Holbein portraits from a decade earlier, with the large codpiece, jaunty hat, and exaggerated sleeves, although he is missing any real regalia of rule, like a crown, sceptre, or even the Order of the Garter symbolism present in earlier works. Even without these, it’s obvious that this is Henry, and he is flanked by his son Edward and his long–deceased third wife, Jane Seymour. He and Jane wear complimentary colors as well as matching medals, and Edward is dressed in red hose and a crimson tunic, with auburn hair and looking like a miniature Henry – which was almost surely the point. This grouping stands at the center of the portrait, under a canopy and with their feet on a rug that is almost identical to that in the Whitehall Mural.

On either side are Henry’s daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. Mary, who stands to the left, wears red and brown as well as a large, prominent cross necklace. Elizabeth, on the right, wears an almost identical outfit, although with a different necklace and a more vibrant red on her dress (although this may be because of the age and condition of the painting). Further out are two members of the royal court, one of whom the Royal Collection identifies as William Somer, Henry’s favored court jester. The other may be a female court jester, perhaps Jane the Fool, but it is uncertain.340 The background includes a garden, decorated in green and white, and the ceiling

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340 Researching Jane the Fool leads down a road of popular history, vague allusions to a court jester who perhaps had a learning disability, and many, many articles by bloggers discussing Tudor history. Perhaps the best source – although it says little about Jane and more about the role of those with learning disabilities at the Tudor court during the reigns of Henry and Mary – is primarily by Suzannah Lipscomb for the “All the King’s Fools” project on “natural fools” in Tudor England. This is a fascinating project to examine, although the identity and purpose of the female figure in the painting’s right doorway may never be fully understood. See the All the King’s Fools Project at http://www.allthekingsfools.co.uk/. It should be noted that this website is (hopefully temporarily) defunct as of November 2022, but Lipscomb wrote about the project and the treatment of disabled people in the sixteenth century in an excellent article for History Today. Suzannah Lipscomb, “All the King’s Fools,” History Today 61, issue 8, August 2011, https://www.historytoday.com/archive/all–king%E2%80%99s–fools.
is painted with red and white Tudor roses. Although not painted by Holbein, it could have come from one of his students, and was likely commissioned by Henry or someone at court, given its size, the amount it must have cost, and its location when displayed.

If this painting was completed in 1545, then it, like the painting of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, served a purpose that went beyond a simple family portrait or commemoration of an historical event. Although throughout this chapter I have noted the it is almost impossible to ascribe a causal relationship between events and portraits, it is possible to show that relationships between events in Henry’s reign – the break with Rome, his marriages, the birth of his sole male heir, the death of Jane Seymour, the Pilgrimage of Grace, etc. – and the ways in which Henry represented himself existed. It is widely accepted, for example, that Henry’s image for the first twenty years of his reign was not a major departure from that of his father’s or of his own youth, and that it was the need to differentiate himself from his father and distance himself from Rome that led to a retooling of his image.341

To say that Henry knew he was at the end of his life and wanted to make sure everyone at court knew exactly what the succession was supposed to look like would be a stretch. But, that said, it would not be out of character for Henry to try and awe anyone coming to court with the magnificence of his glorious deeds in France, with his family and their wealth and beauty. And it would certainly not be unusual – one only has to look at the Whitehall Mural to see this – for

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341 Although it is not a relevant image to discuss at length here, the Wriothesley Garter Book is an excellent example of how art itself changed from Henry’s early reign through his death. One page, which shows Henry at the 1520 opening of Parliament, is decidedly medieval. Without the inscriptions, it is not clear who the image features – it could easily be a thirteenth, fourteenth, or early-fifteenth century manuscript based on the art style. Henry was a student of art, but did not take an interest in being represented by it until he truly needed to. To view this manuscript, see the Royal Collection Trust RCIN 1047414. “Opening of Parliament by Henry VIII at Bridewell in 1523,” in the Wriothesley Garter Book (Sir Thomas Wriothesley, 1530, Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 1047414, https://www.rct.uk/collection/1047414/the--wriothesley--garter--book.)
Henry to use his family members to remind everyone exactly where the crown should go next.  

1544 and 1545 were years when Henry must have seen the need to make sure everyone knew what the order of succession was and that he was still the reigning power in the land. Looking back to his courtship of Catherine Parr, we can see that he was still very much concerned with the succession and his image, even as he became more and more infirm.

A Note on Collecting and Patronage

Portraiture, or direct representation of Henry and his family, was a crucial component of the royal “image,” but other forms of media show the interest the king had in perpetuating his dynastic ambitions through art. Tapestries were an important type of image at the court of Henry VIII. Thomas P. Campbell, in his examination of tapestries under the Tudors, argues that tapestries were “acquired for all sorts of purposes – practical, aesthetic, political…” and that Henry himself spent massive sums on this art form. While not all of the tapestries included images of the royal family, or images of people at all, they should still be considered here.

Campbell rightly states that, “despite the gigantic number of tapestries dispersed around the royal palaces and documentary evidence of the enormous sums that Henry spent on key sets, the royal

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342 This painting, however, should not be confused with a later painting, The Family of Henry VIII: An Allegory of the Tudor Succession (Lucas de Heere, 1572, National Museum of Wales, NMW A 564). This later image, commissioned by Elizabeth I, shows a similar setting, with Henry VIII under a canopy and surrounded by his family. However, it was commissioned to show the peace and harmony Elizabeth had created – she stands almost center, almost obscuring her younger brother, who had been dead for several years at this point and holds the hand of Peace and is followed by Plenty. On the other side of her father, Mary and Philip of Spain stare dourly out at the viewer, trailed closely by War. While Henry’s portrait from 1545 is allegorical in some ways – Jane Seymour’s inclusion gives a wink and a nod to the succession – and was absolutely meant to draw attention to the Tudor dynasty’s power and legitimacy, Elizabeth’s commission from de Heere is fantastical. I will discuss this painting further in the later chapter on George II, as it was acquired by Horace Walpole sometime in the mid–to late–eighteenth century and sold at the sale of his Strawberry Hill collection in 1842. For more information, see the National Museum of Wales at https://museum.wales/art/online/?action=show_item&item=737.

343 Thomas P. Campbell. Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty: Tapestries at the Tudor Court. (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2007), x.
tapestry collection has received scant attention in studies of the Tudor kings or of English art and patronage.\(^{344}\)

That over ninety-five percent of the collection has been destroyed is at least partially to blame for this oversight, but also there has been a serious lack of historical examination of these works. The, “primary text on English tapestry patronage” remains W.G. Thomson’s *History of Tapestry from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, published originally in 1906.\(^{345}\) However, through descriptions and more recent works, like Campbell’s, as well as the inventories of Henry’s reign, a picture of the extensive tapestry collection begins to emerge, and can add greatly to a study of this type. These tapestries were spread through Henry’s twelve palaces and residences, with four having “permanent wardrobes,” or large stores of tapestries.\(^{346}\) Tapestries were displayed in “any room in which the king conducted business, devotion, or entertainment in public” and areas through which processions might pass, showing that they were not simply for Henry and his family to enjoy.\(^{347}\) By collecting, displaying, and commissioning an immense collection of tapestries, Henry, “was to become one of the most active tapestry patrons of his age, using the medium as a means of iconographic suggestion and self-aggrandizement on a scale and grandeur equaled only by Francis I of France and Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor.”\(^{348}\)

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\(^{344}\) Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, x.

\(^{345}\) Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, xii.

\(^{346}\) Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, 89. Campbell refers here to Windsor, Richmond, Westminster, and the Tower, with the possibility of a wardrobe at Nottingham.

\(^{347}\) Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, 92.

\(^{348}\) Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, 103. While Campbell underestimates the instability of Henry’s rule, arguing that “he had no immediate motivation to use the visual arts as a tool of propaganda beyond the way they were already an institutional component of court splendor,” it cannot be argued that Henry “manifested a marked appreciation of tapestry as an art form in its own right,” and used this art form to secure and “brand” his rule. Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty*, 103.
Conclusions

Henry exercised great control over his image and the images of those in his family, whether directly or indirectly, and certainly was conscious of his image – that much has not been disputed by historians, no matter how powerful they think court factions were, or how blustering Henry might have been. While the amount of influence Henry had with individual painters may be unclear, whether he was personally responsible for commissioning and approving all the images of his queens, or how his images were received by the nobility, it is clear that, particularly in comparison to his predecessors, Henry was incredibly concerned with his image, and that of the office of king. The dynasty, and the realities of his family, belong to both that image and office, and Henry used and controlled, at least in part, the images of those in his dynastic family. Of course, Henry’s family may have had more influence over their own representations than we, today, can ascertain. One thing, however, is certain: through a new emphasis on the individual – the body of the individual, rather than simply the representation of an individual office – in art, as well as an increasing interest in collecting, Henry, and his family, created an unforgettable start to the early modern period in England.

How did Henry and his family represent themselves through portraiture? How did Henry use art to support his legitimacy as a second-generation monarch, and what does that say about the changes – and continuities – in the English monarchy during the early modern period? During Henry’s reign, we can see immense changes in the monarchy and the royal family, although perhaps some continuities that we might not expect. Remember that the English monarch was not an absolute monarch, even during Henry’s reign, and Henry had to work with the powerful nobility in order to rule. Although he did remove the ministers who held sway over
his father, and did, in many ways, actually bring some peace to England, he still ruled by
cajoling, convincing, threatening, and impressing the powerful factions at court. He also still had
to rule through and with Parliament, a body whose power would grow immensely during the
early modern period.

I’ve also asked what makes these kings so important for understanding monarchical
representations of legitimacy and for Henry, this question carries through the subsequent
chapters here as well. Henry represents the search for, and the reaction to this search for,
legitimate authority in many ways, including his humanist writings, an unending obsession with
a male heir, and images that incorporated both the symbolism and actual body of the king. Also
important to note, Henry’s image is still recognized today and was recognized – and used – by
both the later Stuarts and Hanoverians to tie themselves to this legitimacy. As Tatiana String
notes, “it is often the case that cultures appropriate the past through the constant revisiting of
familiar narratives that activate a set of enduring associations,” and visual images, “have a
consistently important, and often pivotal, role to play in this process.”349 Because of Henry’s
recognizable figure, later kings and their families – along with the rest of us – could pour their
dynastic ambitions, their claims to legitimacy and power, their historical imaginings about the
sixteenth–century into the figure of the famous Tudor king.

Henry’s role as a second–generation monarch, taking the throne one king after a major
upheaval that changed the structure of English life and the political realm, cannot be
underestimated. Henry did not have a multi–generational dynastic tradition to look to, and he had
to form an image that was unique and different enough from his father’s that he had his own
identity, his own reaction to crises. Perhaps more than anything, Henry was concerned with

349 Tatiana C. String, “Myth and Memory,” 201.
creating a dynastic legacy for his children, despite the serious threats to his crown that he had to react to and at least attempt to solve. Henry was not an absolute monarch, but he had considerable power even without cajoling and flattering the nobles. His image was meant to awe them, not to convince them, and his body was separate, apart, and untouchable.

Henry’s legacy is hugely important for Tudor studies, but also for the early modern world as a whole. Tatiana C. String notes that it is, “often the case that cultures appropriate the past through the constant revisiting of familiar narratives that activate a set of enduring associations…visual images have a consistently important, and often pivotal, role to play in this process.”

For the rest of the early modern period – and, in fact, even today – Henry’s image has loomed large, a symbol of the monarchy and the early modern period as a whole. He also, less magnificently, “left a damnosa hereditas to his successors which led, not very indirectly, to Charles I’s execution one hundred and two years almost to the day after Henry’s own death, and on a scaffold in front of the palace that Henry had made the supreme seat of royal government and where he himself had died.”

Henry’s use of images and imagery as a second-generation monarch to remake himself and the power of the crown as political and religious crises – many of his own making, admittedly – happened all around him would have long-lasting consequences, and would both begin and speak to a change and a need that would shape an age.

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351 As David Starkey points out, Henry, “presided over the remaking of English as a language and literature and began to turn the English Channel into the widest strip of water in the world,” while he, “carried the powers of the English monarchy to their peak.” David Starkey, Henry VIII: Virtuous Prince (Hammersmith: Harper Press, 2008), 3.

Chapter Four:

James II: A Long Life, a Short Reign, a King in Exile

“There was an old saying in Scotland that the Stuarts were like the horses reared in the Aberdeenshire district of Mar, excellent when young, deteriorating more quickly than most,” writes Allan Massie in *The Royal Stuarts: A History of the Family that Shaped Britain*. Massie, writing in 2010, argues that James II, the last Stuart king (r. 1685 – 1688), who succeeded his brother and was forced into exile in France by his daughter and son-in-law, was the “author of his own tragedy.” What follows are tales about the unattractiveness of James’s mistresses, his relationships with his children, and James’s general bumbling until his death in 1701, at the court of the gracious, mannered, and beloved Louis XIV. Massie seems to give us a picture of James that is little better than a tabloid piece on a basically unknown celebrity.

Massie’s work straddles the line between “popular” and “professional” history, but even professional historians of seventeenth-century British history, the history of early modern Europe, early modern art, or the history of British kings often malign – when they are not ignoring – James II. Kevin Sharpe notes that, “every bit as much as Queen Mary Tudor, the image of James II that has passed into history is one crafted by others – by his enemies.”

However, taking a closer look at James’s use of images throughout his reign (which should, but has traditionally not included both his time as heir–presumptive and his exile in France) can

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355 It barely even qualifies as that – Massie devotes only six pages of his 300–page book on the royal Stuarts (of whom there were six) to James II, and barely discusses anything outside the actual years of his reign. Although there are certainly better biographies of and historical works on James, this treatment, particularly as a part of the Stuart dynasty, is disappointing, but not surprising.

show that James was not simply a footnote of a king who fled his country, but instead that he, like Henry and George, was concerned with his image and that of his family as it related to their political ambitions and status, and was a second–generation monarch who used art in a unique way to build, secure, and even try to regain the throne, using legitimacy, power, and symbolism in portraits to achieve his dynastic ambitions. While dismissing James out of hand is easy, and there is certainly evidence to suggest that he was not the most capable of kings at a time when kingship in England was changing dramatically, a more thorough look at James’s rule is necessary.

In this chapter, I will discuss the major changes and events between Henry VIII’s death in 1547 and James’s birth in 1633, then move on to a very short biographical narrative of James’s early life. Next, I will discuss the historiography surrounding James’s life, reign, and exile, including the specific issues surrounding the history written about James stemming from the “Whig historiography” and the nature of the sources available. In the next chapter, I will move to analyzing James’s portraits from his time as Duke of York at the Restoration through his exile at Saint–Germain–en–Laye, former home of Louis XIV, in France, as well as portraits of his wives, Anne Hyde and later Mary of Modena, and his children, along with other family members and groups. I will analyze the portraits themselves following a generally chronological discussion of the political and personal moments of upheaval and the paintings that coincided with or, as we are able to interpret, perhaps spoke directly to these events. This will show that many images and actions concerning representation correlate with challenges to the legitimacy of the king or to event that challenged the monarchy or Stuart dynasty as a whole.

Kevin Sharpe asks another important question of James, and I think it is important to address – if not fully answer – that question here: “Did…James, unlike his father, fail to put his
case, to attend to his representation in words and images, and so fail in those arts increasingly central to the exercise of rule?”357 While it is not my task to rescue James from his bad press, I agree with Sharpe’s assessment that James was not, “silent in his cause,” and that James, throughout his time as Duke of York, as heir presumptive, as King, and as exile, attempted to, “represent himself as the son and brother of a king, as a legitimate and divine king, and as the father of a rightful king.”358 Where I believe my contribution lies, much like with Henry and George, is showing the connection between political and social upheaval and the representation of James – and arguing that while we cannot, with the archival sources that exist today claim a causal relationship between events and portraits, it can be shown that James, who was tasked with challenges unique to a second–generation monarch, was acutely aware of his need for representation, and took that need seriously. That he has ultimately been defeated by his opponents – as a king, as a collector and patron of art, and as a figure concerned with his own image and that of his family – is further reason to ask questions of his reign that have not been asked in this context before.

Between Henry and James: A World Much Changed

After Henry VIII’s death in 1547, the English crown again entered a period of instability; Henry’s children, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, all held the throne for a time, creating both a succession and religious crisis. Elizabeth – the subject of many academic works, and an art patron to rival even her father – died childless, and so the rule of England went to James VI of Scotland, thus ending the Tudor dynasty and beginning the Stuart dynasty in 1603. James’s son, Charles I, later became king in 1625 when James died, but was executed in 1649 during the

357 Sharpe, Rebranding Rule, 225.

358 Sharpe, Rebranding Rule, 226.
English Civil War. Between 1649 and 1660, England (and, to an extent, Scotland and Ireland) were ruled by a military theocracy led by Oliver Cromwell. After Cromwell’s death, Parliament petitioned the Charles’s oldest son to return and be restored to the throne. In 1660, Charles II was crowned, ending the exile he and his younger brother, James, had lived in for over a decade. It is clear, just from this short overview, that the years between Henry VIII’s death and James’s birth saw major changes to English political, cultural, and social life. While the basic structures of family life had changed little, the actual composition of families had been altered significantly by the high death tolls during the English Civil War, which – while a conflict without the scale or scope of the Wars of the Roses, caused just as much destruction, and included the moral anguish of a regicide. The execution of Charles I was a major event – how could we expect Britain to be the same after the king was executed at the order of Parliament?

Artistically, fashions had certainly changed – clothes were significantly different, and portraits were now more common and accessible than in Henry’s time. They were being painted primarily in the Dutch style of Peter Lely and Anthony Van Dyck. Sir Peter Lely, in particular, plays an important role in images of James II while he was Duke of York, and, as Catharine


MacLeod notes, Van Dyck was as essential to Charles I and the fashions of the Stuart court as Holbein was to Henry VIII’s Tudor dynasty.\footnote{She notes that, “Just as Hans Holbein’s massive full–length image of Henry VIII towers over posterity’s view of the early Tudor court, and our vision of the doomed court of Charles I is presided over by Anthony van Dyck’s elegant and melancholic portraits of the King, so our image of the court of Charles II is inextricably bound up with portraits by the monarch’s Principal Painter, Sir Peter Lely.” Catharine MacLeod, “‘Good, but not like’: Peter Lely, Portrait Practice and the Creation of a Court Look” in \textit{Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II}, eds. Catharine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander, (London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 2001), 50. Peter Lely was born in 1618 in Soest, in Westphalia, under the name Pieter van der Faes, and arrived in England around the early 1640s. Lely produced several paintings, including landscapes, while in England, and was copying Van Dyck paintings of Charles I for the Duke of Northumberland by 1647, and continued painting for both the powerful families in England and for Oliver Cromwell himself. In 1651, Lely painted a portrait of Cromwell, and “we are told, on apparently good authority, that Cromwell charged the painter as follows: ‘Mr. Lely, I desire that you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all; but remark all those roughnesses, pimples, warts, and every thing as you see me, other I never will pay a farthing for it.’” Beckett, \textit{Lely}, 11. Even Cromwell’s austerity – an austerity that is both well–documented and also seems a bit hypocritical given the portraits that exist of Cromwell himself – did not stop the lucrative and active collecting scene. Many may have felt that Charles I had overstepped his bounds, and was not fit to be king, but few of the nobility truly espoused Oliver Cromwell’s radical Puritanism and austerity – and almost none got out of the art collecting game entirely. For general histories on Cromwell, see: Ian Gentles, \textit{Oliver Cromwell: God’s Warrior and the English Revolution} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2011), John Morrill, \textit{Oliver Cromwell} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), V.C. Wedgwood, \textit{Oliver Cromwell} (New York: Macmillan, 1956), Marc Aronson, \textit{John Winthrop, Oliver Cromwell, and the Land of Promise} (New York: Clarion Books, 2004). For works on Lely specifically, see: Millar, \textit{Sir Peter Lely}, 15, Diana Dethloff, “Portraiture and Concepts of Beauty in Restoration Painting,” \textit{Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II}, eds. Catharine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander (London and New Haven: National Portrait Gallery and Yale Center for British Art, 2001), 30. Beckett, \textit{Lely}, 27; Millar, \textit{Sir Peter Lely}, 21. As alluded to in Chapter Two, both Holbein and Lely, despite living in England for a majority of their adult lives, were not accepted as English artists. Lely’s elaborate studio and workshop, which saw him painting the faces and assistants finishing the rest of the paintings, shows the growing demand for his portraits. Although Holbein did not have the elaborate workshop and the same demand for portraiture, he did have some similarities to Lely. Both weathered massive upheavals in rule and favor; Holbein survived and flourished despite the death of his protector, and Lely worked before, during, and after the civil war. Part of this was due to their foreign status, another thing they both had in common. Lely stayed in England for the majority of his life, but he never became a citizen, in fact or in perception. Neither Holbein nor Lely were members of the London Painter–Stainers Company, and both, probably to their benefit, retained their sense of foreignness and aloofness from English politics beyond patronage.}{\textsuperscript{361}}}{\textsuperscript{362}}  

Peter Lely followed in this tradition, becoming invaluable to the court and nobility. In 1661, Lely was made Court Painter by Charles II, with an annual pension of £200, and continued painting as Court Painter, gaining a knighthood as well, until 1680.\footnote{For works on Lely specifically, see: Millar, \textit{Sir Peter Lely}, 15, Diana Dethloff, “Portraiture and Concepts of Beauty in Restoration Painting,” \textit{Painted Ladies: Women at the Court of Charles II}, eds. Catharine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander (London and New Haven: National Portrait Gallery and Yale Center for British Art, 2001), 30; Beckett, \textit{Lely}, 14.}{\textsuperscript{362}} Lely’s time at court saw a more sensual and relaxed style – particularly for women, including the famous painted ladies of Charles II’s court – and women, like Mary of Modena,
having more influence on court patronage. In addition, as the paintings in the next chapter will show, the symbolism of power had changed significantly, despite the message—and the needs of a second–generation monarch—remaining very similar for James as it had been for Henry.

_James’s Early Life: A Brief Biography_

James was, like Henry, a second–generation monarch, and, along with George II, share many coincidental similarities that make a comparative study more interesting. He was born the second surviving son, after his older brother Charles, of Charles I and Henrietta Maria, a French princess, on October 14, 1633, in Palace of St. James, and was created Duke of York in 1644. The young Stuart princes had experienced significant trauma and fear during the 1640s when their father was in opposition to, and ultimately executed by, Parliament. Charles fought in the Loyalist army, but James and his younger siblings were held in London as captives—albeit captives living in relative luxury. There are some indications that, because James was not actively participating in the Loyalist army—he was barely a teenager at this point—some factions at court and in Parliament considered making him king in 1646, but this plan went nowhere. In 1648, James was forced to flee to The Hague to escape the political turmoil in England, and in 1649, his father was executed. Monarchists proclaimed Charles king as Charles II, but, in reality, both young men were exiles abroad for almost the next fifteen years.

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Both the English Civil War and the Wars of the Roses involved, from the start, questions of who would rule the country, and, perhaps more importantly, how. Both also created instability in the government and made people – particularly the nobility – question what English government would look like in the future. The execution of Charles I in 1649 irrevocably changed the relationship between monarchy, nobility, and Parliament; no longer was the king untouchable – the direction in which the French monarchy was heading – but was instead vulnerable to the whims of “the people.” That the English Civil War was disruptive to both politics and society is obvious, and the Restoration was a welcome move toward stability.\(^{365}\)

Charles II came to the throne in 1660, and, in 1662, married Catherine of Braganza. Charles was only 32, Catherine was relatively young at 23, and heirs were expected. However, Catherine miscarried at least three times, and, certainly by 1670, a legitimate child from their union was hoped for, but not expected. Charles did have several illegitimate children but refused to put Catherine aside or legitimize his sons by his mistresses, and so James, Duke of York was...

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heir apparent in reality as well as name.\footnote{This is, of course, discounting the existence of Charles’ illegitimate child, James, Duke of Monmouth, an historical figure who also deserves more attention. Although there are few instances of James II presenting himself in opposition to Monmouth, at least one coin struck during James’s reign shows the defeat of Monmouth, and it was James’s hand which signed Monmouth’s execution order. John Ashdown–Hill has noted that if Charles had secretly married Monmouth’s mother, Lucy Walter, as it appears Catherine of Braganza believed he had, James would never have been king, as Monmouth would have been legitimate. Although Ashdown–Hill doesn’t believe Charles and Lucy Walter were married, he does note that, due to the changing marriage laws during and after Henry’s reign, secret weddings were to become more and more common (or, at the very least, more commonly alleged) among the royal family. James married Anne Hyde in secret, allegedly, “at Breda in the Netherlands, in 1659, and this wedding has been various dated to either the month of November or to Christmas Eve of that year…Prior to the supposed marriage Anne had reportedly been James’s mistress.” Charles’ nephew Rupert (Elizabeth, Electress Palatine and Queen of Bohemia’s son) was in an alleged secret marriage, which he denied, but whose issue he legitimised, and later had another mistress and illegitimate child around whom marriage rumors swirled. Finally, in 1685, when many in England were looking for a reason to remove James from the line of succession, a secret marriage was contracted by Louis XIV, Charles’ and James’s first cousin; Ashdown–Hill states that, “although there is no documentary proof of such a marriage, it was universally credited at the time and…the marriage between Louis XIV and Francoise d’Aubigne is also generally accepted by historians.” The appearance of secret marriages in the Stuart family will be discussed later, but here it is important to note that James was not only the second son, but was also almost displaced by Monmouth – a fact that could not have helped with his feelings of illegitimacy at being an unintended second–generation monarch. Ashdown–Hill, Royal Marriage Secrets130–131. B. Masters, The Mistresses of Charles II, (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1997), 9–10.} When Charles II died in 1684, James was by his side. When James succeeded his mostly loved brother, however, the brothers’ closeness did not translate to popularity. James had converted to Catholicism – publicly, unlike Charles – and made marriages that were unpopular at best. James was even nearly excluded from the line of succession; like Henry, James’s religious views, which may or may not have been genuine, caused him nearly as much trouble as the nobles in his court and the women in his life. He also had to participate in the delicate balance of power between Catholicism and Protestantism, the Continent and England, and, eventually, Whig and Tory. James, both as heir presumptive and as king, was faced with the dual problem, also facing Henry and George, of how to continue a “new” dynasty, or at least a restored one, while also forging his own image to create a dynasty that would last beyond his own reign. James responded in similar ways to these challenges, although in a very different style and with vastly different results.
One major reason for these three kings, along with their families, is their status as second–generation monarchs – the second monarch in a dynasty to rule after a major shift in the dynastic nature of the royal family. James, like Henry, was the second monarch to rule after a war and, although the Wars of the Roses and the English Civil War were not terribly similar on the surface, the upheaval caused by both of them was substantial. James faced the additional challenge of being the second king to rule after a regicide and a time when there was no king at all versus too many claimants who *could* be king. James also had to follow a generally well–liked king, Charles II, rather than a less charismatic ruler, Henry VII.

But, similarly to Henry, James was not born as the heir. He was the second child, and although his childhood was tumultuous, it’s doubtful that he ever thought in his youth that he would be king. James was detained in London as a teenager while Charles had adventures in the Loyalist army and went straight to The Hague while Charles played the diplomat, the king in exile, across Europe. Even when Charles was restored to the throne in 1660, it was not obvious, or even likely, that James would become king. When he did, in 1685, he had lived lifetimes already – as a prince, an exile, a duke, an admiral, an heir presumptive, a father – and was already over fifty years old. What must he have thought when he finally did become king? A combination of sadness, excitement, and disbelief, perhaps – but no matter what he felt, he had succeeded his brother as king. Unlike Henry, his rule came with major challenges from the beginning (even before the beginning, to be more accurate) *and* he faced instability after the English Civil War like Henry had after the Wars of the Roses. He also had to come to the throne and create both his own image and build on his popular brother’s image while paying homage to his father without hearkening back to his ancestors *too* much. How would James, a second son
who was not born to be king, who lived through his father’s regicide and his brother’s rule, face the challenges of continuing his father’s legacy while creating his own recognizable and loyalty–inspiring image?

Historiography

Maurice Ashley asked, “What was the ‘black thing’ that palsied the character of the brave but highly unpopular monarch who was dethroned in 1688?” in his questioning of James’s “poisoned historical legacy.”\(^{367}\) While his reign only lasted three years, from Charles’ death in 1685 until late–1688, his positions as heir presumptive, king, and exiled king all had long–lasting effects on British politics, both domestic and international. Why, then, is James discussed as only a footnote in most academic works that are not solely focused on him and his family? And why – despite many works about James and various aspects of his life and reign – is he still such an enigma, so hard to write about in any clear way?

In reality, James was heir apparent for at least a decade before Charles’ death – as evidenced by attempts to prevent his succession – and his Protestant children were accepted as heirs after him. James was a very popular figure at court after the Restoration, beloved respected by many, and was a celebrated naval captain and military leader. Although a converted Roman Catholic, there is little evidence of James being a religious extremist or oppressor. W.A. Speck notes that James was often dismissed as being rigid with his religious beliefs, refusing to accept others, and that’s why he was unpopular – that he was to blame for his own problems – but that in reality, he espoused religious toleration for, if not all, most.\(^{368}\) And yet, most history books mention him with an anecdote, or a few pages about his bad relationship with Parliament, or an


image of his grandson Bonnie Prince Charlie, fighting in Scotland in 1745 to restore the Stuart crown. Part of the reason for James’s dismissal must be attributed to the “Whig historiography,” a case of the winners writing history, and a phenomenon discussed extensively, although rarely critically, in historical works. Briefly, the winners of the “Glorious Revolution,” the Whigs, sought first to discredit James, and then later to support their own succession scenario. The “losers,” the Tories, supported the Stuart succession and, to an extent, the limited absolutism of English monarchs. While William and Mary’s ascension was, technically, a coup facilitated by members of Parliament and expedited by James’s flight from England, it is known as the “Glorious Revolution,” and painted as a Protestant savior saving England from the papist trappings of a corrupt and inept king.369

In this chapter, I will begin by examining the complicated historiography of James II’s life and reign, starting with the immediate problem of the Whig history and its impact on later studies, before moving on to more recent scholarship on specific aspects of James’s life. Of particular importance here is the fact that very few studies have looked at the entirety of his life, including the Restoration, his time as Duke of York, and his time in exile in France – and even fewer at portraiture and image in all of these periods. That said, there is much work, some of it very good, on James, and scholarship on his reign has become more popular in recent decades, and it should be discussed here. James, perhaps more than any of the other kings in this work, has been made and unmade by his biographers.

One reason for the negative writings about James in the eighteenth–century was, as mentioned, the famed “Whig historiography” or “Whig history.” James was almost prevented

369 The first work to identify the Whig Historiography in these terms is Herbert Butterfield, The Whig Interpretation of History (New York: WW Norton, 1965), which continues to be a seminal work on this subject.
from becoming king because of Whig politicians in the 1670s during the Exclusion Crisis, and those same (and some additional) influential men, such as the Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury and Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, had a hand in inviting William of Orange to England as well. These men were prolific writers of letters, political treatises, books, and histories. Burnett’s *History of His Own Time* is, for example, an invaluable resource for historians of this time period, but it is also highly biased – not a terribly shocking thing, given his status as an influential bishop with an agenda of his own.\(^{370}\) Shaftesbury is an interesting figure as well, as he had a long history with both Charles and James. He was an advisor to the Stuarts, and, by most accounts, was religiously tolerant to a point, supporting a bill of indulgence to allow Protestant dissenters to worship freely.\(^{371}\) I will discuss Shaftesbury in more detail when talking about James’s portraits, particularly around the Exclusion Crisis and his abdication of the throne, but Shaftesbury was a complicated statesman as well as a writer and advisor, and a major contributor to the growing power of Parliament. Parliament – which would never allow an “absolute” monarch again after the English Civil War – was dominated by Whigs and growing exponentially in power, and the influence of these politicians has to be acknowledged in its time, but also as an influence over later historians writing about James.

Memoirs have provided much of our history on James. Burnet’s history, a combination of history and memoir, is very useful as long as it’s read with a healthy dose of skepticism. The


\(^{371}\) For a more nuanced view of Shaftesbury, his Dictionary of National Biography entry is very useful and shows a man who was concerned with several aspects of the political landscape at once, not just virulent anti-Catholicism. See Osmund Airy, “Cooper, Anthony Ashley, first Baron Ashley and first Earl of Shaftesbury (1621–1683)” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900, Volume IV* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), 1036–1055.
diary of Samuel Pepys is an invaluable resource as well, and is filled with anecdotes that prove useful when discussing image. Other historians in the early-twentieth century, such as F.C. Turner, Hilaire Belloc, and F.M.G. Higham wrote biographies and studies that, while short, illustrate that interest in James’s story hadn’t waned, but that it certainly was not as keen as interest in other monarchs or the Glorious Revolution itself. It is crucial to understand that the Whig historiography played a defining role in scholarship on James. In the beginning of the eighteenth–century, Whig histories began to appear as the standard history of the later Stuart kings. This is evident in many twentieth century writings about James and his family as well. Interestingly, although we can look back and see the narrative of Whig writers before this, the term “Whig interpretation of history” did not appear until 1931, when Herbert Butterfield used the phrase for his book denouncing, “the tendency in many historians to write on the side of Protestants and Whigs, to praise revolutions provided they have been successful, to emphasise certain principles of progress in the past and to produce a story which is the ratification if not the glorification of the present.” The “Whig historiography,” then is the

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374 Very little was written about James directly in the nineteenth century, but the continued power of Parliament, his short reign, and the popularity of the Whig views on history contributed to this, no doubt.

tendency to give carte blanche authority to Whig writers as well as interpreting the past through the lens of progress rather than objectivity.\textsuperscript{376}

The 1970s in particular saw several biographies and analyses of James’s reign, many of which, while influenced by the Whig historiography, were both very good and also showed that the Restoration and “Glorious Revolution,” as well as the impact of religious conflict in England, were crucial issues to study. John Miller’s works on James, \textit{Popery & Politics in England 1660–1668} and \textit{James II}, are both useful texts for biography and understanding the political situation – which was evolving rapidly, setting the stage for modern Parliament – during the late–seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{377} Miller’s interpretation of James’s life, reign, and exile are deeply rooted in religious strife, and point to Catholicism as the primary force behind the political upheaval surrounding James’s ascension to the throne, almost to the exclusion of all other matters.\textsuperscript{378}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{376} Although Butterfield’s book is required reading for many, it was panned as not actually citing many Whigs or historians, and no Whigs who were historians. Still, it has become influential and an important criticism of the idea of “progress” as an historical philosophy. An interesting interpretation of Butterfield’s work – from obscurity to foundational text – was written by then AHA president William Cronon in 2012, and I believe his criticism as well as praise hold true today. William Cronon, “Two Cheers for the Whig Interpretation of History,” \textit{Perspectives on History: The magazine of the American Historical Society}, September 2012. https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2012/two-cheers-for-the-whig-interpretation-of-history.


\textsuperscript{378} Of particular note are the political motivations Miller ascribes to influential Whigs like Shaftesbury. Miller argues that Shaftesbury was single–mindedly against Catholicism in England, against James, and that his singular focus was exclusion of James and the ascension of the Duke of Monmouth (if Charles could not be persuaded to remarry and have heirs, that is). While Shaftesbury was undoubtedly anti–Catholic and pro–Church of England and believed in indulgences for Dissenters – although interestingly, not for Fifth Monarchists – and most of his actions landed him squarely in the camp of those against the Duke of York as the next king, his political acumen was surely more nuanced than all that. Rather than simply being against James or against Catholics, he was a Whig with a strong, zealous belief in the rights and powers of Parliament, and the ability of Parliament to act independently from the King, a significantly more nuanced interpretation than he just did not like those Popish kings. I will, of course, discuss Shaftesbury and the complicated political nuances of both religion and succession later, but the larger point here is that many biographies of and works on James paint his opponents as only opposed to Catholicism, when the story is significantly more complicated. For more on this, see: Gilbert Burnet, \textit{History of His Own Time, Volume I} (London: Printed for Thomas Ward, 1724–1734), 118. Accessed via the Haith Trust Digital Library on January 26, 2021, https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/012314475.
\end{footnotesize}
Maurice Ashley’s *James II* is more concerned with biography than political interpretation, noting that James also suffers at the hands of historians because of hindsight – we are blinded to the mostly enthusiastic welcome his reign received because we know what happens next.\(^{379}\) Rather than painting James as a complicated king concerned with his own image, Ashley even titles his introduction, “The Tragedy of James II,” and goes on to imply that James both brought about his own destruction and was somehow bungling through the whole thing towards disaster.\(^{380}\) Much is drawn from the writings of Whigs, but to his credit, Ashley does take the narrative all the way to James and Mary’s exile in France and James’s death in 1701 rather than focusing on Charles’ reign and ending James’s story in 1688, although unfortunately he has little to say about James’s images or cultural patronage. *The Life and Times of James II* by Peter Earle does discuss image and the use of images – and, in fact, uses some portraits and drawings quite effectively.\(^{381}\) Earle rightly points out that James’s reign is a puzzle and that the story becomes more complicated the more you read into it, as, “Whig…historians such as Macaulay, Trevelyan and Churchill have painted a black picture of the villain who tried to reimpose Popery on a Protestant nation. Catholic apologists have gone so far the other way as to whitewash him. But to the uncommitted, James is still an enigma.”\(^{382}\)

Some works do present a more nuanced treatment of the complicated king. Lord Macaulay’s (otherwise excellent, and certainly popular) work from 1858, *The History of


\(^{380}\) Ashley, *James II*, 9.


\(^{382}\) Earle, *The Life and Times of James II*, 12.
England, is notoriously skewed towards the Whig interpretation of history, but still a useful volume, and a rare treatment of James’s life as a whole, not just his time as Duke, King, or exile. Steve Pincus, writing in 2009, takes direct aim at the Whig historiography in his book *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, where he notes that Macaulay’s thesis, “became the classic statement of the Whig interpretation” of James’s rule and the 1688 coup. Pincus instead attempts to present a more nuanced view of James’s reign and the political – and social and cultural – struggles he faced, from dealing with a hostile Parliament to Monmouth’s rebellion to anti-Catholic sentiment, arguing that we should include the revolution of 1688 in broader ideological studies of revolutions in history and reevaluate James’s role in it. Although much of Pincus’s focus is on the economic changes and popular movements that arose from the end of James’s reign, he does address the ‘inevitability” of it all, noting that to say the abdication, coup, and reign of William and Mary were destined to happen is to take a significant amount of agency away from James, the nobility, Parliament, and James himself – a refreshing move away from the Whig inevitability of progress.

David Ogg also writes about the political aspects of James’s reign and exile, and covers a longer period of James’s life, although the focus is on his actual reign in *England in the Reign of Charles II* and *England in the Reigns of James II and William III*. W.A. Speck also covers James’s life as a whole in his *Profiles in Power* volume on James, but, as expected, places the blame for losing the throne squarely on James’s shoulders, agreeing with Burnet that James was

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384 Pincus, *1688*, 103.

the master of his own destruction.\textsuperscript{386} The questions Speck raises are more limited, and his work is not a biography, but rather a study in James’s religious beliefs and actions – namely, was James an absolutist, a religious extremist, and a bigot, or an enlightened king who ran afoul of other powerful forces?\textsuperscript{387} While important, the focus on James’s religious aims narrows the focus and, inevitably, takes away the more nuanced picture we can see when looking as well at James’s images and concern with his own image.

Some recent works have painted a more complicated portrait of James, who appears to be gaining a new surge in popularity among historians. Although his work is not directly about James – and in fact starts its true narrative and argument in 1688 with the Glorious Revolution – Brendan McConville does address the American colonies as another realm which the king ruled, and a difficult, at times disjointed one at that.\textsuperscript{388} While McConville doesn’t delve too deeply into James’s life or rule, he makes an interesting argument – namely, that James’s overthrow in the Glorious Revolution was the spark that forced, “local colonial elites to accommodate an emerging imperial political culture, albeit one centered on a cult of Protestant monarchy.”\textsuperscript{389} This is a fascinating take, but it shows that despite some oversimplification of the relationship between Charles, James, and Parliament, histories of this time period in general have begun

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\textsuperscript{386} W.A. Speck, \textit{James II: Profiles in Power} (London: Pearson Education, 2002).

\textsuperscript{387} Speck, \textit{James II}, 3


\textsuperscript{389} McConville, \textit{The King’s Three Faces}, 15.
shifting to both include and provide analysis of James and, in this case, his impact on the burgeoning colonial and imperial identity.³⁹⁰

Tim Harris takes an innovative approach to the reigns of both Charles and James, arguing that to study the “Glorious Revolution” it’s essential to study the problems facing the Stuarts at Restoration. The Restoration was not just a return of the monarchy following a revolution, but it was a true test of the ability of the English king to unite England, but also Scotland and Ireland.³⁹¹ Harris covers the reigns of both Charles and James, and doesn’t place the blame for the events of 1688 solely on James, although he does imply that Charles was the better ruler of the two in many ways. Instead, Harris presents the Restoration as an almost impossible situation of ruling three distinct – legally, socially, culturally – countries as one ruler directly after a violent, partisan, and passionate revolution. While Charles was a generally strong monarch, and his court was a welcome one after years under Cromwell, James faced different challenges both before and during his reign, and handled them very differently, whether we want to judge his actions as “better” or “worse.”³⁹²

³⁹⁰ This argument is especially fascinating when James’s rule becomes the catalyst for imperial imagining, as most British historians place this “imagined community” and the culture that comes from it squarely in the eighteenth-century with the rise of nationalism. That James is even included in this conversation by McConville shows a growing interest in and understanding of the importance of his reign. Two excellent works that speak to the growing imperial culture of England, and that I will discuss more in subsequent chapters on George II, are: Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003) and Paul Monod, *Imperial Island: A History of Britain and Its Empire, 1660–1837* (Chichester: Wiley–Blackwell, 2009).

³⁹¹ Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms, 1660–1685* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). I would note here that, although I am not an historian of medieval England or Wales, and thus have merely “overview” knowledge of the relationship between the two countries’ relationship, it was not that long before James that the Tudors took the throne, and their “Welshness” was very important. Should Harris discuss Wales? Is it relevant to his argument? I don’t know these answers, but it is an interesting thought. How did the Welsh people/nobles/countryside react to the Restoration?

Harris’ argument is innovative, to be sure, but he also brings to light a fact that is often overlooked by historians writing about James: Charles could have easily changed the succession and refused to. I will discuss this more when analyzing portraits from the Exclusion Crisis period, but this is a point Harris and, to an extent, Kevin Sharpe make – that James was intended by Charles to be king, and Charles never publicly (or privately as far as we know) wavered from that view and intention.\footnote{Harris, \textit{Restoration}, 416.} Instead, James was visually and actually being “sold” to the nobility as the next king, despite the popularity of Charles’ illegitimate son the Duke of Monmouth, who had the added advantage of being a Protestant.

Harris is also writing about James from a political angle – namely, that of the concern over “arbitrary government.” This legal and political analysis has been particularly popular in recent years, especially when looking at the end of James’s reign and the “Glorious Revolution” – an event that still overshadows James’s reign.\footnote{Steve Pincus rightly argues that, “England’s Glorious Revolution of 1688–89 holds a special place in our understanding of the modern world and the revolutions that had a hand in shaping it,” and I agree, as certainly not enough work has been done that critically looks at the impact of the events of 1688 on later revolutions and conceptualizations of the nation. (Pincus, \textit{1688}, 3.)} I would argue, however, that the “revolution” of 1688 was one crafted by Parliament and, although it caused upheaval, did not fundamentally change the culture and society of England, but further supported the growing culture of legalism in the seventeenth-century. Mark Kishlansky joins the political history arena as well, noting that the great fear during Charles’s reign, which bled over into James’s time as Duke of York and king, was the “national bugbear” of arbitrary government.\footnote{Mark Kishlansky, \textit{A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603–1714} (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 254.} This is a concept worth exploring, as it helps us understand some of the motivations and fears of James’s contemporaries. Arbitrary government does not mean – and did not immediately or automatically mean to seventeenth–
century courtiers – absolutism. Rather, it meant that within a set of loosely–defined limits, the
king had absolute power over certain aspects of rule. Although opponents to the arbitrary powers
of Charles and James saw them as moving towards – or desiring to move towards – a French
style of absolutism, in reality, it appeared that both Charles and James had learned their limits
after the death of their father. The political nature of the later Stuart court and the legalism of
the late–seventeenth century is fascinating and has been discussed in a number of works. Charles, it seems, was primarily concerned with legality, controlling the succession, and
asserting his formidable, if limited, powers, and James took this rational approach as well, but
with less success – perhaps due to his religion, lack of Charles’s personal charm, or a stubborn
refusal to compromise that many have noted. For the purpose of this historiography and study, I
will be talking more about political matters (like the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis) later
in this work, particularly as they relate to the images created that appear to speak to political
strife, but it is sufficient to say here that the fears of absolutism were often soothed by the actions
of both Charles and James trying to work with Parliament and use logic to guide their decisions,
but, as many historians have pointed out, religious dissent continually stoked the fears of
arbitrary government turning into an absolutist state.

396 I very much like the definition of absolute monarchy that I shared in a previous chapter on the early modern
world by J. Russell Major, who argues that an “absolute monarchy” is, “one in which there were no theoretical
limitations on the king’s authority other than those imposed by divine, natural, and a few fundamental laws, and in
which the king controlled the vertical ties necessary to hold society together and had an obedient army and
bureaucracy of sufficient size to enable him to impose his will under ordinary circumstances.” Major, From
Renaissance Monarchy to Absolute Monarchy, xxi.

397 Kishlansky, A Monarchy Transformed, 255. Kishlansky even notes that, “In many ways, James II was the most
capable of all the Stuarts. Decisive and resolute, James had a clear vision of the monarchy and of the state.” (267)

398 Tim Harris, in particular, has a very nuanced and thorough analysis of the legal and political issues at play during
the period between the Restoration and the Glorious Revolution. See Tim Harris, Restoration: Charles II and His
Kingdoms, 1660–1685 (London: Penguin UK, 2006) and Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy,
While study of James has been plentiful in the past few decades, as Earle notes, James is still somewhat of an enigma. How does one “rescue” a king – particularly one who doesn’t inspire much feeling for most, only reigned three years, and is not a particularly striking figure in his own right – from a narrow historical view? One way historians have tried to deal with the problem of James has been with very focused studies on various aspects of his life. For example, James’s time as a military commander and his reforms of the military as king are fascinating insights into both the interests and abilities of the king. John Childs focuses on James’s changes to the army during his time as king, arguing that these changes were major contributors to the Glorious Revolution. Interestingly, Childs notes that the changes James made – moving towards a meritocracy and a growing professionalism in the army – inspired a small but mighty group of conspirators to form within the army itself as well. Childs does believe that James was using the army – and these factions of conspirators – to enforce “domestic absolutism,” and that many Protestant officers were offended by his religion and stance on allowing Catholics into the army’s upper ranks, but he doesn’t see religion as the primary factor and, unfortunately doesn’t delve deeply into James military past or future endeavors.

J.D. Davies also focuses on James’s military life and accomplishments but uses the Royal Navy and James’s experiences with it to analyze his reign (and that of Charles). For this study, his clearest contribution comes from his introduction, where he argues that studies on James are

399 I, of course, have some feelings about James as an historian of his reign, but most of the romanticism about his reign comes from later Stuart movements, like the rebellions of 1715 and 1745.


notoriously, and frustratingly, either one–note or so ponderous that they are impossible to sift through. He notes that while the navy was a major part of James’s life – something we will see in the next chapter when analyzing his portraits – historians have generally chosen to ignore that part of his life and character. Davies blames some of this on the complicated nature, but also on the historians writing about the later Stuarts, noting that both Charles and James have been dismissed as somewhat lazy, not terribly useful kings because of the joys of their courts and their Catholic faith. Even today, he notes, “the Protestant work ethic has a lot to answer for.”

This work is not a biography and, although the navy and army will both be discussed to some degree, they are not the focus here. However, Davies’ point stands – histories of James’s reign have tended to skew towards either a major, all–encompassing biography or very narrow, very specific topics in his reign. One of the topics, however, that has received very little attention as a major part of James’s life – as Duke of York, king, and king–in–exile – is his image and the attention he paid to portraiture. One of the central questions this work is attempting to answer is how these kings used images to fulfill their dual role as second–generation monarchs, and frankly, not nearly enough attention has been paid to James’s struggles and successes in this area. Very little scholarship exists on James’s art patronage or even his use of art during his reign, and, although he was one of Peter Lely’s primary patrons while Duke of York, and both his wives were art patrons and portrait subjects, most scholars of material culture focus only on one part of his life, his actual reign, which lasted less than four years. Although images are used extensively in works like Earle’s *James II* and Davies’ *Kings of the Sea*, they are not interacted with and analyzed as primary sources very directly and serve more as visual aids. Only two

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authors have dealt with James’s image as a primary focus of their work: Kevin Sharpe and Edward Corps.

Collecting, Patronage, and the Importance of Images

Sharpe is familiar to readers of this work already as an historian of images and art in early modern England, and his chapter on James in *Rebranding Rule: The Restoration and Revolution Monarchy 1660–1714* is, while noticeably shorter than his work on Charles, is still very useful here.\(^{404}\) He argues that James was, of course, concerned with his “image” but that James suffered from three primary problems when it comes to his image, particularly visuals like portraiture. First, as many have pointed out, James’s history was absolutely written by his enemies, and the effort to vilify James was coordinated and powerful.\(^{405}\) Second, there was no *Eikon Basilike* for James like there was for his father, Charles I, and thus he was not able to be so easily rescued from his own history.\(^{406}\) And, as Sharpe rightly points out, although there was no Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* for James like there was to vilify Mary Tudor, “James was systematically demonized as a popish absolutist bent on subordinating English liberties, property

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\(^{404}\) I would also note that Sharpe’s area of specialty was Charles II, not James, and his work on the culture of Charles’s court is exceptional; his brevity around James’s court was not a lack of interest, I’d imagine, but due to James’s reign not being the focus of his long years of study.

\(^{405}\) Kevin Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, 225. Sharpe also notes on page 234 that James’s memoirs were absolutely edited – both by himself and his later detractors – and thus they should be used with caution, which I attempt to do here.

\(^{406}\) Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, 225. As Sharpe notes, “at first sight we might be tempted to explain James’s reputation simply by reference to his failure to repeal William of Orange’s invasion in 1688 or to regain his throne by force. The case of Charles I, however, reminds us that the power of an image, and of words, can, as contemporaries did not doubt, vie with arms; that even a vanquished ruler can remain an effective political force.” The *Eikon Basilike: The Pourtrature of His Sacred Majestie in His Solitudes and Sufferings* is a spiritual (possibly) autobiography of Charles I, published 10 days after his execution in 1649 and combining simple prayers of forgiveness for his executioners, allegorical images of Charles as a representative of God on Earth, and a heavy doses of justification for the monarchy. It was so widely and successfully spread that a commemoration for Charles was added to the English Book of Common Prayer and resurrected the memory of the martyred king. James, despite an interest in and understanding of the importance of art and image, had no such touchstone piece. An excellent typed copy can be found at Project Canterbury, which is part of the Anglican History website. See: http://anglicanhistory.org/charles/eikon/.

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and Protestantism to Rome.”407 James’s life is kind of a muddled mess in some ways when it came to images, although I will argue that there are several themes that run through all of his portraits, and thus there was no single touch point for people to rally around.

Finally, truthfully, James’s reign was quite short. Although his tenure as heir apparent was long, and longer still as Duke of York, and the period of his exile was fruitful for family portraits, his actual time as king was just over three years. James is simply not as recognizable in images as Charles I or Charles II. But, he argues, “the explanation does not lie in James’s indifference to the arts or to visual modes of representation.”408 I agree, and maintain that James was not only interested in his image but also actively participating in its creation through strategic portraits and patronage. And, to build on Sharpe’s argument, I believe one of the reasons James’s concern with image was so different from that of his father or brother, but so similar to that of Henry VIII, was that he had a task neither Charles I or Charles II had – to both maintain and build his dynasty. That he, in many ways, failed at that task (similarly to how Henry’s efforts ultimately failed in a real, if not historical, way) does not, Sharpe and I both maintain, mean he was not concerned with image.

One other author, Edward Corp, has worked extensively on James’s image, particularly his portraits.409 Corp’s work is mainly concerned with James’s cultural history and image–building while in exile – a time in James’s life often overlooked by historians – but also makes

407 Sharpe, Rebranding Rule, 225.

408 Sharpe, Rebranding Rule, 265.

409 This is not, of course, to say that no other scholars have worked on this period of history and its images. Although I discussed the importance of portraits in the second chapter, overviewing the early modern world, for more works on art in the seventeenth–century, see: Matthew Craske, Art in Europe, 1700–1830: A History of the Visual Arts in an Era of Unprecedented Urban Economic Growth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), Madlyn Millner Kahr, Dutch Painting in the Seventeenth Century (New York: Routledge, 2018), Christopher Allen, French Painting in the Golden Age (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003).
that point that just because we don’t see as many portraits of James as we do of Charles, that
doesn’t mean he was not actively crafting his image, whether through the actual commissioning
of portraits or patronage, or both. In fact, Corp notes that it is, “extraordinary that the last years
of any British king, and particularly one whose life is so well–documented, should have received
such little attention from generations of British historians.” The exile period is fascinating
from an historical curiosity point of view, but with the revival of Jacobite studies and
scholarship, it’s become a more popular era to study. Although the court at Saint–Germain–en–Laye has been dismissed as, “a phantom court” by some historians, new scholarship and
attention has shown that it was actually a vibrant center of culture.

Edward Corp comes closest to looking at James’s images in all three “phases” of his life
and provides not only excellent scholarship about art patronage at James’s court in exile but also
shows the difficulty in obtaining sources from this time period, and especially about art and art
patronage. Corp notes that, particularly in exile, many artists – both painters and musicians – can
only be connected with the Stuart court at Saint–Germain through bits and pieces of information.

For example, writing about the French composer and organist Francois Couperin, Corp states


411 Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp, “Introduction” in The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites, ed. by
Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp (London: The Hambledon Press, 1995), xii. Corp also notes in A Court in
Exile: The Stuarts in France, 1689–1718 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) that there is a significant
problem with Jacobite records from James’s court in exile, at least in France. While the archives of Charles II’s
court in exile before 1660 were brought back to England upon his return, where they have stayed, and the archives
of James III’s court in Italy were returned to the Royal Library at Windsor in the early nineteenth century, the
records from the French court of James II, and James III until the move to the Papal States, were destroyed during
the French Revolution. Although there are some portraits, some documents, that exist still, the wealth of evidence
from Charles’s court is certainly not available for James’s court in exile. (Corp, A Court in Exile, 1–2.) Corp also
notes that, “historians and biographers have naturally taken an interest in an exile which ended successfully, whereas
the two others ended in defeat in failure.” (Corp, King Over the Water, 1.) The popular and romantic figure of
“Bonnie Prince Charlie,” or James II’s grandson Charles, has also drawn a significant amount of attention, while the,
“court of the elderly James II and of the young and still unmarried James III has seemed both much less significant
and much less interesting.” (Corp, King Over the Water, 1.)

that, “His activities at Saint–Germain–en–Laye must have been paid for out of the king’s Privy Purse, and thus have left no trace: he was never formally made a member of the Stuart household.”413 But he certainly wrote music for the Stuarts – including a motet for the Prince of Wales’s confirmation at the Chapelle Royale – and became an established figure at the court in exile. Corp also notes that a connection can be made and shows the formidable patronage power of Mary of Modena even in exile in 1692, as we know she even recommended Couperin to King Louis XIV.414 Corp also notes in a study on the Duke of Melfort (later to become James’s Secretary of State in exile and an avid collector and patron) that Melfort’s painting collection, which was quite large, was sold in 1693, but that the most specific record for this sale came from John Evelyn, who, “attended the same and noted down some of the pictures he saw. He mentions ‘some very excellent’ ones done by Van Dyck, Rubens and Bassano, though without any indication of what the pictures actually were.”415 Unfortunately, this type of commentary is not unusual for this time – cataloging of items existed, but descriptions were often vague, and those writing letters or memoirs about such events seem to be, looking back, almost obtuse on purpose.

These kind of roundabout suppositions and educated guesses are often necessary when discussing patronage for all three of the kings and their families in this work, but perhaps more so for James because of the convoluted nature of his life and the lack of records – despite the


414 Corp, “Francois Couperin,” 448. Corp notes that, “when the English court was at Fontainebleau, Louis XIV asked Mary of Modena which psalm she would like set to music…Couperin responded by setting [Psalm 13] to be performed by Abel at Saint–Germain. This brought the young composer to the attention of Mary of Modena, and it is possible that she helped recommend him to Louis XIV when the King of France was deciding on a new organist shortly afterwards. (Corp, “Francois Couperin,” 448)

415 Edward Corp, “Melfort: a Jacobite Connoisseur.” in History Today 45, Issue 10 (October 10, 1995), 44. Corp goes on to note that included in the sale was at least one painting by Kneller, a portrait of Melfort as a Knight of the Thistle. Melfort was, “one of the eight original Knights of the Order, revived by James II in 1687, and the only one, apparently, who commissioned a commemorative portrait.” (Corp, “Melfort,” 44.)
legalistic nature of his court – about art and image patronage and concern. No one was writing down that James commissioned a painting or recommended an artist; rather, one can follow the breadcrumbs set along the path to see what might have happened and what probably happened based on a close study of the king, his family, and the time.

The scholarship of James is broad, yet somehow paradoxically narrow at the same time. He is remembered as a failed king, his wives are often overlooked, and his image is not easily recognized by many. Some historians have tried to rehabilitate James’s character through a selective reading of his own writings, his political maneuvers, or through his naval career; some have tried to further villainize the last Stuart king, painting him as an incompetent failure, more concerned with his mistresses and poor marriage choices than his actual history as Duke of York, king, and courtier to Louis XIV. However, as this historiography has shown, historians have been, and still are, attempting to come to terms with, explain, and use James’s life and image as a lens through which to view the tumultuous late-seventeenth century. James felt the pressure for both dynastic stability and reinvention that Henry felt and responded to, but his story shows the drastic changes in Parliament and the powers – and, more importantly, the ideas about the powers – of the king. If Henry had influence bordering on absolutism, James was an example of how conceptions of the royal family and their place were changing, a process that I argue becomes complete with George II in the next chapter. He’s a step, an important step, in a clearer understanding of the unique challenges faced by second-generation monarchs in early modern England.

**Conclusion**

Next, I will work – generally chronologically – through James’s life and the portraits and images produced during it. The next chapter will examine all three phases of James’s adult life,
and the art produced during each of James and his family, to further understand how James used representation and why he used it. Also, although James is most often seen as a “failed king,” it is my contention that, while he did lose the throne and his legitimate claim to it (whether through his own fault or an illegal act of Parliament), artistically, James set the stage for the Jacobite cause that was to survive for another fifty years after his abdication – a cause that did win the hearts and minds of many, even when James’s own image was unable to muster such support or, indeed, love, during his own life, reign, and exile.

An important note about methodology belongs here, I believe. As with Henry in the previous chapters, and with George in the upcoming ones, very rarely can historians, with any real certainty, say that a political event caused a portrait to be commissioned. Not only is that a simplistic view, as patronage politics, art collecting, even sitting for portraits and finding an artist required more complex decisions and actions, but also, the proof is simply not always there. We can look at records for commissions, if they exist, but they were often vague, listing perhaps a name and price, but rarely all the information to definitively say that this payment was made by this person to this artist to paint this portrait. Portraits also, unlike photographs, take time. As discussed in the introduction, portraits and paintings don’t capture a moment in time so much as a representation of a time and, unlike photographs, can be created to tell a story that doesn’t totally match the reality of the subject, time, or place.

As J.D. Stewart notes, in an article referenced earlier in this work, “records of payments can often be helpful in assessing a painter’s position vis-à-vis others, his rising fortunes, as well as the attribution and date of a particular picture. However, they must be used with great care…often the records are vague,” and changing values of currency, frame prices, painting
sizes, payment arrangements, and many other factors must be taken into account. For these reasons, I am not arguing that any of these paintings are direct reactions to events, or that their commissioning and creation were directly caused by political events. Like the Whitehall portrait and other images from Henry’s court, James’s images were reactionary, and almost certainly had an agenda, but to ascribe causation, when only relation exists, would be overstepping the bounds of the evidence and trying to read the minds of those involved in the political events and the portraits. However, as previously discussed, images and portraits did not appear in a vacuum, and political events and crises absolutely influenced the types of portraits produced, the ways in which the subjects were portrayed, even their placement at court. With an understanding of the time, the art, and the people involved, assumptions and analysis can still take place, even in the absence of dream sources like complete records and specific requests.

Chapter Five:
James, His Family, and Their Images

Introduction

It is clear from the previous chapter that James’s story is certainly worth examining, and his use of images was complicated, as was his life. It should also be evident that historians have tended to disparage James and ignore his images. While my goal here is not to rescue James, it is important to note that in this chapter, I will examine his image from his youth, time as Duke of York, King, and exile in France, a process that shows that he was incredibly interested in his image and that of his family, but more importantly, that James saw the political necessity and expediency of creating a recognizable image that continued his brother’s (and father’s) legacy while also declaring his own legitimacy and that of his heirs. Whether he succeeded or not, James used images as a second–generation monarch to respond to challenges – and take advantage of alliances and opportunities – that he faced to his rule.

The images I will be analyzing in this chapter are limited, generally, in scope to portraits, but much like in the chapter on Henry VIII and his wives, I will also discuss ways beyond direct representation that James and his family used to bolster their legitimacy – namely collecting, patronage, ceremony, and design. Throughout, I will be seeking to prove my original arguments: that these kings and their families used images in a way unique to the early modern period – a time in which the search for legitimate authority was a primary concern – and that they can serve as important case studies, as second-generation monarchs, for the continuity and change, as well as the search for legitimacy, taking place during the period. Comparing monarchical self-representation in the early modern period allows for a new way to see and frame their reigns and the time period as a whole.
Portraits as Duke of York

James appears in several paintings as a child, with his brother and parents, but his representation as an adult is more important for this story, as it is unlikely that he had much control over his image in his youth, particularly while in exile as a young man. As an adult, James was very concerned with his image, and that concern is apparent in the number, and types, of portraits he and his family appear in. While the mysterious double portrait, which I will discuss in detail shortly, is the only portrait of James with his brother as adults – and a rare grouping for early modern portraits in general – James and his wives Anne Hyde (1637–1671) and Mary of Modena (1658–1718) appear in numerous images during his time as a naval commander, as Duke of York, and ultimately, as king. These images do correspond, roughly, to events and challenges that James had to respond to – and while it may be overreaching to say that the individual portraits are direct reactions to events that challenged James, it is absolutely clear through these images that James and his family were cognizant of how their images could be used to support, contradict, or completely alter other representations and views of the royal family. James – and particularly Mary of Modena – were concerned with their images, the

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417 This is not to totally discount some of the very telling and interesting portraits from James’s childhood – they are simply not the subjects of this dissertation, which aims to examine portraits of the royal family under Henry, James, and George rather than portraits of them when they were too young to give any input to their image. A study of the changing representation of children in portraits of the royal family between Henry and George would be fascinating at a later date. One portrait that is very interesting is a Peter Lely painting of Charles I with James, from 1647. Here, James is shown on the viewer’s left, while his father is on the right. Both are standing at three-quarter facing the viewer, but, oddly for this type of portrait, are looking at each other. Charles holds a piece of paper and a pole, perhaps a walking stick, with his left hand, gesturing to James with his right. James holds a pen out to his father with his right hand, while his left rests on his hip above his seemingly ever–present sword. James was, like Charles I (but unlike Charles II) a prolific writer, and the pen could be an allusion to this, as James was fourteen at the time of the painting, and thus well into his education. The sword could also be a nod to James’s future military service, his predetermined fate as the second son and future Duke of York. There are no allusions to James becoming king here – it is a political statement of succession and legitimacy, but not a propaganda piece supporting James’s rule. James may have had some influence on his portrayal, and certainly developed a close relationship with Peter Lely throughout his life, but this painting, like Henry VIII’s earliest images, does not show James’s own influence clearly. Sir Peter Lely, “Charles I and the Duke of York,” Private Collection. 122cm by 144cm, oil on canvas, 1647.
images of the Stuart dynasty, and part of a larger trend in early modern rulers using images to establish, maintain, and grow their power and legitimacy.

James, like Henry, suffered from controversy surrounding his marriages. James announced his engagement to Anne Hyde – daughter of Edward Hyde, a commoner and minister to Charles – in 1659 upon his return to England, shocking and frustrating many.\(^{418}\) That he had seduced her with promises of marriage made the whole affair even more distasteful. Although they were pressured not to marry, James and Anne wed in secret in 1660 in London, with a formal, public ceremony later in the year. Despite being initially unpopular, the marriage was by all accounts a happy one and Anne was generally well-liked at court.\(^{419}\) While Anne was never queen consort, her image still carries importance for this study. Anne and James, as Duke and Duchess of York, were undeniably art patrons, patronizing Sir Peter Lely in particular and commissioning both individual and double portraits of themselves, their children, and others. Olivar Miller notes that Anne was important to James, and influenced many of his decisions, but there is very little documentary evidence of this, likely because she left so little writing of her own.

\(^{418}\) Although Anne Hyde was not royal, her family was wealthy and noble. The primary problem was that James, as the younger son, would have been a very valuable commodity on the marriage market, especially as Charles returned to the throne. It’s easy to imagine the frustration everyone felt at the situation.

\(^{419}\) Accounts of their meeting and opinions on the marriage differ greatly. They may have met at The Hague, and certainly both spent time in France and the Netherlands, and Anne was pregnant when they were married in 1660. Some accounts say that Charles disapproved (although the “merry monarch” was not shocked by the mistresses and James’s licentiousness, surely, but his promise to marry a pregnant commoner was unhelpful to the cause of restoration), while others say that Charles wanted a strong wife for his “weak-willed” brother and thus endorsed Anne heartily. See Barbara Softly, *The Queens of England* (Michigan: Bell Publishing Company, 1979).
Anne’s portraits show a fashionable, pretty woman wearing the couture of the day. She was often painted in double portraits with James and was sometimes seen holding a helmet or other object symbolic of James’s military service, for which he was incredibly lauded and popular. Anne was an unpopular, Catholic, choice of bride, but, as Duchess of York, was relatively well–liked and a patroness of the arts, particularly of Sir Peter Lely, who was much in demand at the Court and with the royal family. In 1661, Lely painted Anne in a yellow gown with a matching background curtain, a fountain, and cherub in a pose almost certainly meant to be a companion for a painting of James.\textsuperscript{420} In a 1662 portrait of Anne, Lely paints her in russet colors, wearing pearls and gesturing in a manner reflected by James in many of his portraits.\textsuperscript{421} Lely painted Anne frequently, and this familiarity is clear even in this early portrait. Anne plays flirtatiously, but clandestinely, with her hair, while almost inviting the viewer in – a sign both of informality and an allusion of intimacy. This intimacy was false, of course, but as queen consort, her primary purpose – to produce royal children – was tied directly to intimacy.


Matching, or at least complimentary, portraits of James were also painted around 1660–1662. The timing of these portraits is important – Charles had just been restored to the throne, James was the dashing young Duke of York, and showing that the royal family was back – and beautiful, and happy – was important. In 1661, Lely painted James with a commander’s baton in his right hand, gesturing with his left hand. If the two portraits – James and Anne from 1661 – are put together, James is gesturing at Anne, with the same yellow curtain behind them both. The gesture, just like the cupid in Anne’s portrait, is a specific nod to their relationship, their marriage, and their love. Similar gestures appear in double portraits from the time, such as another Lely portrait of Anne’s brother, Lord Cornbury, and his new wife, Theodosia Capel.

This is significantly different from Henry’s family portraits, or images produced of his wives and of himself. Art and fashion had certainly changed, but so had portrait compositions. By the time of the Restoration, it had become customary to have portraits painted of a newly married noble couple, and Charles’ Restoration court was famous for its portraits. But for James and Anne, portraits would have been essential during this time. Not only were they members of the royal family, but their marriage was also, at least initially, unpopular. James could have formed an alliance with a royal house on the continent but chose a commoner (albeit


423 Sir Peter Lely, “Double Portrait of Lord John Hyde, Viscount Cornbury, Late 2nd Earl of Clarendon (1638–1709) and his wife, Theodosia Capel (1640–1662). This portrait is also interesting because of its subjects. Theodosia died in 1662, only a little over a year after their wedding, of smallpox. Their only son Edward, however, grew up to be the 3rd Earl of Clarendon, who famously defected from his uncle James’s cause and joined forces with William of Orange in the Glorious Revolution. This painting was sold by Sotheby’s, but can be viewed there as well. See: https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2018/old-masters-evening–I18033/lot.18.html.

from the noble class) with no useful diplomatic ties, and only chose her after a scandalous affair. James and Anne had to show that they were attractive, young, interesting members of court and of the Stuart dynasty. They weren’t, likely, even considering that they could become king and queen – Charles had a young, healthy wife, and was the picture of vibrancy directly after the Restoration – but as part of the newly-establishe d court, they had to be concerned with image. The patronage of Lely, the official court painter and one of the most popular painters in England, shows their sense of style, their access to portraiture, but also, given the timing of the portraits, their concern with image.

In addition to their individual portraits from 1661 and 1662, Anne and James also appear in a very interesting double portrait. Another example of Lely’s skill, this portrait shows James and Anne together in similar poses to their individual portraits, and was likely painted around the same time, from the same sittings.\(^{425}\) James is still holding the baton, while Anne holds a helmet, both symbols of James’s military role in the navy and his status as Duke of York. They are just barely touching at the knee, and James appears to be looking towards Anne, while Anne stares at the viewer. This painting is not exceptional in any way on its own – it again speaks to the importance of presenting a “look” for the royal family, and for the Duke and Duchess of York in particular, but it is very similar to their individual portraits. However, as I will discuss shortly, this painting becomes the basis for one of the most intriguing images of James and his family.

During the 1660s, Anne continued to patronize Lely’s studio. Samuel Pepys commented on several portraits of the king and queen in June 1662, noting that they were generous patrons of the painter.\(^ {426}\) A 1670 portrait of Anne, also by Lely, shows a similar style to earlier portraits, if a much–changed woman. Anne is much heavier in this portrait, a feigned oval now at the National Portrait Gallery.\(^ {427}\)


\(^{426}\) Samuel Pepys, “The Diary of Samuel Pepys,” June 18, 1662.

She rests her left arm on a cloth-covered pedestal, with a tendril of her dark, curly hair snaking over her wrist. Her dress of blue silk, with pearl and gemstone buttons, is cut low in the style of the time, and she wears a pearl necklace and earrings. Anne had, by this point, born seven children, only three of which were still living in 1670, and would have her final child, Catherine, in 1671. She was ill, likely with breast cancer, and had been for months, and would die less than a year after this painting. James’s philandering – and the eventual children resulting from his affairs – could not have made her life any easier. It is still informal, and personal, but Anne’s image is not that of the young, beautiful Duchess of York. Rather, although there is no overt political statement in this portrait, it presents a more majestic, if aged, Anne – perhaps a final gift from Lely to his patroness of the last decade.

Anne died in 1671, and her last surviving son, Edgar, died shortly after. Anne had converted to Catholicism, refusing an Anglican service at her death, and James had – secretly, and very much against the hypocritical advice of his brother – also converted. However, Anne and James’s daughters, Mary and Anne, were raised, and continued to be Anglican, or at least Protestant. In 1671, there was likely still some hope, although it was fading, that Charles would father a legitimate child with Catherine of Braganza (who miscarried several times in the 1660s and early 1670s), but James was becoming more and more secure in his position as heir apparent. James would marry again in 1673, but life in the 1670s would be difficult for James and his new wife, Mary of Modena, despite – or perhaps because of – their shifting roles in the royal family.

Marriage to Mary of Modena

James had this time looked abroad, to Italy, for a wife. Maria Beatrice d’Este of Modena, or Mary, was the daughter of the Duke of Modena, a small Duchy in northern Italy, and was fifteen when she married James. Louis XIV of France had, “filled the role of matchmaker” for
James and Mary, as he surely must have seen that Charles was unlikely to have legitimate heirs with Catherine of Braganza, and was eager to ally with James to, “perpetuate a line of Catholic monarchs in the three Stuart kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland.”\(^{428}\) Attractive and intelligent by all accounts, Mary was a useful consort for James – not terribly political in any overt sense, beautiful, and young, she was from a rich and powerful family, but one whose ambitions did not conflict with those of Britain. She was Catholic, but James had two Protestant children, and the threat mostly likely did not seem immediate.

Although it seems she had little interest in politics, Mary would have a major role to play as queen, and, like Catherine of Braganza before her, “the ground she chose was not politics, where her influence would be minimal, but cultural patronage, where her position was likely to be much stronger.”\(^{429}\) This fact is very important here. Mary used her power as Duchess of York and later as Queen (and, even later, as a queen in exile) to be a patroness of the arts, and that

\(^{428}\) Condren, “The dynastic triangle,” 701. The relationships in Europe were, of course, more complicated. Condren’s article does an excellent job of laying out all the ways Louis XIV benefitted from this union and his role in it. One has to wonder if later, when James and Mary turned to Louis for refuge in their exile from England, Louis would remind them of his role in their marriage. Mary was from a minor family, but happened to be the powerful Mazarin’s niece, and as Condren points out, Louis had no suitable female relatives to offer up to James, so the fourteen–year–old Mary had to suffice.

patronage had political consequences and can be seen throughout the rest of James’s life.\textsuperscript{430} Mary was not universally hated, as the Whig historiography of days past would have us believe, but, throughout her time as Duchess, Queen Consort, and exile, she was a figure who inspired loyalty, rumors, devotion, gossip, and derision at court.\textsuperscript{431}

\textit{The 1670s in Art and Life – and a Mystery of a Painting}

One of the clearest connections between images of James II and the political upheaval he faced can be seen in the mid- to late-1670s. Anti-Catholic sentiment was rife in England – and to an extent, all of Britain – and during Charles’s reign, this was in part due to increasing acceptance of Catholicism by the crown. In 1672, Charles issued the Royal Declaration of Indulgence, which removed legal persecution of Catholics and other dissenters. This move was so unpopular that in 1673, Charles was forced to repeal it and implement the Test Act, which required an oath to the Anglican Church and the King from anyone who held public office in

\textsuperscript{430} Mary’s influence has been noted, particularly by Andrew Barclay in “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Second Bless’d of Woman–kind’?” in Queenship in Britain, 1660–1837: Royal Patronage, Court Culture, and Dynastic Politics (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2002): 74–93. It is also evident when looking at Mary’s letters that she was both extremely well-connected with other royal families, ruling families, religious leaders, and influential figures. For example, early in James’s reign, in 1686, she writes to the Cardinal of Norfolk that the King has made the promotion of her uncle, Prince Rinaldo d’Este, “a principal part of his Ambassador, Lord Castlemaine’s, instructions.” Mary of Modena, “Queen Mary to the Cardinal of Norfolk, Letter on February 20, 1686,” in The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Calendar of the Stuart papers belonging to His Majesty the king, preserved at Windsor castle, Volume I, ed. F. Henry Blackburne Daniell (London: Printed for H. M. Stationary Office by Mackie & Co. Ltd, 1902), 14. She also wrote the Pope in April 1686, the Duke and Duchess of Orleans in June 1686, and many more, some of whom I will reference here. While her actual power may have been limited, it is clear that Mary had both James’s ear and a certain amount of influence through her social connections. Her letters also show that she was, at the very least, using images of her own accord – in May 1686 she writes to the Early of Castlemaine promising, “to send him her picture by the first opportunity.” (“Queen Mary to the Earl of Castlemaine, May 1686, Calendar of Stuart Papers, 16.)

\textsuperscript{431} Carola Oman notes that Mary “was hailed by Bodley’s Librarian in 1889 as ‘the best of the Stuart Queens.’ The procession is not an inspiring one. Anne of Denmark and Catherine of Braganza were unimportant. Henrietta Maria was disastrously influential, but commands a measure of affection as the mother of Charles II and an elegant Frenchwoman. Mary II had some parts, but no luck time has dealt gently with her. Queen Anne is far the most familiar figure. She suffered from the characteristic melancholy of the unintellectual outsize woman; she has descended to history, rather unfairly, both as a slightly comic character and as the sovereign who has given her name to an age very rich in successful military operations and artistic production.” Carola Oman, Mary of Modena (Suffolk: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962), xi.
England and its realms. James was personally impacted by the Test Act, declaring himself a Catholic and resigning almost all public offices later in 1673. In 1678, allegations of a plan to murder Charles II – the completely fictional “Popish Plot” – created even more anti-Catholic sentiment. James was able to hold on to his seat in the House of Lords, and stay in the line of succession, but the growing anti–Catholic movement and fears surrounding the possibility of a Catholic king was impacting James in myriad ways, to the extent that James was asked to leave England and go to Brussels, and then Scotland, as a way of keeping him in the line of succession but also out of the thick of rumor and speculation. 432

Charles II was also very concerned with images, and an active patron of the arts. James was certainly influenced by Charles’s “merry court,” both when in attendance at court and in his role as Duke of York. He saw the value in images to represent victories and the glory of his house as well. At the 1672 Battle of Sole Bay, James ordered his officers to write reports of the day, but he also sailed alongside the first official war painter, who had been hired by Charles. 433 Willem van de Velde the Elder was commissioned by Charles at a rate of £100 (a little over $27,000 in today’s currency) to make, “draughts…of sea fights” and the same amount to his son, Willem van de Velde the Younger, to, “put the said draughts into colours.” 434 Both van de Veldes were given studio space at the Queen’s House, Greenwich and continued to paint primarily battle scenes for Charles, and later James, and then finally William, and Mary, until


434 Jones, “In the Thick of It,” 55.
1693. James was not only aware of the importance of describing and documenting victories in battle, but also the importance of visual representation. The 1670s were complicated for James, but we can see glimpses of the ways in which he was exposed to – and likely used – art as a tool for representing the royal family.

James and Charles were also the subjects of a strange painting that begs several questions. The tumultuous period between 1678 and 1681, with the upheaval of the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis, produced a painting that is very different, and very telling – a double portrait of Charles and James that seems to support the fact of James’s succession, but with a dose of mystery surrounding its origin. As with the portrait of James with his daughters and Anne Hyde above, although there is little proof of how these images were commissioned, it is reasonable to assume, given all we know about the time period, that portraits were sought after as both status symbols and, like the images in the *Eikon Basilike*, to sway the hearts and minds of the viewer. For James, this was crucial in the immediate moment – a moment that saw his crown slipping away – but also as a policy in his role as a second–generation monarch.
Double Portrait with Charles II

This role as unquestioned heir is very clear in a painting by an unknown artist, currently held in the Government Art Collection of the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{435} This painting shows Charles with his brother, standing next to each other, with Charles holding James’s hand in his own. Charles, on the viewer’s left, wears robes similar to his coronation robes – red, trimmed with fur, wearing the Order of the Garter necklace and high–heeled shoes. James, on the right, with blond hair and slightly shorter than Charles, also wears Order of the Garter insignia, similar shoes and tights, with a blue robe, white tunic, and red sash. James, unlike Charles, also wears a sword, most likely a nod to his military career as Duke of York. The painting has a limited provenance history, making its origin and ownership somewhat mysterious, but some assumptions can be made.\textsuperscript{436}

The double portrait is, almost certainly, not from the time of the Restoration itself. Charles looks somewhat older than thirty–three, and although James was absolutely a part of the Restoration court, a double portrait of the brothers that implies James is on equal standing with Charles would likely not have been either appropriate or useful. If we eliminate the Restoration – say, 1660 – 1670, the decade when Charles took the throne and when he and Catherine of Braganza were still hopeful for a legitimate heir, the painting was almost certainly painted between 1670 and 1685. That narrows the scope, as well as the purpose quite a bit, particularly

\textsuperscript{435} Unknown, “King Charles II and King James II.” 238 cm by 174 cm, oil on canvas, 17\textsuperscript{th} century, British School. Currently held by the Government Art Collection, at the Steyning Foreign Office, Wilton Park. GAC number 12789, https://artcollection.culture.gov.uk/artwork/12789/.

\textsuperscript{436} The Government Art Collection notes that, “According to inscriptions on the back of the work, it was formerly at Barrington Hall in Essex” as part of Gosling’s collection. A “photograph of the painting in the Heinz Gallery, at the National Portrait Gallery, London, apparently shows the work displayed within an elaborate plaster frame set into the wall at Barrington Hall.” Barrington Hall was begun in 1734 for John Shales Barrington but was not permanently occupied until the mid–nineteenth century. Unknown, “King Charles II and King James II.” 238 cm by 174 cm, oil on canvas, 17\textsuperscript{th} century, British School. Currently held by the Government Art Collection, at the Steyning Foreign Office, Wilton Park. GAC number 12789, https://artcollection.culture.gov.uk/artwork/12789/.
because James was facing the two most serious threats to his role as heir, his military career, and his life at court – the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis.

The Popish Plot of 1678 was an entirely fictitious, but widely believed, conspiracy that a group of Catholic extremists planned to assassinate Charles II and replace him on the throne with James, who would forcibly return England, Scotland, and Ireland to the Catholic fold. A larger study of anti–Catholic sentiment in English politics is not useful here, but it is sufficient to say that, starting with Henry VIII’s break from Rome to form the Church of England, through the fears of Charles I’s Catholic wife’s influence and High–Church leanings, to the Thirty Years War in Europe, there were some Catholics left in England and English politics, but the general feeling and certainly public policy were decidedly anti–Catholic. The idea that Rome would hold power over England and its territories again was likely a frightening prospect to many. Charles convened Parliament in 1678 only to hear how serious the Popish Plot’s reach had become, and that Parliament was convinced it should be investigated. The Plot led directly to the Exclusion Crisis of 1679 – 1681, in which several bills were introduced to prevent James from taking the throne after Charles and which, indirectly, led to the Act of Settlement in 1701.437

Although the Exclusion Crisis and the bills introduced to keep Catholics from holding office did not prevent James from becoming king, they did cause him both personal and political troubles. Charles was pressured, time and again, to declare James as ineligible for the throne but, as mentioned previously, he refused to set James aside for his illegitimate son, the Duke of

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437 The Exclusion Crisis has its own extensive historiography as well. It’s a complicated legal situation in a complicated time, but for an excellent overview of the crisis, see J.R. Jones, The First Whigs: The Politics of the Exclusion Crisis, 1678–1683 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961). While this book is somewhat dated, it gives a very clear outline of all the moving parts the Exclusion Crisis entailed.
Monmouth. Pressure was also felt in Parliament, where the opinions were split into two camps, which began to form two distinct political parties – the Tories, who were opposed to exclusion, and the Whigs, who supported James’s exclusion from the succession and, by extension, the exclusion of Catholics. With this history in mind, I believe that there is a good chance the double portrait was commissioned and painted during this crisis, when threats of murderous plots and government coups were in the minds of the royal family, nobility, and members of Parliament. Who commissioned it is of course not clear, but if it was from this time, it almost certainly had to be commissioned by a Tory or even James or Charles themselves, and – if we make these educated guesses – it could be a reaction to James’s potential exclusion and the hysteria surrounding the Popish Plot.

A reading of the painting as a source itself does nothing to dispel this idea and, if anything, makes it more likely that it was commissioned and painted during or directly after the Exclusion Crisis or the mania of the Popish Plot. First, to continue with my established methodology and to take stock of the portrait itself, the unusual positions of the two kings should be examined. Both are standing in typical seventeenth-century poses – this was a pose used by monarchs across Europe, facing the viewer in a three-quarters pose with one foot forward. The pose in and of itself is not unusual. However, Charles and James are standing in different enough positions to draw attention to their feet, which are not aligned as though they were simply standing next to each other. Charles appears to be almost backing up, perhaps putting his hand on James’s back to push him forward, as opposed to the typical movement in this type of painting.

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438 The rule of law – with the king as the ultimate source of that law – had been violated before, and it had cost Charles his father and crown, and had resulted in years of struggle in exile. Charles would not see the succession altered again, despite his documented fondness for his son, because a deviation like that could be seen not only as arbitrary government or even absolutism but would also show that the succession was a matter of opinion, not a matter of fact.
where the subject is stepping forward into the light and closer to the viewer. James, on the other hand, is picking up the edge of his robe, as though about to take a step forward and away from Charles. Maybe Charles is encouraging James to move forward into his role as heir? Is Charles stepping into the background, allowing his heir to come into the light?

The ages of the two kings are also important to discuss. It appears that both kings are in their forties or fifties and, as Charles was 54 when he died in 1685, this would make sense if it was painted during the Exclusion Crisis. Another possibility – although one I see as less likely given later portraits commissioned by and commented upon by James, that I will discuss shortly – is that Charles was already dead and James was King when this painting was commissioned, making it an allegorical image of Charles stepping out of the way for James. But, as far as we know, that was not really indicative of their relationship. It’s possible, but James, like Charles, believed in the rule of law and the inviolable laws of succession, and this painting doesn’t read as tribute so much as permission, as blessing. We may never know the full story of this painting, but it seems that this image, rare in its composition and subject, at the very least sheds a light on how James’s ascension was seen by someone, whether it was Charles, James, or a supporter of the Stuart dynasty.439

*Family Portraits and the Exclusion Crisis*

Mary became the subject of portraits by several artists, a nod to her patronage of the arts. A somewhat unusual portrait from 1675, in which Mary wears an embroidered riding habit, was

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439 A third option does exist. Could this be a painting done after James’s exile? The Government Art Collection lists the painting as seventeenth–century, and of the British school, but it is possible that it was painted while James was in France, perhaps commissioned by James or a supporter. If this was the case, it would still show the influence James’s cause had on Jacobite propaganda and his concern with his image even in exile. I believe, however, based on the style and its location, that the painting was done in the 1680s, near the time of Charles’ death.
painted by Dutch painter Simon Verelst. It is likely, according to the National Portrait Gallery, that this was intended to match a similar riding portrait of James, but that portrait is not in any public archives or collections. Mary holds a riding crop with a nature scene behind her. Although this is a different style from the Lely portraits, or even later portraits as queen and in exile in France, it is clearly Mary of Modena, and it is a portrait that does not invite intimacy or present her as wife and mother in the same way her later portraits do. Instead, it’s a classic British riding portrait – perhaps a stylized reaction to convince people that she was not as foreign as they thought? To show her as British and part of the legitimate succession? To downplay her Catholicism? In 1678, right before leaving England for their brief stint in Scotland, a portrait of Mary was started by Lely. This portrait shows Mary – who had had a difficult five years of marriage already, with at least four or five pregnancies, but only one surviving child, Isabel – seated in a typical Lely pose, wearing a yellow gown and red robe. Mary looks at the viewer directly, while her body is turned to the right. Her right hand rests on the head of a lamb, perhaps a symbol of both suffering and loyalty, a fitting image for Mary’s life in England so far. It could also, from a Christian view, be symbolic of the lamb of God, and a reference to her children who were now in Heaven, or to her role as a good Christian – despite being a Catholic. An image of Mary in 1678, with a reference to purity, innocence, and God is not just fashionable, but an attempt to make her more appealing to those unhappy with the royal family. Although it would

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be overstepping somewhat to say that the paintings created during this time were commissioned and created as a direct response to the various crises facing James and Mary, it is appropriate to say that we can read meaning into the unique symbolism of a particular family portrait that, like the Whitehall Mural for Henry, was trying to create a view of James’s family that placed him – and Mary – as far away from the plotting poisoner of the Popish Plot as possible.
Although it seems anachronistic, the painting, “James II, when Duke of York, with Anne Hyde and his daughters, Princess Mary and Princess Anne,” was actually produced in the late–1670s or 1680, and appears to be based on the earlier double portrait of James and Anne, without their children, from the early 1660s by Lely. The new painting was finished around 1680 by Benedetto Gennari, a student of Lely’s, and is, like the Whitehall Mural, an exercise in pure imagination. Anne – who had been deceased for years by this point – and James look almost exactly the same in both paintings, as though neither has aged (or died). The only real differences are the background, the addition of a dog and the princesses, and the color of Anne’s dress, which has been changed from blue to a pinkish color. At the time of its completion, the princesses, who look to be children here, were around eighteen and fifteen.442 Here we have another portrait, painted at a time of particular concern about succession, religion, and legitimacy, with a dead wife and some very creative license with aging.

The painting shows the family seated in front of a landscape portrait of a castle with a red curtain being pulled back on the left side of the painting, where the Duchess and her daughters are portrayed.443 James sits on the right of the painting, while the women in his family are all on the left, much like Henry’s family’s arrangement in the Whitehall Mural. All are dressed in formal dress, made in the fashion of the day and of what appear to be sumptuous materials;

442 Approximately 66 x 76 inches, or a little larger than 5.5 feet by 6 feet. The Royal Collection website notes these dimensions at: http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/eGallery/object.asp?collector=12786&display=acquired&object=405879&row=13&detail=about

443 The Royal Collection, http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/eGallery/object.asp?collector=12786&display=acquired&object=405879&row=13&detail=about; apprentices finishing or assisting on paintings was not uncommon in the workshop of Lely, who died in 1680, presumably shortly before or after this painting was finished. Benedetto Gennari is listed by the Royal Collection as having assisted with the painting, but he appears to have died in 1658, although no formal study of his life has been found thus far; possibly, he assisted with the earlier painting of the Duke and Duchess alone, which was completed in the 1660s.
although many of Lely’s sitters were frequently shown in, “the current dishabille fashion, worn at home and sometimes to the theater, of the nightgown held together at the center with pearl or jeweled clasps,” this is not the case in this portrait. The are seated in an informal arrangement – certainly a far cry from Henry’s family portrait – but still clearly posing for the painting. Here is a symbol of domesticity, of the royal family, of the line of legitimate succession – the legitimate Protestant succession.

The placement of the family and the items they hold are also indicative of a painting with symbolic meaning, rather than purely a painting of a family. James is holding a scepter or baton of some type, with his arm resting on a globe. The globe shows the New World, which James is both pointing at (in a characteristic pose for Lely paintings) and leaning upon. Under the globe is a small table, and next to this table is a smallish black and white dog. Does this dog signify loyalty or devotion, or, because of its gold collar and privileged status, the opulent lifestyle of the upper classes, or perhaps all of these things? There is a dog in Holbein’s painting as well; this was both a fashionable trend among the upper classes and a symbol of wealth and prosperity, as well as a symbol of fidelity and loyalty. The women in Lely’s painting also hold items. Anne Hyde holds Princess Anne’s hand, with her other arm around the younger girl. Princess Mary


445 This scepter is present in nearly all pictures of James, but it is unclear if it has a specific meaning or was just a fashionable prop. Very likely it is reference to his service and command in the Navy, as this is not seen in other symbols and was an important part of James’s life as Duke of York. As Allan Fea states, James was known for his bravery, standing next to, in 1672, his first captain of the ship when the man died. Fea quotes the Earl of Ailesbury as stating that, “His first captain of the ship, Sir John Cox, was killed at his feet, and the brains of that person flew in the Duke of York’s face, and one that was present told me that he calmly wiped his face with his handkerchief, with these words, ‘He was a brave and an honest man, and I pity his wife and children, for he had a numerous family.’” (Allan Fea. *James II and his wives.* London: Methuen and Co., 1908.) This devotion to (and skill at) his post in the Navy makes it reasonable that James would have been painted with regalia and symbols of his service. It could also be a more general symbol of military command or experience, as painting of Cromwell and many others have this same type of baton.
holds a crown of flowers in both hands, standing next to her mother. Interestingly, only two of the figures, Anne Hyde and Princess Mary, look at the viewer. James looks at his deceased wife, of perhaps beyond her, into the distance, but does not look out at us. Princess Anne appears to be looking in the same direction. The dog, like James, looks at Anne Hyde.

Much like the original version of the painting that included only James and Anne, there is an overt political purpose and meaning behind and underneath the family portrait. This is still not a candid image; the royal family is not enjoying a moment of domesticity that the viewer has been allowed a window into. However, here is a movement from a purely dynastic pose to one that does show some, if artificial, intimacy. Also of note is the background of the image. It is unclear exactly where the family is meant to be posing, but the curtain pulled over the head of Anne Hyde, the only deceased member of the family, could be an allusion to her death. The castle in the background is difficult to identify, but it may simply be an artistic choice, rather than a political one.446

By 1679, Charles and Catherine were still childless and it was clear to everyone – whether they liked it or not, and whether they believed that the Popish Plot was real or not – that James was Charles’ heir, and that he would ascend to the throne with Mary of Modena as his queen consort. It was also understood, certainly by the end of the Exclusion Crisis, that Charles would not set James aside for the Duke of Monmouth, his illegitimate, and Protestant son.447 But,

446 By the time of George II’s reign, the backgrounds of paintings were – as I will discuss in the next chapter – almost always imagined or at least partially imagined. While there are some identifiable backgrounds in painting from Charles and James’s reigns, unless there is a very specific and clear background, it is generally assumed that the background isn’t necessarily accurate.

447 A note about the Duke of Monmouth is needed here. James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth and 1st Duke of Buccleuch, was Charles’s illegitimate son with his mistress Lucy Walter, and was born in The Netherlands in 1649. Many works have examined his life, but it is important to note here that Charles did acknowledge him but did not believe he should be legitimized and placed in the line of succession. Monmouth led a rebellion in 1685 against James, leading to the last full army against army battle on English soil, the Battle of Sedgemoor in July, 1685 and his eventual capture and – a badly botched – execution at the Tower of London later that month.
with this new role, new crises arose. Although Charles refused to alter the succession, repeatedly, it is important to remember that both Charles and James knew the limits – even if those limits were amorphous – of their power and had seen first-hand how disastrous political and religious strife, particularly with Parliament, could get. To prevent James’s exclusion, Charles was forced to dissolve Parliament several times, a move that had to have felt dangerous, and the turmoil of this crisis would haunt James’s eventual reign.

For these reasons, the family portrait that was either created or finally finished in the midst of the crisis seems important, and like one intended to show the unity of James’s family as well as the guaranteed succession of his Protestant heirs. Why would he return England to the dominion of Rome just to hand it back to Protestants in a few decades? Why – as symbolized by the baton – would a member of the royal family and a decorated naval officer, even a Catholic one, hand over England to anyone? It’s clear James was concerned with his image, and here, it seems that that image is promising to keep the legitimate, Protestant succession going – something that he would have to prove time and again on his rocky road to the throne. During the early to mid 1680s, images of James and his family increasingly show a family trying to maintain their status and prove their legitimacy.
Other paintings, likely commissioned a year or two before James became king, are less full of familial symbolism, although some assumptions can still be made. These portraits from 1683 and 1684 by Sir Godfrey Kneller, who would be court painter all the way from Charles II to George I, both show James in a formal, decorative suit of armor. In the 1683 portrait by Kneller, James holds a baton and has a sword at his waist. He also wears ceremonial medals, a decorative sash, and a lace collar, and to his right is red–plumed helmet. Armor was a classic theme for James – Anne Hyde held a helmet in the double portrait – but this armor serves a stylistic purpose far more than a protection one. James was often shown as a military commander, and this painting appears to be a continuation of that theme.

By the 1684 portrait, however, the theme has shifted a bit. The 1684 painting is full–length, and a similar pose, but a very different painting. While in the 1683 portrait he holds a baton – again, a symbol of his military service – in the 1684 painting, he holds a royal sceptre, a symbol of royal power. Kneller doesn’t stop there, also adding a crown to the pedestal next to James. Not just any crown, but the coronation crown, sitting on a purple pillow. James also has a robe that appears to be very similar to the one he would wear at his coronation draped over his shoulders and flowing behind him, and he has a much more ornate sword. He also wears the symbolism of the Order of the Garter.

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449 It is worth noting that, as part of the Exclusion Crisis, James was forced to give up his military leadership and career. For James, who had been in the navy most of his life, this must have been a serious blow.

But what does this mean? Well, it almost certainly did not mean that James knew Charles was going to die the next year, as Charles was in relatively good health until his fatal stroke. We do have some information on this painting, however. We know that in October of 1684, Sir Andrew Forrester, “by order of the Lord Marques of Queensbury,” paid seventy pounds to Kneller for portraits of the Duke and King. The seventy pounds appears to be a partial payment, as fifty pounds were also noted as being received previously from the Deputy Lord Treasurer, and the seventy pounds collected payment for, “the Originall Pictures of the King and Duke, with frames to them…” Although it’s unlikely that these paintings were hinting at James becoming king in less than six months, these are wildly expensive paintings, with frames, and paid for – whether partially or completely by the crown – and were likely, given the cost, very large.

The future Earl of Melfort, John Drummond – a character who will play a pivotal role in the exile period for James – writes in 1683 that, “…I am to get the King’s and Duke’s pictors done by Kneller to which they are to sitt,” and in 1684, after the delivery of the pictures, Drummond writes that, “as for opinione of placing the pictors of the King and Duke in the Councell chamber, I am of opinione they ought both to be at the upper end of the room…”


452 Although it is unlikely to have played a major role in these paintings, the Rye House Plot of 1683 may have had some impact on where to hang the portraits. The Rye House Plot targeted both Charles and James, and was supported by Whig factions, so a constant reminder of who was king and who would be king next would certainly have been powerful and, for Drummond, a use of his talent for finding, collecting, and displaying art.

453 Stewart notes that the portrait of James in the National Portrait Gallery (Plate 11) is signed and dated 1684, and it would be an appropriate image for the Council Chamber. Drummond was a great collector of art and would have certainly had opinions on where the images should have gone, although this is more detailed than most commentaries on painting placement for sure in the late–seventeenth century. Drummond’s remarks are recorded in Historical Manuscripts Commission Report on the Manuscripts of the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensbury, Preserved at Drumlanrig Castle, Volume II (London: 1903), 201.
Although it’s not a definitive answer or complete story, the knowledge that this portrait was commissioned by the Crown and likely intended for a placement where the political elite would see it, we can make some assumptions.\footnote{Although it is unlikely to have played a major role in these paintings, the Rye House Plot of 1683 may have had some impact on where to hang the portraits. The Rye House Plot targeted both Charles and James, and was supported by Whig factions, so a constant reminder of who was king and who would be king next would certainly have been powerful and, for Drummond, a use of his talent for finding, collecting, and displaying art.}

This portrait could also have been a work that spoke to James’s eventual rise to king that was finished a bit early, maybe, although an official commission from the crown, as is implied here, doesn’t make that likely. The dates could even be wrong.\footnote{I agree with Stewart that the 1684 painting by Kneller and the painting Drummond discusses are one and the same, as no other surviving Kneller portraits from that time of James exist, and this would absolutely be at home in the Council Chamber. Stewart, “Records of Payment,” 32.} But what is certain is that this portrait is also a fantastic piece of political propaganda and a very powerful message to anyone seeing it that James was not only the rightful heir, but also the \textit{actual} heir, and a man with power in his own right. To James’s left is a naval scene, complete with a battle and an anchor, and it almost appears that James has simply stepped on to the beach to scoop up the garb of kingship. Reminding people – especially those who wished to exclude him from the succession – that he was a decorated military commander, a hero of the navy, who had paid his dues and was now going to be king would be a very bold, but very smart, move.

\textit{The Death of Charles II and the Coronation of James II}

That the 1670s and 1680s were tumultuous for James (and the royal family as a whole) is without question, but even until early 1685, Charles was a relatively healthy man. As Tim Harris notes, both Charles and James had survived the Exclusion Crisis and kept the line of succession intact. When Charles did suffer his final illness, and died at the age of fifty–four on February 6,
1685, James became king with little immediate opposition.\textsuperscript{456} James was likely at Charles’s bedside when he passed away and genuinely grieved his older brother. Although it doesn’t seem to have been a callous thing, plans for James’s coronation – which I will turn to shortly – and new images of James were begun almost immediately. There is a painting that hangs in Christ’s Hospital, a day and boarding school outside London, called, “James II Receiving the Mathematical Scholars of Christ’s Hospital.” Painted by Antonio Verrio, or someone in his studio, between 1684 and 1690, it is one of the largest paintings “in the world,” according to the school.\textsuperscript{457} In 1673, Charles II had given a royal charter to the Royal Mathematical School at Christ’s Hospital; Samuel Pepys, an advocate for the school and part of its founding committee, commissioned a painting of Charles receiving the mathematical scholars of the school. This painting, certainly in part due to its massive size, was not finished until much later, perhaps even as late as 1690, and clearly shows James, not Charles, endowing the school and receiving its scholars, under framed images of Edward VI (the founder of the school) and a man who appears to be Charles II himself.\textsuperscript{458}

\textsuperscript{456} Tim Harris, \textit{Restoration}, 211.

\textsuperscript{457} Antonio Verrio, “James II Receiving the Mathematical Scholars of Christ’s Hospital,” oil on canvas, H 487.7 x W 2642 cm, ca. 1690.http://www.christs-hospital.org.uk/zero/museum–and–heritage/paintings/. This may be overstating things a bit. It is a very large painting, at about 15 feet by 87 feet long. Very large, but probably not the world’s largest. Guinness World Records is unclear on the subject.

\textsuperscript{458} Antonio Verrio, “James II Receiving the Mathematical Scholars of Christ’s Hospital,” oil on canvas, H 487.7 x W 2642 cm, ca. 1690.
Plate 33 Antonio Verrio, “James II Receiving the Mathematical Scholars of Christ’s Hospital.” Gouache, watercolor, and graphite on moderately thick, slightly textured, cream laid paper mounted on canvas and nailed to wooden

Plate 34, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection. Documents concerning the drawing of James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital. Circa 1837, pen and ink with wax seals. ND623.V54.J36, 1837.
Although this is a strange composition, a letter from 1837 holds some answers.\textsuperscript{459} This letter appears to be in response to an initial inquiry about Verrio’s painting, its origins, and its characters.\textsuperscript{460} In the 1837 letter, the President at the time, Mr. Alderman Thompson, writes, “I have been able to find in the Hospital’s records, relating to Verrio’s great picture in the Hall, commemorating the Foundation of the Mathematical School…” several pieces of information. Although he writes that, “we are not in possession of any key to the portraits, and I am not aware that there is one in existence,” he does note that there are, “some remarks on the Picture in Malcolm’s ‘Londinum Redivivum,’” which, if I recollect rightly, points out a few of the Figures, but I have not the means of referring to the Passage.”\textsuperscript{461} He goes on to describe the painting and how it came to be painted:

“The Portrait of the King on the Throne is certainly that of James the Second; and there is a tradition here, that Charles the Second dying whilst the Painting was just unfinished, the Artist obliterated the head of the deceased King, and substituted that of his Successor. This is most probably the alteration alluded to in the minutes of 24. Feb 1685. Regretting that I am unable to furnish any further information on the subject, I am, Dear Sir, with sincere respect, you obliged and faithful Servant, Geo Trollops.”\textsuperscript{462}

Thompson also includes a transcription of these notes, which prove the circumstances surrounding the painting were both difficult and unusual. What stands out the most, however, is

\textsuperscript{459} I have been unable to find the original letter asking for this information, but the staff at Yale Center for British Arts in New Haven, CT put forth a valiant effort to assist me. Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize.

\textsuperscript{461} The book he is referring to is James Peller Malcolm’s, \textit{Londinium redivivum; or, An antient history and modern description of London}, 1802. Although I have searched this book extensively, I cannot find the key Mr. Thompson alludes to here.

\textsuperscript{462} Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize
that Verrio, “obliterated the head” of Charles II after a meeting only twenty days after the king died.

The notes from 1684 and 1685 concerning Verrio’s painting hint at both the process for commissioning and painting such a large, complicated painting and working with its subjects. On June 24th, 1684, a Christ’s Hospital committee agreed that “if the Court shall think fit to have the King’s Majesty’s Picture drawn upon cloth in a warlike posture by a very good hand and to be set up between the two Windows at the upper end of the Mathematical School and in it to be ships…” On October 13th of that same year, the committee again praised Charles II and expressed desire to acquire a painting of the King:

Whereas his gracious Majesty is not only the Royal Founder, but a bountiful Benefactor to the Mathematical School in Christ’s Hospital, and the Court having resolved to draw such a design of the Mathematical Foundation as may transmit to posterity the Honour due to his Majesty and the Hospital’s gratitude and piety to his memory by painting and whereas Seignor Verrio history Painter hath several times been conferred with about the same and drawn a design which hath been approved…this Court desires [members of the committee]…to go to…Pepys, and to request his compensation to Seignor Verrio and to let him know that the Court to make it their earnest request to him that he will with all convenient speed go in hand with the said design and finish the same, the Court having left the whole management thereof to him, as also to place the same in such part of the great hall, as he shall think fit and if the picture of Edward the Sixth is in his way, to let him know the Court have resolved to remove it to some other place.

In short, this committee, along with Samuel Pepys, was approaching Verrio to paint a portrait of the King, Charles II, and to place it in the Mathematical School. On November 12th, the committee met again, this time with a report on Verrio’s progress.

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463 Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize

464 Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize
In October, Verrio had appeared before the committee, going with them into the great hall to examine the area in which the painting was to be hung. Verrio’s painting design was so large that he “seemed to be of opinion that the closing off of the window, and enlarging the two most side windows, will give the far more advantageous prospect to the picture, and give an opportunity withall of placing the King in the most August and Stately posture.” The committee agreed, and asked Verrio when the painting would be done, and, of course, what the price for the painting would be. Verrio’s response, recorded by the committee, was amusing, if not particularly helpful: “he said, he would do it so well, that if any Artist that should see it, did not say it was worth one thousand pounds, he give to the poor of this Hospital one hundred pounds.” The committee, in response, “prayed him to express himself plainly what he expected, at last he said 300 pounds viz. one hundred pounds in hand, another 100 when he had finished a third part of the work, and the other 100 when he had finished the whole…”

Verrio promised to try to finish the painting by May, 1685, and went away to work on the painting, with the full approval of the committee.

Fate had other plans for Verrio’s painting, however. In late February 1685, the committee met again, with the committee’s treasurer reporting that he had heard from Verrio recently, and that the painter needed additional money for the painting because of his need to “make some alteration of the said design in regard his Majesty King Charles the Second of blessed memory [who] is lately deceased.” The committee appointed one of its members to see how much work Verrio had completed, noting that, “if he finds so much done as that the said Seignior Verrio

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465 Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize

466 Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize
deserves fifty pounds more,” then Verrio should be paid that amount. Charles’ death had certainly impacted Verrio’s painting. The king could no longer sit for Verrio, clearly, and, as Verrio had only begun the painting, at the earliest, in November 1684, it stands to reason that much of the work was still incomplete. I argue that James was involved in the decision to sit for Verrio’s painting, and that the decisions made, the other figures in the painting, and image of James himself can tell us much about James’s concern with and use of his image. Although Antonio Verrio is less well known than Holbein or Lely, he was an important painter of the seventeenth–century. He was an Italian painter, and, when he came to England in the 1670s, received royal patronage from Charles, probably beginning his work for the court in 1674 with *The Sea Triumph of Charles II.*

Charles gave Verrio his patronage, but it stands to reason that James and would have approved of Verrio’s work as well. Edward Corp notes that Mary preferred Italian painters, musicians, and fashion, one area in which she did exercise some influence over the quasi–political realm. In addition, Verrio’s paintings, like the Christ’s Hospital painting, were often large and included many figures – he was both a logical choice by the committee (and James) for a massive painting, whether the original naval scene or a crowd visiting the king. The painter was a logical choice for James or Charles and was certainly popular at the time – James would

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467 Multiple authors, “Documents concerning the drawing James II receiving the mathematical scholars of Christ’s Hospital, circa 1837.” Yale Center for British Art, ND623.V54 J36 1837+ Oversize

468 The Royal Collection, in their description of Verrio’s *The Sea Triumph of Charles II*, notes, “This was probably the first work painted by Verrio for Charles II. The subject may have been inspired to some extent by the signing, on 9 February 1674, of the Treaty of Westminster, which brought to an end the Third Anglo–Dutch War. The portrait of the King does not seem to be taken from life and was probably worked up by Verrio from a miniature by Samuel Cooper. It is possible that the design was painted as a trial piece, before Verrio had seen his new patron, to give him an idea of his abilities. The Fleet in the background may have been painted by another hand.

469 Edward Corp, “Catherine of Braganza and cultural politics,” in *Queenship in Britain*, 55.
have sat for Verrio before, and would most likely have been comfortable with the idea of being painted in place of his recently deceased brother. But who are the other people in the painting? In all honesty, we may never know. There are mathematical students, scholars, gentlemen, and many others, but three primary figures occupy the central portion, with James on the throne and two, smaller, round portraits on either side – these portraits flank James on his throne. On the viewer’s right is a painting that is most likely a copy of the Holbein portrait of Edward VI, the founder of Christ’s Hospital. Although this image is very logical given the location of the painting and this history of the school (as well as the movement of Edward’s original painting to make room for the massive Verrio scene) it can also be read as a continued nod to the Tudor period, something George II and his queen, Caroline, will continue in my next chapter. This connection to the undeniably legitimate Tudors is both sensible and, for James, useful. In the center of the mural, James sits on a throne, gesturing towards the second painting, making it both immediately noticeable and, presumably, important. Who is this mysterious figure?

470 According to the school, in 1552, Edward VI, “responded to an impassioned sermon on the needs of London’s poor, and summoned the preacher, the Bishop of London, to talk more about this pressing situation. It was suggested that Edward should write to the Lord Mayor of London, to set in motion charitable measures to help the poor. Christ’s Hospital was consequently founded in the old buildings vacated by the Grey Friars in Newgate Street, London and provided food, clothing, lodging and learning for fatherless children and other poor men’s children.” History of Christ’s Hospital, https://www.christs-hospital.org.uk/about-christs-hospital/history-of-the-school/.

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It’s not Samuel Pepys; not only is there no resemblance, but even Pepys, financial contributor for the painting and benefactor of the school, would not be placed above the king. He is not immediately recognizable as any notable general, political figure, or courtier. He could, in theory, be an important member of the school’s administration, but James’s position suggests a more reverent view. I believe that this is Charles – it bears a resemblance to Charles II, and the placement makes sense. However, Charles’ inclusion raises even more questions. The painting was originally supposed to be of Charles. Why was this idea scrapped for a painting of Charles – only to include an image of Charles in the painting? Why would Verrio not simply paint Charles as king if he already done a sketch? This painting has no label, no name, no true identifying marks. Based on other portraits of Charles, there is certainly a case for this identification. If, assuming based on resemblance and evidence, this is Charles, in the military garb of the originally proposed painting, why would Verrio request extra time and money to so drastically change the portrait?

The timeline may have some answers. Verrio was asked to paint the large painting in November of 1684. By the beginning of February 1685, Charles was dead. Verrio had painted Charles before – in fact, he had painted Charles in a scene at Christ’s Hospital – so he could have completed a sketch of the king in short order, but the logistics of securing a large canvas, sketching the outline of the painting, and beginning to paint would have taken time, even with a studio system.471 He may have decided to simply scrap the original concept for a new one, but a

471 This painting, “Charles II Giving Audience at Christ's Hospital,” is from 1680, so Verrio knew Charles well. This painting – which has a gloriously chaotic scene of a teacher trying to show Charles something while children run amuck – gives more weight to the argument that the second portrait is Charles when compared side by side. Antonio Verrio, “Charles II Giving Audience at Christ's Hospital,” c. 1680. Oil on canvas, Height: 93.5 cm canvas on stretcher, Width: 125.6 cm; Victoria & Albert Museum, P.2–1956. See: https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O78682/charles–ii–giving–audience–at–painting–verrio–antonio/.
military portrait of James would be logical, appropriate, and in keeping with his previous representations if Verrio had chosen to focus on the new king. A painting with James gesturing to the previous king, in a pose reminiscent of the double portrait of Charles and James, with James on the throne, rather than commanding a ship – something he was unquestionably good at, while he was untested as king – would have a much greater impact than yet another portrait of James with scepter and armor.

Did James, who was not involved with the school previously in any way we know about, take this as an opportunity to present himself as the unquestionably legitimate king? I believe he did, and that painting James in place of Charles, rather than how he had been painted in the past, was a conscious decision on the part of the new monarch. Pepys knew both Verrio and James, James had certainly met Verrio, and, as a new king concerned with his image, may have welcomed the opportunity for a large piece of artwork in which he could stress his rightful place in the succession as well as his philanthropy towards the school.

James gesturing to Charles is only one of the symbols in the person of the king and surrounding him. He sits directly under the seal of England (and Scotland), again wearing the regalia of the Order of the Garter and in a blue robe – in fact, his clothing looks very similar in this image to the double portrait of James and Charles.472 James’s feet rest on a pillow, over a rug, on a dais, sitting on a throne. James holds a piece of paper in his non–gesturing hand, although it is impossible to see if any writing is on the paper. To James’s left is a group of scholars gesturing toward a globe, almost entreatingly. This globe, a common prop in portraits of James as both Duke of York and King, appears to show his realms, as does the large map held

472 Another reason I believe the double portrait dates from near this time. Is James reaching for his lost brother, or gesturing towards him? We may never know.
further down the row of scholars. On the right of James’s throne stands a man holding a large book with the royal seal, although unfortunately it is impossible to know who this is without a key, making it difficult to understand his purpose.\footnote{The lack of a key seems to have led to much confusion. A note on the back of the painting, according to Thompson, identifies James as Charles, an obvious mistake – unless Charles actually is in the painting as the portrait opposite Edward VI.}

Although James had been concerned with his image as Duke of York, and had used portraiture as a way to prop up his legitimacy, this painting seems to speak to a new era for him. Moving away from military portraits – although elements of his military service and considerable prowess would crop up in later images – to kingly images, and purposefully “obliterating” the image of his brother, show a reaction to his new role as king. Importantly, they also show the struggle James faced as a second–generation monarch. James had to present himself as king, reverent towards Charles’ memory, while also assuming the role of king, and he had to separate himself not only from his role as Duke of York but also from the “merry court” of his brother. And he had to do all this with opposition from Parliament and the Duke of Monmouth.

Now that James was king – and having himself painted in to murals to show his legitimacy – he had to think about his coronation. Like all leaders, he delegated the responsibility to a committee, starting on February 16, 1685, that consisted of the “Lords of his Privy–Council.”\footnote{Francis Sandford, The history of the coronation of...James II...and of his royal consort Queen Mary: solemnized in the Collegiate church of St. Peter in the city of Westminster, on Thursday the 23 of April...1685. With an exact account of the several preparations in order thereunto... By His Majesties especial command. By Francis Sandford. (In the Savoy: Printed by T. Newcomb), 1687, 1. It should be noted that the document, published in 1687, says that preparations for James’s coronation started on February 16, 1684. This has to be a typo, as that would have been almost a year before Charles’ death. Not only would James not have had a Privy–Council as king in 1684, but he also would not publicly have been planning his coronation, since that borders – very closely – treason. Remember that Anne Boleyn was accused of treason not for adultery, but for wishing the king dead by allegedly making a jest about the king’s death.} Luckily for historians, James commissioned a book to show the details of his
coronation, so we have many details about the planning, the ceremony, even the meals and the procession to and from the coronation itself. Not only does this book show processional images, planning discussions, and the actual regalia and order of coronation, but it’s also full of allusions to the glory of the monarchy. This is not surprising, considering that it was directly commissioned by James, but it is still telling of the ways in which James was presenting himself as king.

That presentation gives us a glimpse into the “absolute monarch” mentality James may have had. Charles certainly dismissed Parliament when it suited him (like during the Exclusion Crisis), but James in many ways had to fake it ‘til he made it, particularly when trying to justify his rule. One of the most intriguing images in the manuscript spans two pages, and is titled “A Representation of the Fire–Works upon the River of Thames, over again Whitehall, at their Majesties Coronation Ao. 1685.” This page shows statues and fireworks, fountains and celebration, with a figure holding a laurel wreath on one side (identified as pater patria, or “Father of the Country”). There is also an inscription, in flames, that says “SOL OCCUBUIT NOX NULLA SECUTA EST” – “The sun has set but is followed by no night.” Sharpe argues that this is a reference to James shining after Charles’ death, and I agree. In the middle of the page are the intertwined initials of James and Mary, with a 2 below (for James II, presumably), and on the far–right side, a crowned figure is seated under the label “monarchia,” or monarchy. This figure has all kinds of symbolic elements – it doesn’t look much like James II, but the serpent, the arrows, the flags, the griffon, and the “JR” under the figure all make it clear who it is

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475 And, as we know, processions were highly important in the early modern period. Robert Darnton points out in The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History (New York: Basic Books, 1984), the order of things was not just a parade, it “expressed the corporate order of urban society.” (120). Although, “a procession could not be taken literally as a model of society,” the order in which people lined themselves up – or were ordered by others – was not just random or based only on wealth or status (122). It was a highly complex dance of rules, nuance, and extreme organization.

476 Sharpe, Rebranding Rule, 293.
supposed to be. Under these columns, and the two ziggurats in the center, we again see James and Mary’s initials, along with crowns and an anchor, surely an allusion to his illustrious military career in the navy.

This page doesn’t have much to do with the coronation, but it’s a part of James’s image in a major way. All the arrows and pillars and ziggurats and columns and nudes – could it be any more obvious that this is an allusion to male virility, and to James’s virility specifically. It’s also a speaking to the divine right of kings, the symbols of power, and the image of James as a “Father” – both literally and figuratively – of the country. This is not an uncommon representation in the seventeenth–century, but this book does show that James was dealing with the controversy surrounding his ascension to the throne by creating images that were both fatherly and authoritative, filled with “love” but also with majesty.

The rest of the book holds fascinating insight into early modern ceremony and how events like this were planned. The Privy–Council looked to Charles’ coronation as a guide, assigning both the order and the roles of the day. For example, one of the major points in the planning is who got to carry the canopy the king would walk under between Palace of St. James, the coronation, and the feast. It was decided that, “That the Barons of the Cinque Ports Claim’d and were allowed to carry the Canopy over the King, and to have it for their Fee, and to Dine in the Hall.”\[477\] This was, at least partially, based on the roles held during the coronation of Charles, twenty–five years earlier, and was incredibly strict. Much like the procession, the clothes were laid out precisely as well – and not just for the royal family.\[478\]

\[477\] Francis Sandford, *The history of the coronation of...James II...*, 3.

\[478\] Francis Sandford, *The history of the coronation of...James II...*, 33. For example: “For a Baroness, the robe or mantle was, “to be of Crimson Velvet, the Cape to be Furred with Meniver pure, and Powdered with Two Bars or Rows of Ermine, the said Mantle to be Edged round with Meniver pure...Two Inches in breadth, and the Train to Three Foot on the Ground. The Coronet to be according to their Degree, viz. With Six Pearls upon the Rim, not raised upon Points, nor is the Rim to Imbellished with Precious Stones.” (33)
This book is not totally unique, and records of coronation plans exist from other kings and queens. But, hearkening back to Sharpe’s argument that James was concerned with his image. – that ,“James’s concern with his self–presentation and his place in history may have outstripped that of most of his predecessors,” this book is an elaborate record that shows James was in fact, and in deed, concerned with his image.\footnote{Sharpe, \textit{Rebranding Rule}, 226.} So concerned, it seems, that the book even goes on to list the gifts, commemorative medals, and titles given to the planners and participants after the coronation. One of my favorite passages, that speaks to both James’s concern with his image and the early modern practice of gift–giving, takes place after the coronation on April 27, 1685:

His Majesty having signified His Pleasure to the Lord Treasurer, That Medals be presented to the 21 Publick Ministers, and six other Strangers of Quality; His Lordship did this Day, by Letter, send unto the Commissioners of the Mint, the List of Their Names; and directed that 27 Medals of the King, and the like Number of the Queen, be curiously stamped in Gold, and delivered to Sir Charles Cotterel King, (Maker of the Ceremonies,) to be presented to them, viz.\footnote{Francis Sandford, \textit{The history of the coronation of...James II...}, 126.}

Although his reign would only last three years, James was concerned about court diplomacy. He was not universally liked, and his ascension was not popular, but he was attempting to build his dynastic representation – of that, there is no doubt. Even the day of the coronation, St. George’s Day, was planned to connect James, Charles, and Britain and the throne in the minds and hearts of people. In choosing this day, “the Council and James sought not only to associate the new reign with England’s patron saint, but to evoke memories of Charles II’s coronation the same day, and the joy and acclamation that accompanied it.”\footnote{Sharpe, \textit{Rebranding Rule}, 288.}
King at Last

Beyond James’s representation in Verrio’s large painting for Christ’s Hospital and the images in his coronation book, very few images of James as king were created, and even fewer are still in existence; due to his short (just over three years) time as king, the opportunity to create many official portraits simply did not exist.\(^{482}\) James did not neglect his image as Duke of York, nor did he eschew the arts in general, patronizing court painters and various other artists—he was said to have employed Lely more than the king and queen while he was Duke.\(^{483}\) He was also interested in the act of collecting. An exhaustive inventory of paintings and statues was commissioned by James in 1688; although the descriptions are brief, the categories are telling—“A List of His Majesty’s Pictures that were not the late King’s in Windsor Castle” and “Pictures in Whitehall of His Majesty’s that were not the late King’s” show that James brought many images of his own, or purchased, or commissioned, quite a few images while Duke of York and King.\(^{484}\)

\(^{482}\) As noted in the introduction, the actual creation of portraits took a significant amount of time. Although portraits of James II do exist, as discussed here, the small number of portraits should in no way be seen as a lack of desire for images, especially when James’s time in exile is taken into account.

\(^{483}\) Sharpe, *Rebranding Rule*, 265. Sharpe also notes that James directly commissioned portraits and paintings of others, including the “Windsor Beauties” and naval images. He cites, and I absolutely recommend, Oliver Millar, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (2 vols, London: Phaidon, 1963), I, p. 124, for a fantastic overview of many paintings currently in the royal collection.

\(^{484}\) The original manuscript (British Library, London, Harleian MS 1890, ‘Inventory of His Majesty’s Goods, 1688,’ fol. 83) is not very descriptive of the actual paintings. A later compilation of this inventory, George Vertue’s *A Catalogue of the Collection of Pictures Belonging to King James the Second: to which is added, a catalogue of the pictures and drawings in the closet of the late Queen Caroline, with their exact measures: and also of the principal pictures in the palace at Kensington*. (London: Printed for W. Bathoe, 1758), will be useful in the next chapter as well.
Olivar Millar tells us that Willem Wissing painted a portrait of the James and his family, and others – like John Riley, who had painted James in the 1660s, did as well.\footnote{John Riley, “James, Duke of York, Later King James II,” Oil on canvas, 76cm x 61cm, 1660s, Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, WA1898.40. See: https://collections.ashmolean.org/collection/search/per_page/25/offset/0/sort_by/relevance/object/44952. Although its provenance states that it was given by Elias Ashmole in 1683, the date range makes it somewhat uncertain when the painting was commissioned or finished. Either way, James was continuing to use artists he had employed throughout his time as Duke of York in addition to the Italian artists Mary of Modena favored.} Kneller, who painted James before he became king, said that the new king and queen sat for him “about thirty six times a piece,” but, unfortunately, very few of these paintings have not survived.\footnote{J. Stewart, \textit{Sir Godfrey Kneller}, (London: Newbury Books, 1990), 38. The National Portrait Gallery lists several images of James that were painted between 1685 and 1688, but these are all held in smaller or private collections, or they are copies of existing works, like Kneller’s oval bust of James based on the 1684 painting depicting the Duke of York in armor. Although some of these paintings are not the originals, and many paintings are lost, new discoveries crop up in private collections all the time. In 2018, a new portrait of James III was discovered in a private collection and identified as the source of engravings and as a similar painting to one that has truly been lost. I will discuss this painting more when talking about the Stuarts in exile.} Why have so few images of James and Mary as king and queen – rather than as Duke and Duchess of York, or from their time in exile in France – survived? It is certainly not outside the realm of possibility that portraits of James and Mary were conveniently “lost” during the realm of his successors or that they were intentionally destroyed, like images of Anne Boleyn or Catherine Howard may have been. It is also possible that their images were spirited away by their Jacobite supporters, making their way into private collections on the continent. Whatever the case, there are still some important images from James’s time as king to discuss.
A 1685 painting of James attributed to Benedetto Gennari, is probably from right before or after James’s coronation, and shows James as a naval commander, wearing the General Officer’s State coat, a reference to his role as Head of the army.\footnote{Benedetto Gennari, “King James II,” c. 1685. Oil on canvas, National Army Museum. NAM. 1987–01–1–1. See: https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?ace=1987–01–1–1.} James grew the army quite a bit during his short reign – preferring Catholic officers – and this portrait shows troops behind him, with a suit of armor on the floor by James’s feet. On the table, his crown and the Sovereign’s Orb sit within easy reach. James must have seen the benefit of drawing upon his military past, combined with his power as king, to bolster his authority over the military and smooth over the ruffled feathers of Anglican officers who may have felt overlooked.

Around the time this portrait was completed, James was also dealing with another crisis impacting his succession and rule, the Duke of Monmouth’s rebellion. Although the rebellion only lasted around five months and, looking back on what we know happened, it appears almost inevitable that Monmouth would lose, it was not a certain outcome at the time, and James must have felt that his place was being threatened again by yet another attempt to keep him from his rightful place as king and within the succession. Monmouth’s rebellion doesn’t figure into this story as a crisis James addressed – explicitly or not – through portraiture, probably because of the short time period it lasted, but it must have had an impact on James’s short reign to be challenged so early, and by a much–loved family member.
Plate 37: The Execution of Monmouth and Argyll, The Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, 914443, ca. 1685.
Although it doesn’t fall directly under the category of “portraiture,” an interesting medal was created in 1685 to commemorate James’s success in defeating Monmouth, and perhaps should be discussed here as a directly reactionary image of James. On the front is a bust of James – wearing Roman garb, including a toga and wreath on his head, but still recognizable even without the engraving – and, on the reverse, is a figure who appears to be doing many things at once. She holds a scale in her left hand, balancing what appears to be three crowns (likely England, France, and Scotland) on one side and a sword, torch, and a serpent (the discord of rebellion, with – perhaps – a “snake in the grass” reference thrown in for good measure), with the crowns being the heavier of the two sides. At her feet are two decapitated bodies, their heads – the heads of Monmouth and the Duke of Argyll, who was also involved in the rebellion, behind her on tombstones. In her right hand, she holds a sword, and in the distance behind her we can see the rain and clouds retreating to reveal a brilliant sun and its rays, shining down on the morbid scene.\footnote{Several of these medals exist – the clearest picture and description can be found on the Classical Numismatic Group, LLC website, where they describe the coin as follows: \textit{“STUART. James II. 1685–1688. AR Medal (61mm, 93.22 g, 12h). The Execution of the Duke of Monmouth and the Earl of Argyll. By R. Arondeaux. Dated 1685. IACOBVS II D : G · MAG · BRI · FRAN · ET · HIB · REX ·, laureate, draped, and armored bust of James facing, head left; all set upon garnished altar, inscribed 16 85 and upon which rests four scepters, crossed in saltire and surmounted by a rose, lis, thistle, and harp (representing the sovereign powers over England, France, Scotland, and Ireland); before altar, crowned coat-of-arms within Collar of the Order of the Garter, inscribed HONY · SOIT · QV[I] MAL · Y · PENSE · (evil be to him who evil thinks); on banner below, ARAS ET SCEPTRA TUEMUR (we defend our altars and our scepters); in background, two ships and Neptune driving triga of sea horses (representing England’s dominion of the seas); Justice standing facing upon pedestal inscribed AMBITIO/MALESUADA/RUIT (ill-advised ambition falls) in three lines; her head lowered rightward, she holds a sword in her right hand and a scale in her left, weighing three crowns (representing the kingdoms of England, France, and Scotland) against a sword, torch, and serpent (representing the discord wrought by the uprising); her foot trampling upon another serpent below; to left and right, respectively, altars inscribed IACOBUS/DE/MONT/MOUT and ARCHI/BALD/D’AR/GYL, and bearing the severed heads of the Duke and Earl; below, their draped headless bodies; in background above, the sun emerging from the clouds, with lightning striking the conquered troops at Sedgemoor; to right, the Tower of London, with pikes surmounted by the heads of the Duke and Earl. MI 615/27; Eimer 281. EF, toned, a few light marks. Highly interesting and allegorical.” I couldn’t agree more. The Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, “The Execution of Monmouth and Argyll.” 91443. https://cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=202051.} Medals and coins – a complete study and fascinating subject in their own right – did not have the same commissioning, creating, and collecting timeline paintings did, and were
not, particularly in this case, meant to show the majesty of the king (and his body) himself, but
rather to commemorate an event where the king triumphed. That said, they are still useful and
fascinating images, particularly when they do relate so clearly to a major event in James’s reign.

For Mary of Modena’s part in the actual reign of James, she rarely directly intervened in
politics, but her Italian influence was certainly seen in the gardens, patronage, and style of court.
One incident, from 1686, however, shows that she did use her influence at least occasionally
outside the realm of art and culture. In January 1686, Mary, “made it clear to James that he must
banish his mistress, her former Maid of Honour, Catherine Sedley…Countess of Dorchester.”
Although Barclay argues that Mary did not grasp the full implications of her actions – that led to
James’s priests denouncing his affairs, a “clear instance in which the Queen and the priests
combined forces in opposition” to the king and Protestant ministers – because her role was “little
more than that of the aggrieved wife.” Whether Mary was political in the traditional sense or
not, she certainly was not ignorant of the influence she had, and she was not ever described as
unintelligent. Barclay argues that she was much more orthodox in her beliefs than James, who
did seem to genuinely believe that other religions should have freedoms as well, and that “any
advice Mary Beatrice dared offer him may have been intended to satisfy her own conscience, so
that she could feel that she had at least done her duty to God and the Church…she was probably
resigned to the fact that her views were going to be ignored.”

489 Andrew Barclay, “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Secon’d Bless’d of Woman–kind?’” in Queenship in Britain, 80.
490 Andrew Barclay, “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Secon’d Bless’d of Woman–kind?,” 80.
491 Andrew Barclay, “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Secon’d Bless’d of Woman–kind?,” 81. This may be true, but
orthodoxy doesn’t mean that she couldn’t see when and where to use her influence.
Mary’s conflicts with James’s mistresses significantly impacted the patronage and collecting of the court. James’s reign as a whole was never completely free of conflict. His Catholicism, his Catholic wife, conflict with Charles’ illegitimate son the Duke of Monmouth, the Bloody Assizes, – all of these conflicts have been written about extensively, and they severely impacted James’s ability to rule and his stability on the throne.\textsuperscript{492} But, at least until 1688, even his detractors could be confident in the fact that his heir, Mary, was Protestant, married to a Protestant, and, although she had suffered a miscarriage early in her marriage was still, in her mid–twenties, young enough to bear even more Protestants. That all changed on June 10, 1688 when Mary of Modena gave birth to a healthy baby boy, her first child since a miscarriage in 1684.

Immediately after the birth of James Francis Edward Stuart, Prince of Wales, James II, “took the opportunity of the occasion of the prince’s birth for a representation of majesty,” with church services, fireworks, festival days, medals, mezzotints, engravings, and more.\textsuperscript{493} James and Mary were surely overjoyed at the birth of a male heir – upon hearing the news that his son had been born healthy, he fell to his knees and cried through the night.\textsuperscript{494} Sharpe notes that James’s haste in “distributing portraits of his son” was unusual, and could have been because of joy,

\begin{footnotes}

\footnote{493}{Sharpe, \textit{Rebranding Rule}, 313–315.}

\footnote{494}{J. Michael Wright, \textit{An Account of His Excellence, Roger Earl of Castlemaine’s Embassy from His Sacred Majesty James IId, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, etc. to His Holiness Innocent XI Published Formerly in the Italian Tongue by Mr. Michael Wright...and Now Made English}. Early English Books Online, Huntington Library, Wing W3702, 1688.}
\end{footnotes}
concern for the child’s health, or, and I believe this is most likely, a reaction to the rumors about his illegitimacy that started almost as soon as James’s son was born.\textsuperscript{495}

Mary of Modena, “was finally able to fulfill her main purpose in life when…she provided her husband with a male heir.”\textsuperscript{496} The warming–pan scandal – that Mary had never been pregnant, and that James Edward Francis had been smuggled into the birthing room in a warming pan – took hold immediately, and James and Mary found themselves defending their joyful news. Of course, to us, this was preposterous. There were witnesses – many – to the birth. Plus, Mary was sixteen when she had her first miscarriage and only thirty in 1688, and the stress of 1679–1687 likely did not help her conceive. A long stretch between pregnancies (pregnancies we know about – she could have had other miscarriages that were not recorded, or whose mention has not survived), is hardly any proof that James III was not the legitimate son of James and Mary.\textsuperscript{497} Rachel Weil notes that the warming–pan scandal was not easily dismissed, and that, “rumours, pamphlets, and satirical lampoons” played a major part in the propaganda campaign that occurred before the Glorious Revolution.\textsuperscript{498} However, “the debate about the warming–pan affair was different from the debate that occurred in the exclusion crisis. It concerned not the rights and powers of subordinates within the family, but the problem of access to knowledge. At issue was not just the power of women within the family, but their power to influence affairs of state.”\textsuperscript{499} In this way, Mary of Modena was given a direct opportunity to take part in a political

\textsuperscript{495} Sharpe, \textit{Rebranding Rule}, 315.

\textsuperscript{496} Barclay, “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Secon’d Bless’d of Woman–kind?,” 74.

\textsuperscript{497} The other rumor surrounding James III’s birth, that he was not actually James’s, is of course impossible to determine. However, if family resemblance is any proof, James III was certainly legitimate.

\textsuperscript{498} Rachel Weil, \textit{Political passions: Gender, the family and political argument in England, 1680–1714} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 86.

\textsuperscript{499} Weil, \textit{Political passions}, 86–87.
debate, but it also made her – and other women associated with the warming-pan scandal – an, “object of suspicion,” as only women could have the most intimate and accurate knowledge about childbirth, including the logistics of faking a pregnancy and birth, not to mention smuggling a baby into a room filled with people in a warming pan.\footnote{Weil, \textit{Political passions}, 93. It is interesting that, even in the seventeenth–century, women were considered both experts on and untrustworthy stewards of, their own bodies. One of the other interesting points Weil brings up is that while the warming–pan story did uphold the claim to the throne of a woman, Mary Stuart, it also raised questions it couldn’t answer or resolve about where women fit into the political narrative and sphere of power. Some women could be believed, it seemed, but they had to be, “the right kind of women.” Weil, \textit{Political passions}, 100.}

But whether the rumor was based in any fact or not, James had to respond. The news of a son was unwelcome for many – after all, “passive obedience to James while they awaited the succession of his Protestant daughter Mary was one thing; the prospect of a continuous Catholic rule another.”\footnote{Sharpe, \textit{Rebranding Rule}, 315.} Now, with a Catholic prince set to take the English throne, so the birth had to be discredited in some way. Medals, pamphlets, engravings, limericks – all were created by the supporters of William of Orange to make the birth seem false. And, although there was little time to create formal portraits between June, when the future James III was born, and October, when William’s Dutch fleet set sail for England, James still engaged in an image campaign with the more immediate methods – ceremony, engravings, fireworks – available to him, as well many pamphlets and depositions of his own. Legitimacy, especially as it related to his family, which was already important to James, was about to become a major theme in his representation.

\textit{The End of a Reign and Exile}

With William of Orange marching towards London, intent on taking the British throne for himself – and his wife, the actual heir to the throne – James and his family fled England for the safety of France in late 1688, after a series of battles, both political and military. James’s
Catholic cousin, Louis XIV, took them in as exiles and provided a base for a potential return to Britain and an essential public relations campaign. Very few biographies or academic writings deal with James’s life in exile, particularly the years between his major defeat at Boyne in 1690 and his death in 1701. As mentioned previously, it is rare to see a treatment of James that fully analyzes his time in France, but particularly one that looks at the culture and images created in exile.

Although there are numerous political, economic, and military analyses of the “Glorious Revolution” – a name that makes it absolutely clear who the winners were, and one that grossly overstates the “revolutionary” aspects of the coup that brought William of Orange and Mary Stuart to England – it is important to note here that, while it was not a totally bloodless coup, it was one that exemplified the legalism of the late-seventeenth century in Britain. It was argued that James, upon fleeing for France, had abdicated, rather than deserted, his throne and title – an

502 While James’s escape, and the general story of the flight to France, has been generally outlined in many other works, new sources indicate that the escape of Mary and her son was also very dramatic. A letter that has recently surfaced in a private collection, and which has now been acquired by the Archives Municipales de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, gives more details on the tumultuous period in December, 1688, in which the Queen and Prince of Wales escaped to France on a packet boat. They were supposed to leave on a royal yacht, but the ship’s captain could not read the letter, in French, requesting a signal that it was safe for them to do so. Edward Corp rightly points out that, had they left on the yacht, James may not have been delayed on his own ship, may never have been caught, and may have escaped much earlier; alternatively, the Queen and Prince may have been caught, and, as Corp speculates, “…there might have been no Jacobite movement, just as there might have been no Stuart Court in exile at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.” Edward Corp, “New Evidence Considering the Flight of the Queen and the Prince of Wales to France in December 1688: A Recently Discovered Letter of James II,” in Archives (Volume 26, Issue 104, pp36–40, 2001), 40. For general works on James II’s flight from England, see Carola Oman, *Mary of Modena* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1962), Meriel Trevor, *The Shadow of a Crown* (London: Constable, 1988), Robert Beddard, *A Kingdom without a King* (London: Phaidon, 1988).


important distinction outlined in, *The arguments upon the abdication of King James*, a 1688 document that outlines exactly how James legally gave up his claim to the throne. This work contains speeches and letters by the Earls of Clarendon and Pembroke, among others, and complicates the story somewhat in that James did not just leave, he was not immediately dismissed, and Parliament certainly felt that they had the right to invite his “legitimate” heir Mary – even if they did not quite feel they had the right to execute James. In November 1688, James, “began to fear for the safety” of his five–month–old son and his wife. He sent them to France in early December and followed shortly after. Upon arrival in France, James and his family – Mary and his infant son – were housed at Saint–Germain–en–Laye, a beautiful Baroque

505 Great Britain, Parliament, 1688, *The Arguments upon the Abdication of King James ye 2d*. James Marshall and Marie–Louise Osborn Collection fb46, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

506 Another misconception is that “the English people” instigated the coup that led to James’s abdication (if we agree to call it that). While Parliament was filled with English people, it’s true, there was no great public uprising against James in 1688. Steve Pincus in *1688: The First Modern Revolution* argues that the, “the English people agreed to replace [James] with the Protestants King William III and Queen Mary II.” (3). While they may have “agreed” to the new rulers, it was not (or was not just) “public” opinion that brought about James’s abdication, but rather legal arguments and a rebellious Parliament, combined with William of Orange’s willingness and eagerness to take the throne of England.

507 Although it is not crucial to discuss as part of my argument, an interesting piece of the historical puzzle surrounding the royal family’s flight to France has recently been discovered. Edward Corp notes that a letter, sold in public auction and bought by the Ville de Saint–Germain–en–Laye in 1998 outlines James’s plan for Mary and his son to escape to France – a plan that ultimately was not followed, but which shows, according to Corp, that the flight to France was not a certain, or safe, flight that could easily have ended in tragedy. For more on this letter, see Edward Corp, “New Evidence Concerning the Flight of the Queen and the Prince of Wales to France in December 1688: A Recently Discovered Letter of James II,” *Archives* 26, Issue 104 (2001): 36–40. The letter itself is held at the Archives municipals de Saint–Germain–en–Laye, near the home in which James and Mary lived in exile.
palace where a court–in–exile could be established. James was, “determined to regain his throne by two means that we might think of as contradictory but which he regarded as complimentary: by armed invasion with foreign support and by continuing efforts to represent himself as rightful king.” These are not contradictory at all considering the images of James to this point – even as king, his military prowess and experience were on display in portraits, and he had long used representation to react to crises, even before his reign.

In exile, James and his family had to continue to be concerned with their image as a family and as the royal family. Portraits, always important, would now become an even more important tool. In addition to private collections held by courtiers and the works already in the Château, “the court employed various painters to produce a series of portraits of the royal family and the courtiers,” and these artists – like Nicolas de Largillière, Benedetto Gennari, François de Troy, and Alexis–Simon Bell – had their works displayed not only in the royal apartments, but

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508 Conceptualizing what this court looked like can be difficult, but some history on Saint–Germain–en–Laye be beneficial. The Château de Saint–Germain was used as Louis XIV’s primary residence from 1666 to 1682, while Versailles was being remodeled and conceptualized. It’s not just a house, but rather a large palace surrounding a central courtyard. Its wings included, at the time, a chapel and a theatre, and the exiled Stuarts used a large section of the palace that Louis XIV and his family had used, while the rest of the building was divided into apartments for courtiers and servants. Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp note that it did have its disadvantages – it was smaller than really needed, there was no easy way to get from one wing to another, and space was at a premium – but that it was a large and grand is not in question. (Cruickshanks and Corp, “Introduction” in The Stuart Court in Exile, xiv.) I have been to Saint–Germain–en–Laye and, while the Château is certainly not as large or beautiful or...gold...as Versailles, it is an impressive building and not at all shabby. Also, although not the main concern of this study, the influx of exiled Jacobites into Saint–Germain–en–Laye did not constitute a small population. We do have an edited volume of the parochial registers of Saint–Germain–en–Laye, and these records show that over 1,000 British names appear each year in the register between 1692 and 1713, and, “about 40 percent of the exiles were of noble birth, a considerable number when the French nobility were only 1 percent of the population and even less in England...in stark contrast to the Huguenot refugees, Jacobite refugees were aristocratic exiles.” Nathalie Genet–Rouffiac, “Jacobites in Paris and Saint–Germain–en–Laye,” in The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp (London: The Hambledon Press), 1995, 18. Parochial records from The Jacobites in the Parochial Records of Saint–Germain, ed. E. Lart (London, 1912).

509 Sharpe, Rebranding Rule, 329.
also around the Château, and many have survived. As Timothy Clifford and James Holloway note, “Portrait painters have always been employed to project the image and reinforce the recognition of monarchs. Their importance for a royal family in exile, anxious not to be forgotten, was even more crucial.” In exile, James and his family faced a new set of challenges, and their images from this period reflect their reactions to these crises. This Stuart court – led by James II and then his son, James III, was, “by far the most important – social, politically, and culturally” of the exiled Stuart courts, and it became a center of art and learning, even as its central players were exiles and in many ways dependent on Louis XIV and his court for their survival.

John Drummond, Duke of Melfort, the Jacobite Secretary of State at Saint–Germain–en–Laye, has been maligned almost universally by historians – Whigs and those more sympathetic to the Stuart plight alike – and much can be said about his mismanagement of James’s court and quest to regain the throne. However, as Edward Corp notes, “it was as a connoisseur and patron of the arts that Melfort had few equals,” and much of what we know about art patronage

510 Many, of course, have not, but Cruickshanks and Corp argue that over fifty of these have – most not of the royal family themselves – and that having fifty surviving speaks to the sheer volume that were originally created in France. Cruickshanks and Corp, “Introduction,” in The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites, xvi.

511 Timothy Clifford and James Holloway, “Foreword,” in The King Over the Water: Portraits of the Stuarts in Exile after 1689 by Edward Corp (Edinburgh: The Trustees of the National Galleries of Scotland 2001).

512 Corp, King Over the Water, 1.

513 “Mismanagement” may be too harsh of a term, but he certainly did not win any friends with his policies and actions. After reading Tim Harris’s Restoration, the struggles to manage England, Ireland, and Scotland for Charles and James makes more sense, and Melfort’s focus on England made enemies of the Duke of Tyrconnel and a French ambassador, the comte d’Avaux, “who believed that James II should remain in Ireland (in 1689) and overcome all opposition there before crossing over to Great Britain.” (Corp, “Melfort, 42.) He failed to obtain papal support in 1691, but returned to Saint–Germain–en–Laye in 1691 as James’s Secretary of State. He was finally banished from court in 1694 and continued to stir up trouble for both James’s family and Louis XIV, as well as the Jacobites at the exiled court. Melfort has been disparaged, and he certainly did mismanage several aspects of the exiled court’s attempts to return to England, but you can’t say he wasn’t colorful and very good at making people think he could do his job – even in exile.
at the court in exile comes from Melfort’s efforts.\textsuperscript{514} Corp goes on to say that Melfort was entrusted with the responsibility of making the exiled court glorious and a center of culture; he notes that, “If the Jacobite court could not rival the French court at Versailles, it could at least stand in comparison with it.”\textsuperscript{515} Certainly, images of James and his family continued to be produced in exile, primarily by Benedetto Gennari, Willem Wissing, Pierre Mignard, and Nicolas de Largillière. From all accounts, the Stuart court in France was a haven for Jacobite supporters, both Protestant and Catholic, and their international network of art patronage. Once in exile, James, “commissioned paintings and engravings of their portraits to remind or persuade people that they were legitimate kings…”\textsuperscript{516} Historians have tended to ignore this part of James’s life or, alternately, only focus on the time in exile, ignoring the long history James had as both a patron of the arts and a member of the royal family who was very concerned with representation.\textsuperscript{517}

Somewhat fewer portraits were painted of James as king after 1690, when hope truly did appear lost that he would be restored to the throne, but family portraits do exist and there was a major surge in art patronage – Melfort’s actions as Secretary of State for the court speak to this. In addition, portraits that were painted were likely seen by more people than we can truly know, as the Stuart court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye was not only mobile, with the Stuarts themselves travelling, but also with supporters of James and his family coming to and from court. They travelled, correspondence travelled back and forth between England, Scotland, and France (and


\textsuperscript{515} Corp, “Melfort,” 41.

\textsuperscript{516} Corp, \textit{King Over the Water}, 22.

\textsuperscript{517} Corp, \textit{King over the Water}, 33.
the rest of Europe), and portraits, even if they were painted to decorate the apartments of the family, would still have been seen, shared, copied, and discussed. That the Jacobite court in exile was, “shabby and impoverished, populated by Jesuits and other intolerant Catholics,” is an impression, “deliberately put about by Whig and Hanoverian propaganda.”\(^{518}\) In reality, the exiled court was not, while in France, particularly short of money and, “provided an Anglo–Italian alternative, or at least complement, to the court culture developed at Versailles.”\(^{519}\) The court’s composition was, as Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp note, made up of, “persons of high political status, mostly nobles, who emigrated in order to be near their king.”\(^{520}\)

In fact, James was determined that while he was in France, “he would create an impressive Court at Saint–Germain, to display clearly the majesty of the exiled English monarchy,” and to this end he, “provided the court with the three things he knew to be essential,” namely, “gold, gilt and silver objects so that he and Mary of Modena could dine publicly and in state, as they had been accustomed to do at Whitehall.”\(^{521}\) In addition, “he ordered the painter Nicolas de Largillière to produce a large picture showing him, the Queen and the Prince of Wales, which was on permanent display in his antechamber” and he, “assembled a group of musicians who could provide high quality musical performances in the Chapel Royal and the royal apartments.”\(^{522}\) James and Mary wanted to attract visitors to their Court such as Jacobite

\(^{518}\) Corp, “Melfort.” 41.

\(^{519}\) Corp, “Melfort,” 41. This is also evidence of Mary of Modena’s influence in bringing Italian artists and culture to the Jacobite court, even in exile. Remember that while Duchess of York and Queen, she most often provided patronage to Italian artists, particularly if they could replace French artists who were favored by James’s mistresses.


exiles like themselves, foreign dignitaries, and French nobles, like Louis XIV, who was only a short distance away at Versailles and visited regularly. While James was away – and presumably while he was often distracted with other matters, and in the day–to–day course of life – we can see Mary of Modena and her preference for Italian artists become the primary cultural influence at Saint–Germain–en–Laye, even more so than she impacted the cultural life of court in Britain. The Stuarts – who Corp compares to the junior branch of the French monarchy, the House of Orléans – operated, “their own network of patronage” with Mary, who was Italian, and Melfort, who supported the growth of Italian culture at court, at the center.523

Portraits were crucial in the eyes of James in exile, and it’s perhaps even easier to see the potentially reactionary relationship between political upheaval and representation in portraiture.524 In 1689, James, along with a French army provided by Louis, went to Ireland to launch a bid to recover the English throne; in 1690, after the disastrous Battle of the Boyne, James and his family moved permanently into apartments at Saint–Germain, where he wanted a “large family portrait to be placed in a prominent position in his antechamber, to impress his visitors with the majesty of the British royal family.”525 Much like Henry’s larger–than–life

523 Corp, “Melfort,” 46.

524 Although somewhat outside the scope of this work, it is important to note that in addition to portraits, the press also played a major role in promoting the Jacobite cause from the exiled court. As Paul Monod notes, “The exiled Stuart court kept a printing press at Saint–Germain–en–Laye to run off declarations, manifestos, protests.” And while London was still the center of publishing for the Jacobite press, this shows that the court in France was producing literature and images that directly spoke to the political agenda of restoration. In fact, the, “Jacobite press posed a serious challenge to the Williamite regime, and elicited a sharply repressive response throughout the 1690s,” a response that seems somewhat at odds with the idea that the censorship of the English press was lessening during this time, as Macaulay argues in History of England. Monod’s work on the censorship and hostility of William and Mary’s court and Parliament to Jacobite propaganda in the press is fascinating and upends some of our conceptions about how free the press in the late–seventeenth century really was. Paul Monod, “The Jacobite Press and English Censorship, 1689–95” in The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward Corp (London: The Hambledon Press), 1995, 125.

525 Corp, King over the Water, 34. This painting was the Mignard family portrait, and is both large and impressive, surely larger than life to those visiting the Court.
portrait at Whitehall, visitors to James’s court at the Château–de–Saint–Germain had to walk past a portrait of the royal family – resplendent in their finery, dominating an entire wall, legitimate and serene – to seek audience with the King. James’s concern for image is clear with this move – he had just lost a major battle, one that was likely the death knell for his military, and images of his family as the royal family of Britain were crucial as the only avenue left for restoration.

Largillière, a French Catholic painter trained in Antwerp, had painted James and Mary before – and was in favor in Charles’ court before anti–Catholic sentiment drove him back to Paris – was in France in 1690, but Mary turned again to Benedetto Gennari for portraits that year. He had worked for the royal family since 1674 (including work on the Lely/Gennari portrait of 1680), but Mary’s patronage likely had to do with both familiarity and nationality, as she often preferred Italian artists. Although it is easy to assume, given the close relationship between France and England that both Charles and James enjoyed, and the exile in France, that, “the Restoration court did little more than follow a French lead,” it was really more an alliance than a full cultural partnership. In fact, there were Italians at court in England, particularly musicians and artists.

526 I use the word “nationality” here, although of course, there is not “nation” yet in the modern sense. Mary preferred painters of Italian origin and background, but she was not a strict adherent to her own rule. Instead, she simply appears to have chosen Italian painters when available, and the royal family’s relationship with Gennari was long and established, and friendly by all accounts. Barclay also notes that, “Mary Beatrice’s artistic patronage was closely linked to her Catholicism,” and an Italian Catholic would have been even better. Andrew Barclay, “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Secon’d Bless’d of Woman–kind?,” 83.

527 Andrew Barclay, “Mary Beatrice of Modena: the ‘Secon’d Bless’d of Woman–kind?,” 83.

528 Edward Corp writes in his excellent article, “Catherine of Braganza and cultural politics,” that Catherine and Mary had teamed up to promote Catholicism (or at least make court more equitable and comfortable for Catholics) and to use their cultural patronage to “enhance their influence at court” and bring Italian artists – and mistresses for Charles – to England (56). Music was also “taken over by Italians,” at least in part due to the partnership of Catherine of Braganza and Mary of Modena (59). Edward Corp, “Catherine of Braganza and cultural politics,” in Queenship in Britain, pp. 53–73.
Mary’s Italian preferences continued through the exile period as well, but it’s also possible she had genuine like for Gennari, for whom she, James, and Catherine of Braganza had been primary patrons. During the exile, Gennari painted a double portrait of James III and Mary, which, artistically, is much less nuanced than other portraits of the royal family, shows Mary in a purple dress and blue cloak, holding the prince, with columns and drapes behind them. There is very little symbolism in the portrait, other than the sumptuous clothing, but its poor quality may have resulted in Gennari’s effective dismissal from the Saint–Germain court; in 1692, he was asked to take the portrait to Modena as a present for the Duke, and not invited back. By late–1691, the royal family had turned to Nicolas de Largillière for their family portraits. Some of these portraits, including the portraits of the young Prince of Wales, were “engraved and sent in large quantities to England and Scotland,” and it is clear that in the 1690s, “the number and quality of Stuart portraits from the exiled Court were already assuming considerable significance.”

529 Quality may not have been the only issues – although the Gennari portrait is less appealing, James’s loss in Ireland may have resulted in a greater dependence on Louis XIV. This dependence, knowing what we know about Louis, almost certainly came with strings, one of which may have been the patronage of French artists.

Plate 38. Benedetto Gennari, "Portrait of Queen Mary of Modena with Prince James Stuart." Oil on canvas, ca. 1690. Historical Portraits Image Library, Philip Mould Ltd.
We know that the young prince sat for Largillière at least five times between 1690 and 1695, although it could have been more frequent even than that. The first portrait, Largillière’s painting *The Prince of Wales*, from 1691, shows the young prince at two years old, naked, and covered with blue draped material. He sits on a cushion with rich fabrics in coral, blue, and white, and, objectively, this is simply a much better painting than the Gennari portrait of Mary and James. Rather than simply being represented as rich and royal, as in the Gennari image, he is shown as almost a cherub. Again, we see a dog, a sign of loyalty, sitting closely with the prince. Rather than being stiffly posed, this portrait shows a real – if somewhat adult looking – child.

Why would James have his family painted in this manner? James was thought, both by historians and his contemporaries, to be humorless and boring – was it perhaps a humanizing touch? It is fitting with the style of the time, and is certainly very close to French portraits being painted in the late–seventeenth century, but this image of the young prince by himself, without his mother or father, is an important part of the role of the second–generation monarch: to carry on the line through his own reign *and* that of his children. This is James III becoming the next Stuart king.

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The next portrait of the Prince of Wales by Largillière has not survived, this one from 1691, when James was three. Although the painting is not able to be viewed today, it can offer a wealth of information on how the royal family was continuing to represent themselves in exile. Corp relates that it was discovered in the Château in the early nineteenth–century but was in terrible condition. Those who found it described it as:

The little prince is very beautiful, with dark eyes, bright complexion, and a profusion clustering curls. He is dressed in a red and green tartan frock, with a long waist, and point–lace stomacher: and wears a sort of fanciful helmet cap of dark blue velvet, with a plume of black and blue feather…He holds a robin red breast on his finger, on which he bestows a smiling regard. The elbow of that arm originally rested in the palm of his royal mother, while the king held him by the other hand; but the portrait of the prince was all that could be restored.\(^532\)

Although the original painting no longer exists, and the source of the above quote cannot be traced back to its original source, there is no reason to assume that this description is in anyway inaccurate. This is another example of James and his family presenting themselves, through their commissioned art, as undeniably legitimate, Scottish, and even, perhaps, English. The description of the young prince paints him as youthful, but still very clearly in a position of power. The red and green tartan signifies a Scottish connection, while the physical connection between him, his mother, and his father speaks to the continuity of legitimacy.\(^533\)

\(^{532}\) Original citation for this belongs to Agnes Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, ix (1846), 313, but her source is unclear. See Edward Corp, *The King Over the Water*, 35.

The third portrait was recently discovered in a private collection, and it is an intriguing image, likely commissioned by a courtier rather than James II or Mary. Painted in 1692, James is wearing a similar costume as he’s described wearing in the lost painting described by Agnes Strickland, who viewed it in the Château–de–Saint–Germain the mid–nineteenth century. The frock James wears is red, and the feathers in his hair are white rather than black and blue. Instead of a robin red breast he is holding a double poppy, and two parrots are on the left side of the painting.534 Also, he’s wearing the Order of the Garter, an honor he had received earlier that year and, somewhat strangely, he’s shown next to an older boy who is turned away from the viewer, looking back at the prince over his shoulder.535

This painting is interesting, not only as another example of portraits of the Prince of Wales, but also because Corp argues that it was likely not commissioned by the king or Mary of Modena, but instead by or for Lady Strickland of Sizergh, who accompanied Mary and the Prince of Wales, who was an infant, when they fled Whitehall and became exiles in France. Lady Strickland was given apartments in the Château–de–Saint–Germaine and was responsible for taking care of the prince, and was joined in France shortly after by her husband and her eldest son, Walter, who was born in 1675.536 The prince was in Lady Strickland’s care from 1688 until

534 Nicolas de Largilière, The Prince of Wales, 1692. Oil on canvas, 137 x 106 cm. Private collection.
535 Description adapted from Edward Corp, “A recently discovered Stuart portrait by Nicolas de Largilière (1656–1746)” in The British Art Journal, Vol. 18. No. 3 (Winter 2017/2018): 87–91, 87. This portrait is clearly the inspiration for an engraving from 1692, The Prince of Wales, engraving by Gérard Edelink (1640–1707), 1692, after Largillière, 1692. 44.5 x 31.6 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France. It is also up for auction through Dorotheum for around $150,000, where the story of its discovery and provenance is shared. The Dorotheum site notes that the provenance is as follows: “Placido de Sangro, Duca di Martina (1829–1891), Naples; Monsignor Augusto Mancini Caracciolo di Martina, after 1870, Rome; and thence by descent to the present owner; We are grateful to Dominique Brême for confirming the attribution after examination of the present painting in the original and for his help in cataloguing this lot.” Dorotheum, Old Master Paintings Lot 104, accessed on January 18, 2021, https://www.dorotheum.com/en/l/1385542/.
536 Corp discusses the family in his book, A Court in Exile (82), but also, we know that her son Walter was granted a pass to join his mother in France in 1689. Corp cites the Sizergh Castle Guidebook, p. 48 for this history.
October 1692, and then again from June 1693 until June 1695, and Corp argues that she might have commissioned portraits of the prince at the end of each of her two periods of caring for James. Corp notes that Lady Strickland did take a, “particular interest in portraiture” and that she, “commissioned Alexis–Simon Belle to paint portraits of her two younger sons…in 1703.” She also collected paintings and the collection can still be seen at Sizergh, and Corp argues that we can assume Lady Strickland commissioned a great number of the portraits, including some portraits modeled after engravings by Kneller.

With the Largillière paintings, the large family painting from 1691, which I will discuss shortly, was almost certainly commissioned by James himself. This portrait was replaced by a 1694 portrait by Mignard in order to include James’s daughter, Louise–Marie, who was born in 1692, and we know that Mary commissioned two portraits in 1694 and 1695 – a portrait of the prince and a portrait of the prince and princess, the former to be sent to the Pope. The fourth portrait, from 1694, was sent to the Pope but has not survived, and the fifth portrait, from 1695, is on display at the National Portrait Gallery in London, and which I will discuss shortly.

The argument for Lady Strickland, rather than James or Mary, commissioning the newly discovered portrait is strengthened by the older boy in the painting. Why would James or Mary include another child, particularly an older boy? Especially since portraits during exile tended to be either filled with symbolism for diplomatic purposes or portraits of the family to display their

537 Corp, “A recently discovered Stuart Portrait,” 89.

538 Corp, “A recently discovered Stuart Portrait,” 89. These portraits are reproduced in the Sizergh Castle Guidbook, 49.

539 Corp discusses this at length in A Court in Exile (183), and evidence for Mary’s commissioning can be found in Journal of Sir David Nairne giving a detailed account of his daily activities in his capacity as Under–Secretary–of–State to James II and his son, the Old Pretender. (National Library of Scotland, MS 14266)

legitimacy conspicuously at the exiled court, putting in another child would make no sense. Lady Strickland, however, had a son, Walter, at court, and Walter became a groom of the bedchamber for the prince in 1695, at which time James left the care of his nurses and governess to be raised among men at court. It is possible that Mary commissioned the portrait as a gift for Lady Strickland, but it does make sense – both because of the timeline and the relationships at Saint–Germain–en–Laye – that the boy in the portrait is Walter Strickland and the painting, somehow, was meant for Lady Strickland. Where this painting hung between 1695 and sometime after 1870 is unknown, but its existence shows that Largillière was painting for both the royal family and the court through the 1690s and that commissioning portraits of the Prince of Wales was done both by the family for their own uses and by the family – or their immediate household and close political allies – for gifts and to share and build images of the family. This newly identified painting is useful for both understanding the images being created of the Prince of Wales and the Stuarts in exile as well as the complicated system of patronages and commissions at the court in Saint–Germain–en–Laye.

541 Corp, A Court in Exile, 258 and 365. Also, Lady Strickland may have been the only woman at court with a son the appropriate age, based on a list of the queen’s salaries in 1693 (RA. SP 1/79).
James was also painted by himself in the 1690s. Although the artist is unknown, this image of James II is exactly what he would have wanted to portray in his unenviable situation.\(^{542}\) James stands leaning on a red–plumed helmet – hearkening to earlier portraits and his military history – while holding what could be either a military baton or the royal scepter. He wears a red sash and armor with red accents, matching the helmet. Although he appears older than his portraits before he was king – and, really, who can judge a little aging under the circumstances? – he is still, with his sword, armor, and pose, portraying himself as vital and strong.

Edward Corp points out that, throughout this period, “the Jacobite court in exile commissioned various Continental painters to produce a steady flow of portraits” to satisfy dynastic loyalty, which required, “visual stimulation…and for the images of the king and his family…to be circulated as widely as possible.”\(^{543}\) Family portraits were particularly useful for James, and he had several commissioned during the exile period. As an exiled king – with a son he wanted to promote to the throne after him – and a second–generation monarch, creating an image of continuity, with a personal flair, was crucial. A 1694 painting by Pierre Mignard is a wonderful illustration of this idea, and shows that family portraits were still being produced, despite the grim outlook for James’s restoration by that time, and that they were still crucial for James, Mary, and their family, which by this time had grown to include Louisa Maria Teresa, born in 1692.

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\(^{542}\) Unknown artist, “King James II,” c. 1690s. National Portrait Gallery, NP 366. The National Portrait Gallery notes that this is not John Riley’s work – and I agree – but that it is an English–sized canvas, and was likely completed by a Continental artist at James’s court in exile. To me, it looks like the work of Langilliere, but we may never know.

\(^{543}\) Edward Corp, *The King Over the Water: Portraits of the Stuarts in Exile after 1689* (Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 2001), 12, 14.
Plate 42. Pierre Mignard, "James II and Family with a Servant." Oil on canvas, ca. 1690s. Royal Collection Trust, Lobby, Palace of Holyroodhouse. RCIN 400966.
In this image, James III, Mary, the young princess Louisa, and James II sit in a family grouping around a table, seemingly on a balcony or portico, with a building that looks much like Versailles in the background. The composition of the photo is interesting, and, while this is, again, a more natural pose than seen in earlier images, like the Whitehall Mural, it is still full of meaning. James II is partially in the shadows, wearing blue robes of state, and with a curtain draped behind him. Looking at the viewer, he appears almost to have just sat down in the chair. The dog at his feet looks at him, much in the same way the dog in the earlier photo with Anne Hyde looked at the deceased Duchess – is this an illusion to James’s failing health? To his semi-retirement from actively trying to restore himself to the throne in favor of working out deals to place his young son in the line of succession? To show loyalty to the home that had exiled him not once, but twice? As Corp notes, this painting was commissioned in 1694, when all hope of James being restored to the throne was certainly lost, and thus perhaps James was playing down his role as king, “leaving the crown, intriguingly, at the feet of his son ‘the Old Pretender.’”

Corp points out, correctly, that it would be fascinating to have insight into how Melfort influenced not just collecting, but also the patronage of artists at the Stuart court in exile, where portraits were being painted not only of the royal family, but the courtiers in exile as well. Corp also and speculates on Melfort’s involvement with Mignard’s work and its composition:

The most important painting to be produced at the exiled court is the great portrait ‘James II and his Family’ by Pierre Mignard, which was placed in the antechamber of the king’s apartment. This was commissioned only a few weeks after Melfort’s departure from the court in the summer of 1694. It is difficult to know what to conclude from this coincidence of dates and it is unlikely that Melfort could have disapproved of the choice of a painter such as Mignard, who was ‘Premier Peintre’ to Louis XIV from 1690 until his death in 1695. Nevertheless, one might speculate that he would have been unhappy with a composition in which James II is represented only as a Knight of the Garter, with

544 Corp, “Melfort,” 43.

545 Corp, “Melfort,” 44.
the crown of England placed at the feet of the Prince of Wales on the other side of the picture. The family portrait is by no means a faithful reflection of the policies that Melfort had been advocating. 546

Melfort may have commissioned, or been involved in commissioning, Mignard’s work, but it is clear that its message was not one he would have condoned if he had still been at Saint–Germain–en–Laye and Secretary of State for James. 547 Elsewhere in the painting, Louisa looks at James II, holding her mother’s hand but gesturing towards her father. Mary also looks at the viewer, wearing similar blue robes and holding up one edge of the robes, directly above a small crown, sash, and sword on a pillow at her feet. Standing next to her, in a small suit of armor with a cape, is the future James III, pointing directly at the crown and looking at the viewer. The lines of the painting point directly from James to the crown to his son, from Mary to the crown, and from Louisa to her father. Even while clearly in France (and even while painted in a very obviously French style) the royal family was claiming that someone in this picture would again be King of England.

546 Corp points out, correctly, that, “it would be interesting to know what influence Melfort had on the patronage of the painters employed by the Stuart court at Saint–Germain–en–Laye,” where portraits were being painted not only of the royal family, but the courtiers in exile as well.

547 Without delving too deeply into the vast web of patronage and politics that existed at the Stuart court in exile, it is sufficient to say here that the court itself was divided into two main factions – courtiers and advisors who wanted constitutional concessions that would lead to a Stuart restoration, and those who felt the best way to regain the throne was through force or diplomatic measures that did not involve any admission of guilt or concessions of power. Those who wanted to return through constitutional means, the “Compounders,” were hopeful that a peaceful, or at least amicable, restoration could take place in England after the death of Queen Anne. Corp has a very succinct explanation of this division, but also cautions against assigning political motivations surrounding this particular matter to patronage. Although Melfort – who favored a forceful return to England without constitutional concessions – would not have approved of Mignard’s composition, for example, that is not an indication that he would have approved more if the painter had been Italian.
As James aged, he continued to sit for portraits, but the images of his children became more important – after all, it was James Francis Edward Stuart, his son, who would sit on the throne next, as James III. The young James – who would be about seven in this picture – walks with his younger sister, Louisa, aged about three, in an outdoor courtyard. A garden and villa appear in the background, with a fountain, and the young Stuarts are surrounded by animals. A green bird rests in a tree near Louisa, above an urn with the children’s names on it, and a small white and brown dog with a red collar is near her feet. Louisa wears an elaborate white lace dress with a lace bonnet, and holds a flower in one hand and points to her brother with the other hand, indicating his role as the older brother, leader, and heir. James wears a red coat, much like James’s in his military portrait from 1685. The symbols of the Order of the Garter are present, and James’s hat, sash, sword, and pose all show him as his father’s clear successor. He also pets a large black dog, who looks at him adoringly. This is not just a portrait of children, but a portrait of (incredibly stylish and stylized) royal children, one of whom is being raised to reclaim the throne of England.

Patronage was also crucial in exile, just as it had been during James’s time in England as Duke of York and king. Turning again to Melfort, Corp gives us insight into the system of collecting and patronage that existed in the exile court, noting that Melfort travelled extensively.

548 Maybe it’s because I’ve worked so long on James’s image, and read so much about him, but calling his son “The Old Pretender” is somewhat distasteful to me. As late as 1705 there were negotiations to put James III on the throne of England when Anne’s children died, and the name seems to point to his rumored illegitimacy more than his claim to the throne.


550 I’ve always wanted to be the historian who studies dogs in paintings, and these are particularly cute dogs. The smaller, white dog looks to be a terrier of some sort, and its coloring, especially side by side with Louisa’s clothing, is a symbol of purity and innocence. The larger dog is likely a greyhound, whippet, or sight hound of some variety. This is a stronger dog, and one that would be familiar to many elites who hunted in England.
and visited great centers of art, but was also friends with, “princes, cardinals and ambassadors” who introduced him to painters and dealers across Europe. 551 It was, “within this system of friendships and clientage that Melfort replaced, within two years, the collection he had been forced to leave behind in England.” 552 After his dismissal from James’s service, Melfort even opened his collection to the public in Paris.

In 1698, James and Mary celebrated their twenty–fifth wedding anniversary and commissioned François de Troy to paint their portraits, “which they then exchanged as mutual presents to be displayed in each other’s apartments.” 553 These portraits were deemed a success, and between 1699 and 1701 Troy – and likely his principal assistant, Alexis–Simon Belle – received a commission to paint seven portraits of the Prince of Wales and two of the Princess, “supplied in multiple copies, so that James could send them to Jacobites in England and Scotland, and to some of his relations in the other European Courts, such as Modena, Hanover and Lisbon.” 554 James also, following on the success of these portraits, commissioned medals that bore the head of the Prince of Wales and which were intended to, “remind people that his

551 Corp, “Melfort,” 44.

552 Corp, “Melfort,” 44. This art, interestingly, was displayed at Saint–Germain–en–Laye in the wing occupied by the Melforts at the Château de Saint–Germain. This apartment, Corp notes, had been created in the 1670s for the Marquise de Montespan, principal mistress of Louis XIV. The Melforts hung the collection here and, “provided the exiled court with a display and magnificence that attracted and impressed visitors from Versailles and Paris.” (Corp, “Melfort,” 44.)

553 Corp, “The Last Years of James II, 1690–1701,” 23. I am still searching for these portraits, although unfortunately it appears they were either lost in the move from Saint–Germain–en–Laye to the Papal States, left in France and lost sometime after the move, or are in a private collection and not yet available for study.

554 Corp, “The Last Years of James II, 1690–1701,” 23. These portraits are reprinted in Corp’s book A Court in Exile, and the portrait of Mary – now attributed to Alexis–Simon Belle – is available via the National Trust (at Sizergh Castle), but the James portrait, which Corp notes is in the Barrett–Lennard Collection in 2004 is not, at this time, available for reproduction. In it, James is wearing armor and standing next to his crown placed on a table. To see the image, although in black and white, see Corp, A Court in Exile, 187.
son was the *de jure* Prince of Wales, and that one day he would unavoidably become King James III."555

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555 Corp, “The Last Years of James II, 1690–1701,” 23.
These portraits were sent as diplomatic gifts and engraved for larger distribution as well as to awe visitors and secure compliance at the Stuart court but, as Corp points out, “it is difficult to assess the impact of the widespread distribution of these medals, paintings and engravings during the period 1697–1702…much depends on one’s opinion as to the strength of the Jacobite movement within England and Scotland.”556 What is certain is that Mary was corresponding with people in power outside of Saint–Germain–en–Laye about portraits and images, writing to Count Alessandro Caprara (an Italian cardinal) in February 1699 that, “I am ashamed that the promise I made you of the portrait of my son is not yet performed, but I shall take care it is sent you on the first safe and convenient opportunity.”557 Whether a person believed in the Jacobite cause or not, there is, “little doubt…that by the time James III succeeded his father in September 1701 his image had become familiar to a very large number of people within Great Britain,” and, based on our knowledge of the bustling court at Saint–Germain–en–Laye and the flow of images out of it, we can assume the same for many outside England as well.558

James continued to fight for the restoration of either himself or his son to the throne, at least through images, until his death in 1701 at age sixty–seven. After his death, posthumous portraits of James were painted and distributed, and between 1701 and 1703, miraculous cures supposedly took place across France and were attributed to James – so many that in 1702, the Archbishop of Paris began working on James’s canonization.559 His time in exile in France,


where he held a court of Jacobite supporters, was dominated by his desire to return to the throne and to secure it for his son, James III, who, in 1716 was forced to leave France when it became apparent that a restoration would not take place. While James III’s son, Charles Stuart, did mount a campaign in the 1740s, the hope for a peaceful or constitutional restoration was over, and James moved to the Papal States, where he almost immediately commissioned a set of “formal state portraits of himself, this time with the crown prominently displayed.560

Interestingly, although the allusion to James III being the heir and, later, king, is made clearly in many portraits, “there is not a single portrait in which James III is shown with the crown or any other symbol of royalty” in his individual portraits without his father.561 James was nearly always shown as a warrior and a king, even in exile, and It’s clear that art was a reactionary response to political crises for James – as it had been for Henry, and as it will be for George in the next chapter – by lining up the images to the timeline of James’s life. His recognition that he had an image problem is also obvious, but it’s also interesting to note that, outside of fashion, James stayed relatively true to his own visual narrative throughout his reign, from his time as Duke of York to his exile in France. James presented himself as a father who was continuing a dynasty restored, a military leader, a tolerant Catholic, and a member of the royal family until the end.

559 G. Scott, “Sacredness of Majesty”: the English Benedictines and the Cult of James II,” Royal Stuart Papers XXIII (London: Royal Stuart Society, 1994). Corp cites this event as well, noting that Mary supported the canonization and assisted with selecting engravings for a religious biography of James published after his death. Mary continued to be involved in imagery surrounding the Stuarts even after James’s death, and certainly until James III came of age. Corp, A Court in Exile, 189.

560 Corp, “Melfort,” 46.

561 Corp, “Melfort,” 46.
Mark Kishlansky argues that, “In many ways James II was the most capable of all the Stuarts.”\textsuperscript{562} James was incredibly capable in many ways, but, as I will discuss in the conclusion, he not only faced tremendous opposition to his rule – from his time as Duke of York until his death – but also unique challenges that made even his diplomatic acumen not enough to win the day. However, given the continued Jacobite presence, support for James III and Charles Edward Stuart, and actual military threat to the Hanoverians until 1745, his images and representation must have had some impact. Corp notes that, “it is clear that the portraits of the exiled Stuarts were collected and highly prized by a large section of the population in both England and Scotland during the first half of the eighteenth century…even the political opponents of the Stuarts were interested to see them…”\textsuperscript{563} I agree, and believe that these images inspired the continued Jacobite claim, a legacy, and major threat to the Hanoverian dynasty, including George II, until the late–eighteenth century.

\textit{Conclusions}

In 1770, almost one hundred years after James’s reign began, the last portrait of a Stuart “king” was painted. While “not even the papacy” recognized Charles Edward Stuart (grandson of James II) in 1766, one portrait does show him as king. It was “painted in Rome by Laurent…in 1770. It shows him three–quarter length in armour, pointing with his right hand across his chest to a coastline where a battle is being fought on the beach, with warships out at sea. Beside him are placed the crowns of England and Scotland.”\textsuperscript{564} Although entirely a lost cause by 1766, the

\textsuperscript{562} Mark Kishlansky, \textit{A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603–1714}. (Penguin Books: New York), 1996. 267. Despite this claim, it’s important to note that Kishlansky walks this statement back pretty quickly, stating that, “though his intellectual gifts were modest…James pondered problems tirelessly” (267). It is also telling that he only dedicates twenty pages to James, the additional ten pages of the chapter going to a description of William’s invasion.

\textsuperscript{563} Corp, \textit{King over the Water}, 17.

\textsuperscript{564} Corp, \textit{King Over the Water}, 99
imagery of the Stuarts and their supporters was far from forgotten. The Jacobites had suffered serious military defeats in 1715 and 1745, had lost any real French and Scottish support, and, although his daughter was later legitimized, the royal line ended for all intents and purposes with Charles.

In 1963, historian Maurice Ashley famously asked, “Is there a case for James II?” Although his iconography is not as recognizable as Henry’s, and not as much like modern celebrity as George, James’s accomplishments when it came to image were many, and long–lasting. This dissertation asks of each king: what makes these kings and their families so important for understanding the early modern search for legitimate authority? James was faced with unique challenges that he faced as a representative as his age, and his reign raised questions about legitimacy – and representation – that kings and queens would have to grapple with for generations.

Let us return to the original questions asked. How did these particular kings and their families, as second–generation monarchs, represent themselves, and what does a comparative study of that representation say about changes – and continuities – in the British monarchy during the early modern period? With James, we see immense changes in the monarchy and the royal family, although perhaps some continuities that we might not expect. Although the British monarch was not an absolute monarch, as the French kings were, James had to work with a much stronger and well–organized Parliament that had already proven its power with the trial and death of his father. Henry’s Parliament had been less steeped in tradition, less powerful, than the nobles he had to woo and cajole, and James’s downfall came not from a lack of ability to charm, but from constant legalism. After Henry’s reign, image had become even more important (one only has to look at Elizabeth I to see the power of propaganda for the monarch) and patronage
even more political, but James was still representing himself within the framework of legitimate authority. He was making different choices in representation – both in portraits and in the style of his Court – than Charles but, like Henry, was continuing his “new” dynasty. One major change we can see between Henry and James, that we will also see between James and George, is the growing power and influence of Parliament, but a continuity that is also very clear between all three kings is using portraits as both means of impressing and securing the compliance of those who looked upon them.

I’ve also asked what makes these kings such touchstones for the surging interest in and concern with legitimate authority that defined the early modern period? Although I will leave larger, overarching narrative comparisons to my conclusion, it is clear that James is a controversial figure, but also one that was concerned with legitimizing his authority, and that of his dynastic family. While Henry did so through his humanist writings, an unending obsession with a male heir, and images that incorporated both the symbolism and actual body of the king, James turned to the omnipresent legalism of the late–seventeenth century, the writing of his own memoir, and images that placed him within the line of succession – sometimes with Charles, sometimes replacing Charles, sometimes showing his success at producing Protestant heirs, and eventually images that, even from exile, kept the king over the water and his son firmly in the running for the English crown.

Although it is true that Charles was concerned with his image and, as Tim Harris points out, had an incredible challenge ruling all the kingdoms he was restored to, Charles in many ways was able to start over.565 He had been asked to return, and his power was – apart from a

few dissenters and fake plots – almost universally recognized. He could forge a new path. James, like Henry, came to power as a second–generation monarch, taking the throne one king after a major upheaval that changed the structure of English life, the political realm, and, in James’s case, regicide, something the English could never fully walk back from. Image–wise, James did not have a multi–generational dynastic tradition to look to – although images that referenced his father weren’t unheard of, they weren’t always a good idea either – and although he did follow some of his brother’s traditions, like the coronation ceremony, he had to form an image that was unique and different enough from Charles’ that he had his own identity, his own reaction to crises. James also, despite his failures as a king, had to be concerned with creating a dynastic tradition for his own children. To add even more pressure, James, like Henry and George, had serious threats to his crown that he had to react to and at least attempt to solve.

Kevin Sharpe, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, asks another important: “Did…James, unlike his father, fail to put his case, to attend to his representation in words and images, and so fail in those arts increasingly central to the exercise of rule?” I believe this is a question that folds in nicely with my overall discussion, as James’s case shows exactly how much representation and image came to matter, and how crucial James’s role in the continued change over the early modern period in England was. James, like Henry, reacted to political and social crises with images – no one can look at the painting of James with his deceased wife Anne Hyde and their children and say it was not a response to a crisis in which James needed to show himself as a father, and a father of Protestant heirs – but the ways he reacted, the image he presented, was different. Stylistically, James represents a turning point as well, with the increase

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566 Sharpe, Rebranding, 225.
in patronage depending on nationality and the adoption of a more Continental style of representation, but more importantly, his body is styled differently.

Henry was not an absolute monarch, but he had considerable power even without cajoling and flattering the nobles. His image was meant to awe them, not to convince them, and his body was separate, apart, and untouchable. James, over a century later, did not enjoy the same privilege. While Henry could be larger than life, claim to be favored by God, and even survive a break from the all–powerful Catholic Church, James had to be more diplomatic. James’s body was not inviolate – his father’s death had shown that no king’s was. James was painted differently because of the style of the time, but also because he was not untouchable, no matter how much he may have secretly desired to be rid of the pesky Whigs and Parliament. James is a turning point because his representation was crucial, but it was also consciously being turned away from the grandeur of Henry towards the “father figure” of George.\textsuperscript{567} If we were to find three kings to visit to get the “feel” of the early modern period and see how it changed in its roughly 300 years of existence in England, these three would be my choice.

So, did James fail? Absolutely not. He may have failed to retain his throne – although that was likely a military failure much more than a failure of image – but he was by no means a failure in his personal image and establishing the tone and iconography of his dynasty. How else could a cause that was almost hopeless last so long? If James’s body had been truly untouchable, if he had been able to portray himself as larger than life, as divine…maybe he could have retained his throne. Maybe not.\textsuperscript{568} There is absolutely a case for James II, and he was not a

\textsuperscript{567} Of course, it could be said that William and Mary walked this back a bit – imitating Louis XIV with their portraits as Roman gods. But the trend towards gentleman kings, fathers (and eventually mothers) of the nation, tempered with a little gentility? That trends generally upward from here.

\textsuperscript{568} Although, what a fantastic “what if” question that would make.
failure – looking back, his images clearly show his interest in his own representation, his family built a patronage and image system that transcended his own life, and he serves as a marker in the early modern period for the changes that took place, from the glorious body of Henry to the elite gentleman of George. His case shows that legitimacy was crucial – and when legitimacy was questioned, it was an actual problem – throughout the early modern period, but that the images created to respond to questions of legitimacy, rule, and power were quite different now that the English had killed their king, development political parties, and started to see themselves as needing a “father” of the country rather than an absolute leader. James, the most capable of the Stuarts, may have had a short reign, like the Aberdeenshire horses, but his legacy serves as a turning point in the early modern English history of royal images.
Chapter Six:
George II: A Neglected Court of Patronage

Introduction

“The neglect of George II is longstanding,” writes historian Jeremy Black.569 While Henry VIII has been a highly public and publicized figure – the, “only king whose shape you recognize,” as he’s been described – and James II was a controversial king whose reign, and ultimate downfall led to new dynasties and changes to the monarchy itself, what can be said of George II?570 I propose that much can be said, particularly when compared to these other second–generation kings, and especially when looking at the dramatic changes that took place in the role and image of the royal family in the early modern period in Britain.

The second Hanoverian ruler of Britain, George’s reign was longer than Henry’s or James’s, and his time on the throne saw a monarchy, a country, and a country and world much changed. He was the last British king to personally lead the army into battle – like Henry and James, he had a keen interest in the military. He established, through royal assent, the British Museum. His wife – Caroline of Ansbach – was a famous patroness of the arts in her own right. He dealt with the rule of both Britain (England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland) and Hanover and faced the largest and most successful Jacobite rebellion and threat to the throne of the eighteenth century. The early modern period, I argue, ends in England with George’s death in 1760, and he


and his family influenced style, culture, art, and political life at court and in society – an influence that is still felt today. Yet, George II remains, as Black argues, neglected. But why? Has he suffered from neglect due to his reign being deemed unremarkable by many historians and his own courtiers? Has his legacy been a victim of his times, his family, his image, his more famous – and infamous – descendants and rivals? Does George’s reign “matter” in a larger discussion of early modern England?

These questions have plagued historians – when, of course, they have bothered to think about George at all. He is most often neglected in favor of his father George I, the first Hanoverian king of Britain, his grandson George III, his wife Caroline – a great, and very public, patroness of the arts – or his Jacobite rivals for the throne, including the son and grandson of James II. As Veronica Baker–Smith notes, the treatment of the Hanoverians has been uneven; the reign of George II and the history of his family are a type of, “lost generation which appears to have slipped through the historical net.”571 He has been represented as a foreign king with very little interest in his own image, especially his image as an British ruler, or the arts in general.

Despite this, there is more to George’s story than appears at first glance, especially when his image, and his involvement with art, collecting, patronage, and portraiture, are considered. Not only was George interested in the arts and – whether by necessity or genuine interest – his own image, his wife, Caroline of Ansbach, was a noted patron of the arts and a major contributor to the cultural life of Hanoverian Britain and George and Caroline’s court. Horace Walpole, courtier, politician, gossip, antiquarian, and chronicler of the eighteenth–century, wrote in his Anecdotes of Painting in England that George’s reign was a, “shining period in the history of

arts.” Gardening – that “art unknown” – became an English art form during George’s reign, guided by Caroline’s patronage. Caroline, in particular, was, “ever ready to reward merit and wished to have their reign illustrated by monuments of genius.” It appears, and will become more apparent in this chapter and the next that George’s contemporaries felt that his court was a center of culture and arts, and he and Caroline certainly championed the arts and learning. Perhaps his personal and familial struggles,

In this chapter, I will continue my methodology of beginning with a short discussion of the major changes and events between the end of James’s reign in 1689 and the beginning of George’s in 1727 – although, it is worth noting that George was born in 1683, when James was still very much the Duke of York and heir apparent, while the Hanoverian branch of the family was, if not languishing in obscurity, certainly not looking towards the British throne. I will then move on to a short biographical narrative of George’s early life. Here, I will also discuss Caroline’s life in more detail, as she was such a major part of George’s time as Prince of Wales and his early reign, and her upbringing almost certainly influenced her patronage. Next, I will look at George’s status as a second-generation monarch, followed by a discussion of the major trends in the historiography of George’s reign and life. Finally, I will briefly discuss collecting and patronage, although – particularly when discussing Caroline – much more attention will be paid to these topics in the next chapter, where I will examine portraits from George’s time as heir to his father, George I, through his later life and up to his death in 1760 in a generally

572 Walpole, H., Vertue, G., Walpole Collection. (176271). Anecdotes of painting in England: with some account of the principal artist; and incidental notes on other arts; collected by the late Mr. George Vertue; and now digested and published from his original MSS. Strawberry Hill: Printed by Thomas Farmer, v. 4, 51.

573 Walpole, H., Vertue, G., Walpole Collection. (176271). Anecdotes of painting in England: with some account of the principal artist; and incidental notes on other arts; collected by the late Mr. George Vertue; and now digested and published from his original MSS. Strawberry Hill: Printed by Thomas Farmer, v. 4 page 51.
chronological order. As in previous chapters, this analysis will also follow political and personal moments of upheaval and the paintings that coincided with or, as we are able to interpret, perhaps spoke directly to these events. This will show that many images and actions concerning representation correlate with challenges to the legitimacy of the king or to event that challenged the monarchy or Hanoverian dynasty as a whole.

Although, as in previous chapters, portraits are my primary focus throughout this work, I will also discuss ways beyond direct representation through portraits that George and his family used to bolster their legitimacy, such as collecting, patronage, ceremony, and design. Throughout this chapter, and this work as a whole, I will be seeking to answer my original questions: How did these particular kings and their families, as second–generation monarchs, represent themselves, and what does a comparative study of that representation say about changes – and continuities – in the British monarchy during the early modern period? And, when compared, what can their unique experiences tell us?

*Between James II and George II: A New Dynasty, a New Century*

Although the time that elapsed between James’s reign and George’s was much shorter than the time between Henry and James, the world – and Britain and her various dominions – still changed in dramatic ways.574 When James II fled England for France in 1689 ahead of the advancing army of William of Orange, he set dynastic wheels in motion that no one could have foreseen. Although James did not formally abdicate, Parliament declared that he had abandoned

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the throne and that his descendants – his Catholic descendants, that is – were no longer in the line of succession. As Jeremy Black notes, “the crisis in 1688 was dynastic as much as political,” but that most people did not want the hereditary succession to end, they simply did not want a Catholic monarch. The problem, it is important to remember, was not that James was a Stuart king, but that he – along his wife, and his new male heir – was a Catholic and, to make matters worse, a Catholic with very strong views on royal prerogative and power, as well as toleration for Catholics and dissenters in general.

William of Orange – later William III of England – was married to James’s eldest daughter, Mary. Mary and her sister Anne, born to James’s first wife, Anne Hyde, were adults by the time he took the throne and were both married to Protestant leaders in Europe. Both girls had been raised Protestant, despite the Catholic leanings – and later, overt Catholicism – their father, mother, and uncle displayed. The Protestant upbringing of Mary and Anne, along with their alliances with Protestant rulers was crucial for James’s ascension to the throne. After all, many of his detractors must have wondered, how much damage could an aging Catholic ruler cause before one of his Protestant children or grandchildren took over? But when Mary of Modena, James’s second, Catholic wife, gave birth to James Francis Edward Stuart in 1688, things changed dramatically.

William and Mary were invited by members of Parliament to claim the throne of England, James fled to France with his family, and the rest is history (or, at the very least, given a more detailed treatment in the previous chapter). William and Mary became William III and Mary II, joint rulers of a Protestant England. Unfortunately, Mary had suffered a series of miscarriages throughout her marriage, and the couple had no surviving children. When Mary

died at age thirty-two, of smallpox in 1694, William carried on as the sole ruler until his death in 1702. While William and Mary are often painted as staunch Protestants – which they, by all accounts, were – William also encouraged limited religious tolerance. He and Mary also agreed to abide by the 1689 Bill of Rights, which severely limited royal prerogative, making it illegal for the sovereign to suspend laws passed by Parliament, to levy taxes without the approval of Parliament, to raise a standing army without the approval of Parliament, and several other restrictions. Parliament would not be run roughshod over by the sovereign again.\textsuperscript{576}

Mary’s younger sister Anne, married in 1683 to Prince George of Denmark, came to the throne in 1702, a year after the death of her father and after years spent as William and Mary’s heir–presumptive. Her husband never took real power, although he was a fixture at court and as a British general; tragically, despite being pregnant at least seventeen times, none of Anne’s children survived past childhood. Her one surviving son, the Duke of Gloucester, died at age eleven in 1700. Anne would continue to rule until 1714, when she died after months of illness.\textsuperscript{577}

All of this is fascinating, and adds to the already complicated history of the late–seventeenth century, but it is also important for understanding how George II came to the throne, and how in

\textsuperscript{576} It is worth noting here that James’s position in Scotland also collapsed in 1688–89 and, “there was also a major shift in the nature of monarchy in Scotland.” (Black, \textit{George II}, 11.) It was determined that James had forfeited the Scottish crown as well, but the conditions under which the crown was offered to William and Mary gave the Scottish Parliament somewhat greater freedom from the personal rule of the king in England. Black notes that William never visited Scotland – and that the, “next monarch to do so was George IV in 1822.” (Black, \textit{George II}, 11.) One has to wonder what would have happened if William, Mary, Anne, George I, or George II \textit{had} made a visit to Scotland. If it was a success, would it have secured Scotland’s loyalty to the later Stuarts or the Hanoverians, and prevented or lessened the uprisings of 1715 and 1745? If a royal visit was a disaster – as one could imagine it might have been – would it have catalyzed the Stuart cause and led to a successful rebellion, restoring the Catholic Stuarts to the throne? We’ll never know, and the scope of this work cannot encompass all the changes and impacts in every corner of the realm between each monarch, but it is a fascinating question – and shows the diversity of reactions to royal rule, prerogative, and image throughout the “united” kingdom.

his early life he could hardly hope that he would one day be King of England (much less Ireland, Scotland, or Wales). William and Mary likely knew that they would not have legitimate children by the time they came to the throne, given Mary’s history of miscarriages, but when it became more and more clear that Anne would not produce a living heir, the matter of the succession had to be determined. The Act of Settlement of 1701 had a great number of provisions, but the most important for the purposes of this study was the exclusion of Catholics from the line of succession.\footnote{Since its passing in 1701, the Act of Settlement has undergone many changes. The original Act prohibited the monarch from traveling outside the dominions of the English Empire without the approval of Parliament, something that was removed by George I so that he could visit Hanover more often. Since Queen Victoria’s ascension, the piece of the Act stating that England, “any dominions or territories which do not belong to the Crown of England, without the consent of Parliament” has lain dormant, as she did not inherit the Electorate of Hanover due to Salic Law. Most interestingly, the Succession to the Crown Act 2013 did away with both male–preference primogeniture, in favor of absolute primogeniture, and repealed the Royal Marriages Act of 1772, which built on the Act of Settlement by disallowing those married to Catholics to take the throne and required the first six people in line for the throne to receive approval for the sovereign for their marriage. As of this writing, members of the royal family who are married to Catholics may keep their place in the line of succession, but Catholics are still prohibited from ascending to the throne, in no small part because the head of the Church of England is also the ruling sovereign.} With this Act, James II’s children with Mary of Modena, including his son James III, were prohibited from ruling England. Who, then, would be the next sovereign?

To answer that question, Parliament had to look backwards in time and in the lineage of the royal family, beyond the English Civil War, to find a suitable candidate. This was a complicated task, both politically and in terms of finding someone who met all the requirements of both hereditary succession and the new Act of Settlement. To make matters even more fraught, Scotland – where support for the Stuarts was still high, if not universal – had passed their own Act of Security in 1704, ensuring that the Scottish Parliament could choose their own successor to Anne. This led directly to the Acts of Union of 1707, which changed the nations of Scotland and England – two nations under the same monarch – into two pieces of Great Britain,
with their parliaments combining.\textsuperscript{579} Whomever was chosen as the successor must be palatable to England, Parliament, and, importantly, Scotland.

Parliament turned to James I (r. 1603–1625) and his children. Charles I’s children who had survived to adulthood – Charles II and James II were both deceased, and Charles had no legitimate heirs, while James’s legitimate children – Mary and Anne – had both died (or would soon die) childless. James I, however, had married his second child, Elizabeth, to Frederick, Count Palatine of the Rhine and later King of Bohemia. Staunch Protestants, if somewhat tragic rulers, Elizabeth and Frederick had several children, including Sophia, their eleventh child born in 1630.\textsuperscript{580} Sophia married another German ruler and Protestant, Ernest Augustus, Elector of Hanover, and had children. Sophia was, aged seventy in 1701, the eldest, and most suitable, eligible Protestant relation to the royal family. This cut off the legal restoration ambitions of James III, but while many in Parliament and at court were eager to have Sophia come to England, Anne saw the older, but healthier and more popular, woman as a threat, and Sophia was forced to stay in Hanover until her death, two months before that of Anne, in 1714.

When Anne died, George I, born in 1660, ascended to the throne. He traveled to England, bringing his son, future George II, with him to live in their new kingdom. As a reminder, George I was born just as Charles II was returning to England to reclaim his title and throne. In his lifetime, he would go from a distant relation of the King of England and heir to an Electorate (an important one, but one of many), to an observer of the political, religious, and cultural chaos taking place in England, to the son of the heir to the throne of England to king himself. For

\textsuperscript{579} This act not only kept Scotland from having a separate monarch, but it also laid the foundation for the “United Kingdom.” Although George II did rule over Scotland – and Wales, and Ireland, and laid claim to France – I will continue to use “English” and “England” where speaking of general rule or events.

\textsuperscript{580} For works on Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, sometimes called the Winter Queen, see the excellent recent work by Nadine Akkerman, \textit{Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Hearts} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).
George II, this shift must have been just as profound, particularly given his tumultuous upbringing and difficult relationship with his father and the challenge of becoming a second-generation monarch.

In short, the world itself had changed – although perhaps not as dramatically as between Henry and James – but more importantly, the rules of the British monarchy had changed. George II was not born in a different world than James, but he would inherit a very different throne in a very different Britain, and although he also would face cultural, religious, and political challenges to the legitimacy of his rule, they would come from very different quarters and in very different ways than the challenges James faced. However, as we will see, as a second-generation monarch, George had many of the same concerns that Henry and James also carried.

_A Brief Biography of the Future George II and Caroline_

Biographies of George and Caroline were once few and far between – and many biographies that do exist are dismissive of the “foreign” king and his court. Luckily, that is no longer the case, with several excellent biographical and historical works focusing on George II and his family. George II was born Georg Augustus in 1683, the grandson of the granddaughter of James I. From this tenuous link to the British monarchy, he rose to be the second and, in some ways, most successful member of the Hanoverian dynasty. Like Henry and James, he has suffered greatly at the hands of his contemporaries and later historians. Despite the massive, largely unexplored depths of his and Caroline’s artistic and cultural patronage, the

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581 I have mentioned – or will mention, in my bibliography – most of these. However, I would note that Andrew C. Thompson, John Van der Kiste, Norman Davies, and Jeremy Black have all written excellent academic works on George, and Clarissa Campbell Orr and Joanna Marschner are authorities on Caroline of Ansbach. Any works by these authors should be considered useful and informative.
changes in policy, practice, and political organization in Britain and Hanover under his rule, the establishment of libraries and universities in a culmination of the British move towards public centers of art, and the fascinating ways in which the royal body and person was envisioned under George and Caroline – particularly as their power moved away from the political and towards the modern, more culturally relevant institution we know today – they have been largely ignored, and never, in academic works, compared directly to the other kings discussed in this work. A brief biography of George’s early life – and that of Caroline’s, whose influence cannot be discounted when it comes to the social and cultural history of George’s reign – is necessary for this discussion.  

George August’s birth was greeted with happiness from his family, as his birth and sex put them one step closer to gaining Elector status – as a male child, his family would have rejoiced at the continuation of their dynasty at the very least, much like Henry and James’s families. His early life was not documented or conducted as the heir’s would have been, and we have limited information on George’s early childhood. What we do have is based on later writings by George himself, and his childhood was shadowed by familial scandal that makes it difficult to separate fact from fiction. His father was often away on military campaign, and his mother, an interesting figure in her own right, seems to figure little in her son’s memories – at least those he shared with others. He mentioned in 1737 that he was close to his grandfather, Georg Wilhelm (his mother’s father) and his father’s mother, Sophia (again, the Sophia who was James I’s granddaughter, known often as Sophia of the Palatinate).  

I address this debate in the introduction (see footnote 4), but again – George’s title was complicated, as were the lands he reigned over. George was certainly the King of England, the King of Great Britain, and the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, but his power over much of Scotland, as well as the continued claim to the throne of France, can certainly be questioned.  

Thompson, King and Elector, 15.
he had tutors, and grew up speaking primarily French both in his studies and at home, as well as German and English. Most information historians have about George’s early life comes from outside observation, but what seems clear is that George was overall a good student, with a bit of a bit of a temper, and a truly terrible relationship with his father, something that was to color the rest of his life.

George cannot, of course, be assigned all his mannerisms and shortcomings based on his youthful experiences with his parents, but he certainly cannot be discussed without them. Besides gaining a throne almost overnight, one of the most influential events of George’s young life had to be the Konigsmarck Affair, which may have influenced his views on family and on the importance of dynasty. As is widely known, even for those who do not have academic historical knowledge – one can’t watch a period piece or read historical fiction without seeing it – most political marriages were made in the early modern period for exactly that: political purposes. George’s parents had a marriage born of political advantage rather than love, and barely tolerated each other. Men were allowed, with little repercussion, to have affairs outside of marriage – see Henry VIII’s various affairs for proof of the double standard – but women,

584 Davies, George II, 1.

585 Thompson, King and Elector, 18. Thompson, in one of two true biographies of George II in English, also makes an important point – many biographers have tended to blame George’s upbringing “for his reactions in later life.” (Thompson, King and Elector, 17.)

586 Thompson, King and Elector, 17. It is important to note here, as discussed earlier in this work, that marriage evolved alongside conceptions of family, childhood, celebrity, and popular culture as well. Although this is not an analysis of these changes, they did have an impact on the kings discussed here. For example, leaving a queen as regent, or head of a regency council, was hardly unheard of in English history – medieval and early modern kings did so with regularity – but the concept of marrying for anything other than political expediency and strategy would have been, with very few exceptions, unthinkable before George’s time without serious repercussions. Henry VIII did with Anne Boleyn, and sparked a reign and century of turmoil. James II did with Anne Hyde and received at best disapproval, at worst rebellion. George II married for very little political gain, yet had no real negative consequences. The most famous example, which is outside the purview of this study, but which would be disastrous to forget, is the marriage of Edward IV to Elizabeth Woodville – the marriage that sparked the Wars of the Roses. For excellent studies on the changing ideas of marriage and family during the medieval and early modern periods, see…
even in the late–seventeenth century – were not only discouraged from having extramarital affairs, they were often punished harshly for any indiscretions.\textsuperscript{587}

George’s father took mistresses, and his mother, Sophia Dorothea, also took a lover, Count Philipp Christoph von Königsmarck, a Swedish noble in Hanoverian service. They exchanged a series of letters and, although there is little concrete evidence available of the proceedings today, the secret was leaked. After being warned that the relationship must stop, to no avail, Königsmarck was intercepted on his way to Sophia Dorothea’s apartments in 1694 and, unsurprisingly, never heard from again. After the discovery of the affair and the disappearance of Königsmark, Sophia Dorothea was sent to live at a castle in Ahlden, Georg Ludwig divorced her, she was not allowed to have any contact with her children, and “traces of her presence were systematically removed from the Hanoverian court.”\textsuperscript{588}

George was eleven when he saw his mother for the last time, and stories circulated, particularly when he came to England of his great desire to see her, to have saved her from her fate, to have freed her if she had outlived his father. Much of this has come to historians in the form of Horace Walpole’s stories, such as the anecdote that Königsmarck’s body was unearthed in the Leine palace after George I’s death – a story he attributed to Caroline, who never returned to Hanover after 1714 and probably would not have been present at a construction site if she

\textsuperscript{587} Thompson, \textit{King and Elector}, 17. This double standard was, of course, “rooted in the fear that an heir might not really be entitled to his father’s property.” (Thompson, \textit{King and Elector}, 17.)

\textsuperscript{588} Thompson, \textit{King and Elector}, 18. Reading this passage in Thompson’s work makes me think of Henry’s campaign to erase Anne Boleyn’s influence from court, and her lack of portraiture that exists today (or that, perhaps exists, but is waiting for us to find and identify). Sophia Dorothea was erased culturally, but also, sadly, from the lives of her children.
had. Thompson notes, accurately, that these anecdotes have come to historians as fact, as remembrances, rather than the “gossipy” and unfavorable rumors Walpole generally spread.

Walpole – who is the very definition of an unreliable narrator, and was a terrible gossip, but was a great journal and letter writer, as well as a keen observer of the court and court life – also noted, in Reminiscences written by Mr Horace Walpole in 1788 for the amusement of Miss Mary and miss Agnes Berry, that George II kept portraits of his mother hidden, which emerged only when his father died in 1727. Henrietta Howard, George’s long–term mistress, told Walpole that George would have freed his mother and brought her to Britain or left her in charge of Hanover in his wake, if only she had outlived his father. There was also the rumor that George tried to visit his mother when he was on a hunting expedition in Hanover, but was stopped before he reached Ahlden, a story that is almost certainly untrue – records were kept of all visitors to Sophia Dorothea, and there is nothing else to indicate this incident ever happened. Whether George actually tried to see his mother, or kept hidden portraits of her in England – a story that rings true when considering the relationship he had with his father – may be tales lost to history. But it is certain that her exile had an impact on him, and that his father’s actions likely contributed to their later rift and his creation of a separate court in England that allowed him to keep his distance from his father.

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589 Walpole says that a courtier, Lady Suffolk, went to attend Caroline the morning after news arrived that George I had died and that she, “told me her surprise on going to the new Queen…at seeing hung up in the Queen’s dressing–room a whole length of a Lady in royal robes; and in the bedchamber a half length of the same person,” neither or which she recognized. Walpole continues that, “the Prince had kept them concealed, not daring to produce them during the life of his Father. The whole length he probably sent to Hanover; the half length I have frequently…seen in the library of Princess Amelia who told me it was a portrait of her Grandmother.” (Walpole, Reminiscences, 22–24.)

590 Thompson, King and Elector, 18.

591 Walpole, Horace, Reminiscences written by Mr Horace Walpole in 1788 for the amusement of Miss Mary and miss Agnes Berry, 22.

592 Walpole, Reminiscences, 22.
Caroline also had a turbulent childhood. Although she was not born a significant royal or as part of a great royal house, her dynastic assets were substantial. Her father was Johann Friedrich, Margrave of Brandenburg–Ansbach, a member of the cadet branch of the Hohenzollern dynasty. Caroline was third cousin to “the Great Elector” Friedrich Wilhelm. Her mother, Eleanore Erdmuth Luise was part of the “Ernestine” branch of the house of Wettin – again, a type of cadet line to the electors of Saxony. Caroline’s father died when she was three, and her mother remarried twice; the second time her husband caught smallpox from his mistress and died, and two years later, Eleanore herself died. Caroline was thirteen, and was eventually taken in by the Elector Friedrich III of Brandenburg.\(^{593}\) This seemingly selfless act was, Hanham points out, also made with the full awareness that Caroline’s status as a Hohenzollern princess, which – for a noble with no daughters – made her especially valuable on the political marriage market.\(^{594}\) It is important to remember here that these alliances and relationships were constantly shifting, and although Caroline had a stable home, she must have felt this instability.\(^{595}\)

While Caroline faced an uncertain future, George knew that, at the very least, he would likely become the next Elector of Hanover and, from the age of 18, knew that he was in the line of succession for the British crown, after the Act of Settlement in 1701. His father was certainly the most eligible candidate for the throne after Sophia, as his uncles either had little interest in

\(^{593}\) Hanham, ‘Anglicisation,’ 278.

\(^{594}\) Hanham, ‘Anglicisation,’ 278.

\(^{595}\) Hanham, ‘Anglicisation,’ 279. Hanham notes that Caroline came under the influence of the Elector’s wife, Sophia Charlotte, who lived in the Italinate residence of Lutzenburg, separate from her husband, and who “indulged her intellectual and cultural interests,” and, in Caroline, “quickly discovered a bright and enthusiastic protegee.” (279). He also notes that, “She received little formal education, but, “such surrounding provided a stimulating environment for a princess...with an avid interest in the arts, a love of music and theatre, and whose developing mind was attracted to new ideas and new thinking, particularly in the topical questions of philosophy and theology.” (278).
the British throne, were disqualified for religious beliefs, or were rumored to have “deviant” sexual appetites. George’s father was a successful military officer, and George himself was a distinguished cavalry officer, receiving commendation for his part in the Battle of Oudenarde in 1708 as part of the War of the Spanish Succession. These factors, combined with the scandal surrounding the future George I, made the younger George a prime candidate for both Elector and eventually King. This situation, however, was fluid. The Hanoverians were still in contact with their English relations, and while Sophia knew that she was in line for the throne, there were many more immediate options, making the Stuart connection, “hardly…anything beyond a curiosity.”

With these fluid and uncertain relationships, the Hanoverian Guelphs chose to use advantageous marriages within Europe to secure “local inheritances before riskier adventures abroad” – a strategy that may seem conservative, but actually left them with many avenues to power. Caroline, when she met George, had already turned down at least one other suitor – the Archduke Charles of Austria – assumedly because of his Catholicism and his uncertain prospects, while George was Protestant (and her rejection of a Catholic husband made her more appealing politically) and his rise to the throne almost certain, apart from the underlying Jacobite threat. Although a marriage that was politically savvy, it does appear – as I will discuss further in the next chapter – that George and Caroline had a generally happy, and certainly productive, partnership and marriage.

597 Davies, George II, 9.
598 Davies, George II, 11.
599 Hanham, ‘Anglicisation,’ 281. This is a classic example of the story mattering much more than the “truth.”
George: Second–Generation Monarch

The concept of a second–generation monarch – the second monarch in a dynasty to rule after a major shift in the dynastic nature of the royal family – has been discussed extensively in previous chapters. But it is crucial to explain here why George, who came to the throne after no real war, certainly no regicide, and after his father’s somewhat uneventful rule, is a second–generation monarch. Like both kings already discussed, George was not born as the heir to the British throne. Henry and James were both second sons, and George – while the first-born son – was not directly in line to rule (or even indirectly, in 1683 at the time of his birth). George was also certainly the second king in a new dynasty in Britain. He and Caroline would try to connect their Hanoverian dynasty to the “ancient” Tudors, but despite tenuous and distant links, they were creating a new dynasty, one that brought kings from a foreign land to rule a collection of countries they had never visited before. Although a war did not break out when Anne I died and George I came to the throne, it easily could have, and certainly Stuart loyalists did not discount the possibility. George was not facing a throne upended by war, but rather a rival court that had immense power, even in exile.

It’s also clear that some influences from George’s youth colored his later life – like Henry and James’s early lives certainly impacted them – but that his childhood in Hanover made him dull or uninterested in culture is overstating things a bit. George grew up to be interested in the arts, to be a witty conversationalist, and to have strong opinions. This is not unlike the other kings described here. Henry’s early life, growing up in the aftermath of the Wars of the Roses,

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600 This is not to say that the 1715 Jacobite rebellion wasn’t important, or impressive. However, it was not a full–scale war and certainly did not threaten the seat of power in London. For works on the 1715 uprising, see: Daniel Szcchi, *1715: The Great Jacobite Rebellion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), Gregory Fremont Barnes, *The Jacobite Rebellion 1715–46* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011), and John Baynes, *The Jacobite Rising of 1715* (London: Cassell, 1970).
seeing his brother succumb to illness and the fragility of the throne, must have had some
influence on his later incessant need for a male heir and representations of his physical prowess.
James was certainly impacted by his father’s death and subsequent exile, and by the numerous
plots to remove him from the line of succession – and, as discussed in the last chapter, by the
death of his brother, who it seems he truly cared for. George was a second–generation monarch
also in the sense that he was forced, especially in a time where the power of the king was moving
from the political – a role taken by Parliament – to the cultural, to create his own image while
drawing on the legitimacy his estranged father brought to his rule and the bright future of his
dynasty, which he and Caroline would assure. 601

_Historiography_

As mentioned above, the historiography of George II – and the Hanoverian dynasty as a
whole – has tended to be uneven, with substantial amounts of attention paid to George I and III,
but with little paid to George II or his family, despite his long reign and the fascinating lives of
his wife and children. This is not entirely the fault of historians or biographers, however. Jeremy
Black notes that, “there are two main difficulties that George II’s prospective biographer faces:
one archival and the other historiographical." 602 George himself left few personal papers –

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601 One question that has come up, since the beginning of my work on this topic, is why Anne is not included here.
Beyond brevity – at which I have utterly failed already – it is my contention that there was no real upheaval in
Britain outside the halls of Parliament when James fled. Of course there was concern, but I have found no evidence,
in any of the works cited here, that there was any type of major, disruptive change in the cultural, social, religious,
or political life of Britain, except a gradual growth of the power of Parliament, after James was replaced with
William and Mary. Yes, Stuart supporters lost their seats and land in some cases, with many going into exile with
James in France. But Mary was already well–known and popular in Britain, William was Protestant and an
accomplished leader, and while many may have missed the merry court of Charles or the religious tolerance James
wanted to introduce, I don’t believe that Anne felt the same pressures Henry, James, or George felt to pay homage to
William and Mary while continuing her dynasty. That said – a study of Anne would be fascinating, and it is
incredibly sad that Anne was never afforded the opportunity to continue the post–Glorious Revolution Stuart
dynasty due to the deaths of her children. She is certainly overlooked, as is Mary, but I do not think she is a second–
generation monarch according to the parameters of this study.

although many wrote about him, and he certainly did write his own private papers, very little from his own hand survives. The letters of his grandson George III are voluminous and overshadow the small collection George II left behind. Why is not totally clear, although George almost certainly destroyed his father’s private papers, and something similar may have happened to his own papers.\(^603\) While there are many other sources, it appears that most writing from George’s life is from those surrounding him – letters, journals, engravings, and records from the reign of George II and his time as Prince of Wales abound, but much of our archival materials from George’s reign are from others at court, foreign dignitaries, members of Parliament, and his political rivals. George’s own voice is disappointingly silent.

In addition, George was not a prolific letter writer, and his personal correspondence tends to be short and scarce.\(^604\) Thompson points out that George did speak to his ministers often, but that he rarely wrote to them when an in–person meeting would suffice.\(^605\) Still, this lack of records cannot be the sole difficulty when it comes to archival research on George’s life. An additional wrinkle comes from the dual nature of his role. As discussed in the previous chapter on James II, the English king was also – with varying degrees of success – king of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. He was king of all these dominions, beginning in 1727, but had only come to live in Great Britain in 1714, and as a member of the Guelph dynasty, had important roles to play in Europe as well, primarily as Elector of Hanover.\(^606\) Another layer of difficulty lies here, as the records and archives of the Guelph dynasty were split up in the nineteenth–century, and

\(^{603}\) Thompson, *George II*, 1.

\(^{604}\) Andrew Thompson, *George II: King and Elector* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2011), 1.

\(^{605}\) Thompson, *George II*, 2.

\(^{606}\) Thompson, *George II*, 2.
many records were damaged during World War II and subsequent natural disasters – most of which were from the eighteenth-century and George II’s reign as king and elector. The, “reconstruction of George’s life and times requires careful consideration of a diverse and dispersed set of sources in several languages,” as well as a creative and contextual reading of them. 607

Veronica Baker-Smith, in her discussion of George II’s complicated family life – a confusing and sprawling group that may account for some of the difficulties in studying George’s reign – notes that while George I has both a defining biography from Ragnhild Hatton, and George III has been the subject of much attention, this focus has largely skipped over George II, with a very good biography appearing in 1901 and 1975, but none in between. 608 Historiographical works that include or focus on Caroline have recently come into fashion, with a recent excellent work from Joanna Marschner, and some other new biographies that have come out in the last decade. 609 Part of this is surely that women’s history, history of the family, the recognition of cultural power as political power – these are modern historiographical concepts that have sadly only become popular in the last several decades. While George and Caroline’s contemporaries certainly recognized the power the queen – and later, the couple’s daughters –

607 Thompson, George II, 3.

608 Veronica Baker–Smith, Royal Discord: The Family of George II (London: Athenae Press, 2008), 7. Some new biographies are excellent – Thompson’s for example – but that so few works on George II and Caroline exist as compared to other eighteenth-century royals is strange.

609 Joanna Marschner, Queen Caroline: Cultural Politics at the Early Eighteenth–Century Court (London: Paul Mellon Center, 2014). Another excellent recent biography is Matthew Dennison, The First Iron Lady: A Life of Caroline of Ansbach (London: William Collins, 2017). That Caroline is finally getting more attention may have some to do with the recent fascination with Regency and eighteenth–century life in books, television, and movies – her successor as queen, Charlotte of Mecklenberg–Strelitz, has become a pop–culture icon due to the recent success of the Bridgerton series. It is also important to remember, just like when discussing the wives of Henry and James, that cultural history as we know it today was not really in existence until the mid–twentieth century.
had, it would not have been given the same consideration or weight as the actual power of the monarch or Parliament by courtiers and contemporaries.

George’s family, in particular Caroline, worked very diligently to create an image for themselves that was distinct from the very German image of his father’s court. But rather than being remembered as English, or British, George has barely been remembered at all. Only in recent years have any true biographies or analytical studies of George’s reign been produced, and, while Caroline has long been a subject of fascination for art historians, historians have rarely discussed her patronage, political savvy, or cultural influence. As Emma Jay notes, George II was represented as, “neglectful of the arts.” But she also argues that modern scholars are challenging this view, and are now arguing – as I am – that George and Caroline actively participated in creating a court that would be British rather than Hanoverian, and modern and young in contrast to George I’s court, particularly when it came to Caroline’s library and closet. I agree with this, and argue that in addition to creating an unique court culture to connect with their people (again, reading “their people” as the nobility, not everyone), they were also attempting to prove their legitimacy from the unique position of second-generation monarchs. It is still concerning British historians have nearly completely neglected the German image George cultivated as an Elector and as a major figure in European empires and burgeoning European nationalism, but perhaps further study will occur in the future.

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611 Jay, “Court Patronage Reconsidered,” 75. For an excellent overview of Georgian culture and politics, see Hannah Smith, Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714–1760 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). It should be noted that “closet” is used here to mean private rooms, a place where Caroline would entertain friends but that was not a public hall, rather than an actual closet that held clothes. Caroline’s closet will be discussed extensively in the next chapter.
George’s primary rival for the throne, Charles Edward Stuart, or “Bonnie Prince Charlie,” has had significant attention paid to his image producing and cultural legacy and cuts a romantic figure – a romantic figure spearheading a lost cause, but one that inspires devotion and awe, nonetheless. Certainly he has received more historical attention, but why? George’s “foreignness” perhaps plays a role in his neglect but I believe that he is overlooked for a variety of reasons, but most importantly these three: first, art itself changed in Britain – portraits were more accessible for more people, but landscapes, still life paintings, and agricultural images, along with caricature and engravings, were becoming more important and popular to the elite classes than portraiture. Second, while this chapter will show that George and his family absolutely were interested in art and their own images, they were not propagandists in the same sense Henry and James were. Finally, George’s role as king during the Jacobite rebellions of the eighteenth–century, a role he played with less drama and romance than his counterpart, relied heavily, and, ultimately, successfully, on images of himself and his family as legitimate heirs to the throne rather than the romantic hero trying to return his family to the throne. Compared to the dashing Bonnie Prince Charlie, George does appear a bit dull, but this, as I will discuss, was as much propaganda as reality.

George’s wife Caroline, perhaps the most accessible of all the queens discussed in this work, was a major part of the success of the Hanoverian claim. The argument can be made that Caroline had the most education, and certainly the most political acumen, but perhaps who she was and her background are not the only reasons for her level of influence. As Andrew Hanham points out, she was raised in a dynastic family, had years of training before actually becoming queen, both in Hanover and as Princess of Wales, and was given an education that, while lacking
in formal studies, was one of cultural and social wealth. I will discuss her impact on court life, and her role as George’s consort, later in this chapter, but a major resurgence surrounding Caroline appears to be happening in the historical profession currently, and with good reason.

How George and Caroline were portrayed is the focus of the next chapter, but I will note here that the concept of portraiture as something to be devoured by the “public” – however small

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613 Caroline’s body was important, as she was, quite literally, the producer of the succession, and her body was represented as such, but how was George as a solo ruler, not a warrior or prince, depicted? I will discuss George as a symbol of anti-Jacobitism, and his images as a young prince and king, but what about his actual, physical body? Robert Bucholz in “Every Inch Not a King: The Bodies of the First (Two) Hanoverians” argues, much as he does in his work on Queen Anne, that the bodies of George I and II, “played an important role” in their “reception as a monarch,” both by their subjects and, “perhaps most decisively and derisively, by subsequent historians.” (Robert Bucholz, “Every Inch Not a King: The Bodies of the First (Two) Hanoverians,” in The Hanoverian Succession: Dynastic Politics and Monarchical Culture (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2015), pp. 147–168, 148.) Bucholz makes an important point – studies of George’s body are so important because his body was of great concern to his subjects and historians alike. Not his “body,” or representation, but his literal body. I will discuss the evolution of this fascination with the body that occurs during the early modern period in the next chapter, but for now, some attention should be paid to the ways in which George’s body was discussed and perceived, as it certainly had an impact on his representation as king. As noted in the introduction, Bucholz addresses three main objectives when looking at the body of the first two Hanoverians, and which I have addressed for Henry and James. First, to establish, the “ontological reality of the bodies” of the king – what were they actually like and how did they appear to the “unprejudiced eye.” Second, to “determine how that reality was portrayed, used, obscured and distorted – that is, how the royal body was constructed and deconstructed, by supporters and opponents, in text and image, both contemporaneously and afterwards.” And finally, third, to “assess what this might tell us about contemporary and later attitudes to the monarchy...” (148). Bucholz argues that the facts of the royal body are less important than the portrayal and reception. What is truly interesting for the study is that, while George II certainly had unflattering portraits painted, the satirical images which were to haunt his grandson, George III, and great–grandchildren, George IV in particular, who was the subject of brutal caricatures, he largely escaped, and was the last monarch to do so, having his physical attributes become a symbol of his vices. George II, like Henry and James, was included in satire, but was very rarely caricatured. Why? This can be explained “by the persistence of the old idea that the king (or queen) was a semi–sacred person and therefore could do no wrong” and “the related and not entirely inaccurate perception that the real issue was over–powerful ministers (Harley, Walpole), who thus became more appropriate targets of visual satire.” (150). But if Henry had his good looks in his youth, and exaggerated codpiece and girth in middle age (and wives with equally unique physical attributes) and James had the fine Stuart features of his family and surrounded himself with lovely women, what did George and Caroline have? George never grew very large, although he did have, as Bucholz puts it, “a well–remarked tendency toward jowliness in later life.” (150). He and his father had similar noses, and George had, at least in all his portraits, an objectively pleasant face, and wore the fashions of the day well. Both were somewhat short – and George’s stature was the subject of a Jacobite tune, “The Wee Wee German Lairdie,” but not so short as to cause comment. (Some English rulers have been so short as to cause comment by modern historians. Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, is almost never mentioned without at least a passing discussion on her height, which was so short that she was just above consideration as a dwarf. See Norah Lofts, Queens of England (New York: Doubleday, 1977).
that group might be – was at the heart of royal portraiture in the eighteenth century, so this question becomes of central importance. How this representation impacted attitudes toward the monarchy and specific monarchs will be addressed as well. Although the academic work on George II is thin, it is not completely absent.  

As noted earlier, historians have tended, until recently to see the Hanoverians as the natural successors to the English throne, relying on the hindsight of history to see their accession as a “sure thing,” not worthy of note. George II has been particularly overlooked, but the impression has generally been unfavorable. German historians have also had a negative view of the Hanoverians, or the Guelphs, as they were referred to in Hanover – they, “were accused of sacrificing the interests of the electorate of Brunswick–Luneberg on the altar of dynastic status elevating, thereby prompting a long–term descent into political and cultural decline.” Perhaps the most influential impact on George’s legacy, however, was the political climate of Britain itself, both during and after his reign.

If Henry’s troubles in ruling in the manner he would have liked arose from the nobles, and James had to contend with anti–Catholic sentiments (and ministers and courtiers who disliked him immensely), George had significant troubles with politicians, as well as his own family. It would be easy to point to the transition between Hanover and England as part of the problems George faced, or his dual sovereignty role. However, while George did face unique problems, other rulers and ruling families had done similar shifts and played multiple roles. As Davies points out, “the transportation of royalty from country to country was a commonplace

614 For more recent works on George II, Caroline, and the early Hanoverians, see…
event in early modern Europe… it was the experience of every English or British queen from Anne of Denmark in 1589 to Adelaide of Saxe–Meningen in 1818." Households moved as well – Henry VII from the Welsh marches to London in the late–fifteenth century, James I from Scotland to England in 1603, Charles II from Holland to London, a trip William of Orange would repeat in 1688 – so the move from Hanover to London was not unprecedented. However unwarranted, all of the difficulties discussed here have impacted the historiography of George’s reign.

Conclusion: A Short Note on Collecting, Patronage, and Legitimacy

While George certainly spent less of his time on patronage and image creation, it is unfair to say – as many historians have – that he was unconcerned with his own image, or that the royal family’s use of their images was not intentional. This has been a recurring theme in writing about George II, that he was, “short–tempered and uncultured” on the one hand, but that he, “presided over a great flourishing in his adopted country” and had great devotion to the arts on the other. Others place all responsibility for culture and influence at George’s court in Caroline’s hands and, while she was a great patroness and influencer, she could not have acted alone in her support and interest. Ultimately, although both have been dismissed and often ignored by historians (although some recent works have attempted a reexamination of George and Caroline, as I will discuss), they were successful in creating a lasting image of the royal family that secured the future of the monarchy, even if it did not make George and his family the recognizable or romantic figures Henry VIII and his wives, or James II and his descendants, would be.

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617 Davies, George II, 27. I would also point out that many queens both before Anne of Denmark and after Adelaide did so as well – as did some kings.

618 Norman Davies, George II (London: Allen Lane, 2021), book jacket.
There is not – at this point in this work – the need to discuss major changes in collecting and patronage during George’s reign, as there was when discussing Henry because in reality, little changed in the process or even the style of portraits, and painting in general, between James and George. Yes, artists died, namely Sir Peter Lely, and some survived multiple changes in ruling family, like Sir Godfrey Kneller, but the basic system of patronage, of using art as political currency, and of personal and family image being created intentionally as a reaction to crisis did not change substantially. What is more important – and which I will discuss in the next chapter – was the use of already existing art, the collecting (and displaying) of art, of gardens, of architecture, combined with the creation of a recognizable image that spoke, unwaveringly, to George and Caroline’s legitimacy as sources of authority. And for the purposes of concluding this study with George II, it is my contention that George represents the ultimate realization of the recognizable body, the embodying of the political institution of the monarchy, that Henry began during his reign. George III and the advent of the modern monarchy – one with very little political power, and who now conscientiously avoid politics – would change the use of images again, but for George II and Caroline, their use of art, their patronage, and their appreciation of “ancient” art were all more important than the ways in which art was produced or the general fashion trends their court saw.

Conclusion

In the next chapter, as mentioned, I will examine and analyze portraits of George, Caroline, and their family in a roughly chronological order, paying particular attention to the crises they faced and how they reacted – or acknowledged – through their use of images and art patronage. It is perhaps worth noting here that Henry, James, and George are, of course, very different people, were different rulers, and lived in different worlds. But if Henry represented a
beginning, in some ways, George represents an end, a bookend to an age. By taking a closer look at George’s use of images throughout his time as heir through his very long reign, a story of how he used, and valued, image begins to emerge. George, like Henry and James, was concerned with his image and that of his family, particularly as it related to their political ambitions, their status, and their influence. George was also, like the other kings discussed here, a second–generation monarch who used art and culture – images of himself and his family, but also control over images and influence on style – in a unique way to build, secure, and establish his own legacy. Much like James, dismissing George is easy – he was not a particularly romantic figure, he has been overshadowed by his relatives, and his reign was politically complicated, discouraging popular histories and popular imagination. But to do so is to ignore his importance as part of a larger trend in early modern British monarchical culture and the early modern period as a whole.
Chapter Seven:  
George II and Caroline: Images of Resistance, Images of Rule

Introduction and Images of George II as a Child

Unlike James II, or even Henry, George’s image did not change so dramatically with changes in the succession, at least in his early life. Rather, his images seem to mirror style and fashion, and he tended to patronize British artists, or those popular in British circles, when he and his father moved to England. While, as discussed earlier in this work, Henry’s image changed from that of a pious second son to an ambitious, larger than life ruler, and James moved away from naval portraits to ostentatious displays of power, George’s images are relatively consistent throughout his young life, and themes he was particularly attached to continue to appear, a point that will be shown here later. In addition, George and Caroline would set a type, or shape, for their images that would be generally consistent throughout their lives.

A portrait from 1691 of George, his mother, and his sister, for example, looks very similar to a popular Lely or van Dyck portrait from Britain – in it, Sophia Dorothea wear a blue and white gown with pearls and lace, all symbols, ironically, of loyalty and chastity. George, with an elaborate wig, wears red, while his sister wears green. Unlike James II’s children from almost the same time, no symbols of royalty or a claim to the throne of England are present. The tartan of Scotland James III wore in his portraits as a young child – a Scotland he had never seen – were blatant claims to dynastic legitimacy, but there is no such symbol here. Although by 1691
it was a distant possibility that Sophia’s descendants could inherit, there was by no means a need for propaganda promoting or even hinting at such a future.\textsuperscript{619}

\textsuperscript{619} What is perhaps most interesting, and disappointing, is that, as of this writing, I have been unable to find any images showing George II as a successor to his father’s position as Elector of Hanover. There are images of him with his mother and as a child, but these are stylistically very similar to other portraits of royal and noble families throughout Europe, and have no special symbolism tying them to the Electorate. Also, as mentioned when discussing James, images of the kings discussed here when children are interesting and important but are not the focus of this study. I am interested in portraits of the king that could be under his own direction or approval – with George there are images of the future king as Prince of Wales, but anything earlier than his later adolescence is not as essential for this work. Images of George as the Elector would be helpful, but I believe this lack of images results from a two–fold problem: first, English historians have not studied Hanover as part of the English/British Empire in any real way until very recently, and thus these sources have not been translated or made available to historians working outside of Germany, and second, the rulers of Hanover could often be sure their fortunes were made, but, unlike the throne of England, the Electoral seat was not always guaranteed based on lineage. In future studies, I will continue to mine for these images, as they would show an interesting comparison between George as a Hanoverian prince and an English king.
After Sophia Dorothea’s scandal and imprisonment, there were no more portraits made of young George II with his mother. By the mid–1690s, George was a young adult and engaged in princely activities, including war. He had begun building a relationship with Britain as well. The Hanoverians were not distant, foreign relations, but rather, George and his British relatives knew each other well. George fought with the British army in his youth, and both enjoyed and excelled at soldiering. Unfortunately, George’s father was likely cognizant of his lack of a “spare” and put a stop to George’s active participation in battle. After the Act of Settlement, an interesting engraving was created, with text highlighting George’s claims to the throne as well as his role as a Protestant king and protector. George is shown in a formal, military pose, wearing armor. George was often depicted in military garb, as he was, by all accounts, both a dashing and genuinely good soldier. A 1706 mezzotint by John Smith, modeled after a drawing by Johann Leonhard Hirschmann, also shows a young George when he was still in Hanover. In this portrait, George is turned to face the viewer, but could easily be imagined on a horse, as he is looking over his shoulder and is dressed in armor. His armor is rich, and he has a voluminous wig, expensive lace and fur, and is painted in a style popular at the time.

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In 1706, George was a potential heir to the throne – although nothing was certain – and this portrait paints a dashing and romantic figure, perhaps to show him as both a military presence as well as a foil to the Stuarts and the romance of their lost cause. A 1706 miniature by Benjamin Arlaud, of George when he was a Prince of Hanover – a somewhat anachronistic term, as he had several titles and there was little guarantee he would be the next elector – shows the template a young George endeavored to make his own image. He appears here in military garb, with a blue sash and Hanoverian robes of state, along with a large wig. I do take strong issue with the Royal Collection Trust’s evaluation in their catalog entry for this portrait that George, “did not enjoy ‘setting’ for portraiture, preferring the military life to art and artists.”

While it was surely tedious for George, who seemed to prefer action over sitting still, including his interests in his portraits, as well as the patronage he undertook, does not point to someone who was completely uninterested in his image.

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622 The Royal Collection Trust, *George II when Prince of Hanover* by Benjamin Arlaud, 1706. RCIN 420964.
Plate 47: Benjamin Arlaud, "George II (1683–1760) when Prince of Hanover." Watercolour on vellum, ca. 1706. Royal Collection Trust, London. RCIN 420964.
The fact that George’s early portraits either show him posing in contemporary styles – as countless other noble persons did – but also with a focus on his own interests of family and military, leads me to believe that George was certainly concerned with his image. He may not have had as much control over his images as a child or young man – he would have been twenty–three in 1706 – but that doesn’t necessarily indicate a lack of interest. George recognized, whatever his personal feelings about sitting for portraits, that image (if not necessarily portraiture) was crucial for George and Caroline to establish a court separate from George I. Portraits of the young George II are useful in establishing two primary things.

First, that even before he became the Prince of Wales in 1714, images of George focused on his family and interests, two things that would continue to be important in both his portraits as well as his court. Not that military portraits were unfashionable or uncommon, but for George, they mirrored the love of soldiering he had but was denied. Family would also be a recurring theme – and the early loss he had suffered with the isolation of his mother was clearly not forgotten. Second, George and Caroline were beginning, upon their arrival in England, if not before, to establish their own court based on a vivacious appreciation for culture (in opposition to his father’s court) and the young couple’s “Englishness,” again as opposed to his father’s “German–ness.” Caroline’s interest in culture was clear, and while George did not contribute as much to this milieu, it’s still clear that he was concerned with his own image.623

Second–Generation King: Establishing the Course of the Hanoverian Dynasty

George, like Henry and James, had the difficult and unenviable role of being the second ruler in a new dynasty after a major change – not the originator of a new dynastic or familial line like Henry VII, Charles II, or his own father, George I, and not a member of a long–established

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623 One of the struggles in looking at George’s concern is, as mentioned, the lack of first–hand sources from George and Caroline themselves – and the substantial amount that does exist from court gossips.
royal family, but somewhere in the middle. Although there was no major violent upheaval
surrounding the succession and the beginning of the Hanoverian dynasty – even the 1715
Jacobite rebellion was a regional rebellion, and not ever a truly viable threat to the crown’s
power – George’s reign must still be considered through the lens of a second–generation
monarch. Monumental political changes had occurred between the Stuart and Hanoverian
dynasties, including the creation of what would become the British Empire, and Parliament, with
the Whig majority, held much of the power that the monarch had once wielded. In addition,
although the early Jacobite rebellions were unsuccessful, after James II was forced to flee to
France in 1689, the Stuart cause still had followers and was a real threat. Several attempts were
made by James to return to his throne, and there was some dissatisfaction with William and
Mary, even among their strongest supporters, to say nothing of those still staunchly loyal to
James or the majority of the Catholic population. While it is harder to define the massive
changes of the early eighteenth century – which seem mild when comparing them to the violent
Wars of the Roses or the regicidal English Civil War, the bringing in of a foreign prince to be
king was not an easy, comfortable, or smooth process.

Like Henry and James, George was not born the heir presumptive. Henry had an older
brother, as did James, and George was a distant, if important in his own right, cousin to the
English crown at his birth in 1683, while Charles II still reigned. So where does George fit in this
examination of second–generation kings? Just as Henry VIII was the first early modern king,
George II was, I contend, the last. Historians may argue about the beginning of the “modern” era

624 For continued reading on the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, see: Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837
York: Bloomsbury, 2016), Gregory Fremont–Barnes, The Jacobite Rebellion: 1745–46 (New York: Bloomsbury,
2011), Geoffrey Plank, Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1746 and the British Empire (Philadelphia:
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), Stuart Reid, The Scottish Jacobite Army 1745–46 (New York:
Bloomsbury, 2012), and David Forsyth, Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites (Edinburgh: National Museums
Scotland, 2017).
was it the French Revolution, the rise of nationalism, the “imagined communities” of the newspaper – but George’s reign represents an end of an era in many ways.\textsuperscript{625} He was the last foreign-born king of Britain, bringing, in many ways, an end to the practice of foreign powers exerting any real influence over Britain’s royal family – the days of marriages between foreign princes and princesses was slowly coming to an end for the British Empire.\textsuperscript{626} He was the last British king to personally lead an army into battle. He was also the last early modern king of Britain in a political sense – Parliament under Walpole, the Pelhams, and Pitt showed that George II was a different kind of king, and that Parliament was becoming a different kind of governing body. His reign began one generation after a major shift that was still resonating during his time as king – the coup generally referred to as the “Glorious Revolution,” which deposed James II and invited William of Orange, a tangentially related member of the royal family to share the throne with James’ own daughter, relegating James, his wife Mary of Modena, and their children to exile in France.

That George came on the heels of a major upheaval is clear. Although the transition of power appears peaceful, it is hindsight that makes it appear so. There was, often overlooked, a

\textsuperscript{625} Although, as discussed, periodization is both difficult and necessary, the line between the early modern and modern is particularly blurry. The rise of the “nation” was a part of this shift; for works on the advent of nationalism, see: Benedict Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism} (London: Verso, 1983), Ernest Gellner, \textit{National and Nationalism} (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2009), Anthony D. Smith, \textit{The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism} (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000), and E.J. Hobsbawm, \textit{Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

\textsuperscript{626} Although foreign marriages did continue, particularly as Queen Victoria married her children and grandchildren off to the royal houses of Europe, but they became less common and less crucial. In the direct line of succession in the British monarchy today, no monarch has married a foreign consort since George V married Mary of Teck in 1893. Mary was the daughter of the Duke of Teck (a German principality) but had been born and raised in England. Before their marriage, Edward VII married Alexandra of Denmark in 1863. While Prince Philip, Elizabeth II’s husband, was technically part of the Greek royal family, he was also raised in Britain. Charles III married two members of the English aristocracy (Princess Diana and Camilla, Queen Consort) and William, Prince of Wales also married a member of the English upper-class, although not a member of the nobility. George and his family weren’t the last to marry heads of state in Europe, but it was clearly becoming less important after his reign.
physical, “re–location of the monarchy” as well as a mental one in 1698, when fire destroyed the vast majority of Whitehall. While the actual location of the court seems inconsequential, it is important to remember, as discussed in previous chapters, that space was also used as a way to transmit image. Henry VIII’s more than life–size mural at Whitehall caused those who viewed it to be, “annihilated in his presence.” While there were some proposals and plans to rebuild Whitehall, and some parts of the structure did remain, it was never rebuilt to its former glory as a palace or primary residence of the royal family. Under William and Mary, Anne, and George I, court life was centered around smaller palaces like St. James’s, Kensington, and Hampton Court, which lacked the ability to be administration centers in the way Whitehall had due to both their structures and locations. George II, entering the court life of Britain as a young man during his father’s reign, was immediately at a disadvantage if he wanted to be politically involved in an official way, as the court and government were now two different – and physically separate – entities. By the time George I took the throne, “rather than remaining with the Court, government was rehoused on the Whitehall site,” and, “the Crown could seem tangential to this nexus or, at best, part of a more multi–faceted governmental process.”

The exiled Stuart court, as well as many in England and Scotland, believed that Anne’s successor would be the Old Pretender, James II’s son. Although the issue was decided by conversation, debate, and law rather than by sword, that did not make the issue of succession any less important to those who believed in the Stuart cause. Michael Schaich points out that the

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628 Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarch*, 137.
Hanoverian Succession seems less dramatic to historians because, “as luck would have it, their accession to the British throne in 1714 came at a point when, in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, the ascent of parliament was well advanced and seemed – at least with the benefit of hindsight – almost unstoppable.”631 On the other hand, the court, as it was appearing (wrongly or not) to lose political power, was becoming the epicenter of a dramatic shift in British life and culture – the end of the early modern period in yet another way – with, “urbanisation, the rise of the public sphere and the triumph of a consumer culture with all the tell–tale signs of polite behaviour.”632

With the acknowledgement that the transition between Anne and George I was, if not violent, dramatic and certainly filled with upheaval for the Hanoverians, Stuarts, the British nobility, and Parliament, it is clear that George II was a second–generation monarch for the purposes of this analysis. George must have been under immense pressure to continue the Hanoverian dynasty – something we will discuss at length later when looking at dynastic art – but also, because of the tumultuous relationship he had with his family, he had to forge his own path. Caroline must have felt similar pressures as Princess of Wales and Queen, much like Mary of Modena, to influence culture as a way to fight opposing forces that could threaten the monarchy and her family. When placed in this context, George and Caroline can be compared to the previous royal families discussed, but also become figures who are easier and more relevant to evaluate as monarchs who valued and relied on their images as family.


Prince and Princess of Wales: 1714 – 1727

It is important to emphasize that, while history has shown us a smooth transition from Hanoverian Elector to Prince of Wales (and Hanoverian Elector), it was actually a lengthy process involving intense negotiations among a set of incredibly strong personalities, across languages and customs, not to mention a great physical distance. Sophia, an exile herself, was not happy about the continued exile of James II, and, “was keen that regal rights should not be altered by popular clamour.” Sophia very elderly, and a suggestion to send George to England and for him to learn English was rejected by his father in 1701, with George I stating, “he was not willing to speculate on an uncertain future.” There was also talk of the elder George becoming heir apparent immediately, skipping Sophia, and his giving up Hanoverian rule. William III pushed particularly hard for George to spend a large amount of time in England, but this was deemed, “impractical and undesirable by both Georg Ludwig and Georg Wilhelm.” In June 1701 the Act of Succession was passed – although it had little immediate impact on George’s life, outside of a banquet when his grandmother was presented with the Act in August of that year. George did start to learn English in earnest, as well as English customs.

William III died in 1702, and Anne, Mary’s sister and next in line to the throne, was strongly opposed to the idea of Hanoverians in her court for extended periods. In early 1714, Sophia was attempting to send the younger George to England. Queen Anne wrote a veiled warning to Sophia. It read, in part:


634 Thompson, King and Elector, 25.

635 Thompson, King and Elector, 26.
Madam, Sister, Aunt, Since the right of succession to my kingdoms has been declared to belong to you and your family, there have always been disaffected persons, who, by particular views of their own interest, have entered into measures to fix a prince of your blood in my dominions even whilst I am yet living. I never thought till now that this project would have gone so far as to have made the least impression on your mind. But as I have lately perceived by public rumours, which are industriously spread, that your elegant highness is come into this sentiment, it is of importance with respect to the succession of your family, that I should tell you such a proceeding will infallibly draw along with it some consequences that will be dangerous to that succession itself, which is not secure any other ways than as the prince who actually wears the crown maintains her authority and prerogative. There are, such are our misfortunes, a great many people that are seditiously disposed. So I leave you to judge what tumults they may be able to raise, if they should have a pretext to begin a commotion. I persuade myself, there, you will never consent that the least thing should be done that may disturb the repose of me or my subjects. Open yourself to me with the same freedom I do to you, and propose whatever you think may contribute to the security of the succession. I will come into it with zeal, provided that it do not derogate from my dignity, which I am resolved to maintain.\textsuperscript{636}

While the tone is friendly, there is little doubt that Anne is cautioning Sophia against sending George and his young family to England as a representative of the Hanoverians and their family. In some ways, it is completely understandable – Elizabeth I also resisted having her assumed heir, James I, and his family in her kingdom – but it also put everyone in a precarious place, with no one able to move without fear of losing favor or, at worst, “some consequences that will be dangerous to that succession itself.”\textsuperscript{637} It was rumored that Anne preferred the her own family, even in exile, and that they would have taken her up on any reasonable offer for the succession, but it is also understandable that she would not have wanted anyone who reminded her of her impending death in Britain or, particularly, at her court.

Anne did, as discussed in the previous chapter, eventually pass away, on August 1, 1714. The Hanoverians arrived in England later that year, and George I was crowned king on October 20\textsuperscript{th}. The new Prince of Wales was given quarters at St. James’s Place, and Caroline arrived soon

\textsuperscript{636} Letter from Queen Anne to Princess Sophia, 1714; Belsham, \textit{History of Great Britain}, vol. 2., 719–20.

\textsuperscript{637} Letter from Queen Anne to Princess Sophia, 1714; Belsham, \textit{History of Great Britain}, vol. 2., 720.
after with their three daughters, Anne, Amelia, and Caroline (ages five, three, and one). The apartments were also very close to Henrietta Howard, the Prince of Wales’s mistress, who was also a lady–in–waiting to the Princess of Wales.\footnote{Tracy Borman, \textit{King’s Mistress, Queen’s Servant: The Life and Times of Henrietta Howard} (London: Vintage, 2010), chapter three.} There was also tension as usual, between George and his father, who was also close by, and who he still blamed for his mother’s continued imprisonment. Henry Pelham wrote in a letter in late 1717 that, “the difference running as high between the two courts as ever.”\footnote{Henry Pelham was the brother of Thomas, Duke of Newcastle. See John Heneage Jesse, \textit{Memoirs of the Court of England, from revolution in 1688 to the death of George the Second} (London: R. Bentley, 1846), vol. 3, 8. Jesse is citing Henrietta Hobart Howard, Countess of Suffolk papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino California, vol. I, 18.} There were many misunderstandings and arguments between George and his father – including an argument over the Prince’s allowance – but, “unquestionably, the Prince’s greatest crime, in the eyes of his father, was the respect and affection which he invariably showed for his unfortunate mother, Sophia of Zell.”\footnote{John Heneage Jesse, \textit{Memoirs of the Court of England, from revolution in 1688 to the death of George the Second} (R. Bentley: London, 1846), vol. 3, 8.}

Despite their tumultuous home life, George and Caroline did endeavor to adapt to their new home. The young Prince and Princess endeavored to learn and speak English – with George proclaiming, “I have not one drop of blood in my veins which isn’t English.”\footnote{John Heneage Jesse, \textit{Memoirs of the Court of England, from revolution in 1688 to the death of George the Second} (R. Bentley: London, 1846), vol. 3, 4.} When the 1715 Jacobite rebellion failed to cause any major disruptions to the government’s operations or the Hanoverian claims to the throne, and a 1716 attempt on the Prince’s life also misfired (literally – the bullet missed George’s head at the theater), George and Caroline were able to set up their

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\footnote{Tracy Borman, \textit{King’s Mistress, Queen’s Servant: The Life and Times of Henrietta Howard} (London: Vintage, 2010), chapter three.}

\footnote{Henry Pelham was the brother of Thomas, Duke of Newcastle. See John Heneage Jesse, \textit{Memoirs of the Court of England, from revolution in 1688 to the death of George the Second} (London: R. Bentley, 1846), vol. 3, 8. Jesse is citing Henrietta Hobart Howard, Countess of Suffolk papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino California, vol. I, 18.}

\footnote{John Heneage Jesse, \textit{Memoirs of the Court of England, from revolution in 1688 to the death of George the Second} (R. Bentley: London, 1846), vol. 3, 8.}

court – both a political and cultural rival to the king’s court, at Leicester House – and get ready to work on their own spheres of influence, starting with their portraits.⁶⁴²

When George and Caroline did finally find themselves creating their own court as Prince and Princess of Wales, they turned Sir Godfrey Kneller, who had painted Charles II, James II, William III, Mary II, and Anne, and would paint both George I and George II (as Prince of Wales). Kneller would die in 1723, before George ascended to the throne in 1727, but his influence as painter during George’s time as heir was substantial and continued after his death. I discuss Kneller at greater length in the previous chapter, but it is, again, truly extraordinary that the portrait painter was able to last so long at the tumultuous English court.

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⁶⁴² Unfortunately, Leicester House was demolished in 1791. Fortunately for the Prince and Princess, it was a large and lovely house, supplemented by her allowance of £100,000 per year (approximately £12 million today). For more on this period and their financial matters, see J. Van der Kiste, *King George II and Queen Caroline* (Stroud: Sutton, 1997). Robert Walpole helped engineer this allowance and an “apology” in in 1720, and was a generally powerful politician in the eighteenth–century.
Plate 48. Sir Godfrey Kneller, “George II (1683–1760) when Prince of Wales.” Oil on canvas, ca. 1716. Royal Collection Trust, Queen’s Presence Chamber, Hampton Court Palace. RCIN 406073.
Kneller’s portrait of George II when Prince of Wales, dated 1716, is an excellent example of not only the skill Kneller and his studio possessed, but also of the less personal, more symbolic images of George II that we generally see. While this has led some scholars to believe that George was not interested in his own image, I would argue that the exact opposite is true. In this painting, George is dressed richly and fashionably, with all the trappings of rule on his person and surrounding him. We can see the crown on an elaborate pedestal behind him, robes of state with the Collar of the Garter (the elaborate white horse medal on a gold chain) around his neck. It is important to remember, when looking at this image, that it was painted no more than two years after the Hanoverians came to England and took the throne. All that was really known by most people at court and throughout the country was that George was a military standout, having proved himself in battle at Oudenarde, and a distantly related, German member of the royal family. Very few knew him or his image in any real way.

This painting was paired with one of Caroline as Princess of Wales. Caroline, due to both personality and her education as a youth, was uniquely qualified to set up a rival court and be its hostess and patroness. She was clever, funny, intelligent, and must have been gracious in her demeanor, once even mediating an argument between Isaac Newton and Gottfried Liebniz. In her portrait, Caroline mirrors George’s ensemble with a gold, silver, and deep red dress and state robes, as well as a smaller crown behind her. While the backgrounds are clearly not true to life, they are telling about the fashion of portraits at the time – Caroline is in front of, but not

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643 Davies, *George II*, 34. It is also important to remember, when discussing Caroline’s role as a leader in lively court conversation and scientific progress, that Caroline was an instrumental figure in the movement to popularize smallpox inoculations. Caroline, “spearheaded the very first trials in England in 1722.” (Helen Esfandiary, Georgian Papers Programme, “In God’s Hands: Inoculating the Royal Children against Smallpox,” November 23, 2018. https://georgianpapers.com/2018/11/23/in–gods–hands–inoculating–the–royal–children–against–smallpox/) This article focuses primarily on the continuation of this program under Queen Charlotte, George III’s queen, but discusses the ways in which Caroline initiated and made acceptable the program of inoculation.
reclining in, a large chair, while George stands in front of a pedestal, near an open window or portico overlooking nature. While chairs figure heavily in portraits of the late-seventeenth century, Caroline is not reclining or sitting like the Stuart queens, or even Anne, were sometimes shown. Another difference – that can be attributed at least partially to style – is the clothing worn. While George’s half of the portrait pair looks similar in pose and fashion to Kneller’s earlier portraits of James II, with obvious changes in clothing and hair styles, Caroline’s portrait doesn’t contain the sumptuous, rich textures of earlier Kneller portraits of queens and consorts. While her skirt is very rich, and the detail is extraordinary, it’s not the same relaxed posture and sensual fabrics seen in earlier portraits.

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644 As the Royal Collection Trust notes, “as always with full-length portraits of this date the setting is imaginary.” It is perhaps a fool’s errand to try and identify any real settings anyway, as shown in the previous chapter examining James II’s portraits and their perhaps real – but likely imaginary – castle and pastoral backgrounds. Royal Collection Trust citing Oliver Millar, 1963. The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, London AND 1969. Later Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, London.
Another portrait of George, also by Kneller and from the same year, shows again the image George and Caroline were trying to project as Prince and Princess of Wales, particularly while George I was away in Hanover. In this image, George, as Prince of Wales, poses again in robes of state, with the collar of the Order of the Garter as well as a badge of the Order of the Garter on his sleeve. His face is recognizable as the same young man in his earlier portraits, and he stands next to a table where the crown rests on a dark red cloth. Behind the crown, on the same table, sits the hat of the Order of the Garter, with its jewels and white plumage prominent.

These portraits were painted most likely in late 1716 when George I was in Hanover and the Prince was named “Guardian and Lieutenant of the Realm” and ruled in his father’s absence. The relationship between the Prince and King was tense at best – they met, “only in full Cabinet meetings, in chapel and in the Princess’s evening salon, and then without exchanging a word.” George I wanted and needed to return to Hanover in 1716, both for personal desire and to make an appearance in his first realm. But a regent had to be appointed and the Prince of Wales becoming regent was, “a prospect abhorrent to the King.” In a compromise, and to return to Hanover as quickly as possible, George I appointed his son as a very limited “Guardian of the Realm and Lieutenant” rather than as a full regent. George II was almost certainly unhappy with the arrangement.

646 This medal says, “honi soit qui mal y pense” or “shame on him who thinks evil of me.” Although of course George did not make up the motto of the Order of the Garter, one cannot help but wonder if he wore this particular medal, with the phrase so prominently displayed, in a painting commissioned while his father – who almost certainly thought evil of his son – was thousands of miles away.


648 Trench, George II, 63.
It is also important to look at the political happenings taking place when this painting was commissioned and painted. The first major Jacobite rebellion of the eighteenth-century had just failed, although it was less clear at the time whether it would be a success or not. Not only were the Jacobite forces – led by the Earl of Mar, who was a loyal courtier in James II’s court in exile – having some success in Scotland, where they outnumbered the Hanoverian forces led by the Duke of Argyle, but members of Parliament were also involved, although they were arrested early on in the uprising.\textsuperscript{649} The 1715 uprising was, for all intents and purposes, over in December 1715, although executions and trials continued until 1716. Were George and Caroline’s portraits a reaction to both George I’s absence – and their frustratingly limited power while he was away in Hanover – as well as the recent Jacobite uprising? I believe they are at least related. They are both replete with royal power and symbolism, and the creation of a long–lasting image, without any other real challenges to their power outside the Jacobite situation and the king’s absence, place them squarely as reactions to upheaval.\textsuperscript{650}

As the Royal Collection Trust notes, the portraits were, “so often copied that they must have been considered the ‘official’ likeness of the couple.”\textsuperscript{651} That George and Caroline took advantage of the King’s absence – an absence they may have welcomed – to engage Kneller is telling. Kneller was not only a talented artist and court favorite, he was also a member of the nobility himself, having been made a Baronet in 1715.\textsuperscript{652} While these paintings are not


\textsuperscript{650} Of course, as mentioned in previous chapters, it is impossible, given the limited sources – both the volume and type – to definitively prove a connection. But a reasonable analysis of the situation and image is the methodology of this work.


\textsuperscript{652} The next court painter to receive the same honor was John Everett Millais in 1885.
particularly exciting or rich in their symbolism, and do not show the personalities of George and Caroline in any special way, their very existence is important. They show that George II was absolutely looking ahead to the future and his image as both heir apparent and king, with the crowns in the background, but also that he was concerned with his role as both an Englishman and a patron, with Caroline, of the arts and culture in England. Engaging the most important painter in the country for portraits like these, while his father was away and he was in a position of (limited) power, is a clear sign that George and Caroline were not only interested in art, but also conscious of its power. 653

A brief discussion of the state of antiquarianism and collecting is also relevant here, as George and Caroline attempted – and, I believe, very much succeeded – in making their court a center of art, learning, and patronage. As discussed in the previous chapter on Henry VIII, antiquarians became incredibly interested in “ancient” Tudor history in the eighteenth–century, writing papers, delivering talks, and conducting extensive research on the past and its objects. Sir Joseph Ayloffe, who wrote such a wonderful description of Henry’s desire to have battles recorded in image, was writing slightly after George II’s eventual death in 1760, but it is crucial to look at the conversations happening around the study of the past – and in particular, the

653 In addition, the Jacobite threat, with its rival ruling family, the Stuarts, in exile, could never have been far from George’s mind, even as Prince of Wales. These early portraits can be read both as a reaction to George I’s leaving England and the efforts of George and Caroline to establish their own cultural and political court, as well as a response to the recent Jacobite uprising of 1715. Although styles across England and the continent, especially in portraiture, were, by the eighteenth–century, very similar, this portrait is very clearly meant to be shown to an English audience. Portraiture in the eighteenth–century is harder to discuss than in, say, the sixteenth, although far more of it exists. The nobility tended, with some exceptions, to be painted the same way across most of Europe, and much of the focus of court appearances was shifting toward salons and spectacle. I will discuss this general trend more in the conclusion, but the shocking differences from one monarch to the next, like Henry VII and Henry VIII, or the major stylistic leaps from the early Stuarts to the later, simply won’t be present in these portraits. What is crucial is setting, props, pose, size, and style. The Royal Collection, “Queen Caroline of Ansbach (1683–1737), when Princes of Wales,” RCIN 405313. https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/search#/5/collection/405313/queen–caroline–of–ansbach–1683–1737–when–princess–of–wales
images of the past – to understand how important images were to George and Caroline both before and during their time as King and Queen.654

In the eighteenth–century, antiquarians were still primarily focusing on the text in images and monuments – which of course is important – but this began to change, as scholars like Bernard de Montfaucon began collecting historical prints and drawings, over 30,000 of them by the early 1720s, and using the images themselves as tools for analysis.655 Eighteenth–century antiquarians faced similar problems that many historians of material culture face today – a lack of writing about historical images or object, portraits with no keys, difficulty verifying the age or provenance of objects, and so many more – but they were doing extensive, high–quality academic research despite these challenges. As Peter Burke notes, “the visual turn of the early modern period not only extended the subject matter of history but also refined historical methods.”656

All of this is to say, of course, that both George and Caroline were certainly aware of the antiquarian movement and, as we will see, both used the study of history and historical objects to their advantage and to further their claims to legitimacy. Caroline, in particular, used antiquarian methods and counsel to create visual links to the “ancient” Tudor past Ayloffe discussed in his

654 See Sir Joseph Ayloffe, An Historical Description of an Ancient Picture in Windsor–Castle Representing the Interview Between King Henry VIII and the French King Francis I. Between Guines and Arders in the Year 1520 (Read at the Society of Antiquaries, March 29, 1770; And a Second Time, by Order of the Society, March 7, 1771)


656 Burke, “Images as Evidence,” 296.
work, and George’s founding and funding of antiquarian and historical institutions such as the British Museum, show that they were interested in art, but also in the ways in which art and its study could prove useful to their cause. For George, who left fewer personal letters than historians would like, and who tended to be taciturn at best in his correspondences, it is also important to think like an antiquarian of the time might think and use images to the best of our modern ability.

King and Queen: 1727 – 1737

When George I died, in the summer of 1727 while on a trip to Hanover, George and Caroline were left with a very prosperous court of their own, but with George II’s, “apprenticeship in the royal trade” giving him, “little hands–on training” and no solution to his family’s many rifts. The years between their arrival in England and taking the throne must have seemed long for the couple, and was certainly a time of stress. Relations between George and his father were never good but seemed to go from bad to worse between 1714 and 1727, with George I spending a large amount of time in Hanover – but also refusing to grant his son full regency powers – in addition to political challenges and interpersonal conflicts.

While there was no major conflict over George II’s taking the throne, the personal situation between George I and his son had been very tense. George I had kept the Prince and Princess’s children from them periodically, and their rival courts had been contentious to say the least. When George I died, George II and Caroline – by then both in their mid–forties – immediately set about making the royal court their own and carving out their own paths. Image, of course, was a major part of their concern.

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657 Davies, George II, 39.
The coronation medal for George, struck in 1727, shows a similar image of the young king that he had been trying to portray while Prince of Wales – British, legitimate, and part of peaceful and popular succession. The Royal Collection describes the medal, noting that, “This medal was distributed at public expense during the Coronation ceremony… the reverse shows the King, seated on King Edward III’s throne and holding the orb and sceptre, being crowned by Britannia, with the motto VOLENTES PER POPULOS (by a willing people), designed specifically to indicate a peaceful succession.”

Plate 51: John Croker, “Medal commemorating the Coronation of George II.” Royal Collection Trust. London. RCIN 443219.

This peaceful transition was crucial to the story George was trying to create during his reign, but so was the continuity of his rule (hence Edward III’s throne and the traditional

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658 Medal Commemoration the coronation of George II, 1727. The Royal Collection, RCIN 443219

symbols of rule) as well as his essential Britishness. It is also interesting – although, admittedly, perhaps a coincidence – that the Collar of the Garter is so prevalent in his most popular portrait as Prince of Wales. The Order of the Garter was established by Edward III in 1348, and George and Caroline were eager to make cultural and familial connections with earlier English rulers. To this end, while George was shown from birth as a noble, Hanoverian elector, and Holy Roman prince, he was very rarely shown as both “German” or “Hanoverian” and “English” or “British.” He was popular in both his realms, but seemed, at least through art – where he had some control that, politically, he did not – intent on keeping the realms separate. Perhaps a part of that was that George, uniquely from Henry or even James, faced a threat to his throne that was both legitimate and threatening to the very core of the English monarchy – the Jacobite movement.

It is also worth noting that the Collar was not actually worn by George for his portrait discussed above – the portrait by Kneller that would become the most used and recognizable image of the young Prince, with its matching portrait of Caroline. Instead, the Collar of the Garter was taken by James II in 1688 when he left for exile in France. According to the Royal Collection Trust, the collar and the pendant depicting St. George appeared as, “A Collar of the order with a George to it of Diamonds’ in the inventory of Saint–Germain in 1703. The collar and pendant were worn by James Edward Stuart, James II’s son, for a portrait in 1719–20, indicating that they had not yet been returned to England – and they would, in fact, not be returned until at least 1815. By being painted with jewels taken by the Stuarts, but that had an inarguably “English” origin and meaning, it appears that George was conscious of and wanted to assert that aspect of his identity and rule.

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660 James II 1703 Inventory, Ancient and Modern Gems and Jewels
Plate 52: Charles Jervas (Studio), "King George II." Oil on canvas, ca. 1727. National Portrait Gallery, London. NPG 368.
Charles Jervas was a favorite painter of George II’s, and the king sat for him several times. In 1728, Vertue notes that, “The king sat for Mr. Jervaise for a picture for the Guildhall,” likely referring to the 1727 painting for the Guildhall Art Gallery.661 A copy of this photo, from “the studio of Charles Jervas” now resides in the National Portrait Gallery, and is very similar to the 1716 painting from Kneller discussed above, at least in style. George wears the Collar of the Garter and – now as king – holds the sceptre, while the orb and crown rest on the table next to him. He wears ceremonial robes, and his window in the stylized, fictional background appears to overlook a church that appears to be Westminster Abbey. The portrait – and matching portrait of Caroline, which I will discuss later – were likely some of the first portraits painted of the new king and queen after George I’s death.

This portrait of George follows the same template that Kneller’s painting provided, and which would, in fact, inform most of George and Caroline’s paintings. This does not mean, I would argue, that George was unconcerned with his image and wanted the same portrait done over and over again. Instead, it shows a keen understanding – that he and Caroline shared – of connecting their portraits both with a long history of English portraiture of the royal family, as shown through both the pose and the use of symbolic elements of rule, as well as the importance of creating a recognizable figure. While George’s portraits are not as memorable as Henry’s portrait by Holbein, with the, “shape you remember,” this pose, sometimes accompanied by the orb, sceptre, crown, or even allusions to buildings, like Westminster, was the basis for most of George’s portraits and certainly a way to distinguish him from his father or later Hanoverians.

661 G. Vertue, Vertue Note Books (edited by The Earl of Ilchester), Walpole Society, III, p 35; Corporation of London catalogue of pictures, 1898 (32); exhibited 'Kings and Queens, AD 653–1953’, RA, 1953 (226).
Art, Collecting, and Patronage

It is important, at this point, to briefly discuss the state of British art when George and Caroline came to court. Unlike James II’s court, there was no artistic renaissance happening in English portraiture, although there was great talent, particularly in portrait painting, garden design, and sculpture. Directly evolving from the workshop system of Peter Lely, the rise of antiquarianism and the evolution of public commentary on art was impacting the art world of English elites. One of the key figures in English court art during the early parts of the Hanoverian succession was Charles Jervas, George I and II’s principal.662

Jervas is also an example of the importance of understanding the political struggles surrounding all aspects of eighteenth-century court life – including art and patronage. Jervas was a court favorite, and was, during the Whig prominence of the 1720s and early 1730s, a popular artist among English elites. Although his prominence declined – a casualty of political winds of change rather than a lack of talent – he was an important figure for understanding George’s court’s understanding and appreciation of painting.663 Jervas painted portraits of George and Caroline, both for the royal family and for court elites. Political capital was inexorably tied to art patronage throughout the early modern period, but, perhaps never as much as during the first half of the eighteenth century. This was, after all, the time of artistic achievement wars – Versailles


663 Edward Bottoms analyzes the situation in which Jervas has been remembered, noting that, “following his death in 1739…his reputation declined rapidly, with Horace Walpole in 1771 dismissing his work as ‘a light flimsy kind of fan–painting, as large as the life.’ That this passage – along with George Vertue’s notebooks, from which Horace worked – should become the standard text and reference point for more recent writers on Jervas , is ironic in the extreme. Horace’s own father, Sir Robert Walpole – the man responsible for Houghton Hall and its magnificent art collection – reputedly regarded Jervas as his favourite artist and appears to have been his single most important patron.” Edward Bottoms, ‘Charles Jervas, Sir Robert Walpole and the Norfolk Whigs’, Apollo, vol. 145, no. 420 [February 1997], pg. 44–48, 43.
and the court of Frederick the Great were two of the major players – and England could not be
left behind. In addition, a power shift from the king to the parliament was in full swing, and
influencing the nobility was a crucial part of the monarch’s job. Thomas Ripley, the architect in
charge of Horatio’s home, wrote letters that belie the “central role Jervas’ portraits played in the
deliberations over the possible picture hangs and decorate schemes for Wolverton.”

In 1739, Ripley reported that, “The Queen’s pickture does mighty well over the Chimney,
amongst her Children,” but that, “The French King did not do well at the East End between the
late and present King. I have therefore put the late King in the middle, King Charles the first on
one side and the present King on the other side of him. The frames being all of a size and make
the End of the Room looks mighty well.” Even more interesting is the number of royal
portraits Horatio must have owned. Bottoms notes that,

A 1797 list of portraits at Wolterton compiled by William Musgrave identifies the Queen
Caroline ad George I and II as being by Jervas, an attribution confirmed by an unpublished
travel diary kept by the Revd John Price, Keeper of the Bodleian, who visited Wolterton in
1757. These portraits, together with the six by Jacopo Amigoni of Caroline’s family, were
all presentation portraits given to Horatio Walpole in recognition of his diplomatic services
abroad. It is also of interest to note that Ripley decided a portrait of Oliver Cromwell – a
figure whose Parliamentarian principles seemed to many Whigs as being akin to their own
beliefs – was to hang ‘over the Chimney in your Bedchamber.’ This was presumably the
Jervas full–length, signed and dated 1736, still at Wolterton today.

Horatio Walpole was close to Queen Caroline, as reflected by the number of portraits of her and
her family he possessed, but this also “perhaps reflects the leading role of Caroline herself in the
Royal patronage of Jervas.” Bottoms notes that, while George II has been maligned as

664 Bottoms, “Charlers Jervas,” 47.
666 Bottoms, “Charles Jervas,” 47. B.L. Add. MSS 6391;Norfolk record Office, Col. 7/11., 2; Wolverton Hall
Archives, T. Ripley to H. Walpole, 4 September 1739.
uncultured and, “something of philistine,” he was, at the very least, willing to sit for portraits at the initiative of Caroline, who was much more involved with patronage and had a closer relationship with Jervas.668 George Vertue – printer, engraver, and historian of English art – was sometimes a questionable source for accurate portrayals of the king as a courtier and gossip, but he does note that in 1728 Jervas, “was implored by the Queen to paint the Picture of Prince William. in which proving successful. the queen sat to him & the King.”669 Vertue also reports that Jervas’s work at Court decline after 1732, when, “The Queen attended by Several Noblemen,” inspected a painting at John Wootton’s Cavendish Square home, of “his Magesty painted on horseback a grey horse…the face of the King by Mr Jarvis & all other parts by Mr Wootton – the House. &c. was much approv’d off, but the Kings not thought to be like…”670


669 Vertue, vol. III, 85. Like all courtiers of all ages, some of Vertue’s commentary must be taken lightly, as it was surely based not only on fact but on enough personal knowledge and desire to rise at court to be dangerous. However, Vertue is an excellent source for the facts of George and Caroline’s patronage and portraits, if not always their motivations. He was also a collector and unabashed lover of the art world – as Horace Walpole notes, “The industry of Mr. Vertue was sufficiently known: the antiquarian world had singular obligations to him. The many valuable monuments relating to our history, and to the person of our monarchs and great men, which he saved from oblivion, are lasting evidences of his merit.” Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of painting in England; with some account of the principal artist; and incidental notes on other arts; collected by the late Mr. George Vertue; and now digested and published from his original MSS.* By Mr. Horace Walpole., v.1. (Strawberry Hill: Thomas Farmer, 1762), v. Walpole purchased Vertue’s collection of notes after the collector’s death in 1757 and referred to the manuscripts as, “near a compleat work.” *Ibid*, vii.

670 Vertue, vol. III, 85. Again, however, it is important to note that, while Caroline probably did see this image, what she actually thought is unknowable, especially when reading Vertue. Bottoms sums up the importance of understanding Jervas’s work as part of, and as a reflection of, the importance of art patronage in the eighteenth century. “Traditionally Jervas’s Royal works has therefore been regarded as of minor significance and limited scope. However, the presence of royal portraits by Jervas Houghton, Ryanham, and Wolterton – together with the above mentioned equestrian portrait, which was commissioned by Lord Hobart of Blickling – suggests that Jervas’s role was extremely important within the circle of leading Whigs based around the figure of the Prime Minister. Indeed, Jervas’s Roay work seems to have been far more extensive that is commonly acknowledged. A documents in the Royal Archives states that for just one year, starting 11 June, 1730, Jervas was paid the princely sum of £496–2–6 ‘for drawing their Majesties pictures’…Although it would be wrong to place Jervas in the same class as Van Dyck or even Kneller, the fact remains that an appreciation of his career is central to a proper understanding of English portraiture in the 1720s and 1730s and illustrates the importance of the network of patronage surrounding, and ultimately emanating from, Sir Robert Walpole” Bottoms, “Charles Jervas,” 48. Bottoms cites a document from the Royal Archives (RA 52771) – for reference, £496 is approximately $107,955.17 in 2017 US Dollars. Calculations based on the method of Eric Nye, University of Wyoming, Department of English, who uses a fascinating historical and mathematical formula to approximate values. See Eric W. Nye, *Pounds Sterling to Dollars: Historical Conversion of Currency*, accessed Saturday, April 08, 2017, http://www.uwyo.edu/numimage/currency.htm.
While Jervas was not the most successful painter of George’s reign, his rise, fall, and popularity show, unequivocally, that art patronage in the early eighteenth century, much like during Henry and James’ reigns, was linked to and important for political power. Although several other artists will be discussed, Jervas’s story gives a good overview of the time period and its artists.671

Another element of patronage and collecting that cannot be ignored and has not been thoroughly studied in relation to royal images is, again, antiquarianism. George’s concern with his image – not just the direct image of his body, or of the office of king, but with how his relationship to that office and the arts were perceived – comes through most clearly, most evidently, when we look at his interest in museums and antiquarian pursuits. Caroline commissioned busts of the royal family, both her own and historical English royals, in an attempt to create a line of legitimacy from the earlier kings and queens to her own family. The eighteenth century was a time of growing interest in the past – as mentioned earlier, papers on artwork commissioned for Henry VIII became fashionable, and the idea of having a collection became more desirable. Royals had always had collections of art, but, with a few notable exceptions, those collections were not tied to any academic pursuit, but instead to political glory and wealth.

Perhaps no other queen – or even king – discussed in this work was as interested in patronage as Caroline, or had as much freedom to pursue her passions for the arts. I will pause here form the basically chronological narrative to discuss Caroline’s patronage and her personal

671 I would also note that, for the sake of comparison, it is significantly easier to see how linked politics and patronage were directly under George and Caroline. Far fewer letters and bills of sale exist from Henry’s reign, for example, as the records are both older and antiquarianism was not the force it would become in the late–eighteenth century as of yet. For James, there is also, always, the consideration that he did, regardless of his reasons, flee England after a very short reign, and therefore documents pertaining to his personal patronage in England are harder to acquire, if they existed in any volume at all. As mentioned in the previous chapters, there was also a habit in English history of erasing the influence of unpopular or disgraced queens. While Caroline was, by all accounts, universally beloved, who knows what has been lost to time and disgruntled courtiers and ministers.
use of image, which must have informed George’s understanding of and interest in art and patronage as well. Although Caroline was only queen for ten years, she had been Princess of Wales for almost fourteen, and had been, as mentioned, raised in a household that valued art and image.

_Caroline: Protestant Patroness of the Arts_

“Caroline of Ansbach...has no rival among England’s queen consorts in the scale and range of her cultural patronage,” Joanna Marschner argues.⁶⁷² She is, I believe, correct, even when taking into account changing centuries and the cultural influence of women of the royal court. Although Anne Boleyn was a cultural patron and fashion icon, the scale of her influence was significantly less, and she held sway over court for a much shorter time period. The same applies for all of Henry’s queens, and for Anne Hyde, even for Mary of Modena, an oft–forgotten patron whose patronage of Italian artists carried through her time in England through her exile in France, as seen in the previous chapter. Why was – how was – Caroline so much more involved in the cultural propaganda and milieu of her time?

As discussed above, Caroline’s situation was unique, and she was raised in a very culturally aware household that placed great value on the arts and the ways in which cultural

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patronage could be used for political gain.\textsuperscript{673} Although George certainly had mistresses, including Henrietta Howard and, later, Amalie Sophie Marianna von Wallmoden, George and Caroline’s marriage appears, at least from the outside, to have been a happy and, above all, steady, one. He stayed with Caroline while she had smallpox in 1707, and spent significant time with her surrounding the birth of their first child, Frederick Ludwig, an event that must have given him some relief, as he was now under less pressure to ensure his dynasty’s success and was allowed to prove himself militarily. Marschner notes that Caroline and George had a very strong partnership and that their temperaments matched well with, “Caroline’s intelligence and even temper” proving, “a counter–balance and foil to George’s energy and his frustration at the narrowness of their lives.”\textsuperscript{674}

Caroline’s own image was important, and certainly had an important impact on the non–royal British subjects – especially as newspapers, the portrait collections of great houses, and engravings became more accessible – but her patronage truly sets her apart from the other queens discussed here. As mentioned previously, none of Henry VIII’s queens, with the possible

\textsuperscript{673} George was initially courted to Ulrike Eleonore, the younger sister of Charles XII of Sweden, then to Charles’ elder sister Hedwig in 1702, but negotiations dragged on, and by 1705, Georg Ludwig began to look elsewhere for a wife for George. Caroline had just rejected Archduke Charles, and Georg Ludwig praised her for it in a letter to Sophia in 1704, and Sophia was able to observe Caroline during her visits to Berlin to see her daughter. While the traditional narrative has been romanticized somewhat, the foundation for George and Caroline’s marriage was almost certainly laid by Caroline’s rejection of Charles and Catholicism, how appealing Georg Ludwig knew that would be to the English, and Sophia’s favorable opinions of her. When George met Caroline (under an assumed name, on a secretive trip, with a love at first sight story to tell when he got home), he asked his father for permission to seek her out as soon as he returned. Georg Ludwig said yes equally as quickly, pointing to serious back–room machinations. He met Caroline in June of 1705 and the marriage contract was signed in July that same year – with the pair married on September 2nd, 1705 in Hanover. In contrast, negotiations for the unsuccessful Swedish alliance had continued almost six years. As with all relationships of the past, it is interesting to think about the feelings involved. Was Caroline swept off her feet by the dashing young prince, or was she mindful of her increasing age and the assumption that illustrious marriage proposals for orphans, even noble orphans, wouldn’t continue indefinitely? It’s comforting to think the former, although Caroline showed pragmatism that belies at least a passing thought for her future prospects. Also, although political machinations were certainly at work, how much did Caroline know? She was an astute observer from all sources, and must have known that the contrived meeting was just that.

\textsuperscript{674} Marschner, \textit{Caroline of Ansbach}, 8.
exception of Anne Boleyn, who did not live long enough to realize her ambitions, had such a mind toward art patronage. Anne Hyde was a patron of Lely, and Mary of Modena certainly used her cultural patronage for political and social purposes, but none had a firm plan like Caroline. In addition, while queen, not even Mary of Modena had to deal with the constant questioning of her legitimacy by a, frankly, much more legitimate contender for the throne.

It’s possible that one of the reasons Caroline was so interested in exploring the royal houses and collections when she became queen in 1727 was because she had so long been denied the freedom by her father–in–law. Certainly, the use of the royal collection to, “promote the new dynasty and celebrate its ancient royal pedigree” was not lost on Caroline. Joanna Marschner points out that Caroline, “who was fiercely protective of the Hanoverian right to the throne, failed to locate a set of portraits to represent the line of English royal succession which she could display prominently.” Her youth and upbringing, “would have left her particularly aware of the tradition in Europe of acquiring portraits to illustrate the dignity and antiquity of the rulers’ families…”

Luckily for Caroline’s plans, in 1728 she discovered a remedy for the tenuous cultural and visual antiquity of the Hanoverians. In Kensington Palace, Caroline found a treasure trove of images. George Vertue recorded the occasion: ‘lately discovered in a bureau at Kensington, which had not been opened in many years, many prints, drawings, medals of silver and brass etc; some drawings of Italian masters painted in body, some designs of Holbein and one book of

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675 Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 93.

676 Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 93.

677 Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 93.
heads said to be King Henry VIII his Queens and Court etc, some with names, some without.’…” Marschner describes this find in more detail, noting that:

‘Caroline’s greatest excitement was, however, reserved for the group of drawings, the ‘designs’ by Hans Holbein the Younger mentioned by Vertue. According to Lord Engmont there were sixty–three drawings in the collection, and they fell into two broad groups. The first dated from the period 1526 to 1528. This was during Holbein’s first sojourn in London; he travelled from Basel armed with an introduction from Erasmus to his first great English patron, Sir Thomas More. The drawings are in black, white and coloured chalks on plain paper and record Erasmus’s London friends and their families…The second set of drawings was made during Holbein’s second London period, between 1532 and 1543. These are a little smaller in size and…they are principally of courtiers with their families…For Caroline not only were the drawings beautiful in their own right but each was carefully annotated with the name of the sitter, and, though they did not exclusively record royal sitters, they stood as a startling record of the Tudor court Caroline admired so much. They held a particular association with Henry VIII, a quintessentially English royal hero, celebrated in the early eighteenth century as the father of the sixteenth–century English Renaissance, a period when England saw a new unity and prosperity. He was another bright star of the Tudor dynasty which the House of Hanover claimed as its inspiration. The discovery of the drawings provided Caroline with a new impetus to research English royal history of this period. Her library would soon contain a great number of books about Tudor political and constitutional history as well as biographies of all the Tudor monarchs. Eventually her research would be manifested in practical form in the waxwork tableau in Merlin’s Cave and in Rysbrack’s line of kings put together in the years that followed...
the Holbein images, quickly set about the creation of a collection that grew to large, if somewhat eclectic, proportions.681

In addition to images – particularly images of earlier kings and queens – Caroline was also a patron of one of the most popular types of art of the eighteenth-century, gardening. Walpole notes that gardening was, “probably one of the first arts that succeeded to that of building houses, and naturally attended property and individual possession,” with, “no reason to think that for many centuries the term garden implied more than a kitchen–garden or orchard.”682 Caroline encouraged this landscape architecture, which was to transform palaces and noble houses for centuries, with Walpole noting that, “gardening and architecture owe as much to the nobility…as to the professors.”683 Caroline’s love of gardens also extended beyond the public gardens she commissioned, and into her love of sculpture and architecture that informed her patronage of sculptors, architects, and painters.684

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681 Caroline, in her quest to prop up the claims of the Hanoverian dynasty wherever possible, generally focused on English and British subjects, like the busts of kings she commissioned, or the Holbein sketches. Marschner, Queen Caroline, 102.

682 Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of painting in England; with some account of the principal artist; and incidental notes on other arts; collected by the late Mr. George Vertue; and now digested and published from his original MSS. By Mr. Horace Walpole., v.4. (Strawberry Hill: Thomas Farmer, 1762), 117–18. Although not important for studying George and Caroline – unless one counts making fun of the French as an essential piece of Englishness – Walpole goes on for several pages about the history of gardens, noting that of course people had gardens before the advent of the modern English garden, but they were either simple kitchen gardens or copies of gardens the ancients had laid out. For example, he argues that, “when a Frenchman reads of the garden of Eden, I do not doubt but he concludes it was something approaching to that of Versailles, with clipt hedges, berceaus, and trellis–work. If his devotion humbles him so far as to allow that, considering who designed it, there might be a labyrinth full of Aesop’s fables, yet he does not conceive that four of the largest rivers in the world were half so magnificent as an hundred fountains full of statues by Girardon.” (Walpole, Anecdotes, 118.)

683 Walpole, Anecdotes, 91.

684 It would also, as I will discuss shortly, be passed on to her eldest son, who would also use gardens and patronage to signal his political leanings.
George’s concern for the actual art of his court can even be seen through Caroline’s patronage and interest in the arts. He had also, as noted earlier, moved a portrait of his own mother into his rooms after his father passed away. In 1727, “on the very morning after the intelligence arrived of the death of king George I, the picture of a lady in royal robes was seen for the first time in the new king’s bed–chamber…this was no other than the portrait of his mother.” Marschner also notes that George understood that, “the visual aspects of monarchy could be used to instill confidence and gain respect,” but he generally trusted Caroline’s ability in the realm of art and patronage.

George was definitely interested in art, however. One incident, in 1735, shows that George would step in when he felt Caroline was upsetting his, “sense of order” or overstepping her bounds. Lord Hervey, in his memoirs, relates that the king, whether for, “the sake of contradiction” or because of general dislike, rebuked Caroline for moving some paintings around in the drawing rooms at Kensington. Hervey, who was very close to Caroline, may be overly critical of the king, but the incident is still telling. Hervey notes that Caroline had taken several

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685 Although George generally, “distanced himself from any involvement in the royal collection,” and the “promotion of the arts was not an aspect of royal life in which he was interested, nor with which he was confident,” he did understand the importance of the arts for maintaining the style and importance of the court, both at home and abroad. Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 110.


687 Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 110.

688 Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 110.

“bad” pictures out of the drawing room and replaced them with very “good” pictures, but George told Hervey that he would, “have every new picture taken away, and every old one replaced.”

Hervey protested that the two Van Dykes placed on either side of the doorway should stay, as they were much better than the anonymous paintings that had previously been hung there. George, Hervey relates, did not agree. He admired Hervey’s tastes, but had his own as well, accusing Hervey of helping the queen to remove the paintings, saying, “I supposed you assisted the Queen with your fine advice when she was pulling my house to pieces and spoiling all my furniture: thank God, at least, she has left the walls standing!” He also gave – again, according to Hervey – a very definite opinion on the new paintings:

As for the Vandykes I do not care, I do not care whether they are changed or no; but for the picture with the dirty frame over the door, and the three nasty little children, I will have them taken away, and the old ones restored; I will have it done too to-morrow morning before I go to London, or else I know it will not be done at all.

Lord Hervey responded to George, saying, humorously, “Would your Majesty have the gigantic fat Venus restored too?” The king responded, “Yes, my Lord...I like my fat Venus much better than anything you have given me instead of her.” Whether or not the exchange happened

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690 Hervey, Memoirs, 33.

691 Hervey, Memoirs, 34.

692 Hervey, Memoirs, 34. It is interesting that while Caroline returned the van Dycks to Windsor, she did not return the paintings of the three older children of Charles I – according to Marschner, she kept those at Kensington but moved them to, “her own drawing room.” Marschner, Queen Caroline, 111. Why did she not return the children to the more public rooms? I would argue that it had to do with both dynastic issues – why would she want to put the James II, whose children and grandchildren had been, and believed they should be, rulers of England, on the wall for anyone who longed for the Jacobites to see? In her drawing room, which was not completely private but was also not “public,” the Stuart children would not be hidden away like George’s mother had been, but they would be part of the family, the private family, rather than the public dynastic display.

693 Hervey, Memoirs, 34.
exactly as Hervey relayed it, George certainly had opinions about art, even if he generally left the management of it to Caroline.\textsuperscript{694}

Caroline enjoyed looking at portraits and paintings, and purchased several to supplement the royal collection, as noted in the incident mentioned above. In 1730, just three years after becoming Queen, she sent Jervas to Italy to look for good Italian paintings for her collection, although Jervas returned empty–handed, as he had become ill on the trip.\textsuperscript{695} Caroline invited artists into her court to view the art she collected and to allow them to make copies. Michael Rysbrack was allowed to make copies of Camillo Rusconi works in 1727, and in 1728, Jeremiah Davidson worked in the State Apartments making copies of van Dyck and Titian paintings.\textsuperscript{696} Vertue himself even made copies of images with the Queen’s permission. Caroline also viewed art and visited artists’ studios. She visited John Wootton’s studio in 1732 where she saw the painting discussed earlier, “a portrait of the King by Mr Jarvis, all of the other parts by Mr Wotton.”\textsuperscript{697} According to Vertue, she approved of Wootton’s representation of the horse, but was unhappy with the image of the king.\textsuperscript{698}

In addition to patronage, Caroline also valued the representation of her family. This shouldn’t be surprising, given her interest in connecting her own family and the royal family in general with the historical English royal family. Although the royal family as a whole had

\textsuperscript{694} Hervey, \textit{Memoirs}, 34.

\textsuperscript{695} Marschner, \textit{Queen Caroline}, 112.

\textsuperscript{696} The National Archives, LC5/158, 492 and The National Archives LC5/159, 1. Lord Chamberlain’s Papers LC2, LC5, LC9, LC11.


\textsuperscript{698} Vertue, “Note Books III” Vol. 22, p. 61–62. Did George and Caroline speak about this portrait as well? It would be fascinating to know.
conflict – George and his father, George and his son, the various relations, the Stuart cousins – there was effort to show them in family groupings that spoke to unity and harmony. One painting, an incomplete sketch by Hogarth, is worth examining more closely here.

While William Hogarth is more known today as a satirist, drawing various commentaries on the morality – and lack thereof – of political players and situations, he was also an accomplished painter. He painted historical subjects and portraits of many influential social and political actors of the day, including Simon Fraser, 11th Lord Lovat (who would be executed for his role in the 1745 Jacobite rebellion), and in 1731 started a painting of the family of George II. The Royal Collection Trust notes that the painting of this portrait was actually an, “unhappy incident” in Hogarth’s life.\footnote{Royal Collection Trust, \textit{The Family of George II} by William Hogarth. RCIN 401358, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/24/collection/401358/the-family–of–george–ii–0.} George Vertue claimed that Hogarth, “made an application to some Lady about the Queen that he might leave to make a draught of the ceremony” of the wedding of Princess Anne and William of Orange, with a mind towards making a print of the painting to sell to the public.\footnote{Royal Collection Trust, \textit{The Family of George II} by William Hogarth. RCIN 401358, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/24/collection/401358/the-family–of–george–ii–0.}

According to Vertue, Hogarth started the painting, with permission from Caroline, but he was, “driven off by his rival artist, William Kent, who enjoyed the favour of the Queen and was anxious to preserve the monopoly status of his own image.”\footnote{William Hogarth, “The Family of George II,” ca. 1731–2, Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 401358, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/24/collection/401358/the-family–of–george–ii–0.} This anecdote – which should, as the Royal Collection Trust notes, be treated with some suspicion – is telling no matter the amount of truth in the actual interaction, as there is a work in progress, which means the commission was certainly started and likely given to George or Caroline for approval. As with so
many portraits, there are not necessarily clear answers as to exactly how the image was commissioned – or how that commission was taken away. What is most interesting about this image, beyond its clear connection to an important political event during the reign of George II, is its setting.

As mentioned, Caroline was a major supporter of the creation of gardens. These gardens were meant to increase the beauty of a home and to celebrate the people, events, and ideas that made Britain great. For example, Richmond Park’s gardens, which Caroline oversaw, contained busts of historical figures in British history. Richmond Park itself had a long history, with the house, Richmond Lodge, and park having once been part of Henry VIII’s Richmond Palace. Although this was not the first garden Caroline had been exposed to – there were several garden projects at her various homes as a child as well – and it was not the first “English garden” in England, it was a substantial piece of land that Caroline could put her mark on. Marschner notes that Caroline was aware of garden design and new trends in gardening. 

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702 Marschner notes that the house was irregular, likely the results of centuries of additions, new facades, and several changes in ownership. That said, she argues, it was a, “semi–private province” which Caroline could, “make her own.” Marschner, Queen Caroline, 24.

703 The royal gardens at Hampton Court and Kensington, for example, and at the Duke of Devonshire’s residence in Chatworth, were designed in French and Italian styles. Marschner, Queen Caroline, 27.

704 Marschner, Queen Caroline, 27. For an excellent discussion on how gardens related to the natural order of the world, and how the Earl of Shaftesbury, who we discussed in the previous chapter, tied Whig political philosophy with philosophical musings on the world, see Marschner’s chapter in Queen Caroline, “Caroline and the Gardeners.”
In Hogarth’s painting – which is really more of a sketch – George and Caroline sit on a large, red velvet and gold couch to the side of the painting, while their children stand in a casual scene in front of the large, columned temple in the center. There is another bench, although smaller, opposite the King and Queen, but Frederick stands in front of it, dressed similarly to George, talking to his sisters. Two of the other princesses sit with a dog – a small spaniel they are teaching to shake hands. Dogs have tended to symbolize purity and loyalty in portraits – thinking of Henry VIII’s Whitehall Mural – so it unsurprising to find one here. Not only is this painting filled with symbolism, from the dog to the temple, which may symbolize the institution of the monarchy or a virtue, like Liberty, to the fountain, which is strangely filled with what appears to be fruit, but it’s also a domestic scene. A staged domestic scene, to be sure, but a family portrait all the same.705

Although at first glance this looks like a family picnic, the arrangement holds just as much importance, if less imposing gravitas and structure, than the Whitehall Mural by Holbein or the portrait of James II and Anne Hyde with their daughters by Lely. Family arrangements, even informal ones, did not happen by chance, and it is almost unbelievable that a portrait like this could have been painted from an unplanned day of family fun, particularly in 1731. Frederick’s main loyalty lay in Hanover, where he had been his grandfather’s representative, and

705 The Royal Collection Trust’s article on this painting also finds the fruit fountain a strange addition, noting that perhaps in a final version a more understandable story or allegory would emerge. They suggest that it may be a retelling of the Judgement of Paris, in which Paris of Troy is forced to do the bidding of Eris, the goddess of discord, planting the seeds for the Trojan War. I am not a scholar of mythology, and early modern retellings of myths and legends often had layers that are incomprehensible at best. However, could this – if it is an allegorical allusion to the Judgement of Paris at all – be a subtle sign that Hogarth saw and understood the discord between George II and Frederick, Prince of Wales, just as there had been between George II and his own father? Perhaps. Hogarth had, as seen in his political satire, a keen eye for the ironic and satirical. However, if that’s the story Hogarth was attempting to represent here, it shocks me that he was surprised at his dismissal. Again, see: William Hogarth, “The Family of George II,” ca. 1731–2, Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 401358, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/24/collection/401358/the-family-of-george-ii-0.
had only been permitted to come to England in 1727 when his father took the throne. He, like his father before him, created an opposition court at his home in England, opposing his parents whenever possible. According to John Van der Kiste, George even considered splitting up the personal union between Hanover and England, giving Frederick the British throne and William, Duke of Cumberland the electoral seat in Hanover.706

Images like this, where George and Caroline are presenting themselves as both the ultimate family authority and thoroughly British – and supporting, at least for a time, an English painter – show that they were incredibly concerned with their image, and with the image of their family, in their adopted home. Frederick, in particular, was a patron of the arts like his mother, commissioning works from some of the artists George and Caroline also supported, like John Wootton and Jacopo Amigoni. Although unfinished, and of questionable origin, this painting shows that the concern with image was not just a reaction to the political and cultural threat of the Jacobites, but also to the dramas happening within the royal family itself.

Images – although the focus of this work – were not the only way in which the family portrayed themselves, their feelings towards each other, duty, and contemporary politics. A wonderful example of the cultural implications of that family drama involves the famous phrase, “Rule, Britannia!” and another attempt by the Hanoverians to connect themselves.707 In 1740, after Caroline had passed away, a masque was performed at Cliveden, Frederick’s Buckinghamshire home. The masque was written by David Mallet and James Thomson and, “has long been recognized as a political performance, and has traditionally been seen as a

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706 John Van der Kiste, George II and Queen Caroline (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1997), 158.

dramatization of the ideas contained within Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke’s ‘Idea of a Patriot King.’” J.W. Cox argues that this performance was not only a show of patriotism and patronage on behalf of the Prince of Wales, but also that it was, an attempt to create a unified opposition to the, “men and measures of Sir Robert Walpole, and the prince’s father, King George II.” That it was an oppositional play, against the foreign policies and politics of Walpole and George II, has been well–proven by historians. This shows, very clearly, that patronage was used by the early Hanoverians – by the family of George II and Caroline – to further their political aspirations as well as dynastic claims. It is also apparent that the political power of the royal family, which had been so centered in the institution of the monarchy and the monarch himself during at the beginning of Henry’s reign, was now completing its shift toward politics by patronage, with the legal power of the country beginning to rest solely with Parliament and the cultural political power – the power of royal celebrity – resting with the royal family.

In addition to the oppositional politics of the play, which one imagines must have reminded George of his own conflicts with his father, the subject matter is fascinating. Cox notes that the choice of Alfred, out of all the great English rulers, gave Frederick and his allies a mythical, far–removed king who espoused all the ideals they felt George II lacked. Alfred, “was believed to have founded the Royal Navy, promoted trade, and ensured the nation’s maritime security,” while Frederick and his court believed the politics of George and Walpole were, “too

708 Cox, “Frederick,” 932.

pacific and inappropriately European.”

Alfred, in ways other English kings could not, became, “both a stick to with which to beat the administration and a figure that offered the possibility of a reformation of the role of the monarchy through a restoration of idealized Anglo-Saxon values.” While the political association with Frederick, who never became king, has lessened and faded into obscurity, the phrase, “Rule, Brittania!” remains a part of popular culture.

We can also return to the topic of gardening when discussing this play. If Frederick – in opposition to his father – was setting himself up to be a, “latter-day Alfred,” he did so at least in part through his gardens at Carlton House. The gardens not only showcased Frederick’s admiration for and patronage of artists, but also his attempts to connect himself with ancient kings – just as Caroline had done. Although not a second-generation monarch, and never a monarch at all, dying in 1751, nine years before his father, Frederick’s patronage and desire to present himself as part of a long lineage of English kings, as a patriot, and as a political entity through his patronage cannot be understated. The gardens were, “more diversified and of greater variety than anything of that compass,” and held busts of, “king Alfred and the black prince.”

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710 Cox, “Frederick,” 938.

711 Cox, “Frederick,” 938. It is important to note here that the 1737 Licensing Act would not permit the play to be performed publicly, as it would not have passed censorship. Performing the masque privately allowed the authors to, “circumvent submitting the text to the lord chamberlain.” (Cox, “Frederick,” 953) The play was eventually performed in 1751, until, “ironically, being cut short by the death of Frederick…on 20 March.” (Cox, “Frederick,” 953)

712 Cox, “Frederick,” 939.

713 Historic Manuscripts Commission (HMC), The manuscripts of the earl of Carlisle (London, 1897) and Duchy of Cornwall Household Accounts vol. xix, fo. 7. Both these sources are also cited by Cox, “Frederick,” 939. I would also add here that there is a bit of historical irony – Cox notes that Frederick likely used the figure of the Black Prince, Edward of Woodstock, son of Edward III, to show his potential and, “future promise.” (Cox, “Frederick,” 939). Edward, like Frederick, would die in his mid-thirties, leaving a son – the grandson of Edward III, Richard II – to become king.
Caroline was only queen for ten years, dying in 1737, but during that time she accomplished a significant amount as a patroness, but also as a visual symbol of the royal family. She had at least some control over her image by being a powerful patron and by having a lively court throughout her time in England, as discussed. Her portraits, including the Kneller portrait when she was Princess of Wales, contain substantial amounts of symbolism on their own, primarily showing her as either a steadfast companion to George or as a motherly figure, a “mother of the country” who was continuing and ensuring the Hanoverian line. This was especially important in light of the rival Jacobite court in exile.

As Joanna Marschner notes, and as this study shows, the Jacobite court in exile did not stop producing images that were, “replete with the trappings of sovereignty,” and both Caroline and George knew very well that those images were being produced and that they were political currency.\(^714\) Caroline’s portraits – often painted by either British artists or those with long ties to Britain and the court – were painted with an eye to tying the Hanoverian monarchs to an ancient English royal tradition. Most of Caroline’s portraits followed the template Kneller had made, with velvet robes trimmed with ermine and her crown displayed prominently. This style was replicated in later portraits by Charles Jervas, Enoch Seeman, John Vanderbank, Joseph Highmore, and countless engravers.\(^715\) The tradition of royal portraits was long – dating back at least to Henry VIII, who presided over the artistic renaissance in portraiture in England – and the work of these artists, “brought for the new regime dignity and authority by linking it to the portrait tradition of an earlier generation.”\(^716\)

\(^714\) Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 112.

\(^715\) Marschner notes that these artists, “supplied a steady series of images until the late 1730s.” Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 113.

\(^716\) Marschner, *Queen Caroline*, 113.
Plate 54: Charles Jervas (Studio), “Caroline Wilhelmina of Brandenburg–Ansbach.”
For example, the 1727 portrait of Caroline by Charles Jervas is strikingly similar to Kneller’s portrait of Caroline as Princess of Wales. The continuity of image was clearly important, as was the use of a well–established court painter. In this image, Caroline stands with her right hand on her crown, again prominently displayed on a table next to her that is draped with velvet. She wears a sumptuous dress of gold and orange brocade with a black or dark green bodice adorned with pearls and jewels. Her hair is also decorated with pearls, and she stands almost luminous against the dark background dominated by a large column. Another portrait from 1735, a bust by Joseph Highmore, is a different view, but the same style and meaning. This portrait is a profile bust, with Caroline facing left, in an ermine–trimmed velvet gown and lace collared dress. She wears a smaller crown, almost a tiara, that is gold with a dark red stone and what looks like a pearl dangling from the top. Her hair also holds an assortment of jewels. In both these portraits, Caroline has ruddy cheeks and is painted as mature – not “old” but as a full–grown adult woman, and as a plump woman who has given birth several times and is reaching middle age. It should be noted that these observations do not make Caroline any less attractive, but they are presented as fact.
Caroline’s success in having several children, in fulfilling her dynastic role, is most overtly represented in Jacopo Amigoni’s 1735 portrait of Caroline. This portrait was commissioned by Caroline, and was given, according to John Kerslake, to her doctor, Richard Mead, the next year.\footnote{Marschner argues that this painting was actually made in 1737 and was commissioned by Richard Mead in his role as sponsor and honorary physician of the Foundling Hospital in Bloomsbury. She notes that, “in a picture destined for a hospital for abandoned children, it may contain an allusion to Caroline as protector of all children, and it served as a reminder that it was through Caroline and her family that the monarchy safeguarded its future.” Marschner, Queen Caroline, 115. John Kerslake argued that this painting was actually given by Caroline to Mead – and it is inscribed, on the steps of her seat, “GIVEN BY HER MAJESTY QUEEN CAROLINE TO HER MOST HUMBLE SERVANT Dr. MEAD. 1736.” Kerslake notes that the National Portrait Gallery holds one of two versions of the painting, both of which were paid for by the Queen in 1735. See John Kerslake, Early Georgian Portraits (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1977). Kerslake’s book is now out of print, but detailed information on the book and this portrait in particular can be found at, “Early Georgian Portraits Catalogue: Caroline,” National Portrait Gallery, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/explore/early-georgian-portraits-catalogue-caroline#.} Caroline wears, once again, an ermine and velvet robe of state, this time in dark blue and gold. Her dress is cream or pink, and lined with lace and jewels at the neckline. While her dress is unsurprising – if beautiful – the rest of the painting is filled with symbolism that absolutely speaks to her role as mother and “Mother of the Nation.” Two cherubs fly above her head, the higher one holding her crown while the other, flying closer to the queen, holds a laurel wreath. The laurel wreath is a symbol of victory or triumph, and Caroline had certainly triumphed in continuing the royal family and her husband’s dynasty through childbearing.

Caroline had triumphed in several other ways as well – over a controlling father-in-law, the people of England, the dismal rate of mortality in childbirth, the first wave of the eighteenth-century Jacobite threats, and, with her happy if imperfect marriage, the political alliance system which was to cause her children and grandchildren so much unhappiness. Caroline was also, as her collecting and interest in antiquarianism show, very aware of ancient symbolism. But the wreath in early modern England also was part of a long tradition of funeral symbolism –
particularly for young women. Could Caroline have been thanking her doctor for allowing her to wear the crown, rather than the wreath?718

Marschner argues that this painting was actually made in 1737 and was commissioned by Richard Mead in his role as sponsor and honorary physician of the Foundling Hospital in Bloomsbury. She notes that, “in a picture destined for a hospital for abandoned children, it may contain an allusion to Caroline as protector of all children, and it served as a reminder that it was through Caroline and her family that the monarchy safeguarded its future.”719 John Kerslake argued that this painting was actually given by Caroline to Mead – and it is inscribed, on the steps of her seat, “GIVEN BY HER MAJEST QUEEN CAROLINE TO HER MOST HUMBLE SERVANT Dr. MEAD. 1736.” Kerslake notes that the National Portrait Gallery holds one of two versions of the painting, both of which were paid for by the Queen in 1735, and the accounts of the Treasurer in 1735 noted that payment was made, “to Amigoni for drawing two pictures of Her Majesty whole–length as a present to the Duke of Kent and Dr. Meade…the Queen sat to him for the face.”720 Vertue also mentions these paintings – probably painted at the same time, by Amigoni’s studio, as they are very similar, with the other just lacking the cornucopia and having a background of pillars rather than a curtain – in 1735, noting that Caroline was painted

718 Although the use of wreaths was common, a nineteenth–century historian, Frederick Edward Hulme, wrote specifically about the associations of flowers with various events and life stages, including wreaths for women who died young. Hulme, Frederick Edward, Bards and blossoms; or, The poetry, history, and associations of flowers (Oxford: Marcus Ward & Co., 1877), 50–51.

719 Marschner, Queen Caroline, 115.

720 ‘Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber 1735’, PRO Audit Office Index 415, vol.169, cited Woodward, p.22. It is important to note that this idea of sitting for “the face” was not unusual, and had been part of the “studio system” in place since the mid–seventeenth century, as discussed in the previous chapter discussing James II and Sir Peter Lely. John Kerslake, Early Georgian Portraits, Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1977. The National Portrait Gallery cites Kerslake’s work on this painting in its notes. See: https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw01096/Caroline–Wilhelmina–of–Brandenburg–Ansbach?LinkID=mp00766&role=sit&rNo=2.
with, “several attributes of honour…and sciences…the whole freely and lively – but neither like nor correct – but of fine glowing colours,” a reference to Caroline’s very youthful looking face.721

This is already a painting filled with symbolism, but at Caroline’s feet sits a cornucopia held by two more cherubs and adorned with gold and flowers. Inside the cornucopia, spilling out the top, are the heads of Caroline’s surviving seven children. I agree with Marschner that this painting is absolutely an, “allusion to Caroline as protector of all children,” but also, that this is a painting is a symbol of her success at continuing the Hanoverian dynasty and the English royal family as a whole. That Caroline commissioned it – as seems most likely given the entry in the 1735 treasurer reports – is even more proof that Caroline was committed not just patronage of great artists, but also to using her image to further her family’s dynastic ambitions.722 The cornucopia, like the crowns, supported by cherubs. The heads of her seven surviving children are coming out of the horn of plenty, but they are definitely children, not accurate portraits of the young princes and princesses in 1735. Frederick, the oldest, would have been twenty-eight, and the youngest, Louisa, would still have been eleven, with the others in between. This reversion to the princes and princesses as children is not without precedent – Henry did not include his children in the Whitehall Mural, but did include his latest, most recently deceased wife, alluding to her already born son, and James’ portrait with Anne Hyde (deceased by that time) and his

721 Vertue, Volume III, p.75. Caroline does look young, and very pretty in this painting, but in my mind, the cherubs holding crowns and the cornucopia filled with children are more unrealistic than any de-aging Amigoni might have done.

722 Caroline’s family was also included in Sir James Thornhill’s large-scale mural of the Hanoverians in the Painted Hall at Greenwich. Here, the work that was begun before the accession of George I was updated by Thornhill to include George II and Caroline as Prince and Princess of Wales, accompanied by their children. Marschner notes that with images like this, “the message was loud and clear; it was through them that the royal succession would be guaranteed into the future.” Marschner, Queen Caroline, 113.
daughters, both grown and married, by Peter Lely, shows the royal couple with the princesses as children. Painting the children as younger serves a dual purpose here – first, the portrait was for her doctor, a prominent surgeon and scientist who had certainly assisted in ensuring the royal family stayed alive and healthy, and, second, showing them as children reduced them to symbols of legitimacy rather than real, very flawed people. Frederick, in particular, was a sore spot for the royal family at times, and the princesses, while generally liked, presented problems as well with their lack of marriages. Painting them as children, royal children coming out of a divine horn of plenty, is a powerful statement.\textsuperscript{723}

\textsuperscript{723} Although it is a horn of plenty, and Caroline’s children were plentiful, some conjecture can be made about the cornucopia itself as well. Could the three large flowers represent the miscarriage, stillborn child, and short-lived prince? Caroline interestingly does not gesture to the cornucopia at all, instead holding on to the chair arm and gesturing with an open hand on the other side of the canvas.
Caroline used her image, along with her children, in other portraits — although never as strangely or symbolically as in the Amigoni portrait. In the 1730s, Caroline sat for a portrait with Herman van der Myn that included one of her younger children, William Augustus, who would later be Duke of Cumberland. In this portrait, Caroline looks much as she does in other portraits, with the robes of state and red and silver dress. She holds the young William’s hand, and gestures to him, standing on her right, with her left hand. William wears a typical outfit for the time, a long dress with a blue sash. Although his dress is not as elaborate as the one James’s son wore in his 1692 portrait around the same age (see previous chapter), a fact that is not surprising given their different places in the line of succession at the time of their portraits, the images show them at similar ages. Where James was pushing his son forward as rightful heir, Caroline’s image seems to be pointing to her children as the continuation of stability and the established dynasty.

In addition to paintings she collected or painters she supported, and portraits her herself and her family, Caroline also commissioned paintings that spoke to the myth of her family’s ancient roots in England. In 1730, before she found the Holbein drawings and started her formal picture closet, she asked William Kent to, “produce three paintings illustrating the life and achievements of the warrior king Henry V.”724 Caroline seems to have paid for these paintings out of the Privy Purse, and the paintings were ultimately placed in her dressing room at St. James’s Place, which was private, but still accessible to the inner members of court.725 Her use of the “ancient” and “antique” was not just a personal preference, but a way to show dynastic


725 Marschner refers to this space as, “a well–used private space.” Marschner, Queen Caroline, 115.
continuity, even if that continuity was more myth than fact. The guests in Caroline’s salon were “those who could support the Hanoverian dynasty in some way.”\textsuperscript{726} Clerics and English heroes, like Isaac Newton, rubbed elbows with writers and courtiers in rooms designed to display the long and storied lineage of the royal family, in 1735, Caroline ordered a series of historical busts from John Michael Rysbrack to represent some of the kings of England from William the Conqueror on. These monarchs, like Edward III and Henry V, “had established places in the Valhalla of royal British worthies and heroes...noted for their valour, defending the honour and liberties of the nation at Crecy and Agincourt respectively.”\textsuperscript{727}

Caroline was also a great collector of books. Emma Jay notes that Caroline started to collect books even before moving to Germany, and she amassed hundreds of books, pamphlets, plays – around 2800 items total. Collecting books was a kind of cultural and court patronage and, “acquiring a book could be a means of acquiring cultural capital.”\textsuperscript{728} Caroline’s library was so important to her that a portrait of George by Charles Philips from 1738, a year after Caroline’s death, shows George standing in the library with dogs and a bust of Athene, which, “communicates George’s grief at the loss of Caroline, the modern Athene, and positions him as the library’s responsible owner.”\textsuperscript{729} This portrait is strangely emotional – while George wears his formal dress, and the room is sumptuous, with green velvet curtains and a large red and gold

\textsuperscript{726} Marschner, \textit{Queen Caroline}, 18.

\textsuperscript{727} Marschner, \textit{Queen Caroline}, 87. Caroline was also, importantly, a Protestant patroness. Blanning notes that, “if the new Prince of Wales was a Protestant hero, his wife...was, if anything, even more renowned as a Protestant heroine.” (Blanning, “The Hanoverian Monarchy,” 137.) A poem by John Gay in 1714, “To a lady, occasioned by the arrival of the Princess of Wales,” spoke of her refusal to accept a Catholic betrothal from the Holy Roman Empire in her youth with the line “She scorn’d an empire for religion’s sake.” (John Gay, \textit{The Poems of John Gay} (London, 1822), 82.)

\textsuperscript{728} Jay, “Court Patronage Reconsidered,” 81.

\textsuperscript{729} Jay, “Court Patronage Reconsidered,” 76.
(colors Caroline favored) chair sits atop a lush rug – it doesn’t feel formal. Instead, the dogs playing, the large statue, and the sad expression George wears make this a very interesting portrait, and certainly a reaction to the passing of his beloved partner who helped him rule through her artistic patronage, which was, “one of the building–blocks of the collection” and, in fact, George’s time as Prince of Wales and his first decade as king. It would be tempting, in some ways, to end the discussion of the royal family’s interest in and use of images with Caroline’s death, and, although Caroline was a major contributor to her family’s public image and certainly one of the most popular of her generation of Hanoverians, that would be unfair to her legacy and her family’s legacy. It would also be dismissing George’s contributions to art and his support for artists, antiquarians, and artistic institutions.

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730 Jay, “Court Patronage Reconsidered,” 79.
The Jacobite Threat and Hanoverian Symbolism

Before moving on to George’s portraits and his interests in art after Caroline’s death in 1737, it is important to recognize and discuss the threat the Jacobite court really posed, and how George was required to respond to that threat. Caroline had no real counterpart in the Jacobite court – Mary of Modena had held sway in exile but had passed away in 1701. Her son, James Francis Edward Stuart, did not marry until 1719 and his wife, Maria Clementina Sobieska, the granddaughter of the Polish king, died in 1735. While there are several portraits of Maria, including one that currently hangs in the Scottish National Gallery, her marriage was a tumultuous one, and she and James separated – with some efforts at reconciliation – in 1725.731 Charles Edward Stuart, James II’s grandson, did not marry until well after the failed coup of 1745, marrying Louise of Stolberg–Gedern in 1772, only to separate after a childless marriage in 1780.732 While George certainly had a Stuart counterpart, and he and Caroline’s children – of which there were many, and all legitimate – could provide a foil to the Stuart heirs, Caroline was not working in opposition to another queen.

However, it is simply impossible to consider George and Caroline outside of the Jacobite threat, even if there was no rival queen for Caroline to work against.733 The Jacobite threat must have been a constant annoyance, if not a constant worry, for George II, even during other conflicts. At the very least, the iconography of the Hanoverians – something I believe was

731 For works on James Francis Edward Stuart and Maria Clementina Sobieska, see: Bryan Bevan, King James the Third of England: A Study of Kingship in Exile (London: Robert Hale, 1967) and Theo Aronson, Kings Over the Water: The Saga of the Stuart Pretenders (London: Thistle Publishing, 2015). For an historian of the eighteenth-century, these two figures are very underrepresented in academic works and would make interesting subjects.

732 Charles did have an illegitimate daughter, Charlotte Stuart, who he did later legitimize.

733 And it truly was a threat. Although in hindsight it’s easy to look back and see that the Jacobite cause was underfunded and incoherent even at its most effective, one different decision could have changed its course.
cultivated in partial response to the popular iconography of the Jacobites – appears prominently in several portraits from George’s reign. The Jacobites in exile were commissioning and distributing images that showed them as the rightful rulers, with a hereditary claim to return to the throne, and George and Caroline were very aware of that activity. As Clarissa Campbell Orr notes, “with the Jacobite threat ever present over these years, the image of monarchy needed to commanding and enduring.”734 George, like Henry and James before him, was faced with a threat that warranted, in fact needed, portraiture.

Iconography presented an interesting problem for George; it could not be too overtly German, as his British subjects certainly would not have liked that (nor would Parliament), and it could not be too British, or it would be impossible to translate successfully to Hanoverian audiences. George had no defining childhood moments like the young Charles II had, despite his youthful military prowess – George’s childhood may have been cold and far–removed from the colorful English court, but he certainly did not have to hide in an oak tree while murderous rebels hunted for him after his father was beheaded and hope locals kept him hidden. The Royal Oak of the Jacobites may be overplayed as an iconographical object of importance by later historians, but that doesn’t change the oak leaves adorning images of later Stuarts and the material objects belonging to their supporters were easily recognized. In addition, no matter how popular the Hanoverians were, no matter how just their cause and appropriate their religious beliefs, the romance of “the King over the water” was tantalizing. Thus, lacking any romantic gestures or daring stories, the White Horse of Hanover was born.

734 Orr, Queenship in Britain, 113.
The White Horse of Hanover has its own ancient – if somewhat difficult to trace – and illustrious past.\textsuperscript{735} But, more importantly for George and Caroline, and the Hanoverian dynasty as a whole, it was safe. It was not too Germanic; even with a long German history stretching to the year 800, it was not a foreign concept to venerate a particularly special horse or have horses on crests. The Order of the Garter, as noted earlier, had a white horse as part of its symbol, with St. George riding a white horse to slay the dragon. On the other hand, it also was not too English, because it was part of the Hanoverian coat of arms and heraldry and was, after all, Saxon. It was also an easily rendered, referenced, and understood image. Most importantly, it was an image that the Stuarts and their Jacobite allies could not legitimately claim as their own.

\textsuperscript{735} For an interesting discussion of the White Horse of Hanover, see The Royal Mint, “The Story of the White Horse of Hanover,” via https://www.royalmint.com/stories/collect/The–Story–of–the–White–Horse–of–Hanover/. The White Horse of Hanover is known as the “Sachsenross” or “Saxon Steed” in Germany, where it has been used by Hanover as well as several other German states.
Plate 59: John Wootton and Charles Jervas, “King George II (1683–1760) on horseback.” Oil on canvas, ca. 1732. National Trust Collection, Blickling Hall, Norfolk. NT 355539.
The White Horse of Hanover became an important part of the cultural image–making of the Hanoverians in several ways. A small part of the royal arms, it had greater implications than just official court uses. It appeared on military uniforms and badges, and white horses were sometimes featured in images of the Hanoverian kings and their families. An early portrait of George II as king, *King George II on horseback*, by Charles Jervas and John Wootton, was painted in 1732. In this portrait, George rides a white horse and wears a red coat, gold riding gloves, and gold and green riding accessories. He and the horse pose in front of a stylized building with neoclassical columns looking over a hilly countryside. This portrait has very little overt symbolism, but the commentary surrounding its creation is fascinating for our story.

Jervas figures prominently in the story of the above–mentioned equestrian portrait as well. He and John Wootton collaborated on the image, which the National Trust Collection notes was painted for Lord Hobart of Blickling – who became the 1st Earl of Buckinghamshire in

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736 Animals as heraldic symbols were, of course, not new. Henry VIII and his third queen, Jane Seymour, were represented at Hampton Court by “The King’s Beasts,” a series of sculptures showing the animals and shields of the king and queen’s families. In 1952, the Ministry of Work commissioned a new series, “The Queen’s Beasts” for Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation. These new beasts – Elizabeth II was not actually directly descended from Henry VIII or Jane Seymour, but is instead descended from Henry’s sister Margaret Tudor, and would need new heraldic symbols – were placed outside Westminster Abbey to guard Elizabeth II at her coronation. They were later given to Canada, and are currently on display at the Canadian Museum of History. For more information on these sculptures, see H Stanford London, with an introduction by Sir George Bellew, *The Queen's Beasts* (London: Newman Neame, 1953). An interesting review of this work, from M. Maclagan in The Antiquaries Journal 34 (October 1954), notes that the book shows, “unequivocally how stimulating heraldic design can be today without departing in any valid sense from its ancient canons,” and that, unsurprisingly, “most of the beasts find their origins in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the great age of the badge, which reflected the bastard feudalism, the livery and maintenance of an over–mighty subject, as clearly and truly as the original coat–of–arms had illustrated and adorned a purer feudal society.” (259) We can hardly criticize the Hanoverians, and George II and Caroline in particular, for trying to connect their lineage with that of the “ancient” kings and queens of England, particularly when Elizabeth II still does so. Maclagan, M. 1954. “The Queen's Beasts: an Account with New Drawings of the Heraldic Animals Which Stood at the Entrance of Westminster Abbey on the Occasion of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 2 June 1953. By H. Stanford London, F.S.A., Norfolk Herald Extraordinary, with a Foreword by the Hon. Sir K.C.V.O. George Bellew, F.S.A., Garter King of Arms. 11 × 8½. Pp. 56. London: Newman Neame, 1954. 8s. 6d.” The Antiquaries Journal 34 (3–4). Cambridge University Press: 259–59. doi:10.1017/S0003581500060236.
More interesting than the actual painting itself is the commentary surrounding its creation. According to Vertue, “Mr Jervase his Majestys painter has had no success in painting their Majesties pictures & from thence he lost much favour & Interest at Court,” because the king’s face was not a very good likeness, but that the horse, which Wootton painted, was, “much approved of.” That the horse was approved by George, but his own likeness was not is interesting, and shows two very important things. First, that George did care about – and comment on – his own image, even when it was painted by an artist who had painted him before and who was a favorite at court. Vertue, who like Walpole was a great gossip, would not have hesitated to write about such a snub, but that George commented on it in the first place is telling. Second, we still see George, years after his military career had practically, if not officially, ended, concerned about and interested in the depiction of his military life and its trappings, even in a portrait with no military garb. The praise of the horse in this portrait, a white horse at that, speaks both to George’s concern with image and symbols of rule as well as his continued interest in sport and military life.

Another striking example of the White Horse of Hanover being used in an image of George II – and a more direct connection to the king’s military career – is John Wootton’s painting, *The Battle of Dettingen, with the Duke of Cumberland and Robert, 4th Earl of Holderness, 27 June 1743.* The Battle of Dettingen was a 1743 battle during the War of the Austrian Succession. England, along with Hanover and Hesse, fought the French forces at

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737 National Trust Collection, John Wootton and Charles Gervas, *King George II on horseback*, NT 355539. See: https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/355539.


Dettingen, near the River Main, with George II leading his troops into battle – the last time in history an English monarch did so. The French were defeated, dealing a blow to the French side of the conflict – and, by association, the Jacobite requests for money from the French throne – and the battle has some fascinating, as well as harrowing, tales. It was also, interestingly, the last battle at which the English monarch was physically present and involved in the actual conflict. Although it is easy to see the significance of this in hindsight, George probably did not not know it was his last battle (or the last for the kings and queens of England, at least as of this writing), and too much emphasis should not be placed on that fact when looking at the painting.

George sits astride a large white horse, and both he and the horse, which is in the act of walking forward, are turned three–quarters to face the viewer. Directly behind the horse, in the background, and across the field behind the King and his companions, are the fallen soldiers of the battle. To the king’s right is his third son, the Duke of Cumberland, who also fought in the battle, and, towards the edge of the canvas, the Earl of Holderness. All are in striking military regalia, not so different from the reds worn by the fallen and the still–fighting troops in the background. George is kingly, but primarily a military captain, in this image. The dominant figure in the painting, however, is the horse. It is a very large, very fine, white horse – an obviously well–bred and luxury animal, but also a markedly white horse. George’s son, and all the other riders in the image, are on brown or dark horses. This painting was completed shortly after the battle, and, although hindsight may be giving the historian an advantage here, by a painter known primarily as a painter of horses and horse scenes. This painting could, at least on some level, have been commissioned as a response to the Jacobites, who were, in many ways, at their strongest in nearly half a century.
It is also important to remember that George and the Stuarts were seen, in different ways, as foreigners. James II was a king who had fled, and his images, as we have seen, were forced to be adapted to the narrative of an exiled, not absent, king, but his son, “James III” and grandson, Charles, were not raised in England, and were often guilty of defeating their own cause. James’ assertion that London was not worth giving up his Catholicism – “I have chosen my own course, therefore it is for others to change their sentiments” – was a boon for the Hanoverians.\footnote{Blanning “The Hanoverian Monarch and the Culture of Representation,” 136, and Gregg, “James Francis Edward (1688–1766),” Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.} Also, as Tim Blanning notes, this, “handed a precious advantage to his Hanoverian rivals; nor did his decision and that of his son, ‘Bonnie Prince Charlie,’ to launch their invasions in 1715 and 1746 respectively from France via the Scottish Highlands do anything to dilute the patently foreign nature of their expeditions.”\footnote{Blanning, “The Hanoverian Monarch and the Culture of Representation,” 136.}

George was not seen as a foreign king in the same way his father – for whom English was always a second language, and who spent a significant amount of his reign abroad in Hanover – had been, but he was still considered by many to be an outsider at best and foreign power at worst. During the major conflicts of his reign, the Jacobite Uprisings and the Seven Years’ War, George’s portraits reflect a sturdy and confident Britishness. His 1744 portrait by Thomas Hudson appears, at first glance, to be a standard image of the king, similar in form and feel to his earlier, widely used Kneller portrait, but if the point was to show the validity of his claim to the English throne and his embrace of an English lifestyle, this portrait was a great success.\footnote{Thomas Hudson, \textit{King George II}, 1744. Oil on canvas, 88 ½ inches by 57 ¼ inches. National Portrait Gallery NPG 670. See: https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw02450/King-George-II?LinkID=mp01749&role=sit&rNo=2.} The crown and sovereign’s orb, along with the sceptre George is holding, were easily understood.
symbols of the English monarch. His robes, the Order of the Garter collar, and the Order are all symbols as well. But most striking is George himself. George is gesturing, similarly to James in his portrait with Anne Hyde, outward, next to these symbols of power, but is not represented in any way that shows his body in a propagandistic light. George is showing himself as the uncontested king, with no tricks or flattery – and that is a powerful statement, especially as Charles Edward Stuart was, at the very time of the painting, attempting to gather support from the French and Scottish.

While we know that the Jacobite uprisings of 1715 and 1745 were underfunded, undermanned, and – particularly in the case of the ’45 – disastrously unorganized at the highest levels of command, it is important to remember that we are looking at these challenges to Hanoverian authority with the benefit of hindsight. George and Caroline had to create the “myth” of Britishness and authority in a world in which the outcome was absolutely unsure. In 1751, for example, Walpole refers to, “a pompous Jacobite” presenting a petition, and later argues that this petition, “severely abused the High Bailiff (whose practice, as a lawyer, the Jacobites totally destroyed)…” That said, as Edward Corp rightly points out, “after 1760, when the English-born George III became king in London, it was clear that the Jacobite cause had totally failed…when the king died in 1766 not even the papacy recognized the Prince of Wales as King Charles III.” The Jacobite cause was certainly considered less of a threat, if one at all, after the decisive English victory at Culloden, but it is important not to look at these paintings and the crown’s actions with hindsight as we have it now.

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744 Edward Corp, *King Over the Water*, 99. I will discuss this briefly in the conclusion, but it is interesting to me that the current King Charles III chose this royal name, given the historical associations that could be made with the Jacobites.
Succession and Dynasty

While portraits of George and Caroline are somewhat plentiful and images of his family members abound, there has been little examination of how they were represented as members of their dynasty, and how the royal family itself was shown. George and Caroline had seven children who lived beyond infancy, including five girls. The princesses, in particular, were the subject of many portraits and the attempted machinations of early modern political marriages. While their individual portraits are less important here—although will be discussed briefly—the ways they were represented as a family are crucial, particularly when those images were reactionary to political or social upheaval happening in England.

George and Caroline represented a major change in the dynamic of early modern marriage, in particular that of royal marriage. They were not, at least in representation, shown as political pawns in a political marriage. They were presented often as a family with their children, an image Caroline, in particular, embraced. Caroline purposely projected and approved the image of “Mother of the Nation,” and she played this facet of her role up often.⁷⁴⁵ This idea of the royal family influencing the customs and cultural norms of the general populace was not new, but this was a different type of influence—the kind that spoke directly to the importance of individual families and the royal family as a cultural institution rather than a political one.⁷⁴⁶

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⁷⁴⁵ As with any mention of the word nation or nationalism by historians working the pre–French Revolutionary era, it is important to note here that I am not making an argument for or against Caroline conceiving of herself as the mother of the nation, but it would seem that she did conceptualize the English/British empire as something of which she was, figuratively, the mother.

⁷⁴⁶ Kathleen Wilson, in her article, “Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth–Century British Frontiers,” notes that, “it was the regulation of individual and collective behavior that polity depended upon, rendering ‘domestic order’ within and without the state possible.” Thus it was important to present the royal family as a family, a domestic unit, not just to appear as English, but to reinforce the very state itself. Kathleen Wilson, “Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth–Century British Frontiers.” The American Historical Review, December 2011, Vol. 116, No. 5, pp. 1294–1322, 1300.
George’s place as a second–generation monarch also figures heavily when looking at portraits of his children and the line of succession. One interesting engraving – certainly a propaganda piece, filled with royal symbolism – is “King George I and the line of succession: from John Sebastian Miller (ca. 1748).” This engraving was created during a politically and personally difficult time for the royal family, with Frederick, Prince of Wales, still operating an opposition court, working against the political machinations of Walpole and his father. There is a lot to explore in this image which, rather than relying on personal image, creates an allegorical scene depicting the line of succession. All the characters are recognizable, whether through their faces and names, which would have been well known in the case of the royal family, or through the symbols they carry. This image, with George I – notably absent a queen consort at the top – held in a laurel wreath frame by two women, who represent the virtues of Liberty, with her phrygian cap, and Britannia, with her shield and staff. Liberty steps on the back of the Pope, wearing his papal crown and holding the symbolic keys of the church, representing the Protestantism of the royal family. Produced in 1748, it’s also difficult not to see this engraving as a response to the failed 1745 Jacobite uprising, in which Protestantism in England – and the family brought in to rule in place of the Catholic Stuarts – finally, definitively triumphed.


748 Royal Collection RCIN 603772 and NPG D32912. One point that can be made about almost all early modern portraits, but particularly ones of these three kings, is the prevalence of phallic symbols in relation to the succession. A large part of my argument is that celebrity culture changes so significantly because, despite changes in politics and style and power, the power of the king moves from the title of king to the body of the king, a point supported by the various phallic symbols present in almost all official portraits between Henry VIII and George II.
Under George I, George II and Caroline are also framed. Caroline had been dead for almost ten years at the time of this engraving but is represented here much like she was in her portraits as Princess of Wales and early in her tenure as queen. Again, these template images became a familiar look for Caroline, creating a recognizable face and image that she would carry throughout her reign. Caroline is conspicuously next to the trampled Pope, perhaps an allusion to her youthful refusal to marry a Catholic, instead choosing a Protestant husband. George is next to Britannia, symbolizing his Englishness. Other allegorical figures, such as Justice and Plenty, as well as busts from antiquity, plus a lion, surround the rest of the family.

At the top of the image, on a smaller pedestal next to George II, William, Duke of Cumberland also appears in a portrait frame. As his only other son to survive to adulthood, it is unsurprising that William makes an appearance here. William was also a war “hero” after the 1745 Jacobite uprising, having joined the army, fighting at Culloden, and then ordering his troops to give no quarter to the Scottish, Jacobite army. He was also one of the main players in the later scheme to pacify – through violence – the Highlands, making him a well-known defender of the King and the Hanoverian succession. William’s inclusion surely had a political motive if this was a response to the defeat of the Jacobite cause only two years earlier, which I believe it was, especially considering the rest of the image. Under George and Caroline are Frederick and his wife Augusta, next in line for the throne, then their children, including the future George III. As we know, Frederick would not inherit the throne, dying in 1751, but his status as heir was very much secure at this point. At the very bottom, under the children, the

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phrase, “To all true Britons, lovers of Liberty and the present succession – This Plate is Dedicated.”

This phrase – more than the images themselves – combined with the allegorical figures is the most interesting part of the engraving for this study. First, as discussed previously, the Prince of Wales, Frederick, had created an opposition court that focused on their patriotism as British subjects in contrast to Walpole and the King’s lenient foreign policy. That this image of the succession speaks to, “all true Britons” is not necessarily a reference to that movement, but certainly seems to be presenting a united front rather than the reality. All images, and certainly all portraits of the royal family, have an element of myth, but this engraving speaks directly to the issues causing serious, public strife in the royal family. Second, it uses the image of Caroline much in the same way the Whitehall Mural used Jane Seymour, as a mother and vessel of the legitimate dynasty; she is shown as a young, attractive, and vibrant figure here, despite her absence in the living world. Third, although it is almost impossible to tell where this engraving originated – was it commissioned by the crown? By a noble? By a bookseller? – it was created by Samuel Wale, who had done several other engravings of historical figures, including Henry VIII and Boadicea, and would later be a member of the Royal Academy.750 That an artist who painted other royal historical figures, particularly ones who Caroline had once looked to as sources of her own family’s legitimacy, is telling.

Finally, the very wording speaks to the image the crown was trying to project after the Jacobite threat in 1745 and the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden. To all, “true Britons” who are, “lovers of Liberty and the present succession” ties the idea of being a true

English or British person – like George had so intently tried to convince his adopted country he was – to loving liberty and the Hanoverian succession. You could not be, according to this engraving, a “true Briton” if you did not support the succession of George I, George II, Frederick, and his son, the future George III. This is a very blatant statement to any remaining Jacobite supporters that the mark of a British citizen was liberty and the support of the Hanoverian Succession, started by George I and supported by Parliament – no matter the internal power struggles or loss of political power outside patronage and image the royal family itself was dealing with.

Even if George did not commission this image, it is clearly meant to glorify his dynasty and its continuation. Perhaps even more than the Whitehall Mural, this engraving takes the concept of being a second-generation king to its fullest potential – here, the start of the dynasty is seen as laying the groundwork for its legitimacy, while George’s son and grandchildren are the future of the dynasty he helped secure. It has echoes of Henry’s Whitehall Jural as well, with its large column and overt symbolism. The lion stands in for Jane Seymour’s dog, the virtues of Liberty, Justice, Protestantism, Britannia, and others take the place of the columns epitaph, and the entire engraving connects the past with the present, the present with the future, all hinging on the current king, who has the dual task – like Henry and James – of continuing a new dynasty while creating its storied past and future to make it legitimate and, with varying degrees of success, long-lasting.

It is also telling that a new version of this engraving was created in 1752, with a subtle change indicating the new order of succession after Frederick’s death. This new image is very similar, with the same banner across the bottom, but with the addition of P. of Wales on the future George III’s image. Both he and his father – Frederick – bear the title, showing that even
when a member of the royal family died, their place in the legitimate line of succession would be
taken up peacefully and by the true Protestant heirs to the English throne.
Several paintings of George and Caroline’s children also exist. Given that not all of their children married, many English portraits exist, versus a large number of foreign ones, and most of their portraits portray them as young adults, rather than rulers in their own right or lands. These paintings have symbolism and themes that were common during the time period. The symbolism here would, of course, have been recognized by the intended audience – this was for the educated and cultured, and shows two important things. First, that familial love and closeness were prized by the Hanoverians, even if they were just – as we know, based on their own accounts – for show. Second, that the Hanoverians were absolutely concerned about image. But more importantly, as it was most likely commissioned by either George or Caroline, it shows a direct interest in portraiture of the family, not just of the monarch or consort. These painting all show the ever–important theme of family for the second Hanoverian monarch.

Given George’s relationship with his sons, as well as his dislike for sitting for portraits, it is not unusual that there are few images of George with his children. However, several portraits were painted of the children alone, with each other, or with Caroline. These portraits, like those of George himself, were commissioned and used for a variety of purposes. Images of the children, especially when they were surrounded by symbolic items and wearing costumes, could have blatant meaning, but just by having their portraits painted, they were shown as continuing the legitimate royal line. A portrait of Princess Amelia, for example, was a portrait of the princess – it was not required to show her with George II for viewers to understand that he was her father and, in a tangential way, a continuation of the legitimate Hanoverian succession.
Plate 63: Martin Maingaud, “Princess Anne (1709–1759) and Amelia (1711–1786).” Oil on canvas, ca. 1718. Royal Collection Trust, Prince of Wales Bedroom, Hampton Court Palace. RCIN 404984.
An interesting series of paintings that should be examined as portraits of the royal children are the triple portraits by Martin Maingaud. Maingaud was a French painter but had worked for the Elector of Bavaria, and The Royal Collection notes that this is most likely how he came to the attention of the Hanoverian rulers. These paintings are interesting from an artistic standpoint – they go together as a grouping, but loosely, and they are of different sizes and dates, but all share a fanciful theme, perhaps taken from ancient myth. The first painting, *Princesses Anne and Amelia* is signed by Maingaud and dated 1718, and shows the two princesses, “shown as allegories of the Good Government of the newly installed Hanoverian dynasty.” Anne wears an “Arcadian” dress and grips the tree trunk next to her, which is covered with vines. Amelia is kneeling, again in Roman dress, and offers her sister a flower while holding the fasces, or “sticks bound together with an axe – the symbol of Justice and authority.” What do these symbols mean? It is likely that this painting, in addition to being a symbol of the rule of law and the civility of court life, is also meant to show unity, virtue, and – somewhat ironically given the family’s actual troubles – familial loyalty and affection. It could also be read as a symbol of strength, with the axe symbolizing Justice. While the Jacobite rebellion of 1715 had been unsuccessful, the Stuart court in exile was still trying to gain momentum for another attempt at taking back the English throne. The nature background also evokes a classical feeling, which was both stylistically popular and evoke a connection with an ancient lineage.

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Plate 64: Martin Maingaud, “Frederick Prince of Wales (1707–1751) and Princess Amelia (1711–1786).” Oil on canvas, ca. 1720. Royal Collection Trust, George II’s Private Chamber, Hampton Court Palace. RCIN 404986.
The second in the series – which is not dated, but which the Royal Collection notes is likely from 1720 – shows Frederick, Prince of Wales and his sister Amelia, the holder of the fasces in the previous painting. Here, Frederick and Amelia, somewhat oddly, shown as lovers. They are, “bound together with a wreath; one crowning the other with a coronet of flowers” and, “the presence of the wind cherub with puffing cheeks and insect wings, disturbing Frederick’s hair, suggests that the pair impersonates Zephyrus, the west wind and bringer of spring, and his love, Flora, goddess of flowers.”

Although the grouping is unusual, it makes sense when looking at the symbolism the family of George II was using to create and strengthen the legitimacy of their succession. Frederick, who would eventually be Prince of Wales, was another layer of legitimate succession for the Hanoverians. He would continue to bring “spring” in the form of peace and prosperity. Amelia, whose value on the marriage market would be high, needed symbols of purity, innocence, and beauty.

Plate 65: Martin Maingaud, “Princesses Anne, Amelia and Caroline.” Oil on canvas, ca. 1721. Royal Collection Trust, Queen’s Private Chamber, Hampton Court Palace. RCIN 404985.
The final painting, of Princesses Anne, Amelia, and Caroline, shows the three princesses from the waist up, with Princesses Anne and Amelia looking at the viewer, while Princess Caroline is looking up at Amelia. Dating from 1721, this painting is evocative of the “Three Graces,” and shows an informal grouping of the young, female family members, something that was to define portraits of George and Caroline’s children. The Three Graces, or Charites, were the embodiments of charm and beauty, as well as fertility and creativity. Anne, Amelia, and Caroline were – as mentioned previously – not only valuable as representatives of the royal family’s success at continuing their dynasty and strengthening the legitimacy of the Hanoverian succession, but also as women who could be married to domestic or foreign powers to further political strategy and gain financial advantages.

It can be assumed that these images were likely commissioned by either George or Caroline, and that they were for a smaller space, like Caroline’s drawing room or a smaller antechamber. None of the paintings are particularly large, which likely means they were for a more private – but not just family – audience. They appear in inventories in the nineteenth-century as being placed in the Queen’s Drawing Room at Kensington and later in the Drawing Room at Kew and Hampton Court. When they were commissioned and painted, it’s also important to remember that George was still the Prince of Wales, George I was still alive, and

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756 One somewhat recent work by Jennifer Larson – Ancient Greek Cults (New York: Routledge, 2007) – does an excellent job of summarizing Greek myths and cults and can serve as a foundation for modern viewers of these types of images. These themes would have been familiar to those seeing paintings of the royal children, and they would have been familiar with classical styles and stories.

757 The Royal Collection Trust cites a painting from 1817 by James Stephanoff, Kensington Palace: Queen Mary’s Drawing Room (The Admirals’ Gallery), RCIN 922152. (See: https://www.rct.uk/collection/922152/kensington-palace–queen–marys–drawing–room–the–admirals–gallery) In this image, the triple portrait hangs over the doorway, separate from the companion portraits. For more information on the Kensington art treasures, see Jane Roberts, Royal Treasures: A Golden Jubilee Celebration (Royal Collection Enterprises, Ltd., 2006).
Frederick was not yet living in England. Frederick would have been thirteen, Anne around eleven, Caroline nine or ten, and Amelia likely seven or eight. It is unlikely that they had any real amount of influence in their own representations, but their parents needed to represent them as happy children who were very much a part of the harmonious royal family. In reality, of course, Frederick was living in Hanover and her other children were living at the court of George I, where Caroline was rarely allowed to see them. The period from 1718–1721 was particularly volatile when it came to family matters, and portraits of the children were almost certainly a response to this upheaval and strife.

*Post–Caroline: The King and His Image*

By all accounts, Caroline’s death in 1737 was a major blow to George. Not only because of their marital relationship, but also her role as a political and cultural ally. Caroline was more outgoing, less taciturn, and certainly more at ease in the artist’s studio or the private salons she hosted. While I reject the notion that George was “dull,” Caroline must have been difficult to outshine. She was highly educated, well-connected, and, by all accounts, a delightful hostess and guest at gatherings. Caroline likely made up for any faux pas George made with his short temper, and her triumph in continuing the line of succession made her an invaluable part of securing the Hanoverian family’s supremacy over the exiled Stuart’s. What did her death mean for his image?

The answer to that question is complicated. George and Caroline were certainly intertwined in the minds of those viewing their images, but they had very few double portraits. Part of this was style, with the fashion leaning toward family compositions rather than the formal double portraits or allegorical dynastic portraits James and Henry used. Part of it was also the fact that George did not remarry, so Caroline’s images must have seemed somewhat sacrosanct, especially to a king who had so long been denied the opportunity to display portraits of his own
mother. George also had no need to utilize Caroline’s image the way Henry used, for example, Jane Seymour – the succession was secured several times over at the time of Caroline’s death, and the allegorical paintings done during her life were surely sufficient to keep her memory and the power she held as “mother of the nation” alive.

George’s reputation as a patron has been eclipsed by that of Caroline’s, but George was still a patron of the arts and of learning, particularly in Hanover and in more subtle ways. Signs of this appear before Caroline’s death as well. For example, he, “had an ambitious re–furnishing scheme” in the 1730s, and in 1736, commissioned two large silver chandeliers based on a design by William Kent, followed by three more later that year, followed again by two large silver candlesticks, all by Balthasar Friedrich Behrens.758 His knowledge of Kent’s work shows that the king not only listened to Caroline when she discussed her patronage of artists – remember that she turned to Kent for the Henry V paintings commissioned for her dressing room – and that he was also inclined to give patronage to English artists who understood the complicated myth–making his family was engaged in. These silver works are not portraits, clearly, but do show that George was interested in commissioning art and patronizing artists. Kent, who had designed Merlin’s Cave for Caroline, used some of the same motifs for his silver design, including an, “owl finial on the right–hand design, an attribute of Minerva, and therefore of wisdom” which, “may be a reference to Queen Caroline.”759 This motif was also used, “in a design for another


759 Alcorn, “A Chandelier for the King,” 42.
piece of silver, a standish for the queen in Merlin’s Cave, where a wax figure of Minerva was represented, and a medal struck in 1736 representing Caroline as Minerva.”

This is all without mentioning his impact on the arts in Hanover. Certainly, a more thorough study of household account books at Leineschloss, the Hanoverian home of George II, is needed, but even this glimpse shows that George was a patron in his own right. My focus here is on his time and role as the English king, but it would behoove English historians who dismiss George as a boorish and uncultured king to look to his founding of art institutions, including the first public art museum, in Hanover, and his support of English artists at home. If nothing else, George was committed to staying the course of royal imagery Caroline had begun, but I believe it was more than that. George was, like Caroline, interested in – and in fact, dependent on – navigating the complicated waters of being a second–generation monarch, particularly one fighting against opposition from the Jacobite court in exile.

760 Alcorn, “A Chandelier for the King,” 42. By the time the girandoles were ready to be made, Caroline had died. Alcorn notes that this may have been the reason for the inclusion of the owl in place of the horses’ heads representing the House of Hanover in the original design.

761 To my knowledge, no major study has looked at George’s inventory in the same way Henry’s inventory has been studied or the Jacobite holdings have been examined, but it would be fascinating to see how the possessions he held at his court in England and his court in Hanover compared. It is also worth noting that George I was originally buried at Leineschloss (Leine Palace – the building sits next to the Leine River) but Leineschloss burned almost completely during World War II and George’s remains were moved to Herrenhausen Palace. For more on this topic, see Alison Weir, Britain’s Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy, Revised edition (New York: Random House, 1996): 272–276. During a renovation in 2016, bones were found that were thought, originally, to belong to Königsmark, Sophia Dorothea’s lover. Whether they are or not, it is clear that more attention should be paid to this historical palace and its role in the dramas of the eighteenth–century. Danny Lewis, “A Skeleton Found in a Castle Could Be the Key to Cracking a 17th–Century Cold Case” in Smithsonian Magazine Online. October 18, 2016, Accessed January 27, 2023. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/skeleton–found–castle–could–be–key–solving–17th–century–cold–case–180960813/.
Thomas Hudson’s *King George II* in 1744 is one example of the images George either commissioned or sat for – or both – after Caroline’s death. It is a very large painting, and shows George, painted by Hudson, seated on his throne, with the crown on a small table next to him. George is wearing state robes, and gestures with one hand while holding a sceptre with the other. This was commissioned by Lord Chief Justice Willes for the Court of Common Pleas.\(^762\) There is nothing remarkable about the symbolism in this painting, although it is very large and its placement, in a court of law, is indicative of the reach images of George had, but it again shows that the template George had established in 1716 still held sway. Although sitting rather than standing, George’s portrait here has many of the same symbolic pieces that had been present for years, as well as similar clothing. I believe its lack of any radical or unfamiliar imagery illustrates two very important points about George’s representations, especially those created after Caroline’s death.

First, George saw himself, and wanted others to know that he saw himself, as indisputably the king, and as the king they had known and loved – or if not loved, accepted – for almost two decades. Second, although it would be hard to argue that George had no interest in the arts, this portrait shows that George did not feel the need to be inventive, or hire inventive painters, when it came to his royal image. After all, who was more legitimate when sitting next to the crown – the man who had been king for seventeen years or the grandson of the last Stuart king who had never even been to London? This is not to say that the Jacobites were not a threat – as clearly demonstrated above, significant art was devoted to combating this very real danger to the Hanoverian monarchy. But, as this portrait shows, a formal portrait can be just as inspiring as

\(^{762}\) See the National Portrait Gallery article on this painting, National Portrait Gallery, Thomas Hudson, *King George II*, 1744. https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw02450/King–George–II.
one with blatant symbolic gestures. That this painting was commissioned and painted in 1744, while the Jacobite cause was gaining both sympathy and funding in preparation for the 1745 uprising, is telling. It is, as mentioned several times, impossible to say that a painting or image is a direct reaction to political, cultural, or religious conflict, but these images served that purpose well.

George is included, and plays a prominent role in, a rather peculiar painting, “Group Associated with the Moravian Church,” circa 1752–54. The Moravian Brethren were Protestants from East Bohemia who eventually became missionaries in the British Colonies. In 1749, an Act of Parliament secured protection for this religious group, an event this painting seems to commemorate. Although, as the National Portrait Gallery notes, not all the subjects can be identified, the person receiving the Act must be Moravian leader Count Nicholas van Zizendorf, and the king is clearly George II. This portrait is interesting not only because of its unusual grouping, but also because it shows the Protestant patronage George II promoted, as well as his connection to his Germanic heritage – something he had downplayed through much of his reign. However, it also, whether needed or not, reaffirmed his commitment to the Protestant cause and the protection of Protestants in the Americas.


765 There is a need here to discuss George’s iconography in the Americas, but this is not the work in which to do. However, for an excellent overview of royal images in the American Colonies, see Brendan McConville, The King’s Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688–1776 (Chapel Hill: Omohundro Institute and University of North Carolina, 2007).
John Shackleton’s 1757 portrait of George returns to the English template of Kneller’s Prince of Wales portrait. In it, George – now considerably older – stands next to a table holding his crown, dressed in robes of state, including the collar of the Order of the Garter, and holding a sceptre in his right hand. Shackleton became Principal Painter in Ordinary in 1749, replacing William Kent, and served in that position until his death in 1767. The Royal Collection Trust notes that this painting, of which there are several versions, likely produced by his studio, was paid for by Thomas Pownall, Governor of Massachusetts Bay in July 1757. George’s portrait here still resembles the young man painted in miniatures in 1706, and the robes of state, the pose, and the table with the crown next to him speak to that creation of a recognizable and consistent image.

In what may have been George’s final portrait during his life, he breaks slightly from this template, but his image is still very much recognizable and contains much of the same symbolism in his earlier portraits. The Royal Collection Trust notes that the original version of this portrait was painted in 1759 by Robert Edge Pine and that the image of the King was taken, “supposedly unseen…as he was speaking to one of his attendants at the top of the great Staircase at Kensington Palace.” George does stand on a staircase, with the garter of the Order of the Garter – which appeared in his portraits on and off since 1716 – as well as the blue sash of the

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766 He was replaced by Allan Ramsay, who would be Principal Painter in Ordinary to George II’s grandson, George III.

767 The price – £55 – would be around $ 11,353 today. (See Eric W. Nye, Pounds Sterling to Dollars: Historical Conversion of Currency, accessed Tuesday, September 20, 2022, https://www.uwyo.edu/numimage/currency.htm.) A very large commission for a single portrait, one that would have indicated the portrait was for statecraft, which is very likely given its purchaser, and that it was at least tacitly approved by the king, as copies were made and it was done by the king’s painter. Royal Collection Trust, George II by John Shackleton, 1757, RCIN 405246. See: https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/1/collection/405246/george–ii–1683–1760.

768 Royal Collection Trust, George II by Robert Edge Pine, RCIN 404629. Is this true, as Pine apparently said, or is it another case of painting – pun intended – George II as uninterested in his image and sitting for portraits? See: https://www.rct.uk/collection/404629/george–ii–1683–1760.
Order of the Garter. He wears a red jacket and white vest, both trimmed with gold. On the stairs are two soldiers in formal dress.

It is here that George, to me, belies his position as the last early modern English king more than any other place – his role as the last king to lead troops personally is circumstantial, even with the armed and formally dressed military officers near him, and his embrace of the changing notions of public and private sphere simply a sign of the times. Henry would never have been caught on the stairs for a portrait, and even the more casual Holbein sketches still show formal settings. James probably was caught in many compromising positions, and caused scandals without measure during his first exile, time as Duke of York, time as king, and second exile, but a portrait in action would have been unthinkable even for James and his family.

George, however, had reached the culmination of the role of king in early modern England – recognizable, inhabiting a body that was an individual but also a representative of the institution of the crown, but also a type of first citizen rather than divine appointee.
Even his role within the changing English political landscape – which was significant – is a subject that belongs more securely in a political history. It is, in my view, his later embrace of his representation as king as fact, rather than hope, that shows most clearly this shift from early modern to modern. George’s images show that while he accepts the challenges to his family and rule, his primary concern and, more importantly, the concern of his portraits’ viewers, is no longer who or what is the legitimate authority. The search for legitimate authority in the milieu of chaos was coming to an end, and George’s portraits show a burgeoning recognition of that movement.

George II died on October 24, 1760. He had been suffering some health issues, including difficulty hearing, and collapsed in the morning, dying a few hours later. He was almost seventy-seven years old, older than any English king or queen in history, a record surpassed only by his grandson, George III, his great–great–granddaughter Victoria, and, most recently, Queen Elizabeth II. While his reign was not as long as many kings and queens before him, he started his reign facing a major threat from the exiled Stuarts and ended his twenty–three–year reign with a firmly established dynastic family, and his direct descendant rules Great Britain today. Although George had been painted as unconcerned with his image, and his rule has been largely ignored by historians and popular culture – perhaps because despite wars and upheaval, the role of the monarchy was increasingly removed from the political power that makes for good television – I believe that I’ve shown here that, while he was not ordering his face painted on his predecessor’s portrait or commissioning larger–than–life murals to inspire fear and awe, he and his family did use images, patronage, and collecting to react to and further their legitimacy.
Legacy & Conclusions

As Andrew Thompson points out, “George II can rightly be described as a forgotten king.”\textsuperscript{769} Michael Schaich takes this sentiment a step further, arguing that “History has not treated the Hanoverians kindly. For a long time they have been passed over quickly in general accounts of British history, as meek successors to the more colorful Stuarts and the invariably feted Tudors.”\textsuperscript{770} In this study, however, he and his family can serve as a bookend, as the last early modern English (for all intents and purposes) royal family and as the last early modern second–generation king.

The need for this type of visual propaganda, and its scope and purpose, changed dramatically after George’s reign. There was little question, even when a direct heir was not available, of the order of succession, and, more importantly, there was little outside threat to the throne or the royal family. Certainly, a need to show legitimacy remained, but it was hardly the foundational reason behind image making. George III’s reign began well after the last serious Jacobite rebellion and, while the revolutions in America and France impacted the monarchy, they weren’t serious threats to the institution of the royal family and its role, particularly given that their political power had waned considerably over the past two and a half centuries.

If the role of a second–generation monarch is to continue but also sculpt a dynastic legacy, what legacy did George II leave for George III, and how did the later George continue and mold it? This question is complicated slightly by the person of George III – whether his afflictions are called eccentricity, hysteria, or madness, he was a significantly more unstable ruler than George II, making his very nature a break in the dynastic image. It is also made more

\textsuperscript{769} Thompson, \textit{King and Elector}, 1.

difficult by my assertion that the true end of the early modern period in England occurred in 1760, with the accession of George III. This is, perhaps, an arbitrary line – certainly England and the British Empire as a whole changed dramatically between 1727 and 1760 – but it is an important one. The world in 1760 would have been almost unrecognizable to Henry VIII or James II, but, if they were to arrive, through time and space, at Kensington Palace prior to the death of George II, they would find a king who they recognized as having the early modern qualities they themselves possessed – military prowess, grandeur, a smattering of divine right, a connection – however tenuous – to an historical continental homeland, and a man concerned, desperately so, with legitimacy.

What was so different about George III’s images? First, and most importantly, George III had no need to combat the exiled Stuarts, their Jacobite supporters or, in a larger sense, any questions of legitimacy. There were no birthing pan rumors of illegitimate births, no lack of male heirs (yet), not even a whiff of Catholicism. The Hanoverian Succession was forty-six years in the past at the time of his coronation, and it had been a long forty-six years of, in general, stability and relative prosperity for growing numbers of English and British citizens, with an ever-expanding market economy and a burgeoning empire. There was no hint of a rumor – or at least none was voiced in any historical record – that George III himself was illegitimate, or a homosexual, or, worst of all, Catholic.

The Jacobites, led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender – James II’s grandson – had been thoroughly routed and the nucleus of the cause destroyed at Culloden in 1745. Charles spent the rest of his life in relative luxury in Italy, the Scottish Highlands were placed under extreme military rule, and George II’s throne was secure. Charles himself lived until 1788, but was little threat to George III’s throne after 1745, and, perhaps, in the eyes of the majority of
British subjects, even before—as Blanning points out, “when the Old Pretender’s second son, Henry, became a Catholic priest, and a cardinal to boot, the cost of a Stuart restoration became too high for all but a small and ever–diminishing number of Jacobite diehards.”771 George III did not have to compete, in any real way, with Jacobite imagery.

George III also never fought in battle. George II was the last king of England to do so—a point that was not particularly significant as far as the outcome of those battles, but which was personally important to George II and played an important role in his images and self–image, and certainly influenced his patronage and thoughts on royal painters.772 His commentary on the Wootton painting is certainly indicative of that. George III, while shown as the nominal leader of the military, did not need to focus on his own personal military prowess. Instead, George III, perhaps in a recognition of the monarch’s reduced powers in comparison to the growing might of Parliament, chose to present himself as a kind of “commoner king”–or, at least, as more of a commoner than George II.773

His death signals, for this study, the end of an era, but George II also left an artistic and cultural legacy that should not be ignored. It is difficult to argue that George was not interested in patronage, especially in Hanover, when acknowledging that he founded the first university in Hanover, donated the royal library to the British Museum, and sponsored major spectacles on

771 Blanning, “The Hanoverian Monarchy,” 136. Again, this was a threat that occupied the minds and hearts of the upper echelons of society for most of the early eighteenth century.

772 George II is often remembered, particularly in trivia contests, simply as the last king to personally participate in a military battle. My hope is anyone reading this chapter will still be able to win at trivia with this piece of obscure knowledge, but also agree that his legacy is so much more.

773 One interesting avenue of study could compare the representations of George II and III in the American colonies. How far did this type of representation go in the colonies, for example?
frequent occasions. Although George has often been overlooked, through an understanding of his age and his accomplishments perhaps the sermon preached by Henry Caner, minister at the King’s Chapel in Boston upon the death of George II, will prove prescient after all:

I cannot say that every man in his Dominion had this for him, nor will pay this Respect to his memory. Every Government will have some discontented spirits within it, and every Prince must expect some subjects of less Loyalty and attachment than might be wished: But what Respect soever he may be deprived of by some few of the present Age, from whom better Things might be expected; I am well assured that Posterity will do Justice to his Memory, and the Reign of George the Second will shine in the English Annals with superior lustre.775

George, like Henry and James, faced tremendous challenges during his reign – external challenges to his legitimacy, like the Jacobite uprisings of 1715 and 1745, the continued pressure coming the Stuart court in exile, the difficulties in ruling two very disparate realms – Hanover and the burgeoning British Empire – as well as internal struggles including the personal conflict with his family that began with his father and extended to his own children, and of course the rapidly evolving nature of British politics.

He was, like those earlier kings, a second–generation monarch, creating his own legacy while perpetuating and legitimizing a dynasty, and, whether he was successful or not in the eyes of historians and his contemporaries, the last early modern English king should be looked at more closely in future studies of the monarchy. He was, if nothing else, concerned with his...
image and that of his family, and faced challenges that necessitated the commissioning of portraits, the creation of a recognizable images for himself and his family, and the patronage of artists and influential courtiers. George, like Henry and James, dealt with challenges in a variety of ways, but art was certainly an important one.
Henry VIII has his own Twitter account, @KngHenryVIII. His bio read at one point, “Looks amazing in a cape. Gout, Glory, Epic Dance Moves. All my opinions are facts. Watch for my next book: ‘Unleash Your Inner Tudor.’” His daily to-do lists – including items like, “demand love in a booming voice,” “raise one eyebrow in signature look of judge–y contempt,” and “think about all the times love has betrayed me” – are interspersed with commentary on “what women want in a husband” and his occasional feuding with Richard III (@richard_third). All of this is very entertaining, perhaps even darkly aspirational, and his more than 72,000 followers regularly engage with “Henry.” Henry – the only king whose, “shape you recognize” – is a result of a particular type of royal celebrity that was created in the early modern period in England – a celebrity reliant upon a recognizable body, a quest for dynastic legitimacy through art and representation, and the rise of images of the royal family for public consumption.

When comparing the representation – through portraits, images, patronage and collecting – of Henry VIII, James II, and George II, along with their wives, I have endeavored to weave my primary argument through these chapters: that these kings and their families used images in a way unique to the early modern period – a time in which the search for legitimate authority was a primary concern – and that they can serve as important case studies, as second-generation monarchs, for the continuity and change, as well as the search for legitimacy, taking place during the period. Comparing monarchical self-representation in the early modern period allows for a new way to see and frame their reigns and the time period as a whole. How did these particular

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776 Henry himself does not actually, of course, run this Twitter. I have, as yet, been unable to contact the actual owner, but am an avid reader of his or her tweets. See https://twitter.com/knghnryviii?lang=en.

777 6/13/17, 6/2/17, and 5/31/17, respectively. See https://twitter.com/richard_third.
kings and their families, as second–generation monarchs, represent themselves, and what does a comparative study of that representation say about changes – and continuities – in the British monarchy during the early modern period?

It is my conclusion, based on the research contained here, that these kings and their families, through images and patronage, as well as collecting, they reacted in unique ways to challenges to their legitimate authority. They did this as second–generation monarchs, using art as a response to both continue their “new,” one–generation–old dynasty and forge a new, unique image for themselves – all while creating a foundation for his dynasty to continue. Their wives, to varying degrees, also participated in this exercise, responding to challenges in these same unique ways through patronage, their families, their images, and their courts, all from the unenviable “second–generation” space they occupied.

We can see changes clearly simply by looking at the art, but style was not the only thing that changed over the centuries between Henry VIII and George II. They symbolism used, the ways the king and his family were presented, the very practice of painting in England – they all changed. Henry VIII’s phallic Latin pillar, surrounded by the legitimizing forces of his deceased parents and wife presented the king as larger than life, larger than the nobility he struggled with, larger than Parliament, larger than the Catholic Church itself. Henry’s was a recognizable shape, but an untouchable reality. James presented himself as a family man and servant to the crown, as a man tolerant to the religions of others – just as he wished others would be tolerant of his – but also as a divinely chosen ruler, a loyal military leader, whose right and duty to rule had been unjustly challenged. George, with Caroline, attempted to tie their family to Henry’s, to be as English as possible, and to represent themselves as public servants who ruled with Parliament and courted the nobility, with a firm military hand that supported the growing English empire.
Henry’s pillar, James’s globe, and George’s casual pose on the stairs shows change, but it also speaks to the continuity I argue for here.

The monarchy changed, irrevocably, in the early modern period. No scholar of British history would deny that. And these three kings were not the only ones who changed it or were a part of the changing world. Elizabeth I certainly oversaw major changes and was an impressive historical actor in her own right – even her older half-sister Mary and younger half-brother Edward were influential in their own ways. James I, Charles I, Charles II, William and Mary, Anne, George I – they were all crucial to the changing landscape of the early modern world in their own way. Henry VII, Henry VIII’s father, certainly changed the landscape of English political life and George III, for better or worse, did as well.

But Henry VIII truly used his image, not just the trappings of the crown, the fleur de lis of France, or the roses of the Lancaster and York branches of the royal family, for the first time in English history to represent his rule, and to respond to the challenges to his legitimate authority, convincing those who saw his image that he reigned supreme. James used images not to solidify his rule, but to convince those in power that his head should wear the crown – and that even in exile, he had solidified and then continued the representation of his dynasty, which included the true heirs to the throne. George, in what seems a natural progression when using hindsight, used images of himself and his family, alongside a growing interest in collecting and patronage of the arts, to connect his family to the ancient kings of Britain while acknowledging that his true power lay in the institution of the monarchy, not the political upheaval of Parliament. They were touchstones of the age – Henry creating the “body of the king” as a crucial part of the crown and its power, James using images as tools of coercion a generation removed from the regicide of Charles I and the change in the monarchy from a person ordained
by God to an institution ruled by, for all intents and purposes, Parliament, and George settling his image in to a place where the institution and the body were inexorably linked once again, if less politically powerful than before. If the early modern period was marked by, defined by, chaos and the quest for legitimate authority, these three kings are excellent guideposts for its journey.

It is my hope that this study has led readers to several important conclusions and created a more complex view of royal portraiture and all the trappings of “image” under these three kings and their families. Henry, James, and George were all second–generation monarchs, and all relied, in various ways, on images of themselves and their families to create real and imagined power. Even without their similarities in other ways – problems with their consorts or mistresses, not to mention their parents and extended families, religious upheaval, and various problems in the continuity of their dynasty – and despite their vastly different time periods and reigns, this concept unites them and their families as markers in a time of dramatic, sometimes rapid, and unrelenting change.

*Family? Dynasty? Both?*

One of the primary questions I have asked since starting this study was how did these kings, along with their families, represent themselves as both “family” and “dynasty,” and, for them, was there a difference between these two concepts? As shown here, there was not always a distinguishable difference for these kings – but there are substantial differences in the way the royal family was conceived of between Henry and James, and between James and George. Not only were the kings themselves seen differently, and represented themselves differently, they also presented their family relationships to the crown in different ways. Families in royal portraits changed dramatically, from the allegorical use of women and children in Henry’s portraits and the very limited power his wives possessed when it came to patronage to the Italian
patronage so loved by Mary of Modena and the massive images of her children painted in exile to the immense power Caroline of Ansbach held over the art at court and the casual – if still allegorical – family portraits by Hogarth and Amigoni.

Although there is still much work to be done on this question, and the importance of royal women beyond the role of “relational” women, some scholarship does exist, and more is being done every day. Caroline of Ansbach has been resurrected as an important patroness, new evidence on Anne Boleyn’s image and patronage has come to light, and reassessments of Mary of Modena’s influence are slowly making their way into studies of James’s reign and exile. I argue that further research into the patronage and collecting, as well as the influence they had over their own images, would benefit scholars looking at Henry and his wives. More work on Anne of York (who, as mentioned, has been criminally understudied), and Mary of Modena will reveal more about their relationships with artists and the world of art patronage, particularly in the tumultuous late–seventeenth century. Caroline of Ansbach, fortunately, has been studied more recently, but a further examination of her attempts to connect the Hanoverian dynasty to the Tudors, and her support of antiquarians in particular, would be fascinating. The artistic patronage of George and Caroline’s daughters would also add to scholarship of the eighteenth–century and the changing dynamics of the royal family – as earlier discussion of Frederick, father of George III, has done.  

I have also asked how representations of the king and royal family – particularly in portraiture commissioned by or approved by the king or family member – related to the evolution of English conceptions of the royal family. The royal family, as discussed, changed in

778 Another fascinating avenue of study, particularly when using a comparative framework like I have here, would be further examining the concept of embodiment and how it applied to these royal women (and men), particularly as the role of the royal family changed from political to institutional. Although I have touched on that issue here in several places, a standalone study would be a worthwhile endeavor.
power, in scope, in composition, and, importantly, in representation during the early modern period but why, and how? Marriage certainly changed, especially for English kings and their families, and the concept of what a “family” was changed as well. It could be argued that while the number of Hanoverians was much larger than, for example, the number of Tudors in the direct line to the throne, the members were less grand, less important, as individuals and more conceived of as part of the “royal family.” The larger story that emerges from this study is that the concept of family and marriage does indeed evolve, and it evolved clearly in the representation of these families. Henry standing with his deceased family members in a formal pose is a long way from Caroline posing with cherubs and her children, stylistically, but the meaning – that these individuals were the rulers, the producers of the dynasty, the “first family” of England – is the same. Through analyzing the images, and why the images analyzed here were created, a pattern has emerged, and my questions – at least partially – have been answered. In addition, by looking at their collecting and patronage as well, although significant further study is needed, it is clear that the personal image through portraiture of the royal family was intertwined with these aspects of “image” and the stories objects and relationships told. What is most clear is that major changes took place in the practice of art because of royal patronage and collecting – and that patronage and collecting also changed the nature of royal portraiture.

The Case for Case Studies in Early Modern Europe

The early modern world was absolutely unique. Although periodization can be too rigid, and multi–period study is crucial, especially for European history, the period in England between the late–fifteenth century and mid–eighteenth century were characterized by a chaos that does not exist so firmly in any other era. Unlike the “modern” era, or the “age of nationalism,” with a defined start date in Western Europe – the French Revolution – the early modern period has no
definite beginning or end. It has been one purpose of this study to show that these kings and their families were both impacted by and creators of this chaos, and I believe that the extensive concern with their images and the creation of a cultural frame does that well.

Rabb asks the question: “Who really understood the symbolism of Renaissance art?” I address the issues with Rabb’s questions in the introduction, but it is important to revisit here. Of course early modern people understood much of the symbolism of their lives, even when they had no personal experience with it – a modern example would be the save button on nearly every computer program being a floppy disk in the year 2022, when floppy disks have not been used with any regularity in almost two decades. Someone who has never seen a disk still knows that that button means “save” because of other cultural understandings, experiences, and tradition. Someone who hadn’t read an allegorical work referenced in a painting of the king would still have understood, at the very least, that it was a portrait of a person of importance, and, most likely, at least some of the symbolism. Art, as I have argued, was an important way to make sense of the world in the early modern period – and still is today – but it was also an important way to influence perceptions and understandings of that world. The English monarchy was never an “absolute” monarchy, especially when compared to kings like Louis XIV of France, and being king, being part of the royal family, required “the art of securing compliance.”

The chaos present in the early modern period makes studying it a double-edged sword. It was a confusing, constantly shifting time, with vastly different source materials, political systems, and artistic styles, even when studying one area or country. For example, a document

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780 Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, xxv.
from Henry’s court and one from George’s don’t appear, at first glance, to even both be in English – and, in fact, many documents from Henry’s reign combine English, French, and Latin. George generally avoided German as king, but the number of German sources is still substantial, especially when looking at his role as Elector. But this chaos, this change over time, makes the early modern period a delight to study and, I believe, a perfect time period for comparative case studies, as the similarities between these kings, their art, and their lives shows that while the period was chaotic, it was also characterized by certain ideas and programs. Art was crucial, as was aggrandizement of the English monarchy. The physical body of the king was always important, but the representation of this importance changed as the king’s political and diplomatic role changed. The image of the king, and of his family, can tell us much about the early modern period as a whole while still telling a smaller story of one place and one throne.

Image and Propaganda: The Same Coin?

Sharpe argues that early modern art was a part of the “model of early modern authority as negotiation rather than autocratic enactment.” Peter Burke has agreed with Sharpe, arguing that the study of art in the early modern period is inseparable from any analysis of power; Louis XIV, for example, used art as a broadly defined form of propaganda. Burke defines propaganda as “the attempt to transmit social and political values,” but cautions that scholars should not see all art “as if they were nothing but attempts persuade, rather than (say) expressions of the king’s power.” I believe Burke’s assessment needs revision here, however. Although I do believe that Louis XIV’s portraiture was a part of the early modern struggle for stability and search for authority, I also see art that was “created to exist rather than to be seen” as a part of that process.

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781 Sharpe, Selling the Tudor Monarchy, 7.

The rise of collecting, the increasing grandeur of royal building projects, the increasing interest in the arts and sciences, and the elaborate and more frequent celebrations of the age all dealt with unseen elements but were still a part of aggrandizing the monarchy as a response to public or nobility opinion.

I argue that propaganda and image are not two sides of the same coin – they are the same coin and in fact are inseparable from each other. Painting, as noted, creates an illusion that is part of a larger story. Whether that painting (or, in the case of our friend @KngHenryVIII, a Tweet of a painting of himself) is consciously meant to convey an idea or not, every image of a person plays a part in that illusion – with the key understanding that both parties, the subject and the observer, are party to the illusion, are participating in and believing, or not believing but still acknowledging, the story. In the case of these kings, I have shown that each king absolutely was conscious of his own image, and that of his family, and reflected that image in portraiture and, although more study is needed, in collecting as well.

In this study, I introduced the concept of “second–generation” monarchs – monarchs who were the second member of a dynasty to rule – and argued that much could be gained by comparing these second–generation monarchs, especially as they, perhaps more so than any other post–medieval English monarchs, embodied the early modern search for legitimate authority. I chose these kings for several reasons, even beyond their second–generation status, like their existing historiography and the similar types of challenges they faced during their reigns, but examining other kings and families, both within and without England could be illuminating. For example, an analysis of second–generation monarchs in the royal family of France – including the often–overlooked Louis XV for example – would be very interesting, as would a broadening of the concept of second–generation for application to English monarchs
since Victoria. Victoria herself could be said to be a second-generation monarch, as could Elizabeth II, and comparing the representation of these monarchs to their early modern counterparts would be fascinating. I would also like, in the future, to analyze representation of medieval English monarchs more closely.

As an historian of early modern culture and art, rather than an art historian, I have a unique perspective on these portraits, and this work, and future works, does not and will not fall comfortably within one area of research. This speaks to the importance of eschewing periodization for its own sake, of discarding the walls between historians and artists, art historians, literary critics, and antiquarians, and of seeking to expand this type of study to a broader area and time period. Historians, like their research subjects, are not one thing – Henry was not simply a romantic tyrant, James was not just the king who fled, and George was not the ignorant foreigner – and it is my hope that this limited study shows the need for, and inspires the pursuit of, further interdisciplinary work, even on the noblest and most famous subjects.

The Monarchy – Then & Now

While in the final stages of writing this dissertation, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II passed away, and her son, Charles III took the throne with his Queen Consort, Camilla. Besides Henry VIII, Elizabeth – with her famous hats, colorful outfits, small black handbag, and small army of corgis – is probably the most recognizable monarch in the history of the English royal family. Her long reign of over seventy years, and her death at the age of ninety-six, brought a stability to the monarchy, a sort of steady and calm guiding hand. But, like Henry, and James,
and George, Elizabeth II was also a second–generation monarch, and her reign could have gone
very differently. She, like the kings discussed here, was not born to be the monarch.

Henry’s older brother Arthur was destined to rule, but died, throwing the order of
succession into a crisis at a time when there had to be a legitimate heir. While the marriage of
Henry VII and Elizabeth of York had officially ended a conflict of nearly a century, it would be
inaccurate to say that Henry VII was unconcerned about a Yorkist, foreign, or even rival
Lancastrian threat if he were to fail to produce a suitable heir. Henry VIII came into his reign
understanding the grave importance of leaving a dynastic legacy, but he also had to create his
own symbolism and image, as he was, from all accounts, very different from his dour and
medieval father. James was also a second son, never expecting to take the throne, but the long
exile of his family after the death of his father and the childlessness of his older brother, Charles
II and his wife Catherine of Braganza, meant that he would take on the mantle of kingship. He
also understood the importance of symbolism and image, although his missteps with Parliament
and religion would prove his undoing. George II could not have imagined himself as King of
England – and likely no one else could have either – during his youth. It took going back to the
early seventeenth–century and going through a female line and excluding all Catholics to put his
father on the throne, and he was a grown man before even moving to England. Elizabeth – born
the daughter of the second son of the king, George V, was ten years old before she was thrust
into the position of heir, and then only because of a legitimate constitutional crisis when her
uncle abdicated in December 1936.

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783 As a reminder, Elizabeth’s reign began after the death of her father, George VI in 1952. George came to the
throne when his brother abdicated to marry outside the Church of England, an act which nearly caused a
constitutional crisis, and threatened the institution of the monarchy itself.
Elizabeth, also like Henry, James, and George, used image to continue, personalize, and solidify her dynasty. Henry was an avid collector, and a patron of the arts – he considered himself a Renaissance prince of the highest order and was certainly a supporter of humanist ideals – but he was also trying to tell a particular story about himself. Even his collecting shows this. He collected things, such as tapestries, on a grand scale, and his art collection veered not toward antiquities, as later collectors, including kings, would focus on, but toward symbols of power and wealth. For James, portraiture became an act of survival. While in exile, James continued to use his image and the image of his family to legitimize the reclamation of the throne and to further the cause of the exiled Stuart dynasty. That these paintings were not being shipped to London to convince Parliament to let him come back is not a red mark against James’ interest in art – he focused, especially after 1689, on creating a court of his own and perpetuating the dynasty, as well as securing the succession for his son. George can appear uninterested in image, but that would be, as shown, an unfair assessment. He and Caroline are not immortalized in fiction the way the “mad” George III was, and he’s not a particularly romantic hero like Bonnie Prince Charlie. But underneath all of that, George and Caroline were patrons of the arts, they were collectors, and George in particular endowed many artistic and educational organizations and buildings.

Elizabeth II, like these kings, created an image of herself that was unique while still being connected to her father, mother, grandparents, and her other illustrious ancestors – her use of brooches and other jewelry given to her by her parents, in particular, has always been striking to me – while also creating a lasting way of doing things, of appearing, of being the institution of the monarchy. And – while it is too soon after her reign to truly analyze how she did and what exactly her methods were – it is safe to say that her use of images of herself, her consort, and her
family were reactions of a second–generation monarch in a very unique position to the changing and chaotic world that spun ever–faster around her, just as it spun around the families of Henry VIII, James II, and George II.
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