



palgrave▶pivot

# The Polish Portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie

Robert I. Frost

palgrave  
macmillan

# The Polish Portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie

Robert I. Frost

# The Polish Portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie

palgrave  
macmillan

Robert I. Frost  
Department of History  
University of Aberdeen  
Aberdeen, UK

ISBN 978-3-030-99935-3      ISBN 978-3-030-99936-0 (eBook)  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99936-0>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2022

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use. The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover pattern © Melisa Hasan

This Palgrave Pivot imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*For Karin*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have helped me in the writing of this study. Olenka Pevny came with me to see the Polish portrait in the National Portrait Gallery (NPG) Store in Southwark; her trained art historian's eye spotted several features that an untutored historian had missed. Lucinda Lax of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (SNPG) was generous with her assistance and accompanied me on a most enlightening tour of the Gallery's magnificent collection of Stuart and Jacobite portraits. Rab MacGibbon of the NPG was supportive above and beyond the call of duty and provided me with the technical data on the canvas discussed in Chap. 7. Mindaugas Šapoka supplied a crucial reference on the complex matter of the Sobieski inheritance, and Adam Mead provided much useful information on the Cullum family. Mike Rapport gave advice on Jacobite exiles in Revolutionary France, and Katarzyna Gmerek helped greatly with suggestions and leads to material in Poland. Jane Ingle of the Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds, was unfailingly helpful, as were Betty Milburn from the Spanton-Jarman Project, Alex McWhirter of the Moyse's Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds, Dr Bernd Pappé of the Tansey Miniatures Foundation, Celle, Jo Langston of Christies, London, Dorothee Feldman of the Kunstsammlungen Graf von Schönborn, and Alexandra Moritsch, Marianne Hussl-Hörmann, and Camilla Tinnacher, all of the Dorotheum in Vienna. Several people read and commented on various versions of the typescript, including Peter Davidson, John Gash, Katarzyna Gmerek, Neil Guthrie, Michael Hochedlinger, Bruce Lenman, Stasia Link-Lenczowska, John Morrison, Murray Pittock, Dan Szechi, and the three anonymous readers for Palgrave. Their observations have done much to shape the final

text. Finally, I am grateful to the audiences in Scotland, England, and Poland for the lectures I have given on this painting; their comments and responses have helped shape the research and the book. My greatest debts are to Edward Corp and Peter Piniński, who have been particularly generous with their time and their considerable expertise; they have provided much-appreciated encouragement and several important leads; above all, they have both forced me to consider my arguments very carefully. Where I have not followed their advice, I hope they will forgive me.

Finally, I would like to thank the National Portrait Gallery, the National Galleries of Scotland, the Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds, Moyse's Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds, the Royal Collections Trust, the Piniński Foundation, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Tansey Miniatures Foundation, the Dorotheum, and Philip Mould Historical Portraits for permission to use images from their collections. Materials from the Stuart Papers in the Royal Archives in Windsor are cited with the permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Aberdeen, UK, September 2021

Robert I. Frost

# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>Unknown Man</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Provenance</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Resemblance</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>The Half-Polish Prince</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Portraits for the Sobieskis</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Unknown Man; Unknown Artist</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>The Embellishment of Tradition</b>	<b>89</b>
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>113</b>
	<b>Index</b>	<b>121</b>



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Robert I. Frost** holds the Burnett Fletcher Chair of History at the University of Aberdeen. He grew up in Edinburgh and studied Modern History at the University of St Andrews, where he developed an interest in Polish history. He studied for a diploma in Polish Language and Culture at the Jagiellonian University, Cracow, in 1980–1981 and wrote his doctorate at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, under the supervision of Norman Davies, a revised version of which was published in 1993 as *After the Deluge. Poland-Lithuania and the Second Northern War, 1655–1660*. He taught at King's College London from 1987, and his second book, *The Northern Wars: War, State & Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558–1721*, was published in 2000. He moved to Aberdeen in 2004 and is writing a three-volume history of the Polish-Lithuanian Union for Oxford University Press. Volume One *The Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1385–1569* (2015) won the *Pro Historia Polonorum* Prize for the best foreign-language book on Polish history published between 2012 and 2017.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AGAD	Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych [Central Archive of Old Acts, Warsaw]
Anon.	Anonymous
AR	Archiwum Radziwiłłów. [The Archive of the Radziwiłłs]
attr.	attributed to
BL	British Library
Fig.	Figure
n.	note
no.	number
NPG	National Portrait Gallery
RA SP	Royal Archives, The Stuart Papers
SNPG	Scottish National Portrait Gallery
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
vol.	volume

## LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.1	Unknown man, formerly known as Prince Charles Edward Stuart. (National Portrait Gallery NPG 1929)	2
Fig. 2.1	The Kinlochmoidart Macdonalds. (Simplified: only individuals named in text are listed)	13
Fig. 2.2	Portrait of an Unknown Lady. Other portraits from Hardwick House. Bury St Edmunds Past and Present. (© Spanton-Jarman Project. K505/3086)	25
Fig. 2.3	Locket left by Clementina Jacobina Schnell to Anne Cullum. Moyse's Hall Museum Bury St Edmunds. Accession no. 1978.101. West Suffolk Heritage Services. The inscription on the back reads: Fragment of the coat which Prince Charles Edward Stuart exchanged for the clothes of Flora MacDonald June 28th 1745	27
Fig. 3.1a	Clementina Sobieska by Francesco Bertosi after Francesco Trevisani (1719). SNPG PG 886 (detail)	37
Fig. 3.1b	The Polish portrait (detail)	37
Fig. 3.2a	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, 1739 (detail) Royal Collection, Holyrood Palace RCIN 401208	38
Fig. 3.2b	The Polish portrait (detail)	38
Fig. 3.3a	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, 1738 (detail). NPG 5517	39
Fig. 3.3b	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Jean-Étienne Liotard, 1737 (detail). SNPG PG 1519	39
Fig. 3.4	Charles Edward Stuart by Antonio David, 1732 copy of 1729 original SNPG: PG 887	40
Fig. 3.5	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Rosalba Carriera 1737. Piniński Foundation, Liechtenstein	43

Fig. 3.6	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Giles Hussey c. 1735/6. Philip Mould & Company	45
Fig. 3.7a	Bust of Charles Edward Stuart by Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, c. 1747. SNPG 594	46
Fig. 3.7b	The Polish portrait (detail)	46
Fig. 3.8a	Prince Charles Edward Stuart. Miniature by John Daniel Kamm after Maurice Quentin de La Tour (1748) Private Collection Photo © Philip Mould Ltd, London / Bridgeman Images	47
Fig. 3.8b	The Polish portrait (detail)	48
Fig. 3.9a	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Cosmo Alexander (1752). Reproduced from the Drambuie Collection with kind permission of William Grant and Sons Limited	49
Fig. 3.9b	The Polish portrait (detail)	49
Fig. 3.10a	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Allan Ramsay, 1745 SNPG PG 3762 (detail)	50
Fig. 3.10b	The Polish portrait (detail)	50
Fig. 3.11a	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Humphry, 1776. SNPG PG 2991 (detail)	51
Fig. 3.11b	The Polish portrait (detail)	51
Fig. 5.1	Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Catherina Heckel-Sperling (1726). Tansey Miniatures Foundation 10658. (Photo by Birgitt Schmedding)	72
Fig. 5.2	Prince Charles Edward Stuart attr. Antonio David (c. 1727/8). Private Collection. (Photo Credit: Dorotheum Vienna, auction catalogue 16.10.2007)	74
Fig. 6.1	Portrait of John Woodyear by Pompeo Batoni (1750). Minneapolis Institute of Art Accession no. 78.24 G	84
Fig. 7.1	Maksymilian Franciszek Ossoliński and his sons. (Anon. (1670s). Royal Castle, Warsaw ZKW/4925 Public Domain)	97
Fig. 7.2	Portrait of a Boy in Polish National Costume by Caspar Netscher (1668–1672). (Czartoryski Museum Cracow MNK XII-263 Public Domain)	98
Fig. 7.3	Portrait of a Boy in Hussar's Uniform (after 1760). (Workshop of Martin van Meytens the younger (1695–1770) ©Kunstpalaast, Düsseldorf. Photo: Horst Kolberg, ARTOTHEK)	99



## Unknown Man

**Abstract** This chapter outlines the problem at the heart of the book. It describes a painting in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery (NPG) in London that it catalogues as “Unknown Man formerly known as Prince Charles Edward Stuart”. Although experts on Stuart portraiture reject the identification of the sitter contained in two inscriptions on the portrait, the painting has never been researched in detail, despite having a provenance that is at least plausible and despite the fact that Clementina Sobieska, wife of James III Stuart, the Old Pretender, and mother of Bonnie Prince Charlie, as Charles Edward is popularly known, was Polish. The chapter briefly recounts the story of the Sobieski-Stuart marriage and relates how the portrait entered the NPG collection as part of a bequest from Gery Cullum, the last owner of Hardwick House, Bury St Edmunds.

**Keywords** Stuart portraits • Jacobite material culture • Stuart, House of • Bonnie Prince Charlie • Polish dress

Languishing in the National Portrait Gallery’s store in Southwark is a painting of a youth in Polish dress (Fig. 1.1). It is no masterpiece, but it is a striking image and rather a fine depiction of its subject. He is shown wearing a sash round his waist over a lavish frogged coat known in Polish as a *bekiesza*, named after Kasper Bekiesz, a Hungarian associate of Stefan



**Fig. 1.1** Unknown man, formerly known as Prince Charles Edward Stuart. (National Portrait Gallery NPG [1929](#))

Batory, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, who was also prince of Transylvania (ruled 1576–1586). The *bekiesza* in the original is scarlet rather than the orange shade in the photograph displayed on the gallery's website. An ermine-lined cloak is held in place by a small gold chain. The subject stares out confidently from under his rakish soft cap, adorned with a feather. His right arm rests nonchalantly on his hip; his left fingers the

pommel of a Polish-style sabre hanging from a leather strap over his right shoulder.<sup>1</sup>

Who is this confident youth? In the top left-hand corner a faded inscription—it is not clear whether it is English or French—declares him to be Prince Charles Edward Louis. At some point, someone clearly felt that this was not particularly helpful, so they added a gold-leaf gloss just above the sitter’s left shoulder, which reads: PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD LOUIS/ GRANDSON OF KING JAMES the 2nd/ BORN at ROME 31st Dec<sup>r</sup> 1720/Died at Florence 1788. If this claim is true, then the National Portrait Gallery possesses evidence that Bonnie Prince Charlie’s known penchant for dressing up did not only extend to kilt and plaid, which he first donned to spectacular effect at a carnival ball in Rome in 1741, wore frequently to public events, and which, in 1745, “quickly and thoroughly...became part of his persona”.<sup>2</sup> But are the inscriptions to be believed?

The identification is at least plausible. As is well known to Stuart historians—but is not widely remembered outside scholarly circles—Charles’s mother was Polish, the ill-starred Clementina Sobieska (1702–1735), daughter of Jakub (James) Sobieski (1667–1737) and Hedwig Elisabeth of Neuburg (1673–1722). It was, however, Clementina’s grandfather, King John III Sobieski (1629–1696), who drove the Ottomans from the walls of Vienna in 1683, whose reputation ensured that she was seen as an appropriate bride for James Francis Edward Stuart (1688–1766), known according to taste as James III and VIII or the Old Pretender. The unhappy tale of Clementina’s short life is an established part of Jacobite romance. Imprisoned by her cousin, Emperor Charles VI, under pressure from his Hanoverian ally when news of her engagement leaked out, she was sprung from captivity by an Irish Jacobite, Charles Wogan, who was knighted for

<sup>1</sup>Heinz Archive, NPG 1929: **Called Prince Charles Edward Stuart**, by an unknown artist. Oil on canvas, 43 × 23<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (1092 × 603 cm); own fair hair, brown eyes and eyebrows, youthful rounded face; Polish costume (or uniform) of black fur cap with aigrette, scarlet jacket with gold frogging, scarlet cape, open, lined with ermine; a green curtain, drawn back, reveals a column, right.

<sup>2</sup>Nicholson, Robin. 1998. The tartan portraits of Charles Edward Stuart. *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 21, 148; McLynn, Frank. 2020. *Bonnie Prince Charlie: Charles Edward Stuart*. London: Sharpe Books, 61–2. The suit was a gift from James Drummond, sixth Earl and third Duke of Perth: Wyld, Helen, Dalglish, John. 2017. “A slim sword in his hand in battle”. Weapons fit for a Prince. In Forsyth, David, ed. *Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites*. Edinburgh: National Museums Scotland, 81.