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The Tudor Relief-portrait in stone at Prinknash, Glos

by W. St. C. Baddeley
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THE TUDOR RELIEF-PORTRAIT IN STONE
AT PRINKNASH, GLOS.

by ST. CLAIR BADDELEY

THE survival of this (not undamaged) stone portrait, obviously that of a young and beautifully-costumed male personage in the court-style of the earlier years of the 16th century, set, as it is, into the wall of a rear wing (now refectory) of the Benedictine Tudor priory of Prinknash, naturally has given rise to the interesting problem as to whom it represents. This, it may be at once admitted, so far has not met with solution.

For above a century and a half at least, it has been mis-called Henry VIII; partly owing (it may be conjectured) to the fact that this monarch during a visit paid to Abbot Parker at Over palace by Gloucester, with Anne Boleyn, in July 1535, under guidance of Sir John Dudley (Viscount Lisle 1542; Earl of Warwick 1547)—the owner of a moiety of the manor of Painswick and residing at its Lodge—and attended by Sir William Kingston, K.G., constable of the Tower (later the purchaser of the said manor from (1546) Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle (d. 1542)—hunted for two entire days in succession over these properties, from Prinknash to Miserden adjoining them.

But doubts at once arise at three points, equally adverse to such an attribution. The surviving features forbid it, as well as the absence of any royal insignia. Thirdly, although that special visit of this king presumably did give rise to the presence hard-by, above the Portway, of a tavern, known until so recently as 1830, as The Henry VIII (referred to both by Pennant 1774 and by

Walpole as a curiosity in inn-signs)—no such royal visit could have given rise to a portrait dating to a quarter of a century anterior to that visit (as the costume discovers in this one to be)—and, in no respect portraying the familiar Tudor features—even after duly allowing for the quasi-obliteration here, of the nose. On the contrary, after careful cleaning and removal of both abundant moss and lichen that have long obscured it, the result points us to the unidentified portrait of a youthful, but non-royal, personage (dating *c.* 1505–12), and the writer desires to express his sincere thanks to the Very Rev. The Prior for permission to make this venerable portrait do itself whatever justice might be still possible, and likewise to Mr D. Morshead, the librarian of Windsor Castle, for courteously letting him examine the various Tudor portraits in the royal collection there.

Since, thus, it is neither the portrait of an ecclesiastic nor that of a royalty, the way becomes clear, though still spacious, for seeking (and finding, if possible), some different identification. In passing, it may be here mentioned that in a pencil sketch* of Prinknash by Samuel Lysons, *c.* 1790, there is some indication, beneath a window, that this object was then already occupying the same position as does this portrait today, as, indeed, Walpole had stated in a letter (see p. 218).

It will, therefore, be not unreasonable if we start upon an entirely fresh line of search and remind the reader that Henry VIII, after appropriating the lands of the monasteries (1538–40), including this same estate of Prinknash from St. Peter's (Gloster), and its appendant woodland and warren—in 1544 settled these upon Sir Edm. Brydges on his marriage with his ward Dorothy Braye, daughter of Edmund, late Lord Braye (d. 1539), and great niece and heiress of Sir Reginald, K.G. (d. 1503), the lord

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RELIEF-PORTRAIT AT PRINKNASH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

treasurer to Henry VII, whose portrait is well-known in the north window at Malvern priory church.

In 1544, therefore, upon the celebration of her marriage with Sir Edmund Brydges of Coberley (later 2nd Lord Chandos), and a favourite of the king, Henry endowed them with this property and residence that Abbot Parker and his immediate predecessors had so improved and beautified. Twelve years later, by the death of her father-in-law, Sir John Brydges (1st Lord Chandos), she became also Lady Chandos of Sudeley near Winchcombe, that had but so recently (1548) witnessed the tragical end of its charming owner, Queen Katherine Parr.

Since these facts have thus widened our purview, the portrait in question may obviously have represented some relative of Dorothy Braye, herself: though it cannot have been her great-uncle and benefactor, Sir Reginald (d. 1503); nor even John his younger brother, her own grandfather, of Eaton Braye (co. Beds.)—buried at Chelsea, c. 1505 when he was probably 45–55. The more likely person pointed to is therefore Dorothy's own father, Edmund, in his youth, who had just before the demise of Henry VII inherited properties both of his father and also of his uncle, Sir Reginald Braye, including Eaton Braye and land at Chelsea. Becoming knighted in 1513, he was old enough to follow the king to the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1515, and may have been born c. 1490. Later he became K.G., married Joan, daughter of Sir Richard Haligwell, was summoned to Parliament as a baron 1529, and died 18 Oct. 1539, aged about 50.

That this portrait presents a good example of this elaborate French court-cap at its fullest development permits dating it up to c. 1510–12. But we know for certain of no portrait of Edmund Braye, although two exist of his son, John, second Lord Braye (cf. *Ancestor*, vol. 6), Dorothy's brother.

This lady's father had, therefore, been dead five years

when her wardship to the king ended with her marriage to Sir Edmund Brydges of Coberley (later, 2nd Lord Chandos of Sudeley), and converted the Abbot's hunting-lodge, by means of any desirable alterations or adornments that were needed, to subserve the family-life of courtly lay-folk. Two tenements became held also by them in the village of Painswick, hard-by.

Finally, we have evidence of Sir John Brydges, her father-in-law, staying at Prinknash in 1555 with his son on account of his official responsibility connected with Bishop Hooper's execution at Gloucester by Queen Mary's order. He died the following year.

Walpole, though interesting and valuable as giving evidence about Prinknash, errs in two particulars. He states (probably on account of Arms in the glass formerly there) that Henry VIII and Jane Seymour lay there. The other item occurs thus: 'Under a window a barbarous bas-relief of Harry (when) young—as it still is on the sign of an Ale-House on the descent of the Hill'. Undoubtedly he saw this Relief with the nose gone, as did Samuel Lysons. Old folk formerly at Cranham stated that the present 'Royal William' did bear that ungenial sign of Henry VIII until 1830: though the situation of that inn could never have been accurately described as upon the Portway, hard-by it, nor on the descent of the hill, unless referring to people returning from the high camp of Kimsbury or Painswick, to the Portway by Prinknash Park wall, as some golfers do today.