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## 70 KING HENRY VIII

c. 1562-7

Oil on 5 Baltic Oak Panels [Glazed]

90 1/3 x 49 in. (229.6 x 124.1 cm)

Trinity College, Cambridge [Main Dining Hall]

Trinity College Number 84

**Provenance:** Bequeathed by Robert Beaumont, Master and Vice-Chancellor of the College, to Trinity College Library in 1567; in the Master House Main Dining room until 1912; today in the Trinity College Main Dining Hall.

**Exhibitions:** The New Gallery (London), The Royal House of Tudor Exhibition, 1890 (#128); Hans Eworth: A Tudor Artist and His Circle, London and Leicester, 1965; Henry VIII Revealed Exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 24 January-30 March, 2003.

**Selected Literature:** L. Cust, "Notes on Pictures in the Royal Collections-XXXIX: On the Portraits of King Henry VIII," *Burlington Magazine*, 31(177), December 1917, 217-224; T.P. Greig, "In the Auction Rooms," *The Connoisseur*, December, 1949, 65 and 215; R. Strong, *Hans Eworth, A Tudor Artist and his Circle*, London 1965, 9; R. Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, London, 1969, 152-161; R. Strong, *The English Icon*, London, 1969, 98; P. Gaskell, *Trinity College Library, The First 150 Years*, Cambridge, 1978, 48-9; X. Brooke et al, *Henry VIII Revealed: Holbein's Portrait and its Legacy*, London, 2003, 52-4 and 107.

**Inscription** [Bottom Center]:

EN EXPRESSA VIDES HENRICI REGIS IMAGO  
QUAE FUIT OCTAVI: MUSIS HOC STRUXIT ASYLUM  
MAGNIFICE. CUM TER DENOS REGNASSET ET OCTO  
ANNOS: QUIS MAIOR REGEM LABOR ULTIMVS ORNET  
A°N 1546

YOU SEE IN THIS IMAGE A TRUE LIKENESS OF KING HENRY, WHO WAS THE EIGHTH [OF THAT NAME]: HE ERECTED THIS MAGNIFICENT TEMPLE TO THE MUSES. NOW THAT HE HAS REIGNED THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS, WHAT GREATER WORK COULD BETTER HONOUR THE KING? IN THE YEAR 1546

**Inscription** [Other]: Bottom left ‘HEFESIT’ [sic]; Bottom right ‘1567’; Bottom edge, center ‘AETATIS SUAE 51’ and ‘D 1538’<sup>1</sup>; Upper right, around emblem ‘HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE.’<sup>2</sup>

**Technical Data:** In the files of Trinity College are the following reports: A dendrochronological report by Ian Tyers (#572k) of University of Sheffield (ARCUS Dendrochronological Laboratory) dated August 2002, indicates that the picture was “manufacture(d)..sometime after AD1554.” An examination, technical, and treatment report by Ian McClure, Jenny Rose, Helen Brett, and Ray Marchant (Hamilton Kerr Institute for the University of Cambridge), dated December 2002, indicates that much of the original underdrawing is visible and was probably meant to act as a highlight; the frame is probably original to the picture; the picture was overlaid with smalt—a technique unknown to English artists of the period; the picture is much damaged, particularly on the silver doublet and in the brown/green background; and much overpainting and several layers of varnish were found and subsequently removed/repainted, although the text originally present on the Garter emblem of Henry’s proper left leg is no longer visible.<sup>3</sup>

**Attribution:** This portrait is inscribed with Eworth’s customary ‘HE monogram, although it also includes ‘FESIT [sic],’ which is unique among Eworth’s *oeuvre*—this being the only known example.<sup>4</sup> Vladimir Juren argues that such an inscription acts as “a mark of manufacture,” but also as a referent to the “humanist trend” toward antiquity.<sup>5</sup> It is not known if Eworth could read

or write in Latin and it may be that the changed nature of his monogram, as it is found here, was dictated by Beaumont.

The visible underdrawing is similar to other known Eworth works, including Eworth’s *Portrait of Mary I* (#5) at the National Portrait Gallery, London. It is possible that the underdrawing and details were painted by Eworth while other parts of the picture—perhaps the background, which is less delicately painted—were handled by assistants. The technical reports also suggest that the center-most panel was prepared with less skill, which has resulted in additional paint loss. This difference in technique also suggests more than one hand at work on this portrait.

**Description:** This extraordinary portrait—the largest in Eworth’s known *oeuvre*—presents King Henry VIII dressed in sumptuous attire, standing on the edge of a ledge covered in a grey carpet.<sup>6</sup> Behind him is a green velvet curtain decorated with a gold fringe that stops just short of the floor. To his proper left, and directly at his eye level, is the emblem of the Order of the Garter, of which the King is sovereign. The emblem consists of the circular Garter as the badge of the Order, with the Order’s motto, “Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense,” inscribed upon it, inset with the arms of the English monarch, and surmounted by the Crown Imperial of England.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Here Eworth is mistaken in the year of Henry’s death; Henry died 28 January, 1547. The error may have to do with the date of the completion of the Whitehall mural (1538), which Eworth (or Beaumont) appears to have conflated with the year of Henry’s death.

<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to J.S. Edwards for his assistance in the translation of the Latin inscription.

<sup>3</sup> I am grateful to Mr. Paul Simms for access to this portrait and the Trinity archives. These reports were generated as part of an exhibition held at the Walker Art Gallery (Liverpool) in 2003. The catalogue for the exhibition—Xanthe Brooke et al, *Henry VIII Revealed: Holbein’s Portrait and its Legacy*, London 2003—also includes images of paint samples and infrared reflectography (89 and 98-101).

<sup>4</sup> The misspelling of ‘fecit’ may be explained by considering that spelling words phonetically was commonplace in Tudor England.

<sup>5</sup> Vladimir Juren, “Fecit-Facibat,” *Revue de l’art*, 26, 1974, 29. “Ainsi se manifeste une tendance proprement humaniste qui consiste à considérer la signature non seulement comme une marque de fabrication, mais en même temps comme une sorte de confession esthétique ou une prise de position à l’égard de l’Antiquité.”

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<sup>6</sup> Henry wears a red velvet gown with an interlaced pattern of embroidered gold thread with gold braid borders. Over his gown he wears a mantle of brown fur, probably sable. Underneath, his U-fronted jerkin of silver silk has banded guards of silver silk covered in an embroidered vine motif. His jerkin covers a matching slashed and embroidered doublet, with tufts of his white silk undershirt pulled through each slash. Wrapped around his considerable waist is a length of white silk, tied in a bow near his codpiece. His codpiece also matches his jerkin and doublet. For more on codpieces see Grace Vicary, “Visual Art as Social Data: The Renaissance Codpiece,” in *Cultural Anthropology*, 4(1), February 1989, 3-25. He is also wearing white hose with a white garter on his proper right leg and the blue garter emblem of the Order of the Garter on his proper left leg. His white leather shoes are decorated with small slashing hash marks. Adorning his head is a black felt hat with white (perhaps ostrich) feathers and in his proper right hand he holds a pair of brown leather (perhaps calfskin) gloves. For more on dress in Henrician England see Ninia Mikhaila, *The Tudor Tailor: Reconstructing 16<sup>th</sup> Century Dress*, London: Batsford Publishing, 2006 and Maria Hayward, *Dress and the Court of Henry VIII*, London: Maney Publishing, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> For more on the political implications of the imperial crown under Henry VIII see Richard Koebner, “The Imperial Crown of this Realm: Henry VIII, Constantine the Great, and Polydore Vergil,” in *Historical Research*, 26(73), 29-52.

Henry is also wearing a considerable number of jewels; the most prominent jewel is an enormous collar of interlaced clusters of pearls and gold with three large rubies and three large diamonds.<sup>8</sup> Around his neck, and passing underneath the collar, is a gold necklace of interlaced 'H's with a round pendant, embedded with a large diamond and decorated with a swirling vine pattern, which falls just below his waist.<sup>9</sup> Henry's tunic is closed with 10 large ruby buttons that run in pairs down to his waist. His sleeves are likewise decorated with matching large rubies: eight are visible on his proper right sleeve and eleven on his proper left sleeve. He is also wearing several rings: on the index finger of each hand is a large diamond ring and on the fifth finger of each hand are a ruby ring and a diamond ring. Hanging from the silk cord at Henry's waist is a chain of tightly intertwined gold loops, with a small gold dagger in a red scabbard hanging from the end. The hilt of the dagger, as well as the tip of the scabbard, is decorated in heavy gold filigree. His felt hat is also decorated with at least six small diamonds set in gold.

**Discussion:** In June, 1567 one of Trinity College's first Vice-Chancellors, and erstwhile Master of the college, Robert Beaumont, died. In his will Beaumont bequeathed this large panel portrait to the Trinity Library, along with five other pictures as well as a significant portion of his personal library.<sup>10</sup> Although this portrait is dated 1567, technical studies indicate that the '7' is a later addition. As the inscriptions indicate, King Henry was also the founder and patron of Trinity

<sup>8</sup> This may be the collar described in Henry's inventories as "Item a Collier set with iij large balaces [rubies] the Xth balace standing in the top of the Kinges Crowne made against the Coronacion with X frier knottes in euery knott xvi perles." The collar Henry wears in this portrait is indeed separated by groups of 16 pearls, although a 'Kinges Crowne' is absent. See David Starkey, eds., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII: The Transcript*, London: David Brown Publishing, 1998, 80 for more.

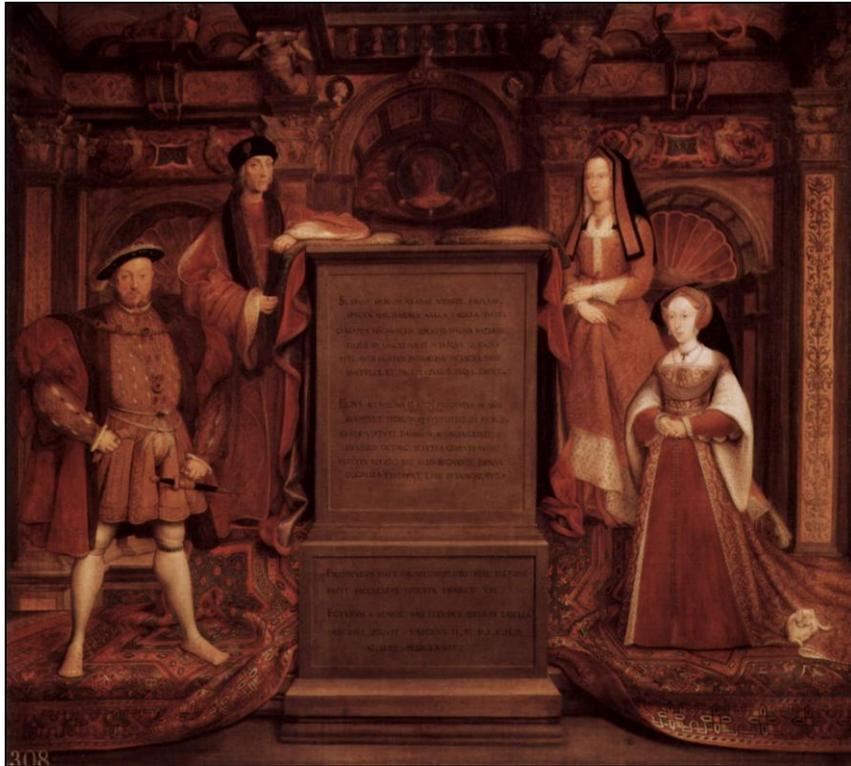
<sup>9</sup> This necklace and pendant are identical to that seen in Holbein's *Portrait of Henry VIII* in the collection of the Thyssen Museum, Madrid (c. 1537).

<sup>10</sup> Will of Robert Beaumont, Cambridge University Archive, U.I. Wills II, 1567, fol. 45v. "...I gyve to Trynitie colledg wherof I am master – xlii to the stallynge / and glasyng of the new lybrarye Item I gyve to the sayed trinitie colledg all those Dyvynitie books onlye which I have / and the colledge wantethe Thirdly I gyve to Trynitie colledg my syxe pictures of our fownder / his parents and child to be set in the librarye assone as it is as buylded and there to remayne as longe as they laste In the meane space to be fayre and warely kepte in the mres' lodgyng." The picture was never moved to the Library and remained in the Masters Lodge Dining Hall until 1912, when it was then moved to the Main Dining Hall, where it remains today. See C.H. Hartshorne, *The Book Rarities in the University of Cambridge*, Cambridge: Longman Publishing, 1829, 482.

College and it is possible that Beaumont commissioned this work after his initial appointment as Master in 1561, and sometime prior to his death in 1567, as a tribute to the founder of the College.



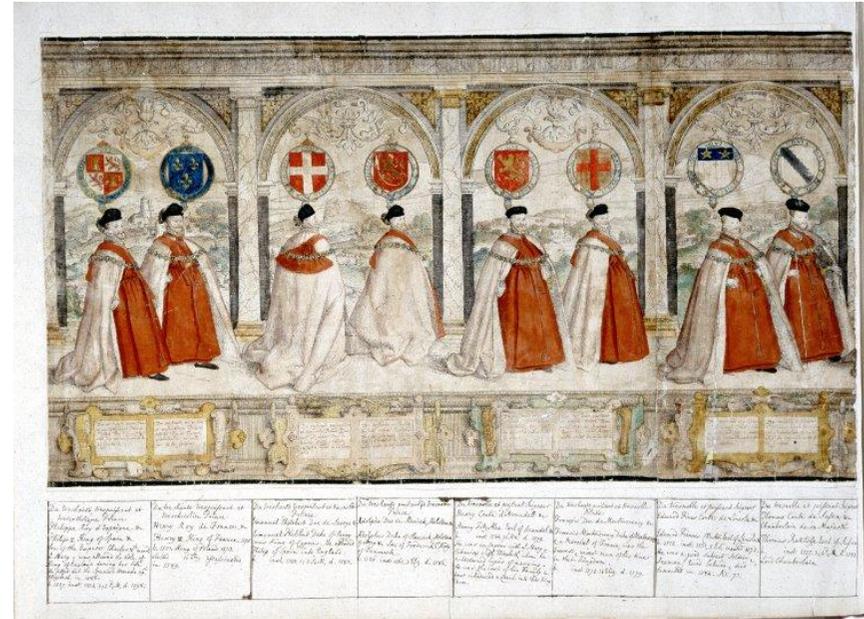
*King Henry VII and King Henry VIII*  
Hans Holbein the Younger  
1536-7  
Ink and watercolour on paper  
101 ½ x 54 in. (257.8 x 137.2 cm)  
National Portrait Gallery, London [NPG 4027]



*Copy after Holbein's Whitehall Mural*  
Remigius van Leemput  
1667  
Oil on canvas  
35 x 38 7/8 in. (88.9 x 98.7 cm)  
The Royal Collection [RCIN 405750]

This picture is one of at least six 16<sup>th</sup> century copies of a portrait of King Henry VIII that follow Holbein's lost wall-painting in the Privy Chamber at Whitehall Palace, painted in 1538.<sup>11</sup> Today, all that remains of that original mural is a portion of the cartoon in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London

<sup>11</sup> The other copies—at Chatsworth (#49), Walker Art Gallery, Petworth House, Belvoir Castle, and Parham House—are believed to be based upon that original Whitehall mural,



*Procession of the Garter* [Folio 3]  
Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder  
1576  
Etching (on paper)  
11 7/8 x 21 in. (30 x 54 cm)  
British Museum [1892,0628.194.3]

and a smaller copy of the complete mural by Remigius van Leemput in the Royal Collection. The vast majority of the copyists of Holbein's mural portrait of Henry VIII remain unknown; this picture, however, is unique in that it is signed with Eworth's monogram.

Another of the unique aspects of the Trinity portrait is that it does not depict Henry within Holbein's architectural and genealogical space.<sup>12</sup> Here the column

which was destroyed by fire in 1698. For details on these works see, Xanthe Brooke et al, *Henry VIII Revealed*, 74-5.

<sup>12</sup> Technical examinations suggest that the underdrawing in the Chatsworth picture is virtually identical to that of the Trinity picture. Today, the Chatsworth picture is attributed to Eworth based upon that similarity. See Xanthe Brooke et al, *Henry VIII Revealed*, 54.

and other architectural elements, as well as any suggestion of his father Henry VII, have been set aside and are replaced by the cartouche and text at the center, bottom and the large Garter emblem at the top right of the picture.

The Order of the Garter is an ancient chivalric order, probably founded by Edward III in the 1340s.<sup>13</sup> By the time that Henry VIII came to the throne the Order was made up of the King and 24 (primarily) English Knights. Places within the order were greatly coveted; it was, according to Raymond Waddington, “the most glittering prize of (Henry VIII’s) reign.”<sup>14</sup> Henry’s use of the Order was primarily political, and often dynastic as well, bestowing favor on trusted intimates while furthering his own claims to ancient royalty.<sup>15</sup> In 1536, for example, Henry used the Garter celebrations in order to announce the election of Sir Nicholas Carew to the Order, selecting him over Lord Rochford, Queen Anne’s brother. This event was to have two-fold repercussions: it was seen as a very public precursor of Anne’s later downfall while simultaneously reasserting Henry’s right to rule.<sup>16</sup>

The court of Henry VIII was also a place of splendor and pageantry and the Garter celebrations were a central event, acting as what Roy Strong describes as “a reinforcement of medieval hierarchical principles and an affirmation of chivalrous ideals.”<sup>17</sup> The typical celebration consisted of three days of banquets and processions in which the Knights of the Garter honored the Sovereign. Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder’s 1576 engraving of the *Procession of the Garter* is exemplar of the kind of formal processions held during the Garter celebrations, particularly under Elizabeth I, where they would become extremely popular

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<sup>13</sup> However, Lisa Jefferson argues for a later date, suggesting that it was probably founded by Henry V in 1415. For more see Lisa Jefferson, “MS Arundel 48 and the Earliest Statutes of the Order of the Garter,” in *The English Historical Review*, 109(431), April 1994, 356-385.

<sup>14</sup> Raymond Waddington, “Elizabeth I and the Order of the Garter,” in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 24(1), Spring 1993, 100-1.

<sup>15</sup> Grace Holmes, *The Order of the Garter: Its Knights and Stall Plates, 1348-1948*, Windsor: Oxley and Sons, 1984, 17-19, 168-78.

<sup>16</sup> Raymond Waddington, ‘*Elizabeth I*’, 100-1. The start of the annual Order celebrations also fell on St. George’s Day (April 23), which was the same day that Henry was proclaimed King in 1509. As such, the Order must have had a very personal meaning to Henry, linked as it was to the start of his reign. For more see George Hall, *Henry VIII, King of England*, London, 1550 (printed 1904), 187.

<sup>17</sup> Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry*, London, 1977, 165.

among the general populace.<sup>18</sup> The engraving is also evocative of the Trinity picture in the presence of the Garter emblem above each knight and the cartouche, with inscriptions, below.<sup>19</sup>

The Order of the Garter also had religious implications for the Tudors. Henry VIII, for example, completed St. George’s Chapel, at Windsor Castle, in 1528 and it was here that the Garter ceremonies were often performed. It was also here that Henry was buried, alongside Queen Jane, in February, 1547.<sup>20</sup> In March, 1553, Edward VI drafted changes to the statues of the Order of the Garter that would have removed any veneration to St. George, whom Edward saw as an “obscure sup[er]sticion”, replacing the saint’s image with that of a knight astride a horse.<sup>21</sup> He also shifted the annual Garter feast from St. George’s Day to Whitsunday—a day in commemoration of the foundation of the Protestant church.<sup>22</sup> Although Mary I would subsequently nullify these statutes, under Elizabeth I many of the Garter statues under Edward VI returned, with some additional modifications: the gospels were read in the vernacular and the elevation of the host was eliminated from the Mass.<sup>23</sup>

These issues were not unimportant to Robert Beaumont, who was an ardent Calvinist at Cambridge. In 1565, he campaigned against clergy wearing surplices in church, baptisms by laity, and for the defacement of images of the Trinity.<sup>24</sup> In his will he also indicated his desire to be buried as a Protestant, writing “no wayne Jangelynge of belles nor anye other popishe ceremonyes or mystrustfull prayers [be used at my funeral] as though my happye state with god were doubtfull.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, 173.

<sup>19</sup> The Trinity portrait is the first dated portrait I am aware of in which the Order of the Garter is presented with such importance. It is therefore possible that the Trinity portrait is the instigator of this artistic trope or, at the very least, the first extant expression of it.

<sup>20</sup> Ralph Houlbrooke, “Death, Will, and Succession,” in *Man & Monarch: Henry VIII*, British Library, 2009, 258.

<sup>21</sup> John King, *Tudor Royal Iconography*, Princeton, 1989, 101.

<sup>22</sup> In 1548 Edward (and the Privy Council) removed the requiem for departed knights. For this, and other, changes see Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, 166-7.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Robert Greaves, “Robert Beaumont,” in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed online 10 May, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Will of Robert Beaumont, Cambridge University Archive, U.I. Wills II, 1567, fol. 45v.

## HANS EWORTH: THE COMPLETE CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ

The Trinity portrait concerns itself with dynasty, but less biologically so than was the case in Holbein's mural. Instead, attention is drawn to the chivalric legacy of the Garter, as manifest by the emblems present within the picture, and Henry VIII's place within that dynasty.<sup>26</sup> The Trinity portrait, therefore, may be seen as an image that presents King Henry VIII as the chivalric Christian knight whose heroic actions founded Beaumont's beloved church and college in England.

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<sup>26</sup> There are further, albeit smaller, hints at the Order in the blue garter Henry wears on his proper left leg and in the black felt hat that he wears—both are symbols of the Order.