



 CATALOGUE ENTRY

Portrait of Marie de Guise
after 1537

Workshop of Corneille de Lyon

Netherlandish, active in France, 1500/1510–1575

oil on wood panel
4-15/16 × 4 in.
(12.5 × 10.1 cm)

The Clowes Collection
2017.88

Marks, Inscriptions, and Distinguishing Features

None

Entry

1 A young woman peers out at the viewer. The formality of her pose belies the touch of a smile that extends to a lively pair of blue eyes. Her black silk headdress frames delicate features and veils a crop of rich, auburn hair. By contrast, a creamy area of décolletage is revealed by the gown's square neckline, where a single chain is elegantly draped, and just visible on her arms is a pair of white fur oversleeves. These materials and textures are a foil to the austere black costume that serves to enhance the sitter's porcelain-like complexion against the light green background. To the modern eye, her attire might seem unassuming, but, in actuality, it conforms to an aristocratic French style dating from the early sixteenth century. A similar fashion was adopted by Louise de Savoy (1476–1531), the mother of King Francis I (1494–1547), as a sign of widowhood after her husband died in 1496. In fact, the black headdress worn here by de Guise suggests that she, too, was a widow when this portrait was executed.

2 The modern identification of the sitter is not undisputed. In 1947, when it was purchased by George H.A. Clowes, it was identified as Diane de Poitiers (1499–1566), the famous mistress of the king of France, Henry II (1519–1559), and the rival of Queen Catherine de' Medici (1519–1589).¹ However, in 1968, the art historian Mark Roskill, with the assistance of Dana Bentley-Cranch, noted similarities between the Clowes portrait and two others believed to depict Marie de Guise (1515–1560) in Edinburgh and Versailles (fig. 1 and fig. 2).² Following this discovery, Ian Fraser, the first curator of the Clowes Collection, formally identified the sitter as Marie de Guise.³ Corneille de Lyon did not inscribe his paintings, nor are any portrait drawings by him preserved that could firmly establish the identity of the sitter. When the painting was in the collection of the art dealer Jacques Seligmann and exhibited in Paris in 1937, its identification was based on drawings of Diane de Poitiers from the album of Clouet drawings that once belonged to Catherine de' Medici in Chantilly, France.⁴ The one closest to the Clowes composition however is dated to about 1540 and not part of Catherine's album, thus likely to be a later copy made in the surrounding of the workshop. It shows an older woman (Diane de Poitiers would have been about 40 at the time) in comparable pose and expression as the woman in the Clowes painting (fig. 3).⁵ The identification with Marie de Guise is also based on a comparison with portrait drawing from the circle of Jean Clouet (about 1485–1541), the leading portraitist at the French court who was a skilled master in the use of red and black chalks.⁶ In favor of Marie de Guise are the provenance of the Edinburgh painting in the collection of Robert de Gaignières and a comparison with a drawing in the British Museum that bears the inscription: "La mere de la Royne descose/de la mesant de guise" (The mother of the Queen of Scotland of the House of Guise) (fig. 4).⁷ Although this drawing most likely dates to the early 1550s, when Marie de Guise briefly visited France as the regent of Scotland, and depicts a woman in comparable pose and dress to that of the sitter in the Clowes portrait, the lines around her mouth and an air of austerity give the appearance of a slightly older woman. Also, her eyes are larger and of a hazel color rather than blue. If one accepts the likeness as the key to identifying the sitter, her youthful appearance and somber dress in the Clowes painting, paired with the attribution to the artist Corneille de Lyon, who worked in France, imply that this portrait dates from 1537 to 1538—the brief period after the death of de Guise's first husband, de Longueville, and before her departure for Scotland after marrying James V.



Figure 1: Corneille de Lyon (Netherlandish, 1500/1510–1575), *Mary of Guise, 1515–1560. Queen of James V*, about 1537, oil on panel, 8-21/32 × 5-15/16 in. (panel), 17-9/16 × 16-9/64 × 2-61/64 in. (framed). Scottish National Portrait Gallery, National Galleries of Scotland, Presented by E.P. Jones 1950, PG 1558.



Figure 2: Unknown artist, *Portrait of a Woman*, 16th century, oil on board, 6-1/2 × 5-25/64 in. Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles, France, MV3148. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY. Photo : Christophe Fouin.



Figure 3: School of Jean or François Clouet, *Portrait of a Woman (Diane de Poitiers?)*, about 1540, pencil and chalk, 9-27/32 × 8-17/64 in. Musée Condé, Chantilly, France, MN339;B330. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY. Photo: René-Gabriel Ojeda.



Figure 4: Circle/School of François Clouet (French, before 1522–1572), *Portrait of Marie de Lorraine, Queen of Scotland*, about 1522–1572, black chalk with red chalk on paper, 11-57/64 × 8-13/16 in. The British Museum, London, Gg, I.420. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

3 Marie de Guise, also known as Marie de Lorraine, was one of the most powerful women of her time. Born in 1515 in Bar-le-Duc within the Lorraine region of northeastern France, she was the daughter of aristocrats Antoinette de Bourbon (1493–1583) and Claude de Lorraine (1496–1550). He was a high-ranking soldier and later made a duke and Peer of France by King Francis I. Having distinguished himself in service, Claude was awarded the title of Duke de Guise in 1528. For his eldest daughter, Marie, he arranged an advantageous marriage with Louis II d'Orléans, Duke de Longueville (1510–1537). The couple married in 1534, but the union ended unexpectedly with his death just two years later, leaving Marie a widow at the age of twenty-one. Soon thereafter, she became a pivotal figure in French foreign politics.

4 In 1537, after the death of Henry VIII's (1491–1547) third wife, Jane Seymour (1509–1537), the king of England attempted to court Marie.⁸ (In fact, evidence claims that Hans Holbein the Younger [1497/1498–1543], who held the official title of “King’s Painter,” may have been commissioned to capture her likeness, perhaps in relation to marriage negotiations.)⁹ However, that same year the wife of James V (1512–1542), King of Scots, died. Madeleine (1520–1537) was the daughter of Francis I (1494–1547), and her premature death threatened the strategic alliance between the Catholic states of France and Scotland.¹⁰ As a result, Henry VIII’s courtship was thwarted when Marie was, instead, directed by Francis I to marry his widowed son-in-law (fig. 5). The couple produced three children before James’s death a few years later. As his widow and the queen regent, Marie played a central role in the rivalry between France and England. She actively supported the claim to Scottish rule on the British Isles, and through her daughter, Mary Stuart (1542–1587), she continued to nurture close ties between the Catholic nations with the marriage of her daughter to the French *dauphin*, Francis II (1544–1560). A forceful presence to the end, Marie de Guise died after a brief illness while at Edinburgh Castle in 1560.



Figure 5: Unknown artist, *James V of Scotland and Mary of Guise*, about 1538, oil on wood panel. Collection of His Grace the Duke of Atholl, Blair Castle, Perthshire, Scotland.

5 In addition to the three versions already mentioned—Edinburgh, Versailles, and Indianapolis—a fourth portrait was last documented at auction in 1954, and a fifth is in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch.¹¹ The art historian Anna Dubois de Groër considered the Edinburgh version to be the original from which the other paintings were copied, both for stylistic considerations and the fact that it bears the wax seal of Colbert de Torcy on its reverse, proving that this painting indeed was part of the Gaignières collection.¹² By comparison, the Clowes

version is slightly smaller than both the Edinburgh and Versailles paintings, which may be the result of having been trimmed during a later intervention.¹³ This helps explain why the sitter's left shoulder is not fully depicted in the Clowes painting as it is in the Edinburgh panel, where the positioning of the arms suggests that her hands are folded in front of the body, showing her almost as a half-length figure, and corresponds to the length Corneille usually depicted in his portraits. Given the multiple versions of this portrait, it is likely that they were used as presents to be displayed in portrait galleries and probably also copied for a growing collector's market in following centuries.

6 That the Clowes painting shares a direct relation with the Edinburgh version is supported by a comparative 1:1 overlay of the two, which demonstrates that the outer contour of the averted side of the face (proper left), shoulder line, and position of the train of the headdress, as well as the position of the eyes, noses, and lips, match exactly, leaving no doubt that both portraits were based on a common source, either a drawing or a painting (fig. 6). As there are no known surviving drawings attributed to Corneille de Lyon, it is not clear whether this model was a portrait drawing or another type of intermediary support used to copy additional versions from an extant painting.¹⁴



Figure 6: Overlay of Corneille de Lyon's *Mary of Guise, 1515–1560, Queen of James V*, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, National Galleries of Scotland, Presented by E.P. Jones 1950, PG 1558, onto Workshop of Corneille de Lyon's *Portrait of Marie de Guise*, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, The Clowes Collection, 2017.88.

7 This small-scale panel, the typical portrait size in sixteenth-century France, employs thinly applied layers of paint to a shimmering, transparent effect that is emphasized by the pale green background. These particularly striking visual features are associated with a larger group of sixteenth-century French portraits attributed to the artist. However, in comparison to the Edinburgh panel, the Clowes work is less expressive in its handling, with controlled brushwork. Corneille de Lyon operated a workshop that included his sons and son-in-law Jean Maignan,¹⁵ and probably other assistants. This would account for the numerous portraits associated with his style, and it is conceivable that the Clowes painting is a copy made after a model in Corneille's workshop.

Author

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Provenance

Possibly in the collection of François-Roger de Gaignières (1642–1715), Paris.¹⁶

Duke of Hamilton, Hamilton Palace;

Christie's sale, London, in 1882;¹⁷

J. Nosedá, London.¹⁸

(Jacques Seligmann et Fils, Paris) by 1937;¹⁹

Probably private collection of Germain Seligmann (1893–1978), New York;²⁰

(Pierre F. Nesi, Beverly Hills, California, and later New York), on commission with him in 1941;²¹

G.H. A. Clowes, Indianapolis, in 1947;²²

The Clowes Fund, Indianapolis, from 1958–2017, and on long-term loan to the Indianapolis Museum of Art since 1971 (CI0027);

Given to the Indianapolis Museum of Art, now the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, in 2017.

Exhibitions

Palais National des Arts, Paris, 1937, *Chefs d'Oeuvre de l'Art Français*, no. 44;

John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis, 1950, *Holbein and His Contemporaries*, no. 48;

Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1951, *French Paintings 1100–1900*, no. 48;

John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis, 1959, *Paintings from the Collection of George Henry Alexander Clowes: A Memorial Exhibition*, no. 17;

The Art Gallery, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 1962, *A Lenten Exhibition*, no. 34;

Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, 1963, *Northern European Painting: The Clowes Fund Collection*, no. 3;

Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, NY, 1964, *Sixteenth Century Paintings from American Collections*, no. 7;

Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, 2019, *Life and Legacy: Portraits from the Clowes Collection*.

References

Chefs d'œuvre de l'art français, vol. 1: *Peintures*, exh. cat. with a preface by Georges Huisman (Paris: Éd. des Musée Nationaux, 1937), 82, no. 28 (reproduced);

Chefs d'œuvre de l'art français, exh. cat. (Paris: Palais National des Arts, 1937), 29, no. 44 (reproduced);

L'illustration, 4 December 1937 (reproduced);

René Huyghe, *La peinture française du XIVe au XVIIe siècle: Figures et portraits; Les Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art français à l'Exposition internationale de 1937* (Paris: Librairie des arts décoratifs, 1937), pl. 18A;

Jacques Baschet, *Pour une renaissance de la peinture française* (Paris: Éditions S.N.E.P.—Illustration, 1946), 14 (reproduced);

R. O. Parks, *Holbein and His Contemporaries*, exh. cat. (Indianapolis: John Herron Art Museum, 1950), no. 48 (reproduced);

Charles Sterling, *French Painting 1100–1900, Department of Fine Arts, Carnegie Institute*, exh. cat. (Pittsburgh: Department of Fine Arts, Carnegie Institute of Art, 1951), no. 48;

Germain Seligman, *Oh, Fickle Taste, or Objectivity in Art* (New York: Bond Wheelwright, 1952), 119, 121, fig. 55 (reproduced);

David G. Carter, *Paintings from the Collection of George Henry Alexander Clowes: A Memorial Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Indianapolis: John Herron Art Museum, 1959), no. 17 (reproduced);

A Lenten Exhibition Loaned by the Clowes Fund, Inc., of Indianapolis (Notre Dame, IN: The Art Gallery, University of Notre Dame, 1962), no. 34;

Northern European Painting: The Clowes Fund Collection, exh. cat. (Bloomington: Indiana University Museum of Art, 1963), no. 5;

Sixteenth Century Paintings from American Collections, exh. cat. (Poughkeepsie, NY: Vassar College Art Gallery, 1964), no. 7.

Mark Roskill, "Clowes Collection Catalogue" (unpublished typed manuscript, IMA Clowes Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN, 1968);

A. Ian Fraser, *A Catalogue of the Clowes Collection* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1973), 146–147;

Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de la Haye, dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 116, no. 13B (reproduced).

Technical Notes and Condition

The support is constructed from a single wooden panel with the grain horizontally aligned. Attached to the back of this is a second wooden panel, to which a cradle is affixed. This comprises five fixed horizontal and three sliding vertical members. Measurements with the cradle are 5-5/16 × 4-9/16 × 9/16 in. (13.5 × 11.6 × 1.5 cm). These dimensions include edge strips that were attached to all four sides. It is not known when these were added, but the wood is of a similar grain to the panel. The presence of these strips suggests the possibility that the panel was trimmed.

The ground appears to be a single layer of thin chalk and glue ground, and infrared reflectography shows evidence of underdrawing. According to X-radiography, past damage was sustained from major splitting in two areas along the wood grain, as well as insect damage that has caused some losses. These were treated with a lead-based fill material, and overpaint covers some areas of paint loss. The dating of previous treatment is not known; however, the presence of zinc indicates a date after 1834.

Notes

1. The identification was first proposed when the painting was in the collection of the art dealer Jacques Seligmann and exhibited in Paris in 1937; see *Chefs d'œuvre de l'art français*, vol. 1: *Peintures*, exh. cat. with a preface by Georges Huisman (Paris, 1937), 82, no. 28.
2. Mark Roskill, "Clowes Collection Catalogue" (unpublished typed manuscript, IMA Clowes Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN, 1968). See also Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 115–116, no. 13–13B. Provenance of the Edinburgh painting is linked to the Gaignières collection, as indicated by the mark of Colbert de Torcy on the back of the panel. It was given to the museum by E. Peter Jones in 1950. There were several portraits of Marie de Guise documented in the Gaignières collection, including the Clowes version; however, the back of the Clowes version has since been cradled and bears no marks. On the Edinburgh version, see "Corneille de Lyon, *Mary of Guise, 1515–1560, Queen of James V*," accessed 3 March 2022, <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/3214/1402/mary-guise-1515-1560-queen-james-v>. On the Versailles version, see Claire Constans, *Les peintures: Musée National du Château de Versailles* (Paris: Ed. de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1995), 2:985, no. 5527. This painting entered the museum's collection in 1833 during the reign of King Louis-Philippe (1773–1850). Although the catalogue entry indicates that it is a copy of the Edinburgh version, the sitter has not been identified and the work is titled *Inconnue*.
3. A. Ian Fraser, 8 September 1972, File C10027, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.
4. The known portraits of Diane de Poitiers include drawings by Jean Clouet housed in Chantilly (Musée Condé, Inv. MN 201, 273, and 274, dated between 1525 and 1540), and an enamel by Leonard Limousin (about 1505—about 1575). See also the letter from Germain Seligmann to Pierre F. Nesi, 28 March 1941, Clowes Registration Files, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields. On the drawings, see Alexandra Zvereva, *Portraits dessinés de la cour des Valois: Les Clouet de Catherine de Médicis* (Paris: Arthena, 2011), 268–269, nos. 172–174.

5. School of Jean or François Clouet, *Portrait of a Woman (Diane de Poitiers?)*, about 1540, Musée Condé, Chantilly, inv. MN 339 (without inscription). Raoul de Broglie, "Les Clouet de Chantilly: Catalogue illustré," *Gazette des beaux-arts* 77 (1971): 257–336, 327, no. 330, as "unidentified." Alexandra Zvereva, *Portraits dessinés de la cour des Valois: Les Clouet de Catherine de Médicis* (Paris: Arthena, 2011), 357, nos. 379–380 (MN 202, 203) lists two portraits that show Diane de Poitiers at about the same age as in MN 339, and are dated to about 1555. For William Suida's assessment of this portrait, see William Suida, undated, File C10027, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.
6. For a thorough description of his working techniques, see Peter Mellen, *Jean Clouet: Complete Edition of the Drawings, Miniatures, and Paintings* (London: Phaidon, 1971). Also see Alexandra Zvereva, *Portraits dessinés de la cour des Valois: Les Clouet de Catherine de Médicis* (Paris: Arthena, 2011) on the drawings kept in Chantilly.
7. Circle/School of François Clouet, *Portrait of Marie de Lorraine, Queen of Scotland, 1522–1572*, 30.2 × 22.4 cm, British Museum, London, Gg, 1.420. Inscription: Numbered "26" and titled "La mere de la Royne descose/de la mesan de guise." Also see Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 115. A copy of this drawing is in Fécamp, Musée des Arts et de l'Enfance, FEC. 31 (33.7 × 21.9 cm). See Xavier Salmon and Philippe Malgouyres, *Catalogue raisonné des dessins anciens du Musée Centre-des-Arts de Fécamp* (Fécamp: Musée-centre des arts, 1994), 82–83, no. 27.
8. Arthur B. Chamberlain, *Hans Holbein the Younger* (London: G. Allen & Co., 1913), 2:139–140.
9. In 1537/38, King Henry II sent a representative to France to meet with Marie de Guise for negotiations and probably also to obtain her portrait on this occasion. This led the historian Arthur Chamberlain to speculate as to whether Holbein may have been charged to paint her portrait, since he was sent to Le Havre and Joinville, France, the same year and painted the portrait of Marie's younger sister Louise de Guise. Arthur B. Chamberlain, *Hans Holbein the Younger* (London: G. Allen & Co., 1913), 2:142–155, especially 143–144.
10. Biographical information is based upon Rosalind K. Marshall, "Mary of Guise," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 36 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 71–77, with complete bibliography.
11. The four versions are listed as follows in Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 115–16, nos. 13–13C. No. 13, *Marie de Lorraine*, 15.3 × 12.7 cm, The National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, Inv. 1558; no. 13A, *Marie de Lorraine*, 16 × 13 cm, Musée national du château, Versailles, MV 3148; no. 13B, *Marie de Lorraine* [sic], 14 × 10.5 cm [sic], The Clowes Collection, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, Indianapolis, C10027; no. 13C, *Marie de Lorraine*, 13 × 11 cm, Collection of the Duke of Buccleugh (A fourth, sold in Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 4–5 February 1954, no. 85 is incorrectly identified as no. 13C among the replicas on p. 115).
12. Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 115.
13. Edinburgh: 15.3 × 12.7 cm; Versailles: 16 × 13 cm. For technical analysis of the Clowes painting, see the [Technical Examination Report](#).
14. Dubois de Groër suggests the possibility that Corneille de Lyon worked without preparatory drawings; however, she acknowledged that this practice only starts to occur in the seventeenth century. See Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 40. Also see Cécile Scaillièrez, "Des petits portraits au naturel, qu'on nomme cornilla," in Ludmila Virassamynäiken, ed., *Arts et Humanisme: Lyon Renaissance* (Lyon: Musée des Beaux-Arts/Paris: Somogy, 2015), 149, who has also suggested that Corneille de Lyon worked without preparatory designs and copied the versions more or less exactly.
15. Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), 40–41. See also Cécile Scaillièrez, "Des petits portraits au naturel, qu'on nomme cornilla," in Ludmila Virassamynäiken, ed., *Arts et Humanisme: Lyon Renaissance* (Lyon: Musée des Beaux-Arts/Paris: Somogy, 2015), 150–151.
16. The inventory of the Gaignières collection, made in 1711, was first published by Charles Loizeau de Grandmaison, "Charles Gaignières, ses correspondants et ses collections de portraits [troisième article]. Appendice" in *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, 53 (1892), 5–76, and contains several portraits of Marie de Guise ("Marie de Lorraine"). Dubois de Groër's catalogue raisonné lists four versions of this portrait; see Anne Dubois de Groër, *Corneille de La Haye, dit Corneille de Lyon (1500/1510–1575)* (Paris: Arthena, 1996), nos. 13–13C. The Clowes version, no. 13B, is supported by a modern cradle, with no trace of the red wax seal of Colbert de Torcy.
17. *The Hamilton Palace Collection*, sale cat., Christie's, London, 15 July 1882, no. 1653 as "Lady of the time of Francis I, by Janet."
18. The catalogue of the 15 July 1882 auction notes that "J. Nosedá" purchased no. 1653, as well as other portraits of royalty in this sale. This is likely to be a reference to Jane Nosedá (1813/14–1894) who was primarily a print dealer. On the Nosedá family of dealers, see Mark Westgarth, "A Biographical Dictionary of Nineteenth Century Antique and Curiosity Dealers" in *Regional Furniture: The Journal of the Regional Furniture Society*, 23 (2009), 143–4.
19. Jacques Seligmann et Fils, Paris, is listed as the owner in *Chefs d'Oeuvres de l'Art français*, exh. cat. (Paris: Palais National des Arts, 1937), no. 44.
20. See Letter from Nesi to G.H.A. Clowes, 8 May 1947, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, and File G.H. A. Clowes [sic], Box 180, Folder 6, Jacques Seligmann & Co. Records, Archives of American Art.
21. See Letter from Seligmann to Nesi, 28 March 1941, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.
22. See Bill of sale from Nesi to G.H.A. Clowes, 16 January 1947, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.