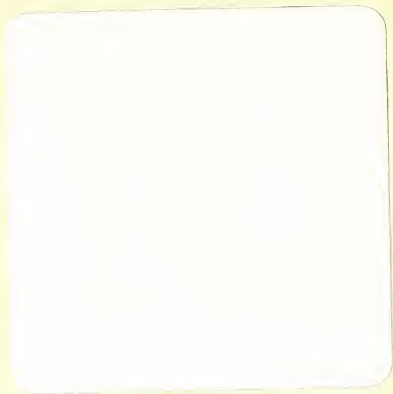




Apparently very rare.
I never saw it treated and
never saw another copy.

The dog jumps with much
like *Prunella* ^{de Hb.}
like *Palustris*

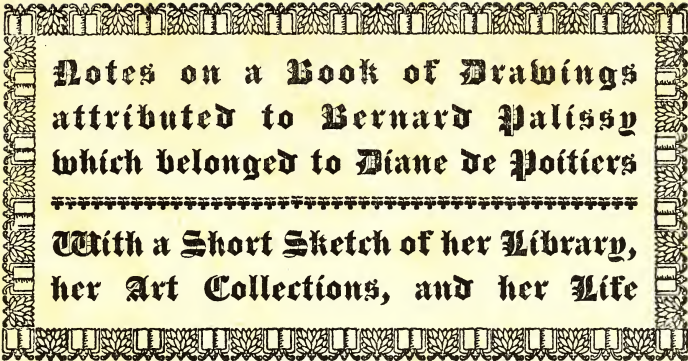


Ulrich Middeldorf

NOTES ON A BOOK OF
DRAWINGS ATTRIBUTED
TO BERNARD PALISSY
WHICH BELONGED TO
DIANE DE POITIERS

WITH A

SHORT SKETCH OF HER
LIBRARY, HER ART COL-
LECTIONS, AND HER LIFE



Notes on a Book of Drawings
attributed to Bernard Palissy
which belonged to Diane de Poitiers

With a Short Sketch of her Library,
her Art Collections, and her Life



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NOTES ON A BOOK OF DRAWINGS
ATTRIBUTED TO BERNARD PALISSY
WHICH BELONGED TO DIANE DE
POITIERS.

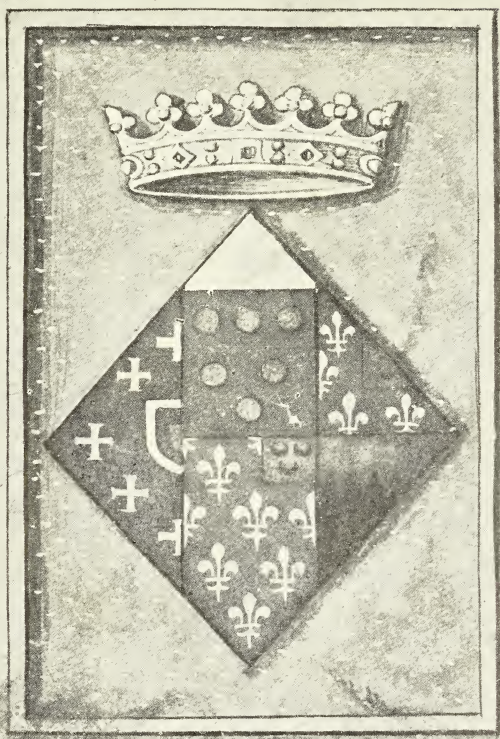
WITH A SHORT SKETCH OF HER
LIBRARY, HER ART COLLECTIONS,
AND HER LIFE.

AMONGST the great ladies who have formed libraries, one of the most eminent was Diane de Poitiers, and no books are more sought after at the present day than the volumes which were once in her possession, or those far rarer ones which bear her arms.

She was a patroness of the Arts at the best period of the French Renaissance, and employed as far as possible artists who were French, in opposition to Catherine de Médicis, who favoured her Italian countrymen. Her taste for the Fine Arts was refined, and her library, though small, was one of the most magnificent ever brought together. Practi-

cally the whole of her Collection was, more by accident than design, saved for her own country, and the very few volumes which passed from France have been gradually absorbed into National Museums. It is now an extraordinarily rare occurrence to find an example of her Library even in the most notable private Collection.

The present exquisite little volume is a unique and personal relic of Diane de Poitiers. It is a small quarto, about 5½ in. by 4 in., and contains thirty-six leaves of blue paper. The first leaf is blank, except for an outline ruled border. On the recto of the second leaf is the full armorial shield of Diane de Poitiers emblazoned in colours upon a gilt dotted background. The shield is a lozenge-shaped one of a widow, and the quarterings are as follows: 1. Azure, within an orle of eight crosses or an inescutcheon argent within an orle of the second (Brézé). Impaling, quarterly, 1. Azure, six bezants, three, two and one, a chief or (Saint Vallier). 2 and 3. Azure, semée of fleur-de-lys or, on a quarter argent three crescents gules, one and two (a Royal augmentation). 4. Argent, four piles issuant from the base sable (Ruffo).



The presence of these last arms upon the shield is accounted for thus. In 1414 a certain Nicolas Ruffo, Marquis of Contron, in Italy, was despoiled of his possessions and forced to flee the country for having espoused the cause of Louis d'Anjou. Taking refuge in France, he married Marguerite de Poitiers, daughter of Louis de Poitiers. This latter, from being his father-in-law, became also his son-in-law by marrying Polixene Ruffo, the Marquis's daughter. As Nicolas Ruffo died without heirs, his arms, titles, and eventual rights in regard to his property passed to the family of Poitiers. The Royal augmentation is a combination of Henri II's arms and Diane's crescents.

It is noticeable that the shield as here illuminated differs slightly from Diane's usual one in having the augmentation in the second and third quarters. (In the one generally found this coat is in the second only, the Ruffo coat in the third, and the Saint-Vallier repeated in the fourth.) Over the shield is Diane's gold coronet, with the various gems painted in colour.

On the recto of the second leaf is a drawing of the goddess Diana. She is clothed in a flowing robe open at the thigh, and carries a

bow in the right hand and an arrow in the left. At her feet are two dogs.

The remaining thirty-two leaves contain sixty-five exquisite drawings attributed to Bernard Palissy, for vases, dishes, bowls, urns, lamps, ewers, candlesticks, etc., boldly drawn and shaded, and the effects heightened with Chinese white and colours, each design being enclosed in a frame made with a broad band of gilding. There can be but little doubt that the present volume is the pattern-book sent by Palissy to Diane when she was preparing the decorations of the Château d'Anet, in which she was so greatly absorbed.

The binding of the volume (probably by Étienne Roffet) is of black morocco, tooled in the Grolier manner. The centre panel is enclosed in a very elaborate geometrical framework formed of interlacing strapwork. The interior space is filled with simple curved foliate tools, engraved in outline only, and another outline formal tool is stamped at each corner. Some of the spaces between the strapwork are relieved with dots.

The volume contains inscriptions of later owners. One runs, "ex libri Claudii Fay, A," and the family of Fay d'Espeisses was



noted for a fine Library collected and preserved by many generations. The volume belonged to a member of this family, and the *A* denotes the source from which it was derived—the Château d'Anet.

The Library which Diane brought together at the Château d'Anet was a small but splendid one, both as regards the books themselves and also for their bindings. There is, however, considerable doubt as to the books which were actually bound for her.

But there can be no doubt whatever regarding the very few which, like the present volume of Drawings, bear her arms as Duchesse de Valentinois.

The case is different, however, as regards those which simply bear her emblems, or the monogram of herself and her Royal lover. About this monogram there has been considerable controversy, some writers suggesting that it was not intended as H.D., but as H.C. for Henri and Catherine. Usually, however, the Queen used a crowned K as an initial, and when the rare monogram H.C. occurs, it is quite distinct from the monogram H.D., as the ends of the C distinctly overlap the side-strokes of the H. The H.D. monogram occurs on those books which belonged to Diane, and remained in the Library of Anet until its final dispersal; but it also seems certain that the volumes on which it is found were not really bound for her. We know that Henri when he first came

under the influence of Diane de Poitiers, about 1530, adopted her emblems and initial, and wore them with ostentation. The monogram is found on all the buildings erected for the King, and on many objects and ornaments made for himself. Thus we find the monogram, the bow, the crescents, and other emblems on books bound for him; and though many of them doubtless found their way into the hands of his Mistress, they were not specially bound for her, and the description usually applied to them, "bound for Henri II and Diane de Poitiers," is very misleading and not accurate. Some of the most valuable books given to Diane by Henri were volumes which had formed part of the old Royal collections. For example, the magnificent "Bible Ystoriaux" of Guyart des Moulins, given to King John, who had placed upon it the inscription "A moi Jehan roy," passed into the famous library of his son the Duc de Berri, and from his into the ancient library of the French Kings in the Louvre. This was given by Henri to Diane, and from him she also obtained the manuscript of the translation of part of Livy by Pierre Bercheux, Prior of Saint-Éloi at Paris, in a binding with a medallion of Charles de Bourbon, its original owner in the time of

Louis XII, and with eight metal bosses containing his monogram. When in 1555 Denis Sauvage published his translation of the Histories of Paulus Jovius in two volumes at Lyons, he at once had a special copy bound for presentation to the King with a portrait medallion in gold at each corner with the motto "Ex voto publico." This volume, also, the King handed over for the Library at Anet, where it remained until the dispersal in the eighteenth century, when it was purchased, with the two others mentioned above, by M. de Sardièris.

During the reign of Henri II French binding reached its greatest perfection. The Artists who bound the Royal volumes which have come down to us owed much to the work of the Italians; but, while they did not servilely copy, they utilized the designs with improvements of their own. Italian bindings were tending to become over-ornamented; the French binders reverted to an earlier simplicity. Those of this class have the sides ornamented with a panel, either of gilt and plain lines mixed, or with a band of interlaced ropework between fillets. In the centre is a stamp of the Royal arms of France crowned and surrounded with the collar of the Order of

St. Michael, all within a framework of four of Diane's bows joined together at the ends. Here and there the H.D. monogram and the cluster of crescents is stamped, while a lightness is added by the addition of a few gilt fleurs-de-lis. These bindings in their simplicity are reminiscent of some of the graceful work done for Grolier by Aldus's bookbinders.

Another style, also Italian in origin, was well represented in Henri II's library. In this the side was decorated with an elaborate geometrical design carried out with interlacing strapwork, which was often painted or enamelled in different colours, while the effect was heightened by filling some of the intervening spaces with gold dots.

Some of the bindings are also found ornamented in what is known as the Lyonnese style. The main decoration was interlaced strapwork, but entwined with it are delicate sprays with outline leaves, which give the whole a light effect. A few bindings were also made for Henri II which bear his portrait in profile stamped as a cameo, while the rest of the cover is heavily dotted with gold.

Though various styles are represented at this period, one point is noticeable in all. In spite of the lavish decoration of some of the

volumes, the tools used were simple. The designs were worked out with lines and curves, and, with the exceptions of the monograms and emblems, few engraved tools were used. The reserve and simplicity of many of the bindings are as remarkable as their fine effect, an effect due to an artist who could work out elaborate designs by simple means and was not dependent on engraved ornaments to relieve the weakness of his invention or execution.

The Royal binders at this period were Étienne Roffet and Claude Piques. Jehan Roucault and Jehan Louvet were the most celebrated gilders, and though they worked upon leather, it is not known if they actually executed bindings. Geoffrey Tory, a clever draughtsman, both bound books and designed the ornament on his work.

A very careful examination of the existing records of her Library proves that only the following eighteen books were certainly bound for Diane :—

1. La Bible en Francoys, 1545. (*Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève.*)
2. Psalmi Davidici, 1547. (*Château de Chantilly.*)

3. Chants Royaux. Manuscript. (*Royal Library, Copenhagen.*)
4. Pourquoi l'on dit chaque Jour. Manuscript. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)
5. Orationes Basili, 1556. (*City of Reims.*)
6. Hippolyti Salviani. 1557. (*City of Poitiers.*)
7. Oeuvres d'Ange Politien. (*City of Bordeaux.*)
8. Discours sur les Sibylles, 1558. (*City of Bordeaux.*)
9. Les Folles Entreprises. (*Château de Chantilly.*)
10. Oronte Gigante, 1531. (*Turner Collection, 1878.*)
11. Histoire des Deux Amantz. Manuscript. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)
12. Geographice Enarrationis, 1541. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)
13. Histoire de la Destruction de Troye. Manuscript. (*Hermitage Library, Petrograd.*)
14. Vies de Huit Personages. Manuscript. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)
15. Histoire des Ducs de Milan, 1549. (*Riva Library, Milan.*)
16. Livres de la Boscachardine. (*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

17. Terrier du Marquisat de Breval. Manuscript. (*Firman-Didot Collection.*)
18. THE PRESENT VOLUME OF DRAWINGS BY BERNARD PALISSY. (*Fay Collection.*)

Diane de Poitiers, born on the third of September 1499, was the eldest daughter of Jean de Poitiers and his wife Jeanne de Baternay. She spent her childhood at her father's château at Saint-Vallier, and when only six years of age accompanied him on horseback on his hunting and hawking expeditions. The open-air life, and a fondness for cold water, rare in those days, perfected the natural beauty of the girl, and when she was ten years old she was betrothed to Louis de Brézé, Comte de Maulevrier and Grand Seneschal de Normandie. He was a grandson of Charles VIII, for his mother was the daughter of Agnes Sorel, that King's mistress.

The marriage took place in 1515, and though the bridegroom was ugly, deformed, and thirty years older than the bride, he was a wealthy and powerful noble, and the marriage seems to have been a happy one. Diane bore her husband two daughters, and for nine years lived an uneventful life, appearing at Court as one of the ladies of the King's mother, Louise de Savoie, Comtesse d'Angoulême.

In 1523 the conspiracy of Charles de Bourbon against François I was exposed through the agency of Louis de Brézé, but unfortunately amongst those implicated in the plot was

Jean de Poitiers, Diane's father. Condemned to death, his sentence was at the last moment commuted to one hardly preferable—confinement for life in a small room with only one window, through which his food and drink might be passed to him. This change from an immediate to a living death was only granted in answer to the fervent intercessions of Diane and her husband, and of the King's wife Claude, amongst whose ladies Diane was then numbered. It has often been alleged that François I took advantage of this occurrence to make Diane his mistress, but there is no authority for this assertion. Louis de Brézé died in 1531, and his widow changed her colours from green and white to black and white. After the death of her husband, to whom she had been a devoted wife, her romantic and best-known story commenced, which joined her life with that of Henri II. When almost a boy he had formed a devoted attachment to her. At a Tournament in 1530 his lance had been broken in her honour, and as she was then thirty-one years of age, while the Prince was but fifteen, many strange stories were circulated to account for his infatuation for one so much older than himself. The attachment remained unbroken throughout his life,

a memorial of his constancy and Diane's charm.

As Dauphin he and his household adopted her colours of black and white, and on his doublet he wore the interlaced initials D and H, and the golden crescents, to show his devotion to the widow. As a recent writer remarks, "there is a certain irony in the princely lover wearing the colours of his mistress mourning for her husband."

In 1549 François I died, and Diane de Poitiers arrived at Saint-Germain, the acknowledged mistress of the new King. Her position was one of peculiar interest, and one which is almost incomprehensible to the modern view. It must be remembered that, apart from her personal beauty, she had great intellectual accomplishments and a refined and catholic taste in art, and above all a powerful mind and strong character. Henri II shared her love for the arts, but his will was weak, and he was easily swayed by the tactful woman who concealed her power under a velvet glove, did everything which she thought could please him, and was able to enter fully into his country sports and other amusements. She ruled the Court and the King's household, and indeed was virtual Queen of France, while the

lawful wife, Catherine de Médicis, lived in comparative obscurity. The Queen, though young, for she was not eighteen at the time of her marriage, had been trained to maintain great control over her feelings and actions, and, whatever she may have felt, exhibited no anger or resentment against the favourite, and even pretended to make a friend of her. The whole management of the Royal household appears to have been left in her capable hands. She looked after the Royal children, and consulted with Monsieur de Huymières, their governor, as to their welfare and upbringing. She communicated the King's wishes for all the movements of his family from one Royal residence to another, superintended the appointments of servants, and consulted the physicians if the children were ill. At the same time she had to employ all her skill in keeping Henri to her side and preparing changes of amusements and employments to keep him interested. But with all her charm she kept her own objects in view. She was rapacious rather than ambitious; she concerned herself little with government, devoting her energies chiefly to augmenting her income and providing for her family and friends. Everything depended on her hold over the King.

For thirteen years Diane had reigned supreme in France, but in 1559 her fortunes were eclipsed and her triumphant career ended. In June of that year the double marriage took place of Henri's daughter Elizabeth with Philip the Second of Spain, the widower of Mary Tudor, Queen of England, and of Margaret, daughter of François I, with the Duke of Savoy. As was the custom of the time, the event was celebrated with a grand Tournament, held on three consecutive days. It is said that Henri's death was foretold by the astrologers, and that the superstitious Queen Catherine de Médicis had entreated him not to enter the lists. He paid no heed to such warnings, and his successes on the first two days seemed to prove them groundless. The third day was one of unusual splendour, and amongst the other assembled princes and nobles sat the youthful Mary Queen of Scots, and her husband the Dauphin François. All had gone well with the King until the close of the day, when, for a final contest, he challenged Gabriel de Montgomery, Count de Loches, a captain of the Scottish Guard. By an unfortunate accident, on re-crossing the arena after the first charge, the broken shaft of Montgomery's lance pierced

the King's visor and inflicted a serious wound. Then came the Queen's opportunity. For years she had had to give place to the favourite, but now she exercised her rights as Queen and took her place by her husband's side. For eleven days the King lingered, and though Diane pleaded for one visit to the dying man, Catherine sternly refused it, and ordered her to retire to her own residence. The end was foreshadowed when the Queen issued an order commanding her to restore all such jewels in her possession as belonged to the Crown, and to quit Paris immediately. In reply to her inquiry as to whether the King was dead, she was told that he could not last out the day. Then she sent back her last proud answer to the Queen, saying that while a spark of life remained in the King she had no other ruler, and had no fear of her enemies, and that on his death her grief would be too deep to allow her to feel the insults that might be offered her. After Henri's death Catherine deprived Diane of much of her property and wealth, but the Château d'Anet, standing on land which had belonged to the Brézé family for generations, still remained her own, and there she retired. The remaining years of her life

were spent in seclusion, far removed from the amusements or troubles of the Court. Occasionally she received visits from Diane de France, her unacknowledged daughter by Henri, or from the Duchesse d'Aumale, her daughter, and the heiress of Louis de Brézé. She visited and relieved the poor, and attended services in her private Chapel, and in 1566 died and was buried in the magnificent Château which had been the scene of her greatest happiness.

The Château d'Anet, when it passed in 1444 into the possession of the family of Brézé, was a partly ruined fortress to which, during succeeding years, miscellaneous additions were made. When Diane de Poitiers came into possession, after the death of Louis de Brézé, she made large additions to the property, and demolished a considerable part of the irregular buildings. So modest a residence was not suitable, however, for a woman of such power and importance, so in 1548 the new Château d'Anet, destined to be one of the most magnificent palaces in France, was begun. It was a *chef-d'œuvre* of the French Renaissance, and unique in its decoration.

On the one hand, the owner wished to be recognized as the sorrowing widow of Louis de Brézé, on the other as the ruling power in France and the mistress of Henry II. In memory of the former, black marble entered largely into the scheme of decoration, while the initials of the latter were scattered profusely all over the work.

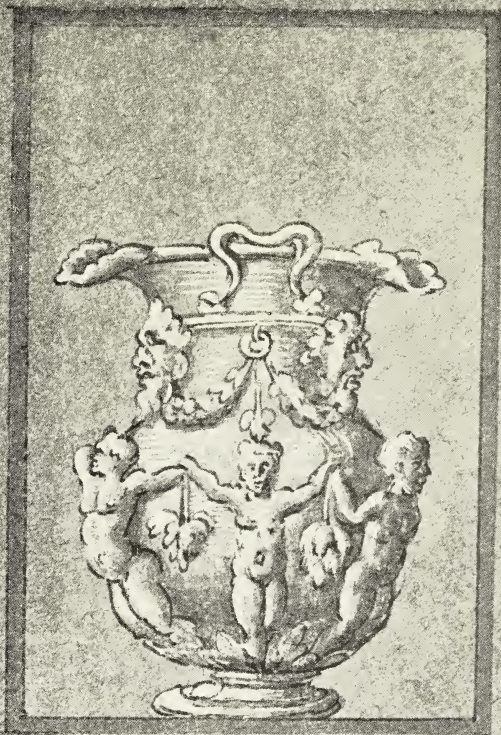
The building and decoration were entrusted as far as possible to French workmen rather than to the Italians, who were then, under the Queen's patronage, flocking to France. Philibert de l'Orme was chosen as architect.

This celebrated Master of the Renaissance style was a native of Lyons, but studied in his youth in Italy. Returning to France, he was patronized by Cardinal du Bellay, and was soon after employed at Paris. Appointed in 1545 architect to François I, he worked for a time in Brittany, and under Henry II supervised the work at Fontainebleau, Saint-Germain, and other Royal palaces. Anet was, however, his masterpiece ; and the plans have been preserved in Cerceau's "Plus excellens bastimens de France." The exact dates of the beginning and ending of the work are not known, but it was begun about 1548 and finished before 1560. In that year de l'Orme fell into disgrace with the Court, for Catherine, in her hour of victory, was annoyed with him for the pains spent on the Château of her rival. In excuse he protested : "What I did at Anet, where there are so many beautiful things, was done at the command of the late King, who was even more anxious to know what was being done there than at his own Château, and was annoyed with me when I was not there often enough. Besides, it was all done for the King."

Jean Goujon, a protégé of Diane's, enriched the buildings with statues, bas-reliefs,

balustrades, doorways, mantelpieces. He was a famous Sculptor who was employed on most of the important erections of his time. Unfortunately, during the vicissitudes which Anet has undergone, a great deal of his work disappeared or was destroyed, but his wonderful fountain of Diane with the Stag is now preserved in the Louvre, the portico of Anet is now at the École des Beaux-Arts, and his bust of Diane is at Versailles. The decorations of the chapel of Anet are still remaining there.

Bernard Palissy designed most of the pottery and ornaments used at Anet. For many years he had worked with the utmost diligence and constancy and a never-ceasing struggle against starvation to discover the secret of certain glazed pottery or porcelain. Though not entirely successful, he produced a superior class of native pottery decorated with modelled or applied reliefs coloured in imitation of nature. He secured the patronage of the Connétable de Montmorenci in 1548, who employed him to produce coloured terra-cottas for the Château d'Écouen. Thenceforward his success was assured, and he worked for many of the leading persons of the kingdom. One of his plaques, depicting Diane seated on a stag







and surrounded by her hounds, was in the Fontaine and Spitzer collections.

The enamels were the work of Leonard and Pierre Limousin. The former was the more celebrated, and was one of a family of seven Limoges enamel painters. In 1530 he entered the service of François I, and retained his position under Henri II. For the latter he executed a number of portraits in enamel of Diane de Poitiers in various characters. In the Louvre is a famous panel, "La Chasse," depicting Henri II on a white horse, with Diane also on horseback behind him. The two brothers executed the twelve plaques of the Apostles for the chapel at Anet. These were designed about 1545 by Michel Rochetet, and were intended for François I, bearing his emblem of the salamander. They were only finished in the time of Henry II, in 1557. In the accounts of the King for that year is a note of the payment to Leonard Limousin for the twelve Apostles, ordered by the late King and delivered to Henri, "who had immediately presented them to a certain place which he did not wish to be there set down." These enamels, saved from the Republican destroyers of the Revolution, were given in 1802 to the church of Chartres.

The most celebrated of all goldsmiths, Benvenuto Cellini, is believed to have worked for Diane, and amongst other things which he produced or designed is the splendid crystal cup with the enamelled cover bearing the devices of Henri and Diane, now at Florence.



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At the death of Diane, the Château d'Anet passed to Claude de Lorraine Duc d'Aumale, through his wife Louise de Brézé, Diane's daughter. On his death in 1573 his widow gave the property to her son Charles de Lorraine, who married in 1576 his cousin Marie de Lorraine. This noble, having kept up Anet for many years with great splendour, became one of the most ardent supporters of the League, but was sentenced to death by the Parliament of Paris. The sentence was carried out upon his effigy while he himself escaped to Brussels, where he passed the remainder of his days. The Château d'Anet was doomed to destruction, but by the intercession of Henri IV it was saved. Among the exiled Duke's creditors was Marie de Luxembourg, Dowager Duchess of Lorraine and Duchesse de Mercoeur, and when his possessions were brought into liquidation she obtained the property at the price of four hundred thousand livres.

She took possession of Anet in 1615, and it passed into the possession of her only daughter, Françoise de Lorraine, the wealthiest heiress in France, who married César de Vendôme, the natural son of Henri IV and Gabrielle d'Estrées. These two possessed Anet for

nearly fifty years, the Duchesse de Vendôme dying in September 1667, and Duc César about six weeks later. Their eldest child, Louis de Vendôme, was the next owner, but he held the property for a very short time. By his marriage with Mlle. de Mancini he had two sons, Louis-Joseph and Philippe, but on his wife's death he presented the Château d'Anet to his eldest son and entered the Church. He became Cardinal Legate to Clement IX, and died in 1699. Under his son's rule the Château witnessed strange scenes. It was his favourite residence, and there, surrounded by a small circle of intimates of all classes used to his vagaries and vices, he passed much of his time in foolish excesses. At the same time he was a man of great talent and a noted military commander. In 1702, at the King's request, he went to Italy to take over the supreme command of the army. In May 1710 he married Mademoiselle d'Enghien, Marie Bourbon de Condé, daughter of Henri Jules de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, and Anne, Princess Palatine of Bavaria. Under the marriage contract he settled the estate of Anet on his wife. Shortly after his marriage he left for Spain, where he placed himself at the head of the army which

restored Philip V to his Capital, after the famous battle of Villa Viciosa on 10 December 1710—a victory due to the talent and bravery of the Duc de Vendôme. He died at Vanaroz in Valencia in 1712, and by Philip's order was buried with great pomp in the Escorial. His widow, the Duchesse de Vendôme, continued to inhabit the Château d'Anet until her death in 1718. She had begun negotiations for its sale to the Crown, but these came to nothing, and as she died childless the estate passed to the Princesse de Condé, who continued to reside at Anet until her death in 1723. For some time her possessions remained undivided amongst her heirs, but finally her Collections were widely dispersed.





397 Notes on a Book of Drawings attributed to Bernard Palissy which belonged to Diane de Poitiers. With a short sketch of her Library, her Art Collections, and her Life. 32 pp. text, 6 plates. 8vo. no p., n.d. (London ca. 1915). \$22.50

Four of the plates show designs by Palissy for ceramics, one the Grolier style binding of the book, and one Diane's coat of arms in the volume, one of the very few known to have been bound for the great patroness of the arts and ever having left the French Royal and national collections.

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