

Adolf van der Laan(c1684-c1755)

Seven drawings, brown ink and grey wash, all signed but nos. 6 and 7
Av. size: 135x185 mm.

In our opinion these drawings are to be closely associated and may belong to a larger group (compare the one at the Witt Coll. maybe belonging originally to this group), commissioned for the illustrations of a book on the Stuarts. It would be interesting ^{to know} if this book was published at the time.

The three drawings representing the Popes Innocent XIII and Benedict XIII could well be associated with the Stuarts because of their exile in Rome, where thanks to the Popes they found refuge, after being refused residence by most other Courts in Europe.

And more in detail:

1) Pope Innocent XIII (Michelangelo Conti - he was elected in the year 1721) is administered extreme unction, Cardinals and Bishops approaching. Pencil inscription in Dutch verso: 'On March 7, 1724 the Pope of the Romans Innocentius XIII died during the night at the age of 69 years'.

2) Pope Innocent XIII on the death bed, people around lamenting his death, possibly Prince James, the Old Pretender, amongst them.

3) The election on the 29th of May 1724 of Cardinal Orsini-Gravosa (1724-1730) - Benedict XIII - as Pope. Pencil inscription in Dutch verso: 'On May 29, 1724 Cardinal Vincenzo Maria Orsini, Neapolitan by birth, Bishop of Benevento, was elected to the Papacy in the name of Benedict XIII on the age of 75 years'.

4) The birth of Prince Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, on the 31st December 1720. Clementina Sobiesky, wife of the Old Pretender, in her bed, the King approaching and other people around. Please note the coat of arms of the Kings of Scotland on the fauteuil.

5) Same subject with the King sitting on a fauteuil and visitors approaching.

6) Same subject with other visitors approaching, Cardinals amongst them. This drawing may well depict instead the birth of the second son of the Old Pretender, Henry, later Cardinal York and the last of the Stuarts, born in Rome March 6th, 1725. On the subject of drawings N.4, 5 and 6 please compare Saint-Simon, Memoires, Hachette 1874, XVII p.208.

The interior of the Palace depicted in N.4, 5 and 6 should be Palazzo Muti-Papazzurri, now Balestra, in Rome, Piazza SS. Apostoli N.49, where the Stuarts lived while in exile in Rome.

7) This drawing may well represent the death of Mary of Modena, mother of the Old Pretender, on May 7th, 1718 in Saint-Germain. Please note the coat of arms- a crowned eagle - over the bed and over the fauteuil, which was the coat of arms of the House of Este.