

HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III
DRAGON BOAT IN FULL SAIL



Mixed Media Study of a Sailing Boat Numbered 'D 36'

Blue Ink and Coloured Crayons on Paper

Signed 'P. Charles' lower right.

13"high x 17" wide (Framed)

Presented in a Bespoke Contemporary "St. Ives" Style Oak Frame

Drawn by the then Prince Charles as a pupil at Cheam Preparatory School between 1957-1962 and gifted by him to Stella Jack, Head Matron at Cheam.

Provenance: Stella Jack, and by family descent

After spending his first eight years at Buckingham Palace, the Queen and Prince Philip sent their first born son to Hill House School in West London, making Prince Charles the first royal heir to be educated at a school.

After a brief time at Hill House School, 9 year old Prince Charles was enrolled at Cheam School, in Hampshire, in 1957. The same school where his father Prince Philip had been sent at the age of eight.

Founded in 1645, Cheam is one of Britain's oldest preparatory schools and includes a number of notable alumni, including Lord Randolph Churchill and Lord Milford Haven. At the time Cheam School was seen to have a progressive philosophy, moving away from the exclusive atmosphere of other private preparatory boarding schools.

When he arrived at Cheam, Charles was the Duke of Cornwall, however, during his years there, the Queen granted him the titles of Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.



Charles returning from Church at Cheam School, 1958 (Getty Images)



Cheam Preparatory School



Prince Charles at Cheam School, 1958 (Getty Images)

It seems most probable that the current work was drawn from the Prince's memory of his time sailing in "Bluebottle", his father, Prince Philip's Dragon Class boat.

"Bluebottle" was originally a wedding gift from members of the Island Sailing Club in Cowes to then Princess Elizabeth and Duke of Edinburgh. She was built in 1947 by Camper & Nicholsons in Gosport and the Duke raced her with family, including Prince Charles and Princess Anne.



*Boat Designer Uffa Fox and Prince Charles sailing yacht racing at Cowes In the "Bluebottle",
5 August 1957 (Getty Images)*

In 1956 Prince Philip became the President of the Royal Yachting Association, and had a longstanding affiliation with the International Dragon Class. "Bluebottle" was sailed by the Duke together with friend and renowned yachtsman Uffa Fox. A number of competitive crews put "Bluebottle" through her paces and in 1956 Graham Mann skippered her to Bronze at the Melbourne Olympics. Bluebottle remained 'The Royal Dragon' until 1962.

The Dragon is a single mast keelboat designed by Norwegian Johan Anker in 1928.



The Dragon class insignia

The Olympic Dragon Class was initiated in 1948 by the Royal Gothenburg Yacht Club, who gave Norwegian yacht designer Johan Anker a brief for an economic cruising/racing boat with about 20 square metres of sail area. The Olympic status was retained until the Munich Olympics in 1972.



Charles, Prince of Wales with his father the Duke of Edinburgh and crew members Uffa Fox, the Duke's Yachting adviser and Lieutenant-Commander Alistair Easton, Sailing Master of the yacht "Bluebottle", at Cowes, during their Dragon class race © PA Archive / PA Images



"Bluebottle" at Cowes, 1953

Photograph by Beken & Sons of Cowes

Beken of Cowes Marine Photographers are internationally renowned and popular with yachtsmen worldwide. Their classic vintage images are displayed in their Maritime Photography Gallery alongside modern and contemporary colour images of racing and cruising craft.



A 1953 press photo with the Duke of Edinburgh at the Helm of "Bluebottle"



The "Bluebottle" now lies outside the Greenwich Maritime Museum in Falmouth. Interesting to note that the colours of the hull are those which the young Prince depicted in his drawing.



On his first visit to Cowes, Prince Charles sailed in *Bluebottle*, with the Duke of Edinburgh at the helm for the 12-mile Dragon Class race. Mr. Uffa Fox, the Duke's yachting adviser, and Lieut.-Commander Alistair Easton, RN, sailing master of *Bluebottle*, acted as crew in the race

Below: Last man aboard—Prince Charles jumps from the Royal barge to the yacht *Bluebottle*, which is owned jointly by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh



ROYAL YACHTSMEN

THERE was great excitement in Cowes on Monday of The Week, excitement that drew crowds from all over the island, for the day was unexpectedly doubly Royal, with two members of the Royal Family on *Britannia*—the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of Cornwall. But no one, surely, can have been more excited than the small boy who found his sea-legs and who attained the height of the ambition of every small boy to whom the sea calls by going for a trip aboard and taking the tiller of a racing yacht. For with his father, Prince Philip, and the Queen's Sailing Master and Uffa Fox, Prince Charles sailed for the first time in the 30-ft Royal Dragon yacht, *Bluebottle*

Article from *The Sketch*, 14 August 1957

Image © Illustrated London News Group. Image created courtesy of The British Library Board



Stella Jack, Head Matron, Cheam School



Prince Charles on first day at Cheam School

Stella Jack was born on 22nd November 1918, one of four children and attended Cheltenham Ladies School. After World War II Stella was appointed Head Matron at Cheam School in 1948. She retired in 1974 after 26 years' service and at the time was the longest serving and most famous of all Matrons at the school - because her predecessors had not stayed very long. Stella was the 'go to' person if any of the parents, of 80 boarding pupils, wanted to contact the school when dealing with their child's health and welfare. During Stella's time, the school was a 'Boys Only' school, and she knew all the boys personally, including Prince Charles who arrived at the school in 1957 and was there until 1962. Stella met members of the Royal Family on many occasions.

On the occasion of Stella's 90th birthday in 2008, Prince Charles sent her a bouquet of flowers and she remarked at the time how she felt very honoured to have cared for him as a child. In a related Bristol Post article titled 'Stella's birthday surprise from Prince Charles' dated Friday 28th November 2008 her brother recalled; "She was just so overwhelmed to receive the flowers and especially the handwritten note. She was honoured to have cared for him as a child and despite having worked at the school she would never divulge any stories. The only time she would talk about him is to say what a lovely young chap he was". When Stella passed away in 2010, Prince Charles wrote to the family expressing his deepest sympathy and recounted some of those occasions when Stella looked after him, including experiencing a bad time when suffering from chicken pox or measles. Stella was known to be strict but had a great sense of humour and was addressed affectionately by Prince Charles as "Dragon". It is possible that there was an element of humour in his gift when he gave her this drawing of a Dragon Boat.