A New Theory on the Origin of Two Paintings by Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675) of Delft

A search in the archives of Delft has revealed a location where Johannes Vermeer may be situated two of his paintings, today known as The Glass of Wine and The Lady with Two Gentlemen. A third painting, now known as Girl Interrupted in her Music, may also relate to this location. This place was not Vermeer's atelier, but a mansion outside Delft: the home of a wealthy gunpowder family who, according to the theory exposed here, commissioned these paintings, probably as wedding gifts for the heirs of the family business. This new theory has led also to new interpretations of other features in these paintings.

Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675) of Delft has been the subject of a flood of books and articles since his rediscovery as a superb painter in the late nineteenth century. In more recent years there has been much speculation about his possible use of a camera obscura in the process of composing his paintings.1 A few years ago, my colleague Marlise Rijks and I were able to prove that such a device was present in Delft at the time of Vermeer. The military engineer Johan van der Wyck made – and publicly demonstrated – such an optical device during his stay in Delft from 1654 to 1658.2 Van der Wyck's activity as optical instrument maker in Delft coincides exactly with the start of the career of Vermeer, who became a member of the St. Lukas guild in 1653. In 2001 Philip Steadman devoted a special study to Vermeer’s supposed use of such an optical device. According to him Vermeer’s paintings were all designed and made in his atelier in the centre of Delft. However, for at least two of Vermeer’s canvases, with estimated dates between the years 1659-1662, we present here a different possibility.

The first painting is called by its present owner, the Gemäldegalerie of the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, as Herr und Dame beim Wein. (Lady and Gentleman with Wine). However, in the English literature this painting is better known as The Glass of Wine. The other Vermeer painting from the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Brunswick is called Das Mädgen mit dem Weinglas (The Girl with a Wine Glass), also known as The Lady with Two Gentlemen (see figures 1a and 1b).3

1a. The Glass of Wine / Das Glas Wein – Oil on canvas, 65 x 77 cm, c. 1658-1661. (Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, inv. 912c).

1b. The Lady with Two Gentlemen / Das Mädgen mit dem Weinglas – Oil on canvas, 78 x 67 cm. c. 1659-1661 (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Brunswijk, inv. GG 316).

These two paintings are almost identical in size (only the length and width are interchanged). They depict similar scenes – a courtship – on a floor with identical
The Van Nederveen-De Vogel couple lived in the south-west corner of the Oude Delft and the Peper-Gulde Laken family at least until 1653. At some moment before 1600, and their home stayed in the same house for at least thirty years before he even was born? Neurdenburg guessed that the depicted window had been present in Vermeer’s studio, being a presumed former house of the Van Nederveen-De Vogel couple. In 1989 John Michael Montias convincingly showed that this couple never possessed Vermeer’s house, but had lived on the Oude Delft, the most prominent canal of the city. Later, in 1998, Montias suggested that Nederveen’s house at the Oude Delft might have been bought by Vermeer’s Maecenas Pieter Claesz van Ruijven (1624–1674). Montias had found that Ruijven had lived at the Oude Delft, in a house called De Gouden Adelaar (‘The Golden Eagle’). Perhaps Vermeer had adapted his paintings with the coat of arms to flatter Van Ruijven. However, this suggestion can be rejected too, because Delft’s digital Historic Geographic Information System (HGIS) reveals that Van Ruijven never lived in the Nederveen house. This house, called Het Gulde Laken (‘The golden cloth’), was located at the south-west corner of the Oude Delft and the Pepersteeg. The Van Nederveen-De Vogel couple lived there already in 1600, and their home stayed in the family at least until 1653. At some moment before 1657 the house was transported to the two widowed sisters Sara and Cornelia Croeser(s), who lived here at least until 1668. So, in the years of production of the two Vermeer paintings, Van Ruijven was never connected to this location. In 2008 the late Vermeer specialist Walter Liedtke, lacking any further explanation, presented as his opinion that the coat of arms in Vermeer’s paintings had only a symbolic meaning, referring to the general concept of “the respectable family.”

Liedtke’s view, however, disregards the vital meaning of heraldry in Dutch civil culture. If an identifiable escutcheon is used in a seventeenth century Dutch context, this certainly has a distinct connotation. The fact that in both paintings the window is opened, to present a better view on the coat of arms, substantiates the value that must be ascribed to it. Whether or not such a window ever existed in reality, in the painting its message is clear and not to be misunderstood: these features have something to do with the Nederveen-De Vogel couple! Therefore, with Nils Büttner, we ask: “this fact calls for an explanation” (2008). In line with Liedtke, Büttner seeks the solution in a general token of family tradition, or in an ambiguous sexual meaning of the Dutch verb “vogelen”. I, however, suggest a completely different meaning, following a road already designated by Montias, who in 1989 suggested that:

Vermeer may have seen the coat of arms elsewhere, perhaps in the house on the Oude Delft, where Van Nederveen and his wife once dwelled, and inserted it into the clear space framed by the oval-shaped mullions. This would be especially likely if one of Janetge Vogel’s descendents had been Vermeer’s patron. So I wondered: who might this descendant have been? And why is the same coat of arms used twice?

**Historical facts: A family history**

None of the authors discussing Vermeer refers to the fact that Moijses Jansz van Nederveen founded a very important business in Delft, which existed well into the eighteenth century. Moijses was a cruytmacker, a producer of gunpowder, which product he delivered to the Dutch army, as well as to the fleet. Seen from a military perspective, Delft was one of the most significant places in the Dutch Republic. In 1572 the States-General, the supreme political organ of the young Republic had selected Delft as their central place to
store their weaponry. A former Catholic chapel, sequestered by the government after the Reformation, was equipped as their military warehouse. This Generaliteits Magazijn stood along the Oude Delft, in the middle of the city. It was also the work location of the aforementioned optician Van der Wyck, in the four years that he was stationed in Delft as a military engineer. The provincial government, the States of Holland, followed the example of the federal government. For their military equipment a large arsenal was built at the end of the same canal in 1602.

Moijses van Nederveen was one of the four Delft producers of gunpowder. In 1593 he became a poorter (citizen) of Delft, stating that he came from the Frisian city of Franeker. In fact his origin was Brielle, a city 25 km south of Delft, where his father Jan van Nederveen already worked as a producer of gunpowder. So, it seems that Moijses was educated at the Franeker University, founded in 1585. It is well known that in the early years of that university alchemy (and therefore also regular chemistry) enjoyed great interest there.

Moijses continued his father’s business in Delft. In 1603 the city government granted Moijses permission to erect a kruitmolen (gunpowder mill) outside the walls, along the Buitenwatersloot, a canal that connected Delft to Maassluis. In this powder mill saltpeter (or potassium nitrate) was mixed with sulphur and charcoal to obtain the desired gunpowder. Today here still remains a bridge, called the Mosjesbrug, referring to Moijses van Nederveen as its original builder (Fig. 2). Together with his business companion Willem Willemisz van Linschoten, Nederveen delivered huge amounts of gunpowder to the States General and the Province of Holland, at least from 1598 onwards. It is estimated that in the first decade of the seventeenth century Nederveen and Linschoten were responsible for the delivery of approximately 60% of all the gunpowder used in the Dutch Republic. It is obvious that their business must have been very profitable, even after they experienced a severe setback in 1604, when their “kruitmolen” exploded.

After Moijses van Nederveen’s death in November 1624, the lucrative powder factory was continued by his son Johannes, together with Moijses’s son-in-law, Abraham Salomonsz van der Heul. These two business partners were double brothers in law: Johannes van Nederveen married Abraham’s sister Jacobmijntge van der Heul and Abraham van der Heul married Johannes’s sister Katrina van Nederveen. The Nederveen-Van der Heul couple took over the house ’t Gulde Laken at the Oude Delft (Fig. 3) and the Van der Heul-Van Nederveen couple settled in a house at the Delft Koornmarkt. In approximately 1648 the family also had access to a (probably newly built) mansion in front of the gunpowder factory (Fig. 4).
3. Moijses van Nederveen’s house at the (right) corner of the Oude Delft and the Pepersteeg. This house remained in the family at least until 1653. Detail of the *Kaart Figuratief* from 1677.

4. The Nederveen-Van der Heul family mansion at the *kruikmolen* in front of the *Mosjesbrug*, built ca. 1648. Detail of fig. 5.

5. Map of the gunpowder factory at the Buitenwatersloot, made in 1718 by the surveyor Leendert Swemkoop. The mansion (fig. 4) was situated slightly to the left above the compass rose, near the Mosjesbrug. (City archive Delft, 1.1, inv. nr. 544; TMS 123012)
Unfortunately, both Johannes van Nederveen and his wife Jacobmijntge van Nederveen died shortly after each other in the early 1650s. From their five children, only one under-aged daughter survived. Given the close family relationships, it is needless to say that this orphan now came under the custody of her double uncle and aunt, Abraham Salomonsz van der Heul and Katrina van Nederveen. This couple had already four children of their own. Essential for the family was the gunpowder factory, founded by Moijses van Nederveen during his marriage to Janetge de Vogel. In the years 1658–1663 (the estimated time of creation of the Vermeer paintings), this gunpowder factory (Fig. 5) was the only place in Delft where it made sense to commemorate their memory and where one could expect a window with the before-mentioned coat of arms.

**A first hypothesis:**

**Family weddings in the years 1658–1660**

The genealogy of the Van Nederveen-Van der Heul family (see the appendix) reveals that on 12 December 1658 the eldest son and intended successor of the gunpowder factory, Salomon van der Heul (22 years of age) married Rusge ’s Gravesande (23 years of age). This date fits remarkably well to the estimated date of production of Vermeer’s *Glass of Wine*: 1658-1661. So, could it be that this painting was meant as an engagement or wedding gift?

A next wedding in the Nederveen-Van der Heul family occurred on 10 November 1660: this time it concerned the orphan from the other branch of the family: Barbara van Nederveen (then 26 years of age). She married Johannes van der Slaert, a 34-years old widower and Calvinist minister at Katwijk on the Rhine.25 Barbara represented the other branch of the heirs to the gunpowder factory. She too was a grandchild of Moijses van Nederveen and Janetge de Vogel. So, to present her with a similar painting as her cousin Salomon would be a beau geste that would underscore in a beautiful way the origin of an otherwise already intertwined family. Moreover, such a gesture would be in line with a tradition of remembrance in the Nederveen family. For instance, in this family it was also remembered with great pride that they descended from a noble baby, who – like Moses in the Old Testament – was rescued in a wicker basket during the Great Elisabeth Flood of 1421. In 1635 Barbara’s father, the late Johan Moijses van Nederveen, had interviewed an old great-aunt about what she, in her youth, had heard about this event, which statement he had recorded in a notary document.26

In short, at first sight it seems plausible that The Lady with Two Gentlemen, the second painting with the family crest, was made for Barbara’s marriage. This canvas has indeed a somewhat later estimated date of production than the first. But if these two similar Vermeer paintings were wedding gifts, then they must have been commissioned by the wealthy gunpowder producer Abraham Salomonsz van der Heul and his wife Katrina van Nederveen. After all, they were the guardians of the children from each branch of the family. The mere fact that in due time the gunpowder factory would be handed over to these two branches explains both the presence of the Van Nederveen-De Vogel coat of arms in the Vermeer paintings, as well as their double usage.

**Further arguments: A female virtue in the window**

But there are more arguments for our hypothesis than just an appropriate genealogy. In the window, the holder of Janetge de Vogel’s coat of arms is a female figure (figs. 6a and 6b). Rudiger Klessmann identified her in 1978 as a representation of Temperantia, the virtue of moderation and self-control.27 Klessmann made this identification by comparing the female figure with an emblem in Gabriel Rollenhagen’s *Selectorum Emblematum* of 1613 (Fig. 7), arguing that the female figure has reins in her hands, which would express to the viewer the necessity to bridle oneself. The interpretation regarding the reins has been dismissed by Gregor Weber. He identified the curved wires in the woman’s hand as ribbons, used as an ornament to decorate the coat of arms.28 However, as Linda Freeman Bauer remarked “a close scrutiny of the window does not yield that certainty of identity [of the virtue Temperantia] that one would wish”.29 Indeed, already in 1907 Cornelis Hofstede de Groot has noted that the female virtue has neither reins nor ribbons, but rather snakes in her hand.30 When I investigated which virtue can be linked with snakes, Prudentia turned up, especially an engraving by Jacob Matham after a drawing of Hendrick Goltzius, which depiction closely resembles the female figure in Vermeer’s painted window (Fig. 8).31

As a rule Prudentia has two faces (as in Goltzius’s drawing), but in the Vermeer paintings the head of the virtue is too coarsely painted to distinguish this detail. In the given context, this new identification would make sense. In a gunpowder factory Prudentia – or prudence – is really an essential virtue! It makes you wonder whether Janetge de Vogel’s death in 1604
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6a & 6b. The open window in *The Glass of Wine*

7. The virtue *Temperantia* from Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Selectorum Emblematum* (1613).

6b. The open window in *The Lady with Two Gentlemen*

8. The virtue *Prudentia*. Engraving [in mirrored position] by Jacob Matham after Hendrick Goltzius (c. 1610)
perhaps was inflicted by the explosion of Nederveen’s gunpowder factory that very year! In that case the window would represent a warning to the next generation to act very cautiously with the family business. Moreover, in the 1660s everyone in Delft was aware of the dangers of gunpowder. In 1654 a huge explosion involving another gunpowder repository – an event called the “Delftse Donderslag” (“Delft Thunderclap”) – had destroyed a large part of the city.

In this context it is remarkable that half a century later, in the auction of the impressive collection of prints and drawings of Abraham Salomonsz II van der Heul (grandson of the assumed commissioner of the Vermeer paintings Abraham Salomonsz I van der Heul), several prints by Hendrick Goltzius were offered for sale. Could it be that part of this collection, which included “several beautiful prints” by various masters “such as Sadeler, Titiaan, Michel Angelo, Raphael, Goltzius [my italics], and the like”, was already brought together by Abraham senior? The presence of these prints at least proves that within the Van Nederveen-Van der Heul family a cultural awareness existed, in which such artistic expressions were appreciated.

Questions and guesses (1)

The Glass of Wine and The Lady with Two Gentlemen may undisputably be characterized as genre paintings. This was at the time a very fashionable way of painting, in which domestic scenes were shown in detail, often with moralistic and sometimes coded messages. Dutch painters of the seventeenth century have produced enormous numbers of genre paintings, regularly drawing inspiration from each other’s work.

It is accepted among art historians that Vermeer was strongly influenced by Pieter de Hooch, who worked in Delft as a painter between 1652 and 1660. According to Jan Kelch (1984) De Hooch “was one of the first Dutch genre painters to have created a ‘natural environment’ for his figures.” Vermeer entered the Delft St Luke’s guild in 1653, almost simultaneously with De Hooch. He will therefore have known De Hooch and his work rather well. Kelch therefore argues that Vermeer’s Glass of Wine and The Lady with Two Gentlemen “cannot be placed earlier than the first masterpieces by Pieter de Hooch”. Liedtke confirms this, writing in 2001:

De Hooch and Vermeer must have inspired each other in the late 1650s. [...] It appears that De Hooch was Vermeer’s main point of departure for the types of subject and composition found in The Glass of Wine and one or two other works.

Even the theme of courtship involving a glass of wine Vermeer seems to have derived from De Hooch. However, at the time this concept has also been used frequently by other painters, such as Gabriël Metsu (1629–1667), Quiringh van Brekelenkam (c.1622–c.1669), Gerard ter Borch the Younger (1617–1680), Frans van Mieris the Elder (1635–1681) and possibly also Ludolf de Jongh (1616–1679). But because the majority of their paintings is not dated, it is difficult to determine who exactly inspired who.

If it indeed was a habit to include in genre paintings hidden messages, could these references not be personalized? For example, by adding real elements, such as in our case the coat of arms of the family Van Nederveen? After all, De Hooch also has incorporated twice in a genre painting the still existing memorial stone of the Delft Hieronymuspoort. De Hooch lived on the site behind that gate from 1655 to 1660. There he also located a group portrait of the Delft reverend Volckerus ab Oosterwijk (1603–1675) and some relatives, standing at the courtyard of their house (‘the domineeeshuis’) in the former St Hieronymus convent. This canvas (now in the Gemäldegalerie der Bildende Künste in Vienna) has the year 1658 as estimated date of production. In this approach of the introduction of lifelike elements in a genre painting De Hooch was followed by others. Jan Steen, for instance, who resided in Delft in the years 1654-1657, included the Delft merchant Adolf Croeser and his daughter also in a genre-painting.

So, with his coat of arms Vermeer followed the footsteps of his colleagues. Now the question arises: did he incorporate more real elements in the canvases that are discussed here? For instance, the Brunswick Vermeer depicts as a ‘painting within a painting’, a portrait with a pleated collar and cuffs with lace, in the style of the Delft painter Michiel van Mierevelt (1566–1641) (see Fig. 9). In such a ‘painting in a painting’ usually the main theme of the setting was emphasized, or an opposite pole was represented. This practice makes interpretations difficult. Nevertheless, such an attempt sometimes yields surprising insights. According to Liedtke the sitter in The Lady with Two Gentlemen is a “sober figure, who hovers in the room like a parent, a chaperone, or a conscience”. A comparison with other Van Mierevelt paintings reveals that the
clothing of this person can be dated around 1625 (Fig. 10). When we recall that the founder of the gun powder factory, Moijjes van Nederveen, died in 1624, then the question arises whether this ‘painting within a painting’ could be his portrait. Barbara van Nederveen was the only surviving member of the family still carrying his surname. How could this be better emphasized than by Moijjes’ presence in this canvas, The Lady with Two Gentlemen?

Unfortunately, the ‘painting within a painting’ in the luxurious gilded frame on the back wall of The Glass of Wine cannot easily be interpreted. To begin with, it is hard to see what is depicted in that frame. During a visit to Berlin in 2014, I found it impossible to distinguish any details. The ‘painting within a painting’ is chiefly very dark. But in 1911 Eduard Pletzsch clearly recognized here a wooded landscape, according to him in the style of Allart van Everdingen. And indeed, on photographs one can clearly distinguish an Arcadian landscape, possibly even with a simple hut. Vermeer used a similar landscape in the background of The Concert (stolen and still missing from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum at Boston in 1990). Elise Goodman suspects that Vermeer deliberately made the landscape in The Glass of Wine so dark. She points out that all orthogonals in this canvas converge to this dark landscape. According to Goodman Vermeer has consciously emphasized in this composition the contrast between the darkness of the forest and the lightness of love. In her arguments in support of this idea she referred to some old Dutch songbooks, which would also underline that woman are a masterpiece of nature.

In this way, there are more elements to denote. For instance the question what to think about the characters depicted in the canvases? Could they be representations of the involved couples? Of course, these Vermeer paintings may not be compared with the formal portraits made earlier in the century, but, as we have pointed out, around the middle of the seventeenth century personalized genre paintings were indeed made. In both Vermeer paintings, for example, only one person is depicted in front view – and thus possibly with recognizable features. In The Glass of Wine this person is a man and in the The Lady with Two Gentlemen it concerns a female character. Could it be that in these paintings on the one hand the groom Salomon van der Heul is represented, and on the other hand the bride Barbara van Nederveen? (cf. figs. 11a & 11b). The facial features of the other subjects (possibly representing the bride Rusge’s Gravesande, respectively the groom Johannes van der Slaert) are not shown in a recognizable way.

More difficult to interpret is the mysterious third person in The Lady with Two Gentlemen: a sideways seated man in the background, who – leaning on his right arm – does not really participate in what happens elsewhere in the room (Fig. 12). So far, he has been interpreted as a melancholic, an alcoholic, or a rejected lover. The way in which he is depicted is indeed not exactly cheerful. If this painting is a wedding present, as I assume, why then include a person with such a
gloomy aura? In an earlier stage of my investigation I thought that person could represent Moses II van Nederveen, Barbara’s elderly brother, acting as unwilling chaperone during his sister’s courtship, deliberately looking aside. Would it not be a nice and teasing way of recalling this anecdote in a wedding gift? But then I learnt from the archives that Moses junior already died in 1649, at the age of nineteen. Nevertheless, although it is perfectly conceivable that this character refers to a personal anecdote, something more can be said about the way of rendering. The attitude of the man is in fact resembling that of the maid in Vermeer’s *A Woman Asleep*. At that time being asleep was synonymous with idleness or dereliction of your duties, one of the deadly sins. In *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* the man seems to sleep. In any case, he does not pay attention and therefore neglects his duty. Whether this idleness should also be given an erotic connotation, as Eddy de Jongh argued in the discussion of a similar situation in a painting by Nicolaas Maas, I leave aside.

**Questions and guesses (2)**

If we pursue the line of thought that these two paintings should be seen as gifts for the engagement or wedding of two grandchildren of Moijjes van Nederveen, then immediately there is another question to tackle. Because on 30 May 1660, just a few months before Barbara van Nederveen’s wedding, her cousin Anna van der Heul (then 29 years of age) also married. The groom was Reijer van den Berch, a 40-year-old widower from Brielle. Anna was the older sister of Salomon, and therefore she was also a grandchild of Moijjes van Nederveen. Would it not be consequent that she, too, should have received a similar painting? Is here a Vermeer canvas missing? Or, otherwise, could it be that the much smaller and unsigned Vermeer painting in the New York Frick Collection, now known as *Girl Interrupted in her Music* (Fig. 13) and estimated to be made in 1658-1662, was intended for Anna van der Heul and her groom from Brielle? That canvas is estimated to have been made in the years 1658-1662, a date that again would fit to the date of this marriage. The depicted setting surely resembles *The Lady with Two Gentlemen*, although the window is closed and the central coat of arms is lacking. Following Blankert, one may wonder if this much smaller and less powerfully painted (or brushed) canvas is just a
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preliminary study for a now disappeared larger original. In that case, the coat of arms could still be applied after a later elaboration. Anyway, the intricate pattern of the stained-glass window in this painting is completely identical to that in the two other Vermeer paintings. The chairs in the Girl Interrupted in her Music are also the same as in The Glass of Wine and the string instrument (a zither) shown in both paintings is comparable. This suggests that this painting could be located in the same house as the other two. Further, the theme of making music with a string instrument fits in well with the depicted courtship. The Dutch poet Jacob Westerbaen wrote for instance in 1672: ‘Learn to play on the lute, learn to play on the harpsichord | The strings have the power to steal someone’s heart’. In the background of this canvas, according to the first known description from 1810, a violin hung on the wall, but in later restorations a naked cupid emerged here as a ‘painting in a painting’. This depiction, after a now lost canvas by Cesaer van Everdingen (ca.1616–1678), Vermeer has used more often, for example in his A Lady Standing at a Virginal (fig. 14). Eddy de Jongh has shown that this cupid is based on an engraving in Otto van Veens Amorum Emblemata (Antwerp 1608), which refers to faithful love for a single partner, again a theme that fits nicely with the idea that this painting was intended to be a wedding present. If so, then in line with the situation at The Glass of Wine and The Lady with Two Gentlemen, the ‘warm side’ of the couple is depicted in a recognizable way. So here, too, the question seems legitimate whether it is the bride Anna van der Heul who looks at the viewer, while her future husband directs his gaze downwards?

Anyway, the assumed commissioner of the Vermeer paintings, Abraham Salomonsz van der Heul, died in 1666. Two years later his wife, Katrina van Nederveen, passed away too. This fact may explain why the remaining children of the family, at their later weddings, evidently did not receive comparable paintings (see the appendix).

The provenances

If Abraham van der Heul and Katrina van Nederveen indeed commissioned these paintings to mark the aforementioned marriages, what then is a plausible road to the first registered sightings of these paintings?

The Berlin Vermeer is first mentioned in July 1736 as part of the bankrupt estate of the Delft brewer and collector Jan van Loon (1693–1761), who had come into major financial difficulties the year before. As a result, he was forced to sell all his possessions. It was a gigantic bankruptcy that must have been discussed throughout Delft. Not only Van Loon’s renowned brewery De verkeerde wereld (‘The wrong world’) was auctioned in June 1736, but also his adjacent beautiful mansion at the Gasthuislaan, and four other houses and a in 1734 newly built farm in the village of Zevenhuizen. A few days later his household effects were sold, including some ‘curious Japanese en Chinese porcelain’, jewellery, ‘beautiful modern table- and silverware’, but also all that belongs to a orderly and
regulated household’. Van Loons collection of 49 paintings (with pieces by Gerard Dou, Pieter de Hooch, Gabriël Metsu, Paulus Potter, Herman Saftleven, Jan Steen and others) was therefore only a small part of what had to be sold. An unknown buyer bought Vermeer’s *The Glass of Wine* – described in de auction catalogue as “a sitting drinking female with a standing male figure” for 52 guilders.\(^{56}\) Not that much, because 21 other paintings required a higher bid. The highest amount – 340 guilders – had to be paid for a canvas by the Italian painter Michelangelo Cerquozzi, representing the Capitol in Rome. To make matters worse Van Loon’s wife, Catharina Hoogoht\(^{(t)}\)wout from Alkmaar, died 14 June 1736, in the middle of the series of execution auctions, which suggests a suicide. Van Loon, who afterwards moved to Utrecht, would be chased by his debts until his death. He died in Utrecht in May 1761, at the home of a canon of the archiepiscopal church, with whom he lived and who took care for the settlement of Van Loon’s meagre legacy.\(^{57}\)

The Brunswick painting by “Von der Mair” is first recorded in a description of the *Kunstkammer* of Duke Anton Ulrich von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, published around 1710. Then this canvas is called *Eine lustige Gesellschaft*, in English “a merry company”.\(^{58}\) In 1975 Blankert discovered that in the 1696 auction of the Delft printer and bookbinder Jacob Abrahamsz Dissius (1653–1695), a Vermeer painting was offered, described in exactly the same wording: *Een vrolijk gezelschap in een kamer, kragtig en goet* (“a merry company in a room, vigorous and good”).\(^{59}\)

This strong resemblance suggests that Duke Anton Ulrich commissioned the purchase of *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* at the 1696 Dissius auction, where no less than 21 Vermeer paintings were sold. In these years the Brunswick duke was very active in the gathering of paintings. His ‘Schloss Salzdahlum’ (finished in 1694) was built especially to house his collections, but a large part of it still had to be acquired. In his study of the duke’s collection, Koenraad Jonckheere wrote in 2004:

> Enormous empty wall surfaces had to be decorated. A large part of the paintings of Anton Ulrich – more than 140 masterpieces – was of Dutch origin, that is to say almost a quarter of the entire collection. Most paintings must have been bought in the Netherlands and shipped from there to Salzdahlum.\(^{60}\)

It was Elisabeth Neurdenburg who in 1942 made the connection between the Dissius auction of 1696 and an inventory in the Delft archive listing 20 Vermeer paintings, dated 1683.\(^{61}\) This inventory concerned the estate of the late Magdalena van Ruijven, Jacob Dissius’s wife. Montias convincingly showed that her husband’s collection was in fact hers, or rather that the collection of paintings was brought together by her late father, Pieter Claesz van Ruijven (1624–1674).\(^{62}\) In 1987 Montias proved that he had been Vermeer’s real Maecenas. It was Van Ruijven who had bought the bulk of Vermeer’s paintings since the mid-1650’s. However, as Montias noted, the Dissius auction of 1696 counted 21 Vermeer paintings, whereas the inventory of 1683 listed 20. So, between 1683 and 1696 one Vermeer painting must have been added to the Van Ruijven collection. It is my hypothesis that this painting was the *The Lady with Two Gentlemen*, as I will argue below.

**An educated guess about the journey through time of the Brunswick canvas**

If the *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* indeed was a wedding gift to Barbara van Nederveen in 1660, how did it arrive at the Dissius-auction in 1696? How may this canvas have left the hands of Barbara’s family? Unfortunately, very little is known about Barbara’s life. In 1652 and 1654, shortly after the death of each of her parents, she made a last will. The first time to appoint her father as heir, and the second time, when she was the last surviving child of the Van Nederveen-branch, she favoured her first cousins, with whom she now lived together in the same house on the Buitenwatersloot, adding in her testament two other relatives, the children of her aunt in Brielle.\(^{63}\) Further, in June 1660, shortly before her marriage, she sold part of her father’s inheritance (the land on which the “kruiptomlen” stood) to her uncle and cousin, Abraham van der Heul and his son Salomon.\(^{64}\) After her marriage to reverend Johannes van der Slaert, she left Delft to become a minister’s wife in the village of Katwijk. There she stood witness at two baptisms in nearby Leiden.\(^{65}\) In 1671 her husband changed his post for the remote southern town of Hulst in the province of Zeeland. Here Barbara died in 1679, leaving behind one daughter, Catherina, then just eighteen years old.\(^{66}\)

If my hypothesis about the Vermeer painting is correct, Catherina van der Slaert inherited the canvas, probably after her mother’s death, but most certainly after the passing away of her father in 1692. At that time Catharina van der Slaert already was a widow, responsible for the upbringing of two young sons. In 1687, at the age of 26, Catherina had married David
Bake, a local notary, who died two years later, when she was pregnant with her second child. It would take nine years before she remarried. A son from this second marriage recalls that his mother in these difficult years had been obliged to find “honorable means of finding bread for her children.” This suggests that Catherina was rather short of cash between 1689 and 1696. The sale of a painting may certainly be regarded as an honourable way to obtain money. Moreover, this period fits nicely with the time span between 1683 and 1696 in which Jacob Dissius from Delft obtained a new Vermeer. A transition of the *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* from Huist back to Delft could easily be performed. From the poems of Catharina’s son we learn that over the years Catharina stayed in close contact with her Delft relatives.

*An educated guess about the journey through time of the Berlin Vermeer*

Salomon van der Heul, the presumed first owner of the Berlin Vermeer, succeeded his father and uncle as a gunpowder producer. He extended the family firm, with the result that around 1670 Salomon obtained the exclusive right to store all gunpowder for the Province of Holland, the Rotterdam admiralty (“op de Maze”) and the Delft chamber of the East India Company. Salomon kept these lucrative contracts all his life, which made him a very rich man. His wife, Rusge’s Gravesande, passed away in 1692. Her funeral was an exposition of the family’s grandeur. She was buried at night (the most expensive hour) with sixteen carriers of torches, being followed by many luxury coaches. Salomon remained in good shape until old age. It is telling that he ordered a brand new coach shortly before his death in 1722. Until his last days Salomon lived in the mansion near the gunpowder factory, although from 1698 onwards he also possessed two impressive houses inside Delft.

In 1722 Salomon’s goods were divided among his four surviving children and one grandchild. Unfortunately, no document relating to Salomon’s legacy has passed down to us. It is only known that in 1723, when Salomon’s daughter Catharina sold the gunpowder factory, she removed from the family mansion “two paintings above the chimney, being family pieces”. One of these canvasses was probably a painting of Salomon’s children by Johannes Verkolje, mentioned by Arnold Houbraken. The other one could have been the Vermeer painting, but unfortunately, details are lacking. It is true that Houbraken mentions a second painting at Van der Heul’s gunpowder factory – an alchemist by the Delft painter Adriaan van Linschoten – but this canvas was no family piece for it was bought in 1645 at the auction of the assets of Harman Pietersz van Ruijven (c. 1587–1645), a trader in wood. Anyway, in the years between Salomon’s death in 1722 and the first sighting of the Vermeer painting at the Van Loon sale in 1736, all Salomon’s children had passed away, to my knowledge without leaving any inventories of their estates. However, an interesting clue is given in the last will of Salomon’s unmarried son Adriaen (†1730), who in 1728 bequeathed his collection of gold coins and medals to his sister Anna (who would die later that year). This particular numismatic interest implies that Adriaen van der Heul at least must have been familiar with the Delft numismatist and brewer Gerard van Loon (1683-1758), the elder brother of the Delft brewer Jan van Loon: the very man who acquired Vermeer’s *The Glass of Wine* somewhere before 1736! Gerard van Loon is best known for his richly illustrated multi volume folio-book *Beschrijving der Nederlandsche Historiepenningen*, the standard reference work for Dutch medals until today. Van Loon visited virtually every coin- and medal collector in the entire Dutch Republic, so certainly also his fellow citizen Adriaen van der Heul, who indeed figures in the list of subscribers of Van Loon’s numismatic *Opus Magnum*. Gerard van Loon is also known as one of the executors of the estate of his famous fellow citizen Anthony van Leeuwenhoek (1632–1723), who in turn had been the executor of Johannes Vermeers’s estate. Indeed the Delft social circles were narrow! The intertwining of the Delft social circles goes even further: Anthony van Leeuwenhoek’s preacher, the Delft reverend Petrus Gribius, who informed the Royal Society in London about Leeuwenhoek’s death and who worked closely together with Gerard van Loon in preparing Leeuwenhoek’s funeral, was the widower of Diewertge (Debora) van der Heul (1659–1702), the eldest daughter of Salomon van der Heul and Rusge’s Gravesande. Their daughter Maria Gribius was one of the main heirs of the Van der Heul fortune. So, it is not that difficult to imagine how the brewer Jan van Loon could have come in contact with the Van der Heul family.

Anyway, at some moment in time, Jan van Loon succeeded to buy *The Glass of Wine*. But only at the expense of an added price that could not be expressed in money. As condition for the transfer to Van Loon, the Van der Heul heirs must have stipulated that the
Vermeer painting was made anonymous by hiding the recognizable coat of arms under a fresh layer of paint. For it is telling that in 1901, when the Berlin Museum purchased *The Glass of Wine*, the window with the coat of arms was painted out by a curtain and a view through an open window without glass (Fig. 15). After all, without the escutcheon the Vermeer canvas was just another Dutch genre painting: “a sitting drinking female with a standing male figure”, as described in the Van Loon auction of 1736.

In the light of the painting over of *The Glass of Wine*, it is interesting that Blankert noted that the earliest descriptions of *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* does not mention the man at the end of the table. It was as if he had disappeared. Blankert suggested that this canvas, too, might be changed at some moment in time by the adding of new paint. If so, the question is relevant whether the escutcheon also was hidden? Certain is only that all eighteenth-century descriptions of the Brunswick Vermeer do not mention a coat of arms. In 1776 it is only said that “the room has a painted window”. In a time in which heraldry was still seen as being important, this silence is at least noteworthy. And indeed, during the 1989 restoration of this canvas some remains of “old and blot painting over” were found, which remnants were then removed. However, according to a description by Ludwig Pape, dated 1836, the sitting man at the table was visible (again?). Although Pape does not refer to a coat of arms, a reproduction from 1868 shows the canvas exactly as we see it today (Fig. 16). So, in the end we cannot tell whether the escutcheon had been painted over, or not.

Conclusions

In this paper I present a new theory on the origin of two paintings by Vermeer, namely that both *The Glass of Wine* as well as *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* were commissioned as a wedding present for two of the grandchildren of Moijses van Nederveen and Janetge de Vogel. Although no archival document can prove that this hypothesis is correct, this theory has not been contradicted by the retrieved historical facts. The dating of both paintings fits, and their provenance contains no conflicting elements. Moreover, what we can deduce from the two paintings itself makes sense: the presence of the coat of arms is explained, the female virtue holding this crest has a meaning consistent with the background of Vermeer’s presumed client, and the reason for the repainting of the escutcheon in *The Glass of Wine*, but perhaps also in *The Lady with Two Gentlemen*, is evident. Further, the fact that the ceramic floor tiles in these two paintings are identical, but very different from the...
marble floor tiles in all other known Vermeer paintings, would be explained if we assume they were made (or at least set up) in the mansion in front of the Neder-veen-Van der Heul gunpowder factory (Fig. 4). This house had at its front two rooms both with two windows, as in the Vermeer paintings. If the coat of arms in Vermeer’s window was present anywhere in Delft, it certainly would make sense that it was in this mansion! The identical lattice in the leaded window in the related painting *A Girl interrupted in her Music* could mean that this painting was also set up in this house. In a smaller room with lesser status it would be logical that no coat of arms was set in the window. Steadman argued that the size of Vermeer’s paintings is related to the size of the projected image of a *camera obscura*. If his guess is right, such a smaller room would explain the smaller size of this canvas. According to that line of reasoning the nearly identical size of the other two paintings would suggest that these are situated in the same room. We therefore differ from Steadman, who claims that all Vermeer paintings were set up in Vermeer’s atelier.93 After all, if Vermeer used any optical equipment, it would be easy to make it portable, just as the optical projection device, made at Delft in 1653 by Vermeer’s contemporary, the military engineer Johan van der Wyck.94

What are the consequences of this new theory, if my educated guesses are correct? Firstly, it seems plausible that Vermeer has represented actually existing objects (and even perhaps real people) in paintings that until now are only seen as mere genre pieces. Secondly, this theory implies that one must be careful with a firm allocation of ‘hidden meanings’ and interpretations, such as Klessmann’s, who guessed that in these two paintings the notion of “moderation” was depicted, both with regard to the “temptation to drink”, as well as to the temptation of sexual seduction.95 In this case the historical circumstances indicate that the open window should rather be seen as a warning to the grandchildren (as heirs of the gunpowder factory) for the dangers of a devastating explosion. In a similar way more interpretations have been ascribed to these paintings, which should be treated with more doubt than has been done so far.96

**APPENDIX:**

**Short genealogy of the Van Nederveen and Van der Heul families**

*Persons who might be represented in Vermeer’s *The Glass of Wine* and *The Lady with Two Gentlemen* are underscored and put in CAPITALS. Assumed heirs of the paintings are put in **bold italics.** Children who died before reaching adulthood are put between brackets* [*…*]

1. **MOYES JANZS VAN NEDERVEEN** (Brielle (?), 1566 – Delft, 1624). Producer of gunpowder; died: corner Oude Delft/ Pepersteeg, near the “Haverbrug”.
   Married:
   1. Apolonia Mosis van Nederveen (Delft, 1590 – after 1630) married Delft, 1612 Pieter Pouwelsz Steur (*† before 1628), from Brielle children: Paulus and Janneken
   2. [Leonora van Nederveen (Delft, 1593 – Delft, 1598)]
   3. [Child (*† Delft 1596)]
   4. Jacob Mozisz van Nederveen (Delft, 1596 – Delft, 1624) [not married]
   5. **KATRINA VAN NEDERVEEN** (Delft, 1599) **follows II-1**
   7. **JOHANES VAN NEDERVEEN** (Delft, 1604) **follows II-2**
   8. [Leonora van Nederveen (Delft, 1604 – Delft, 1605)]
      Twin sister of no. 7.

   Children:
   1 Jannetgen/Johanna van der Heul (Delft, 1627 – The Hague, 1686) married:
      a. Delft, 1669 Jan Kotjens, kiesheer of Zwolle, widower.
   2. **ANNA/JANETGEN VAN DER HEUL** (Delft, 1630 – Delft, 1688) died “op de Buitewatersloot op de Kruitmole”.
      married:
      a. Delft, 30 May 1660: **REUVER VAN DEN BERCH** (ca. 1620 – Brielle, 1669) widower of Sara van Diick (married 1644), *vroedschap* of Brielle.
      b. Brielle, 19-11-1675: Cornelis Tael (c. 1619–1705), Mayor (1679) of Brielle.
3. SALOMON VAN DER HEUL (Delft, 1636) follows III-1
4. Moijjes van der Heul (Rotterdam, 1639 – England, before 1706)
   married Johanna Kerduff [= Cardiff]
   Left for England, where he produced some children.

II-2 JOHANNES VAN NEDERVEEN (Delft, 1604 – Delft, 1653)
   Producer of gunpowder [died corner Oude Delft/Pepersteeg]
   married c. 1627 JACOBMIJNTGE SALOMONS VAN DER HEUL († 1651)
   [died “op de kruitmolen”]
   Children:
   1. [Moijses van Nederveen (Delft, 1628 – Delft, 1630)]
   2. Annitge van Nederveen (Delft, 1629 – Delft, 1651)
      [died “buiten de Waterslootspoort op de Kruit Molen”]
   3. Moijjes (II) van Nederveen (Delft, 1630 – Delft, 1649)
      Notary clerk in 1645-1646.
      [died “op de Kruitmolen”]
   4. BARBARA VAN NEDERVEEN (Delft, 1633 – Hulst, 1679)
      follows II-2
   5. [Salomon van Nederveen (Delft, 1637 – Delft, 1637)]

III-1. SALOMON VAN DER HEUL (Delft, 1636 – Delft, 1722)
   Producer of gunpowder.
   married Delft, 12 Dec. 1658:
   RUSGE’S GRAVESANDE (Delft, 1635 – Delft, 1692)
   daughter of Doe Arentsz Gravesande & Dijwerten Ariens
   Children:
   1. Diewertge / Debera van der Heul (Delft, 1659 – Delft, 1702)
      married Delft, Petrus Gibrius (1651 – Delft, 1739)
      Calvinist minister in Delft for 54 (!) years.
      One daughter (Maria Gibrius)
   2. Abraham Salomonsz van der Heul (Delft, 1661 – Delft, 1712)
      “Veertigraad” of Delft [not married]
   3. Adriaan van der Heul (Delft, 1663 – Delft, 1730)
      [not married; died at the Koornmarkt]
   4. Catharina van der Heul (Delft, 1665 – Delft, 1723) [died on the
      Achterom].
      married 1683 Willem Maartense Staal († 1713); divorced 1701.
      Five children: Johanna (†1684), Salomon (†1686), Maarten
      (†1687), Russina (†1689), Abraham (†1693).
   5. Johanna van der Heul (Delft, 1668 – Delft, 1736) [died on the
      Oude Delft]. “Plateelbakster” [producer at – and after 1703
      owner of – the Delftware factory the Grieksche A on the
      ‘Achterom’; living at the Oude Delft after the death of her
      husband].
      married Delft, 1698 Pieter Cocx (Delft, 1664 – Delft, 1703)
      “Plateelbakker”; owner of the pottery the Grieksche A;
      No children.
   6. Anna van der Heul (Delft, 1675, d. Delft, 1728)
      [died “ten huisje van de Heer Adriaan van der Heul op de
      Koornmarkt”]
      married Delft, 1705: Bonifacius Pous from Zierikzee († 1726)
      “Rentmeester-generaal beooster Schelde van de graafelijkheids
      domeinen”
      No children.

III-2. BARBARA VAN NEDERVEEN (Delft, 15-11-1633 – Hulst 1679)
   Owner (1659-1680) of the grave no. 295 in the ‘Oude Kerk’.
   married 10-11-1660 [living in the Koornmarkt]:
   JOHANNES VAN DER SLAERT (Leiden, 1626 – Hulst, 1692),
   widower. Calvinist minister in Katwijk on the Rhine (1657–1761)
   and Hulst (1671–1692).
   Remarried: Vianen, 1680 to Constantia Streso (The Hague –
   Hulst, 1690)
   Child from the first marriage (after several who died young):
   1. Catharina van der Slaert (Katwijk, 1661 – Hulst, 1730)
      Married:
      a. St. Jansteen, 1687: David Bake, public notary in Hulst († Hulst,
         1689)
      b. Kieldrecht, 1696: Johannes Moorman († Hulst, 1710),
         widower of Suzanna Pedeceur; “schepen” of Hulst
      Children: Adriaan Bake (1688–1753) and David Johan Bake
         (1689–1738); Johannes Moorman jr. (1696–1743), Lieve
         Moorman (†1698), Barbara Cornelia Moorman (†1701) and
         Salomon Moorman (†1703)

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4. Steadman, Vermeer’s Camera (n. 2), pp. 64-65; 115.

5. Elisabeth Neurenburg, “Johannes Vermeer. Eenige opmerkingen naar aanleiding van de nieuwste studies over den Delftschen schilder”, Oud Holland (1942), 65-73, esp. 69. The male identification was already provided by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, as reported by Philip L. Hale, Jan Vermeer of Delft (Norwood 1937), p. 191. Genealogical research has revealed that this combination of names occurred only once. See F.B.M. Nederveen & C.J. Nederveen, De genealogieën van Nederveen (Geertruidenberg 2006), pp. 10-13.


8. Website ‘Historisch GIS Delft’: house 034D570 (website consulted February 2014). Additional info is obtained from the Delft DTB registers, online at the website ‘Digitale stamboom Delft’ (now ‘Collectie Delft’). The eastern side of the Pepersteeg has been widened into the present Peperstraat after a huge fire in 1938.


13. Only Petra Beydals, former archivist of Delft, has made this connection in a newspaper article, published on 2 April 1942 in the Delftsche Courant. This note however escaped the attention of all other authors in the professional literature.


15. City archive Delft, 1:1, inv. nr. 404: “Register van poorter-inschrijvingen”, 1 June 1593.

16. Algemeen Nederlandsch Familienblad, 14:2 (1901), 76: Jan (= Hans) van Nederveen is mentioned as “purmaeker” in 1579. See also City archive Brielle, inv. nrs. 3368 (2 Jan. 1588) and 4229: sale by the heirs of Hans van Nederveen of the former buspoorder moolen (gunpowder mill), 2 October 1607.

17. Unfortunately, the Franeker Album Studiosorum is incomplete for the years around 1600, so this cannot be proven. See for the interest in alchemy among the Franeker academic community in these years, A. Dijkstra, Between Academics and Idiots. A Cultural History of Mathematics in the Dutch Province of Friesland (1600-1700) (Enschedé 2013), p. 151.


19. In April 1604 Van Nederveen received permission to make this bridge in front of his mansion. Nat. Archive, The Hague, FA Van Beresteyn, inv. nr. 1760. Today this link between the “Mosjesbrug” and its founder has been long forgotten. Cf. P.C. Visser, Delfts bruggen (Delft, z.j.), p. 27.


24. In 1653 Johan van Nederveen died in the house at the corner of the Pepersteeg. Delft DTB registers.

25. Johannes [Pieters] van der Sluert (1626-1692) matriculated at Leiden University for a study in theology on 28 June 1649 at the age of 23; he was declared admissible for the pulpit on 5 April 1651, but matriculated again on 8 August 1656. His first wife was Catharina Heynderikx Potbroek (marriage contract, Regional Archive Leiden, ONA, inv. nr. 450, deed 20 November 1657). Van der Sluert first served as a minister in the Mark Brandenburg, and became the reverend of Katwijk on the Rhine in 1657. Cf. De Nieuwschier 32 (1882), 490-491. See also: National Archive, FA. Wassenaer van Duvenvoorde, inv. nr. 2901.


32 Catalogus [...] Librorum, [et] Curiississimarum Rarissimarumque Iconum [...] Abrahamus van der Heul (Delft: A. Beman, 9 October 1713), pp. 26 (nos. 267 & 268), 28 (nos. 283, 287 & 289). This auction was announced in the Oprechte Haarlemse Courant of 12 September 1713.


41 Adolf Croeser (c. 1613-1668) lived at the “Oude Delft” opposite Jan Steen’s brewery “De Roscam” (the curry comb) otherwise known as “In de Sloange” (in the snake – present no. 74). Two doors down the road, at the corner of the Oude Delft and the Pepersteeg (present no. 78), Croeser’s sister Sara and Cornelia resided, in the former house of Moijses van Nederveen and Janjigne de Vogel. The sisters had bought this house after the death in 1653 of Nederveen’s son Johan. Cf. Frans Grijzenhout & Niek van Sas, The Burgher of Delft. A Painting by Jan Steen (Amsterdam 2006). See about this canvas also the discussion in the Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum (2008).

42 Anita Jansen, Rudi Ekkart & Johanneke Verhave, De portretfabriek van Michiel van Mierevelt (1566-1641) (Zwolle 2011).


44 Cf. RKD, The Hague, nos. IB 114049 (dated 1623), IB 20479 (dated 1624); IB 25107 (vd Dussen, dated 1626) and IB 52757 (dated 1627).

45 E. Pietzsch, Vermeer van Delft (Leipzig 1911); Hale, Vermeer of Delft (n. 12), p. 189; Liedtke, Vermeer and the Delft School (n. 27), 376-377.


47 Liedtke, Vermeer [Dutch ed.] (n. 4), pp. 87-88.

48 Delft Archive, DTB registers, 14 inv. 39, folio 189v (19 March 1649, ‘Nieuwe Kerk’, listed under ‘Nederveen’).


50 Estimated date of production of the Girl Interrupted in her Music (The Frick Collection, New York), by Blankert (who regards the painting to be a study piece): c. 1662; by Wheelock: c. 1660-1661; by Liedtke: c. 1658-1659. See note 3.

51 Blankert et al, Vermeer (n. 4), p. 171.

52 Steadman, Vermeer’s Camera (n. 2), p. 69.


55 I limit myself to a discussion of the provenance of the two Vermeer paintings in Berlin and Brunswick. For these provenances, see the website www.essentialvermeer.com. The provenance of the Girl Interrupted in her Music goes only back as far as 1781 when Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) saw the painting in Amsterdam at the house of Pieter de Smeth van Alphen (1753-1809). See: Esmee Quadbach, ‘Some new findings on Vermeer’s Girl interrupted at her Music in The Frick Collection’, in: J. Bikker e.a., (red.) ‘Gij zult niet feestbundelen’ (Amsterdam 2016), pp. 160-169. The canvas was sold at Amsterdam in the De Smeth van Alphen sale (12 August 1810, no. 57). So far, no earlier sighting has been established.


57 For (1) the auction of Jan van Loon’s brewery and other real estate on 4 and 9 June 1736, see Delft archive, (notary W. Vlaardingerwoud), inv. nr. 2602C, fol. 157-177 and ‘s Graven-
**haegse courant**, 18 May 1736. (2) For the in 1734 newly built farm in Zevenhuizen, auctioned 3 July 1736, see ’s Gravenhaegse courant, 8 June 1736. (3) For the auction of the household effects on 9 July 1736, see ’s Gravenhaegse courant, 20 June 1736. (4) In this newspaper is also printed the announcement of the auction of Van Loo’s paintings on 18 July 1736 in the St Lukes guild room in Delft. For the list of paintings sold in this auction, see: Gerard Hoet, *Catalogus van Naaemlyst van schilderijen*, vol. 2 (’s Gravenhage 1752), pp. 389-391. Some of these paintings are identified in E. Bergvelt, M. Jonker & A. Wiechmann (red.), *Schatten in Delft: burgers verzamelen 1600-1700* (Delft 2002), pp. 80-85 and p. 160. For Van Loo’s meager estate left after his death, see Utrechts Archiv, inv. nr. 237a002 (notary J. De Clefay), deed 117 (30 May 1761). For the final settlement of all the debts of Jan van Loo, see *Leydse courant*, 1 November 1762.


62 After Magdalena van Ruijven’s death her estate became subject to an ownership dispute between Jacob Dissius and his father Abraham (also a printer and bookseller), resulting in the split of Magdalena’s inheritance in 1685. However, in 1694, after Abraham Dissius’s death, the collection was reunited again in Jacob’s hands. Cf. Montias, *Vermeer and his milieu* (10), p. 253-256. See also Montias, “Recent Archival Research” (n. 12), p. 97-99. Until now it has not been noted in the Vermeer literature that the The Hague painter Martinus Nellius (1621-1719) used the *Delftse Chronyck Almanach* issued by Abraham Dissius, to portray mortality in his still life paintings between 1673 and 1695. In these canvasses Dissius’s name and address are clearly visible. Cf. Jeroen Salman, *Populair drukwerk in de Gouden Eeuw* (Zutphen, 1999), pp. 288 and 398.

63 City archive Delft, ONA 1983 & 1985 (Nots. Govert Rota), 18 October 1652 and 16 April 1654: the two other beneficiaries were Paulus and Janneken Steur, the children of aunt Apolonia van Nederven.

64 City archive Delft, losse aanwinsten, no. 372. On 29 June 1660 she also sold a property called *De oude brouwerij* (the old brewery) in Brielle to her cousin Pouwels Steur from Goes. City archive Brielle, inv. nr. 581.

65 Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken, DTB Dopen, Leiden: 10 March 1661 and 30 March 1668.

66 Catherina’s father, reverend Johannes van der Staer, remarried in 1680 in Vianen to Constantia Streso (d. Hulst, 10 July 1690). Constantia would give birth to one daughter, Constantia van der Staer. He is not to be confused with his nephew Johannes (Franz) van der Staer (1661-1702) from Leiden, “proponent” in 1688, becoming a Calvinist minister in Nieuw Voossem deer. 1692-1702, who in 1696 stood witness at the baptism of Johannes Moorman, Catherina van der Staert’s son from her second marriage.

67 Unfortunately the Hulst notary archive contains no inventories relating to Catherina van der Staert’s inheritance, marriage or remarriage. In 1696 she remarried in Kielrrecht to Johannes Moorman, a magistrate from Hulst and a widower with six children, with whom she bore four other children.

68 “… al liet uw moederin zich nergens door verhinderen, om tydlyk brood, met eer, te zoeken voor uw kinderen”. (‘even though your motherly love was stopped by nothing to seek for a while bread for your children in a respectable way’). Poem made at the death of Catharina van der Staert by her son Johan Moor- man junior, in his *Gedichten* (Middelburg: Leendert Bakker, 1745), pp. 178-181, esp. 180.


72 At his 84th birthday Salomon’s good health and still youthful appearance was still praised. Cf. Moorman, *Gedichten* (n. 76), p. 154.


74 Website *http://www.achterdegevelsvandelft.nl*, lemma ‘Oude Delft 157 & 159’. These houses were bought in the years 1698-1709 together with the adjacent Hieronimuspoort. City archive Delft, charters nos. 6315 (1698) and 3522 (1709).


76 City archive Delft, 1.1, inv. no. 554. The new owners Nicolaas en Hendrik van Hoorn exploited the Delft gunpowder factory at the Buitenwaterslot until it exploded in 1742. The complex was never fully rebuilt. A bullet foundry remained until the Second World War, when the German occupation army used the site to store its gunpowder. The complex was bombed in July 1941 by the Royal Air Force. The present building *De Kogelgieterij* dates from the 19th century and houses a foundation for assisted living. Cf. Crol, “De kruutmolen” (n. 78), pp. 204, 206.

77 ONA Delft, 2592 (Notary Willem Vlaardingerwoud), fol. 9 (6 February 1723): “two schilderijen voor de schoorsteen, sijnde familie stukken”.
87 Cf. Arnold Houbraken, De groote schouwygh der Nederlandtsche konstcholders en schildersessen, (‘s Gravenhage, 1753), vol. 3, p. 285. Houbraken (p. 146) also mentions another painting at the gunpowder factory, made by the Delft artisan Adriaan van Linschoten, depicting an alchemist (an appropriate theme for a saltpeter plant). However, this painting was no ‘family piece’, for it came from the collection of the wood merchant Harman Pietersz van Ruyven (c. 1587-1645), dispersed in 1645. Cf. A. Bredius, ‘De schilder Adriaen Cornelisz van Linschoten’, Oud-Holland 2 (1884), 135-140, esp. 140.


88 Hand, Blankert, einem paintings,研究院, researched Wine, 285.


92 In his Lady Writing a Letter with her Maid (National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; estimated date of production 1670-1671), Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675) depicted another (partly visible) coat of arms:.

At the heraldic right (and thus male) side this escutcheon shows a heron, standing on rising ground and three stars pointing to the coat of arms of the Desmaret family. This may indicate to the Delft Walloon pastor Henrij Desmaret (c. 1630-1725), the translator of René Descartes’ Passion de l’âme (1649) into Latin (1650). He was the eldest son of the Groningen and Leiden professor Samuel Maresius, with whom he published an annotated version of the Bible (La Sainte Bible, Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1669). Henrij Desmaret lived on the Oude Delft since 1666. In 1675 he moved to the ‘domineshus’ behind the former St Hieronymus convent (see note 40). In 1655, in his earlier residence Den Bosch, he had married Anna Maria Pisset (d. 1677). Her coat of arms has not been retrieved with certainty. Known is a ‘Pisset’ escutcheon with black ermine tails, accompanied by some stars, which elements could be depicted in the other (heraldic left) half of the Vermeer crest. The Desmaret-Pisset couple had two sons and one daughter: Henriette Marie Desmaret (1657-1724), 14 years of age in 1671. Is she the young lady in the Vermeer painting? Her disputed marriage to Jan Meerman in 1680 is discussed in I.H. van

