

Vermeer and his Milieu: Conclusion of an Archival Study*

Family Background

In a first article on Vermeer and his family¹, I published a number of documents ranging from 1597 to 1653, the year of his entry into the Guild of St. Lucas. The present article contains the main results of my archival research on the mature life of the artist, his family, and his immediate entourage. Before getting on to this main subject, however, I shall summarize in the text the most important documents that I have found since the first article appeared concerning the painter's family background and the period of his life preceding his entry into the guild. A check list of documents of secondary importance will be found in the Appendix. As in the first article the documents I found are marked with an asterisk, while those turned up by other researchers are identified in the footnotes. Not all published documents, however, are listed in this article².

Vermeer's father, Reynier Jansz., was registered in the guild of St. Lucas on 13 October 1631 as 'Reynier Vos off Reijnier van der Minne.' We now know that the inn on the Voldersgracht that he rented, before he bought 'Mechelen' in 1641, was called *De Vliegende Vos* (The Flying Fox)³. The rental contract cited in the same source ran from 27 January 1635⁴. If this contract was actually a renewal, as I suspect it was, and Reynier Jansz. was living there in 1631, then it is likely that he drew his last name Vos from the name of the inn. Johannes Vermeer would then have been born in this inn in 1632, on the North side of the Voldersgracht, a couple of houses East from the Old Men's home, in

whose chapel the guild of St. Lucas held its meetings⁵. The name van der Minne, as I suggested in 'New Documents I', belonged to his stepbrother Drick Claesz. van der Minne (1583–1657)⁶. No information has yet emerged on the origin of the name Vermeer. (It was first used by Reynier Jansz.'s brother Anthony when his daughter Neeltge was baptized on 6 April 1625⁷. The first known document in which Reynier Jansz. calls himself Vermeer is dated 6 September 1640⁸.)

In 1619 Vermeer's maternal grandfather Balthasar Claes Gerritsz. and his son Reynier Balthensz. were involved in a counterfeiting operation in The Hague (no. 9 in 'New Documents I'), which resulted in the beheading of Balthasar's two senior partners, Gerrit de Bury and Hendrick Sticke in August 1620. A few significant details in this story can now be filled in from the original records of the official investigation.

In his interrogation, de Bury claimed that Balthasar's wife had told him that if her husband were caught he would easily get pardoned by His Excellency (Prince Maurice) because 'he had made several artful instruments for His Excellency' (*hij verscheijden constelijcken instrumenten vor Zijn Excellentie heeft gemaect*)⁹. Nothing is known of this (apparently legal) activity in the service of the Stadhouder. Vermeer's father seems to have been in contact with both Balthasar and his son Reynier throughout the affair. In early 1620 de Bury addressed a letter to 'Reynier in Delft' (undoubtedly Reynier Jansz.), within which was enclosed

* I am extremely grateful to Rob Ruurs both for his extensive and detailed comments on an earlier draft and for allowing me to use some of his findings on the Thins family (Vermeer's in-laws) in Gouda. I am also indebted to Albert Blankert and Otto Naumann for a number of useful criticisms and suggestions. Finally, I wish to thank Mr. H.W. van Leeuwen for his help in transcribing and interpreting obscure passages in the archival documents. The research for this paper was carried out while I was a Fellow at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in The Humanities and Social Sciences, the support of which is gratefully acknowledged.

¹ *Oud Holland*, 1977, pp. 267–287 (henceforth referred to as 'New Documents I'). Unless otherwise indicated, all documents in this article are extracted from the Delft Gemeente Archief. The spelling of all proper names follows that of the documents in which they are cited. However, when any person is mentioned whose name is not directly cited in a document under discussion the spelling follows that occurring in the first mention in this article.

² A complete list of hitherto published documents (excluding those in 'New Documents I') excerpted by Rob Ruurs will be found in *Vermeer of Delft* by Albert Blankert with contributions by Rob Ruurs and Willem L. van de Watering, Oxford (1978), pp. 145–154.

³ See document 23 in the Appendix. According to a document dated 30 October 1640 (Prot. not. J. van Beest, no. 1668)*, the house was still called 'de Vosgen' after it had been sold.

⁴ 'New Documents I' p. 277. Heijndrick van der Burch who held a mortgage on the house is not identical with the painter of that name, as I suggested he might be, in my first article. This van der Burch (or Verburch) died on 29 July 1640. The house on the Voldersgracht is mentioned in his estate papers (Prot. not. J. van Beest, no. 1671)*.

⁵ See below, p. . The location of the house leased by Reynier Jansz. and belonging to Pieter Corstiaensz. Hopprus can be inferred from the Delft Verponding boek of 1632 (fol. 127v).

⁶ See Appendix no. 6 and document no. 12 below. The year of Dirck Claesz.'s birth is inferred from the fact that he was 62 years old in 1645 (Prot. not. G. Rota, no. 1978, 23 April 1645)*. Reynier Jansz.'s half sister Adriaentge Claesdr. is called 'van der Minne' in a document of 16 May 1669 (Prot. not. J. Ranck, no. 2116)*.

⁷ 'New Documents I' p. 270.

⁸ No. 32 in 'New Documents I'.

⁹ Justitieboek, fols 23, 23b, 10b, and 16 (R. A. 293, Amsterdam City Archives). The wife or concubine (*bijbesith*) of Balthasar Gerritsz., who is mentioned a number of times in the course of the interrogation, was probably his second wife, Beatrix Gerritsdr. (See document of 17 April 1632 cited below.) She seems to have known the details of the counterfeiting activities of her husband.

a secret letter to Balthasar Gerritsz.. This same 'Reynier from Delft' later went to Amsterdam to meet de Bury to ask him for money, evidently to pay for the release of his brother-in-law Reynier Balthensz.. They made an appointment in the Nieuwe Kerck. There Reynier explained to de Bury that 'he had stripped himself bare for the sake of Reynier Balthensz. to the point of having to sell his bed' (*om Reynier Balthensz. wille hem sulx hadde ontbloot dat hij zijn bedde . . . moeten vercoopen*)¹⁰. If he was telling the truth, it is remarkable that only three years later he could pledge goods worth nearly 1000 guildens, including a bed and bedding valued at 60 guildens, against a loan from Balthasar Gerritsz. ('New Documents I' no. 19). The question this raises is whether Balthasar, under the guise of a loan, may have returned money that he owed for his son's release to Reynier Jansz.. The financial sacrifices Vermeer's father made for the sake of his brother-in-law in 1620 may be seen as an important indication of the close ties that bound his extended family together at the time.

By the time of Vermeer's birth in 1632, Balthasar Gerritsz. was already dead. On April 17 of that year his widow Beatrix Gerritsdr. living in Gorinchem (Gorcum) petitioned the local authorities to be named town midwife (*Stadsvroedvrouw*). She would have applied earlier, she claims, had it not been that her husband 'Master Balthasar Claesz., alias Mijnhcer' had employed her 'in secret services of the land with trips and voyages' (*in secrete diensten van den landen met reysen ende trecken*)¹¹. I was not able to find any trace of Beatrix Gerritsdr.'s activities in the 'secret services of the land' (presumably of the United Provinces), which were perhaps linked with Balthasar's services for Prince Maurice already cited.

My list of new documents begins with the first known contact of a member of Vermeer's family with a painter.

1) 18 November 1620 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no 500)*: In the estate papers of the painter Pieter den Dorst¹², small amounts due to Neeltgen Goris (the mother of Reynier Jansz., Vermeer's grandmother) and her partner and friend Catharina (Tryn) Rochus are recorded for services rendered. Both Neeltge Goris and Tryn Rochus are called *vuytdraegsters*. These second-hand dealers performed various services, including the evaluation of the contents of less important estates, for the auction master. Tryn Rochus appears in many contemporary documents as a buyer of inexpensive paintings, chairs, and other movable possessions. Hannis Floerke once pointed out that in the seventeenth century the sons of second-hand dealers in household goods frequently became painters, particularly in Antwerp¹³. We recall that Neeltge Goris and Tryn Rochus were also engaged in the organization of an important lottery in 1620, the prizes for which included paintings as well as silver-

ware and other objects of luxury ('New Documents I' no. 16).

Our next five documents, which all concern Vermeer's father, shed light on Reynier Jansz.'s personality and on the milieu in which the future artist spent his childhood and early youth.

2) 27 January 1635 (Prot. not. G. van der Wel, no. 1938)*: 'Reynier Jansz. Vos, 43 years old, Cornelis Theunisz., 31 years old, Theunis Jansz., 23 years old, Abraham Jero-nimusz., 18 years old, all *caffawerckers* living in Delft,' testify at the request of Cornelis Jansz. van Noorden¹⁴ about a knife fight provoked by a certain Robberecht Post, which took place on March 25th in the Hout Tuynen just outside Delft. After Reynier Jansz. and Cornelis Theunisz. had called (for help), the attestants broke up the fight with clubs or golf sticks (*colven*). The party then 'went on the ice again'. But Robberecht Post once more attacked Cornelis Jansz. who had fallen on the ice. When Cornelis got up again, Post gave him several blows on the head.

3) 11 February 1645 (Prot. not. A. van der Block no. 1745)*: Reynier Jansz. Vos, *meester caffawercker*, 53, and Gerrit van Slingelant living in Dordrecht, 22, testify at the request of Cornelis Balbiaen, doctor in medicine, about the confession that Sara Pots, a daughter of Cornelis Balbiaen by an earlier marriage, had made in the house of Reynier Jansz. (i.e. in 'Mechelen') concerning the theft of a silver spoon from the widow of Adriaen Balbiaen. Sara had broken the spoon into pieces and had sold the silver to Frans Verboom, goldsmith. She had cried bitterly after the confession and had implored that it not be reported further. The witnesses had agreed to this but now 'having been asked to testify to the truth, they have not been able to refuse', and they are willing to confirm their testimony, if requested, by oath. This is the only one of the many documents now known about Vermeer's father where he is given the title of master *caffa* worker.

4) 2 August 1645 (Prot. not. G. Rota, no. 1978)*: At the request of Lyntgen Pietersdr. van Amsterdam, widow of Heyndrick Dircksz. van der Graeff, skipper of the ship *Nieuw Delft*, shortly arrived from the East Indies, two members of the ship's crew testify about a project of a will found in the skipper's cabin after his death, with legacies to three of the officers. Reynier Jansz. Vos declares that he heard a discussion in his house (i.e. in 'Mechelen'), between the captain's widow and one of the officers to whom money was bequeathed in the project, concerning a previously drawn up testament that she showed him. The officer claims this earlier testament to be invalid because it did not mention the legitimate portion of the captain's heirs.

5) 8 February 1648 (Prot. not. G. Rota, no. 1980)*:

¹⁰ Secretconfessieboek (Amsterdam City Archives, R.A. 533), fol. 160.

¹¹ Stadsarchief Gorinchem, inv. no. 47, fol. 167. This document was found, transcribed, and kindly communicated to me by Mr. A.J. Busch, the archivist of Gorinchem.

¹² Pieter den Dorst, a member of the guild of St. Lucas in the master list of 1613, painted religious and mythological works (mentioned in his *boedel*). None of his paintings are known today.

¹³ *Studien zur Niederländische Kunst- und Kul-*

turgeschichte (Munich, 1905), p. 92.

¹⁴ Identical with 'Cornelis Jansz. *caffawercker*', mentioned in no. 40 in 'New Documents I'.

Pieter Vermeer, brewery worker in Amsterdam (no relation to the artist), recognizes a debt owed to Jacob Vrancens Croostwijck in Rotterdam. The notarial document is drawn up in the house of Reynier Jansz. Vosch, innkeeper in 'Mechelen', in the presence of Egbert Lievensz. van der Poel, master painter. On the same day, both Reynier Jansz. and Egbert van der Poel witness a document for the notary. This reference to the presence of Egbert van der Poel in Reynier Jansz.'s house is the only new document I have found referring to a contact of Vermeer's father with a painter. (The others cited in 'New Documents I' were with Joris Gerritsz. van Lier, Pieter Steenwijk, Balthasar van der Ast, Pieter Groenewegen, Jan Baptist van Fornenburgh, Evert van Aelst, Cornelis Saftleven, and Willem Willemsz. van den Bundel. Leonaert Bramer is also known to have been in contact with both Johannes Vermeer and his mother Dingnum Baltens.) However, I have now become aware that 'Reynier van Heuckelom', living in The Hague, cited in a procuration in 'New Documents I' (no. 42) as owing money to Reynier Jansz. in 1651, was very probably the portrait painter of that name, born circa 1604, who, in the mid-1620's, was one of the founders of the *schildersbent* in Rome (nickname 'Wolf') and later became an important collector in The Hague¹⁵.

6) 29 September 1651 (cited in document dated 10 September 1668, Prot. not. A. Verkerck, no 2202)*: On this date Jan Heymensz. van der Hoeve, baker, the husband of Vermeer's aunt Maertje Jansdr., took out a mortgage on his house on the Nieuwe Straet, apparently for 1000 guildens. The act was passed before the Orphan Chamber of Delft¹⁶. According to the 1668 reference to this document, 'Reynier Vos *schilder*' and 'Ghysbrecht Heymensz. van der Houve, stoffinacker', were co-guarantors of the loan. The stove-maker Gysbrecht Heymensz. (±1591–1652) was the brother of Jan Heymensz.. In my opinion the word *schilder* is an error, due to confusion with the occupation of Reynier Vos as an art dealer or with that of Johannes Vermeer as painter¹⁷. Jan Heymensz. van der Houve (or Hoeve) died about 1660 and his wife Maertje Jansdr. in September 1661. The co-guarantee of Reynier Vos in 1651 further supports other evidence (supplied in 'New Documents I') suggesting that Vermeer's father was in good financial standing a year or so before Reynier Balthensz.'s financial *débauché* of 1652–1653. It also adds to the evidence of the family's cohesiveness until Reynier Vos's death in October 1652.

7) 15 June and 10 September 1652 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 493)*: Six references to Reynier Jansz.'s name in the estate papers of the wine merchant Simon Jansz. Doncker who died on 10 September 1652, a month before

Vermeer's father, give us a glimpse into the state of the family's financial circumstances at this critical juncture. On 15 June 1652, according to an accounting recorded on a loose sheet in the *boedel*, the merchant delivered *aen Reynier Vermeer 17½ stoop frs met 6¾ stoop sp* (17½ stoop of French wine together with 6¾ stoop of Spanish wine)¹⁸. Carel Fabritius, incidentally, had received 9½ stoop of French wine only three days before. On 26 March 1653 when the first accounting of the estate was submitted by the trustees appointed by the Orphan Chamber, the cumulative amount owed by 'Reynier Vos' for this and previous deliveries was said to be 250 guildens 4 stuivers (Fabritius, 5 guildens 3 stuivers, which were immediately paid for). The amount owed by Reynier Vos was inscribed among the middling debts (*middelbare schulden*) due to the estate¹⁹. At that time, more than six months after Simon Doncker's death, nothing had been paid toward the settlement of this debt by Reynier Jansz.'s heirs (presumably his widow and his son and daughter). The debt was divided into two equal lots of 125 guildens 2 stuivers each, one of which was assigned to the children of the wine dealer and the other to his widow. On 14 November 1653, when a second accounting was submitted, 18 guildens and one stuiver had been paid toward the children's share. In the margin was written '*rest 107 gul. 1 st.*' By 24 July 1657, when a new accounting was made, this entire sum had been received by the estate. Since the accounting of the widow's receipts is now lost, we cannot be sure how the heirs of Reynier Jansz. settled that part of the debt, although it may be presumed that each of their payments was divided in equal shares between the children's and the widow's lot.

The sequence of payments made to the children's lot suggest that the family was short of funds in the year following Reynier Jansz.'s death but that the situation improved in the next three years. It is relevant to recall in this connection that Johannes Vermeer had paid only one gulden 10 stuivers toward his entrance fee of 6 guildens in the guild of St. Lucas in December 1653 and that he had not brought in the remaining part of his dues until 24 July 1656. The delays in the payments of the debt owed to Doncker, while it confirms my suspicion that the Vermeer family was in narrow financial straits at the time of the father's death, throw no light on the cause of these difficulties, which I earlier tentatively ascribed to efforts to rescue Vermeer's uncle Reynier Balthensz. from his predicaments ('New Documents I', pp. 282–284).

The Doncker inventory was unusually rich in paintings by Delft and other masters. Remarkably, six paintings by (Jacob) van Loo, including one society piece (*geselschap*),

¹⁵ Thieme-Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon*, vol. 17, p. 6 and G.J. Hoogwerff, *De bentvueghels*, Martinus Nijhoff, 's-Gravenhage (1952), p. 137. Reynier van Heuckelom *schilder* was said to be 39 years old in a declaration of 26 March 1643 (The Hague, City Archives, Prot. not. no. 97)*.

¹⁶ The original document is not to be found in the archives of the Orphan Chamber. (Note

that the books containing 'Guarantees of Loans' are preserved only from 1653 on.)

¹⁷ The signature on Vermeer's 'Rest of Diana' in the Mauritshuys was once read as Reynier Vermeer (P.T.A. Swillens, *Johannes Vermeer, Painter of Delft, 1632–1675*, Utrecht-Brussel, 1950, pp. 157–161). The error in our document should not, in my view, be a pretext for reviving this hypothesis.

¹⁸ There were 16 stoop in an *anker* of wine, which contained roughly 39 liters. A *stoop* was then about equal to three quarts.

¹⁹ The debt owed by Reynier Jansz. in 1631 (Appendix, document no. 22) had also been considered 'middling'.

were listed. This is the earliest inventory in Delft where I have found paintings by this Amsterdam master who influenced Vermeer's early work²⁰.

We now return to the document of 22 April 1653 signed as witnesses by Gerhard Ter Borch and Johannes Vermeer (no. 45a in 'New Documents I'). The presence of the two artists on this occasion seems to have had nothing to do with the attestation itself. It is my guess that they had come to visit the notary, Willem Reyersz. de Langue. Vermeer's father had known Willem de Langue at least since 1629 when he began to witness documents for him. De Langue was the family notary, who drew up the will of Vermeer's parents in 1638 and generally carried on their business. On April 5, 1653, he had been a witness to the document, prepared by another notary, in which Maria Thins, without actually consenting to Vermeer's marriage with Catharina Bolnes, had said she would not put any obstacle to it and would permit the banns to be published. What is more, he was the notary of many artists in Delft, more of whom appear in his records in the 1630's and 1640's than in those of any of his colleagues²¹. (The portraits of Willem de Langue and his wife Maria Pynacker by Willem Willemsz. van Vliet are reproduced in fig. 1). He was also one of the collectors after whose paintings Leonaert Bramer made drawings, some time between 1648 and 1652. The document in which the signatures of Vermeer and Ter Borch appear is dated two days after the marriage of the younger artist, which is believed to have taken place on Sunday 20 April 1653 in Schipluyden. Ter Borch may have to come to Delft to attend the younger artist's marriage. If so, it would have been quite natural for Vermeer soon the following Tuesday, afterwards to bring his already reputed colleague to the cabinet of his old family friend Willem de Langue²². If this sequence is correct, it suggests a prior acquaintance of the two artists. The question is where the two men might have become acquainted. I should have guessed Vermeer had known Ter Borch in Amsterdam, if it were not that so far no trace of the latter has been found there after 1648²³.

Vermeer's Maturity

I found very little new information in the archives about Vermeer's life and activities in the 1650's after his registration in the guild of St. Lucas in December 1653. There

is no evidence, for example, as to whether he lived in this period in 'Mechelen' or in his mother-in-law's house on the Oude Langendijck, which he inhabited in the 1660's and until his death in 1675. (See below, document no. 13.)

8) 30 April 1654 (Prot. not. A.C. Bogaert no. 1888)*: Johannes Vermeer and the notary Govert Rota appear as witnesses to a recognition of a debt of 190 guildens owed by Cornelis Jansz. Warmen, carpenter, living in Nicucoop, to Dirck Meyndert, lumber dealer, for lumber deliveries. The painter signs 'Johannes Vermeer'.

9) 14 December 1655 (Prot. not. G. Rota, no. 1986)²⁴: On 5 December 1648 Reynier Jansz. Vosch had borrowed 250 guildens for a year ('New Documents I', no. 37). This loan had been guaranteed by Captain Johan van Santen. By the present document, Johannes Vermeer and his wife appeared before the notary to declare themselves secondary guarantors for the repayment of the loan and to absolve Johan van Santen from any responsibility for damages as first guarantor. Maerten Wigant and the notary's clerk, Pieter de Coninck, witnessed the act. In December 1664 the loan was still outstanding. At this time the obligation was held by the heirs of Elizabeth Jansdr., widow of Willem de Godder, who had died in December 1664. According to an entry in her estate papers (Prot. not. A. Verkerck, no. 2200, 14 December 1664)*, 'Reynier Jansz. Vosch herbergier wonende opt marckvelt als principael ende Johan van Santen wonende aende corenmarckt als borg ende mede principael' owed the heirs of this estate the sum of 250 guildens at five per cent interest. Interest on the loan had been paid, presumably by Dingnum Baltens or by Johannes Vermeer and his wife, at least up to 1663.

10) 25 February 1657²⁵: Anthoni Gerritsz. van der Wiel registers in the guild of St. Lucas as an art dealer (*konstverkoper*). Gertruy Vermeer and her husband Anthony van der Wiel lived on the South side of the Vlamingstraet. Van der Wiel had a workshop behind his house and, in addition to making frames, sold ebony wood to other framemakers²⁶. Nothing is known of his activities as an art dealer.

11) A picture in the estate of the Amsterdam-based art dealer Johannes de Renialme dated 27 June 1657²⁷ is described as:

Een graft besoeckende van Van der Meer 20 guldens

This visit of the Holy Women (or Three Marias) to the

²⁰ Blankert, p. 16 and pp. 24–25. See also below, document no. 18.

²¹ Among Willem de Langue's clients or witnesses may be cited the painters Evert van Aelst, Balthasar van de Ast, Harmen van Bolgersteyn, Leonaert Bramer, Willem van den Bundel, Jacob van Geel, Hans Jordaens, Moses van Uyttenbroek (domiciled in The Hague), Willem van Vliet, and Abram Vromans. See also note 30 below.

²² On the next day, April 23, Johannes Vermeer and his uncle Reynier Balthensz. went

to the fledgling notary C. Georgin to write the procuration that was to enable Balthensz. to collect money for work done in Zierickzee ('New Documents I' no. 52). Could it be that Vermeer did not wish to lay the unsavory affair of his uncle's arrest in 1652 before de Langue?

²³ *Oud Holland*, 17 (1899), p. 189.

²⁴ A. Bredius, 'Iets over Johannes Vermeer', *Oud Holland*, 3, 1885, p. 218 and A.J.J.M. van Peer, 'Jan Vermeer van Delft: drie archiefvondsten', *Oud Holland*, 83, 1968, p. 241.

²⁵ F.D.O. Obreen, *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis* (Rotterdam: 1877–1890), vol. 1, p. 61.

²⁶ The workshop behind Van der Wiel's house is mentioned in a real-estate transaction in Prot. not. J. Ranck, no. 2117, 23 December 1661*. The sale of ebony wood is cited in Prot. not. T. van Hasselt, no. 2155, 4 February 1666*.

²⁷ Bredius, *Künstlerinventare*, 2, p. 233.



1
W. van der Vliet, Portraits
of Willem de Langue and Maria
Pijnacker, 1626, *priv. coll.*

1

Tomb of Christ appears to be the earliest recorded painting by Johannes Vermeer²⁸. Johannes de Renialme registered in the guild of St. Lucas in Delft as an art dealer (under the name of Johannes Rijalleme) on 1 August 1644²⁹. He was a frequent visitor to Delft, where he owned a house, and was a close acquaintance of the art dealer Abram de Coge; he also knew the notary and collector Willem de Langue, to whom he sold a *steen taefel* (probably a sculpted or inscribed stone slab)³⁰. The following paintings by Delft painters are included in Renialme's death inventory: eight by Bramer, two by Miereveldt, one by Palamedes Palamedesz., one by (Hendrick) van Vliet, and one by (Jan Willemsz. or Willem Jansz.) Decker. The 'Visit to the Tomb' may be thematically related to Vermeer's 'Christ in the House of Martha and Mary' in Edinburgh. In both these New Testament paintings, we have the Holy Women (two in the house of Martha and Mary, three in The Visit) ministering to Christ (alive in the first, dead and resurrected – but absent – in the other)³¹.

12) 20 July 1657 (Prot. not. W. van Assendelft, no. 1867)*: Dirck Claesz. van der Minne, who was brought up along with Reynier Jansz. by his father Claes Corstiaensz. and his stepmother Neeltge Gorisdr., died on this date. In

the inventory of his possessions, the following items are of interest.

Paintings:

Een schildery van Marta ende Maria

Een vanitas

Een lantschap

2 borritges van musikanten (musicians)

Musyck instrumenten:

Een luyt (lute)

Een schuyftrumpet (trombone)

Een schaelmey (primitive oboe or flute)

2 viole

Een kernet (cornet)

I have found enough examples of paintings on the theme of Christ in the House of Martha and Mary in Delft inventories to be wary of identifying the one owned by Dirck Claesz. van der Minne with the painting by Vermeer in Edinburgh, despite the family relationship of van der Minne with Vermeer's father.

Both the paintings of musicians and the list of musical instruments remind us that the father of Dirck Claesz. was himself a musician. The list of instruments in the inventory, assuming that Dirck Claesz. inherited them from his father,

²⁸ Neither the landscape painter Jan van der Meer nor the Utrecht Johannes van der Meer (born about 1640) are likely candidates for the authorship of this painting. Neither is any other known van der Meer. That Vermeer's name should have been spelled Van der Meer should cause no surprise: the two forms were virtually interchangeable in the 17th century. (Document no. 23 below gives an example of the Van der Meer spelling inscribed in the register of a Delft apothecary who must have been personally acquainted

with the painter.)

²⁹ Obreen, *Archief*, vol. 1, p. 39.

³⁰ The information on Renialme's contacts with de Langue comes from an attestation made many years later by de Cooge at the request of Willem de Langue's widow, Maria Pynacker (Prot. not. R. van Edinburgh, no. 2257, 11 March 1674)*. His house on the Oude Delft was leased by his widow for 140 guildens per year in 1672 (Prot. not. D. Rees,

no. 2147, 22 April 1672)*.

³¹ A painting (149 x 191 cms) of 'The Three Marias at the Empty Grave of Christ', owned by the Hannema-De Stuers Foundation in Heyno, is attributed by Dr. D. Hannema to Johannes Vermeer (Reproduced in D. Hannema, 'Een Onbekende Vermeer', *La Maison d'Hier et d'Aujourd'hui, De Woonstede Door de Eeuwen Heen*, no. 21, March 1974, p. 3). It is said to be signed JVD Meer and dated 1648 (when Vermeer was 16 years old).

suggests that the latter was more than an ordinary fiddler. Vermeer's father was then most probably raised in a family where music was performed. (He lived with his stepfather from the age of six to the age of twenty when he left for Amsterdam.) It is also likely that he learned how to play one of the instruments that his stepfather possessed³². He may then have passed on this skill or at least a knowledge and love of music to his son Johannes. (Musical instruments appear in eleven of Vermeer's known paintings. Music plays a central role in several of these.)³³

13) 27 December 1660 (*Begraafboeken*, no. 40, fol. 40, Oude Kerk)³⁴: 'Een kind van Johannes Vermeer aen den O. Langendijck' (a child of Johannes Vermeer on the Oude Langendijck [was buried on this date]). As it turns out, the address of the painter given on the occasion of the burial of two other of his children, on 10 July 1664 and 16 July 1669, was also on the Oude Langendijck (*Begraafboeken*, no. 41, fols. 14 and 47). Document 26 below confirms that Vermeer and his family were living in 1663 in the house of Maria Thins, his mother-in-law, on the Oude Langendijck.

Since such a large part of Vermeer's mature life unfolded in Maria Thins's house, I have focused my study of the artist's milieu on the house and its neighborhood and on the family of Maria Thins. Documents 14 to 17 recapitulate a number of events that occurred in the Thins family from 1641 to 1657.

14) 20 April 1641 (Prot. not. C. P. Bleiswijck, no. 1914)*³⁵: This document records the sale of the house on the Oude Langendijck by Jacob van den Velden to Jan Thins, presumed to be Maria Thins's brother, living in Gouda. The price of the house was 2,400 guildens. It was situated on the 'corner of the Molen Poort', a narrow alley running south from the Oude Langendijck to the Burgwal. I have not been able to locate the house more precisely³⁶.

Hendrick Jacobsz. van den Velden (±1589–±1666)³⁷, who

sold his house to Jan Thins, was a Roman Catholic who appears to have played a leading role in Delft's catholic community³⁸. The house itself was part of the *Paepenhoek* (the papist's corner), a catholic neighborhood best known for its 'hidden' attic church run by the jesuit order³⁹. This church was probably situated on the East side of the Mole(n)-poort on the Oude Langendijck and was thus contiguous with, if not in, one of the three houses sold by van den Velden in 1641 (See Illustration no. 2)⁴⁰. Maria Thins also owned a house on the North side of Delft on the West side of the Haeghpoot (*Huysing protocol* no. 4352).

The legal separation of Maria Thins and her husband Reynier Bollenes had occurred about 1640, a year or so before Jan Thins's purchase of the house on the Oude Langendijck. Maria Thins and her two daughters Cornelia and Catharina moved to Delft shortly afterwards, though apparently not, as we shall see, into the house purchased by her brother. Van Peer in his unpublished typescript on the Vermeer family, which summarizes a number of Gouda documents concerning the turbulent marriage and the subsequent separation of Vermeer's mother-in-law, supplies evidence of the profound enmity that Maria Thins and Reynier Bollenes harbored for each other – and which extended to any son, daughter, brother, or sister who took the side of one party or the other in the dispute. In the 1640's, the combat, waged *via* notarial depositions, spread from Gouda to Delft.

15) 15 January 1647 (Prot. not. Jacob van Santen, no. 2015)*: The notaries Govert Rota and Symon Mesch testify that they went to the house of Dorethe Michielsdr. on the north side of the Vlamingsstraat at the request of Reynier Bolnesch, brickbaker, and heard from her that the sister of Joan Thins (presumably Maria), who, along with her brother was living next-door to her, Dorethe, and in his house,

³² We recall that the first painting listed in Reynier Jansz.'s inventory of 1623 represented a flutist (no. 22 in 'New Documents I'). Also, in an attestation of 20 September 1622, witnessed by Reynier Jansz. caffawercker, Cornelis Cornelisz., *speelman*, testified about a dance held outside Delft (Prot. not. H. Vockestaert, no. 1587)*. Since Vermeer's father does not appear as a witness for this notary in any other document, I suspect he may have been acquainted with the attestant.

³³ On this point see the discussion of *Musica Laetitiae Comes Medicina Dolorum* in Blankert, pp. 44–45. I may also add that a sheet of legibly annotated music appears in the foreground of the 'Love Letter' in the Rijksmuseum.

³⁴ This archival find was kindly communicated to me by H.W. van Leeuwen of the Delft Gemeente Archief.

³⁵ Referred to in Van Peer, 'Jan Vermeer . . .', p. 223, note 26.

³⁶ In any case, there is no reason to believe that the house just to the West of the Molen Poort, illustrated by Swillens (*op. cit.* plate 35), is the one where Vermeer later lived. Research done on the *Huysing Protocol* (which mentions the house of Maria Thins) indicates that the house Swillens illustrated belonged to Simon van Slingelandt.

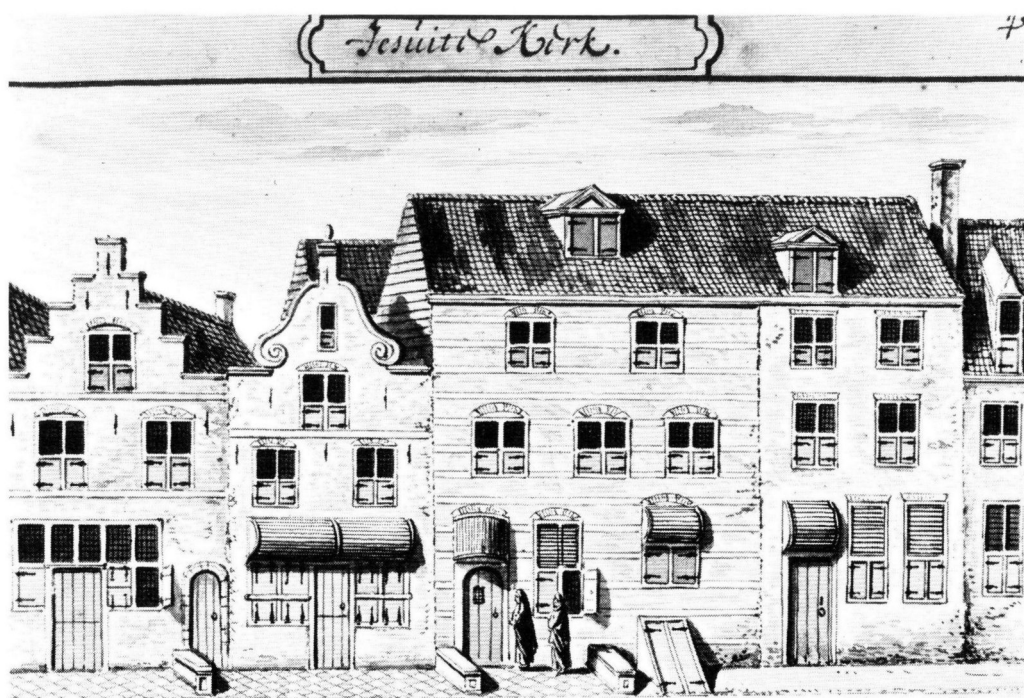
³⁷ On 8 February 1664, Hendrick Jacobsz. van den Velden is said to be 75 years old (Prot. not. N. Vrijenbergh, no. 2061)*. On 4 February 1667, he is said to be 'late' (*zaliger*) (same notary, no. 2064)*.

³⁸ On 19 September 1648 (Prot. not. C. P. Bleyswijck, no. 1901)*, a witness declares him to be 'van goede roomsche catholycke apostolycke geloof ende alhier van de voorn. catholique seer bemint' (of good Roman Catholic Apostolic faith and well-beloved in this town by the above-named catholics). Along with the sculptor Adriaen Simonsz. Samuels (a near neighbor of Vermeer's), he testified on 20 October 1659 that Bastiaen Amoure and his

wife had been wed by a priest 'in the Roman Apostolic Catholic manner'. They also declared that the priests had performed several such marriages 'despite the oppression with regard to the free exercise of the Roman catholic faith, which may not be done here' (*mits de benauthelijdt int reguardt men de vrye exercitie die alhier te landen niet en mach gedaen werden*). Cornelis P. Bleyswijck, the notary who drew up this act (no. 1902 above-given date)* may have been Roman Catholic himself.

³⁹ See M. L., *Sint Josefskerk te Delft*, Delft 1928.

⁴⁰ It is perhaps significant that secret catholic services had been performed in the Thins family house, 'de Trapsen', in Gouda, when Maria had been a child (A.J.J.M. Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse familie geschiedenis', unpublished typescript, no date, p. 2).



2

A. Rademaker, the 'Jesuite Kerk', Delft, drawing, *Gemeente-archief Delft*.

2

had packed her goods and was ready to leave because she had been mistreated by him. In a parenthetical remark, Dorethe was said to have observed that he was 'keeping a very bad house'.

Maria Thins and her husband only came to an agreement concerning the separation of their properties in December 1648. In March 1649, she finally received 15,616 guildens as her part of the settlement⁴¹.

16) 15 July 1649 (Prot. not. J. Spoors, no. 1674)*: This is the first of many complaints recorded in Delft notarial acts that Maria Thins made against her unruly son Willem. Dirck Cornelis Verkerck appears before the notary at the request of Maria Thins ('Johan' crossed out) and declares that some time ago he heard Willem Bollenes, son of the petitioner, say to M^r. Claude Jansz. Kerckeringh, town surgeon in Gouda, that he, Willem, had met his mother with great irreverence and, save your respect, had turned his arse toward her' (*met groote irreverentie met verlof den naers toegekeert hadde*). Kerckeringh had reported to Johan Thins that Willem had prided himself in so doing. Maria Thins was said to be very despondent over this behavior.

17) 18 June 1657 (Prot. not. Schaffintveld, Gouda)⁴²: The first known testament of Maria Thins is passed before her notary in Gouda on this date. Besides a donation to the poor, she leaves all her clothing and all her private belongings to her daughter Catharina, including the silverware that Catharina has already received from her – consisting of an underbelt (*onderriem*) and a key-belt (*sleutel-*

riem) – plus 100 guildens given to her this year, together with rings, bracelets, and a golden chain. She bequeathes to her namesake and goddaughter Maria Vermeer, probably the oldest daughter of the artist, 200 guildens. Her son Willem is left only her bed, two pair of sheets, two pillows, and two blankets. Her remaining goods, including her household goods and silverware and 'all her movable and immovable property', are bequeathed to the children of Willem and of Catharina, who will be entitled to enjoy the usufruct thereof during their lifetime. (Willem, as it turns out, was never married.)

I now resume the sequence of documents in chronological order.

18) 16 May 1661 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 673 I and II)*: The first item in the inventory of Cornelis Cornelisz. de Helt, innkeeper 'In de Jongen Prins', who died on this date, reads as follows:

Int Voorhuys

In den eersten een schilderye in een swarte lyst door Jan van der Meer (In the front parlor, firstly a painting in a black frame by Jan van der Meer). In the same room, there were two landscapes, three seascapes, one kitchen scene, two flower pieces and three smaller paintings all without artist's names⁴³. In the kitchen, there hung a *poëterie* (mythological scene) by van de Venne; in an interior room, a fruit piece by Gillis de Berch; and in a small hall, a painting by 'Vromans' (presumably Pieter Vroomans, the follower of Bramer). De Helt's possessions were auctioned on 14

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

eeuwse . . .', p. 20.

⁴² Summarized in Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-

⁴³ The second item in the inventory was *een*

rond asch, which may have been a round painting by Pieter van Asch or a round axel-shaped object.

June 1661 (*boedel* no. 673, II). The painting by 'Van der Meer' sold for 20 guildens 10 stuivers, one by Van Beyeren for 8 guildens 10, one by 'Molier' (probably Pieter Mulier) for 8 guildens 10, one by 'van Loo' (Jacob van Loo) for 3 guildens 13, and the one by Vromans for 10 guildens 15. Out of 64 paintings, which brought a total of 380 guildens 6, only three paintings sold for more than the one by Van der Meer (two panels for 21 guildens 5 and 36 guildens respectively and the Five Senses for 30 guildens 15). De Helt's household goods brought a total of 2,862 guildens 6 stuivers. It cannot be proved beyond a doubt that the painting by Van der Meer was actually by Vermeer and not by Jan van der Meer of Haarlem, but I consider this latter possibility extremely unlikely. In this inventory the only named painters who did not belong to the St. Lucas guild in Delft were the seascape painter Pieter Mulier and the genre painter Jacob van Loo. Since both of these also appear in other Delft inventories of the 1650s and 1660s (7 and 6 examples respectively), I surmise they must have had some local reputation. The Haarlem landscape painter does not, to my knowledge, appear in any Delft inventory of the 1660s or early 1670s. In 1661 when the inventory was prepared and the sale took place, Vermeer was headman of the guild. This fact was presumably well known. In the improbable case where the clerk who drew up the inventory had recognized that a painting had been made by the Haarlem landscapist, I should think he would have tried to distinguish his name (by adding 'from Haarlem') from his better known homonym. The same arguments apply to Jan van der Meer of Utrecht.

The price of the painting by 'Van der Meer', while much higher than the average for the inventory as a whole, seems quite low compared to the 600 *livres* (i.e. 600 guildens) that Monsieur de Monconys asserted had been paid for a single-figure painting by the Delft master some time before August 1663, or even compared to the *six pistoles* (about 48 guildens) that he said he would have thought he had overpaid for this painting if he had bought it for that sum⁴⁴. We must, I think, conclude that the painting in the inventory was an early work, like 'The Visit to the Tomb' (also valued at 20 guildens), painted before Vermeer adopted his more meticulous and painstaking style.

19) On 15 May 1662 (Prot. not. Straffintveld, Gouda)⁴⁵: Maria Thins amends her testament of 1657. She adds to the silver and gold that Catharina has already received from her a gold cross, two silver dishes, and a gilded wine-tankard. She gives to her goddaughter Maria, in the form of a predecease bequest, a sum of 200 guildens and to the other

children of Catharina and Vermeer together a sum of 400 guildens. She also gives her son-in-law Johan Vermeer in the form of a similar bequest a sum of 50 guildens yearly, so long as he shall live, as interest on a capital sum that must remain intact during his lifetime, and, after his death, will accrue to his children (born of Catharina). She deeds 20 guildens to her servant, provided the latter will have lived with her three years before her (Maria's) death and has deserved the bequest, to the discretion of Catharina. She further stipulates that Willem and Catharina will receive the usufruct (i.e. the rents) of her landed properties in Bon Repas and Oudt Beyerlandt. These properties will remain entailed (unalienable) not only for the lifetime of Catharina and Willem but for that of their children. They will finally accrue in the form of disposable property to their grandchildren.

20) End of 1662 (Obreen's *Archief*, vol. 1, p. 68): Johannes Vermeer was headman of the guild of St. Lucas in 1662. He was not yet 30 years old when he was elected, presumably on 17 October 1662 (on St. Lucas's day), for a two-year term. Up to his election, he was the youngest headman chosen under the New Guild Letter of 1611. (The average age in a sample of 18 painter headmen elected before Vermeer whose date of birth is known within a year was 49 years old)⁴⁶. The retiring headman of the painter's craft in 1662 was Cornelis de Man. According to the Guild Letter of 1611⁴⁷ he was one of the three headmen (the other being the glassmaker Arent van Sanen and the faïencier Aelbrecht Keijser) who must have nominated Vermeer in October 1661, along with another candidate, to become headman for the coming year. (In 1670, Vermeer returned the favor by nominating Cornelis de Man for the following year.)

21) 17 January 1663 (Prot. not. G. van Assendelft, no. 2130)*: On this date Willem Bolnes, Maria's son and Vermeer's brother-in-law, recognizes a debt of 300 guildens owed to his mother arising from debts paid by Maria Thins on his behalf as well as from money lent to him. He promises to pay her the main sum, together with interest reckoned at four percent, within three years. To guarantee repayment Willem Bolnes assigns to his mother by the present act the three-years' proceeds from three *morgen* (circa three hectares) of lands located in Gelekenes in the Barony of Liesveld belonging to him as owner of a certain vicariate and thus entitled to these revenues. The witnesses are Johannes Vermeer, (*meest* crossed out) *schilder*, and Wouter Jansz. Bylt, *steenhouwer* (sculptor or stone carver). Bylt was probably one of the journeymen employed by the widow of the sculptor Heyndrik Jansz. van der Schrick (who died

⁴⁴ *Journal de Voyages*, Lyon 1666, cited in Blankert, p. 147.

⁴⁵ Summarized in Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . .', pp. 20, 24–25.

⁴⁶ In cases where a painter had become headman more than once, his age was taken to be

that at which he first acceded to the office.

⁴⁷ Article 22 of the Guild Letter of 1611 stipulated that the two headmen in the first year of their two years' service shall nominate four men from the guild and deliver their names to the burgomasters who would then select two out of the four as headmen for the following year (*Schildersgildebrief*, Delft, Ge-

meente Archief, I, no. 1993). In 1648, a third headman, representing the faïenciers, was added to the list. I presume that the headman-painter, jointly responsible for nominating candidates for the following year with a glassmaker and a faïencier, had the most say in the selection of candidates from his own craft.

around 1659) or by his successor Adriaen Samuels, whose atelier was located virtually next door to Vermeer's residence on the Oude Langendijk⁴⁸. It is curious that the notary began to write *meester schilder* and then changed his mind. Yet Vermeer was not only a master in the guild but one of its headmen in that very year.

22) 16 October 1663 (Prot. not. J. van Ruiven, no. 1967)*: Mathijs Jorisz. Duimhoff, about 25 years old, and Michiels Michielsz. Buijouw, about 24, testify at the request of Heyndrick Jacobsz. van der Houck and of Jan van Acker, headmen of the carpenters' and masons' guild in Leiden, that they had met Jan Jonasz. (van der Plaat) and Isaac Cornelisz., master carpenters in Delft, 'in the house of Reynier Vermeer in his lifetime innkeeper in Mechelen' (*ten huise van Reynier Vermeer in syn leven herbergier in Mechelen*). We shall see below (document no. 35) that Dingnum Baltens did not rent 'Mechelen' until 1669. It is not entirely clear from the above document whether the two masters carpenters from Leiden met their Delft colleagues in 'Mechelen' when it was run as an inn or as a private house, although the first alternative seems more probable.

23) 9 February 1664 (Prot. not. N. Vrijenbergh, no. 2061)*: Among the debts owed for medicines delivered due to the estate of Dirck de Cocq, apothecary, and his wife Marian van Leeuwen, who had died on 17 November 1663, we find:

'Jan van der Meer *schilder voor uts*. 6 g. 13 st.'

Since the *uts* (*ut supra*) refers to *geleverde medicamenten*, we may interpret this entry to mean that Jan van der Meer owed to the apothecary 6 guildens 13 stuivers for medicines delivered.

Vermeer's neighbor Adriaen (Samuels) *steenhouwer* owed 7 guildens 5 stuivers; the painter, faiencier, and art dealer Abraham de Coge owed 1 gulden 4 stuivers.

De Cocq collected paintings chiefly with religious subjects, including a 'Magdalene' and a 'Beheading of the Apostle Paul'. The only attributed painting in the inventory was a kitchen scene by Lange Pier (Pieter Aertsen).

It would of course be of considerable significance if we could ascertain that Vermeer was already sickly more than ten years before his death, but this cannot be inferred merely from the evidence that he bought medicine which could have been used by anyone in his family.

We now introduce a series of documents referring to Maria Thins's energetic campaign against her unruly son Willem. A scene in which Willem was the protagonist,

described in document no. 26, involved Catharina Bolnes, Vermeer's wife.

24) 4 June 1666 (Prot. not. F. Boogert⁴⁹, no. 2006)*: Maritge Woutersdr. 50 years of age, and Heindricge Dirxdr. Veremans, spinster, 28, testify before notary Boogert at the request of Maria Tins. First Maritge Woutersdr. declares that she had now and then frequented the house of Hermanus Taerling where Mary Gerrits was living as a service maid (*dienstmeijt*). Mary had told her that she had a suitor in Waelwijck but that his relatives there were not willing to permit her to marry him. She and her suitor had thought up the idea that she would pretend that she had been made pregnant by him so that his relatives would consent to the marriage. 'As evidence of this, she had for some time bound herself up with a cushion on her belly to induce these relatives to believe she was pregnant' (*Tot een teken van dien haer hadde enige tijd toegemaect met een kussen op haar buijck te binden, om also de selve vrunden des te beter te doen geloven dat sij swanger was.*) Heindricge Dirxdr. then declares that she was living in Waelwijck where rumors were going around that Mary Gerrits was pregnant. She had met Mary in the church with her bosom quite loosely laced (*mette boesem heel loos gegeren*) and looking so bulky that, to all appearance, she must be with child; but she had learned that this was only a pretense (*maer gefingeert te wesen*). Both witnesses set their mark in lieu of a signature.

This document may be understood in the light of the following information. At some time previous to the events mentioned above, Willem Bolnes had left his father's house in Gouda, apparently because he could not get along with his irascible father, and settled in his mother's house in Delft. After a while, his relations with his mother began to sour. Violent quarrels erupted. In the second half of 1663, Maria applied to Messrs. the burgomasters to have him committed to a private house of correction (*verbeterhuijs*). This request was granted. Maria Thins was entrusted with the custody of her son's estate on 13 January 1665⁵⁰. The young man was confined to the house of Hermanus Taerling on the Vlamingsstraat, called '*de drie Taerlingen*' (the three dice)⁵¹. It was in Taerling's house that he had met Maria Gerrits, as the sequel of the affair reveals.

25) 24 June 1666 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2006)*: Annetge Harmans, widow of Antoni Taerling, former substitute sheriff of Delft, and Maeyke Pieters, the wife of Hermanus Taerling, testify at the request of Maria Thins

⁴⁸ See document no. 26 below.

⁴⁹ From this date on Maria Thins entrusts her affairs for several years to this notary, who seems to have had extensive contacts with artists (as did the notary Willem de Langue from 1620 to his death in 1655). Boogert was godfather to children of Pieter de Hooch baptized in Amsterdam in 1661, 1663, 1664, and 1672, and to children of Heyndrick van der Burch baptized in Leiden on 23 February 1659 and 5 November 1662. (For this information I am indebted to Peter Sutton and

P. de Baar of the Leiden Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst.) Adam Pick and Adam Pijnacker often witnessed documents for him in the period 1649 to 1651. It is possible that Maria Thins chose Boogert as her notary because of Vermeer's prior acquaintance with him.

⁵⁰ This was revealed in an act dated 25 November 1676, cited in Obreen, *Archief*, vol. 4, p. 296.

⁵¹ Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . .' pp. 25-26. There are frequent notarial references

to this house of correction, 'which was engaged in the lodging and keeping of a few delinquent and mentally sick persons (*sig generende met het logeren ende houden van eenige debouchanten ende kranksinige personen*). The yearly costs of keeping a person in this institution were 300 guildens a year (Prot. not. J. Ranck, no. 2122, 22 September 1670)*. See also Prot. not. C. van Vliet, no. 2037, 27 March 1668* (witnessed by Willem Bolnes).

that Marija Gerrits from Waelwijck at the time she had hired herself out (as maid) in the house of the attestant Macyke Pieters had said many things about her previous stay in Bommel and about her suitor there which turned out to be a tissue of lies. What did happen is that Willem Bolenes, the son of the petitioner, who was a committed person (*commissael*) in the house had gone with her to church early in the morning on a certain Sunday and that she had returned alone. The attestants had reproached her with having knowledge of his absence, but she had sworn many an oath that she knew nothing about it. It then transpired that Willem Bolenes had emptied the clothes from his coffer and taken them away in the morning. The witnesses concluded their testimony by declaring that the oaths Mary Gerrits had sworn to them concerning the departure of Willem Bolenes were notoriously false and that, in place of the cattle breeder that she said she was going to marry, they understood that on the contrary not only was she going to marry Bolenes but already for some time had slept with him, as Mary Gerrits had acknowledged (*sy attestanten verstaen hebben dat sij ter contrarie metten voorn. Bolenes niet alleen soude trouwen maer al ettelijcke tijd bij hem te hebben geslapen, so sij Mary Gerrits heeft voorgegeven*).

The following document is transcribed in full with the exception of redundant notarial formulac.

26) 3 July 1666 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2006)*: *Op huijden . . . compareerden . . . Sr. W^m de Koorde, Gerrit Cornelisz. steenhower, ende Tanneke Everpoel de welcke getuigden . . . ten versoecke van Juffr. Marija Tins waerachtich te wesen ende eerst de voorn. Tanneke Everpoel dat sij inden jare 1663 heeft gewoont gehad by de Requirante ende deselffs swager Johannes Vermeer. Verclaerde voorts de selve Tanneken Everpoel ende Gerrit Cornelisz. dat tot verscheijde reijzen haer Req^{te} zoon Willem Bolenes tot haer Req^{te} huijse seer groot geweld heeft gestelt. In soo verde dat dickwils menigte van personen voorde deur vergaderden, vloeckende ende swerende op desselfs moeder makende van de selve een ouwt paeps varcken, een duijvelinne ende sodanige lelijke schelt woorden die om eerbaerheid verswegen werden. Verclaerde nog de voorn. Tanneken Everpoel dat sij heeft gesien dat hij Bolenes ooc een mes heeft getrocken, soeckende de selve sijne moeder daer mede te quetsen. Verclaerde wijders dat de Req^{te} sodanigen geweld heeft geleden van den voorsz. haeren soon Bolenes dat sij in ettelijcke dagen niet dorst van haer camer comen, ende dat men haer spijs ende drank op haer camer genootsaect was te brengen, dat mede sij Bolenes gelijcke geweld van tijd tot tijd stelde tegens des Req^{te} dogter de huysvrouw vande voorn. Johannes Vermeer haer dreijgende tot diverse reijzen met een stock te slaen niet tegenstaende de selve op het uijtterste swanger was, ende sulx ooc soude hebben geffectueert ten ware door haer getuige was belet geworden. Verclaerde mede de voorn. de Koorde dat hij tot diverse reijzen de voorn. Bolenes op de aenclagten van sijn suster heeft metten arm vanden deur gelegd, vermits het geweld dat hij voor haer deur was stellende, dat mede hij gesien heeft dat hij met een stock*

daer een ijssere pen in was verscheijde malen naer sijn suster heeft gesteken. Verclaerden eintelijcken alle de getugen dat de Req^{te} seer groot geweld van de voorn. Bolenes heeft uytgestaen ande dat hy dicwils sij heeft aengestelt als een uitsinnig mens, ende dat de voorn. Req^{te} over't voorsz. geweld clagtig sijnde heeft vanden magistraet geobtimeert dat sij hem vermogte vast te setten. Wijders niet getugende presenterende het gene voorsz. is des gereq^{te} sijnde te verclaeren. Verleden binnen delft ter presentie van Johannis van Bert ende Willem van Westerhoven beijde mijne clerquen als getugen'. Willem Coordij and the two clerks signed in a literate manner. Tanneken Everpoel and Gerrit Cornelisz. both set their marks (a cross).

Tanneke Everpoel, a witness along with Willem de Koorde and Gerrit Cornelisz., stone carver, testifying at the request of Maria Thins, declared that she was living in 1663 in the house of the petitioner and her son-in-law Johannes Vermeer. Tanneke and Gerrit Cornelisz. both declared that on various occasions Willem Bolnes had created a violent commotion in the house – to such an extent that many people gathered before the door – as he swore at his mother, calling her an old popish swine, a she-devil and other such ugly swearwords. She, Tanneken, also saw that Bolnes had pulled a knife and tried to wound his mother with it. She declared further that Maria Thins had suffered so much violence from her son that she dared not go out of her room and was forced to have her food and drink brought there, also that Bolnes committed similar violence from time to time against the daughter of Maria Thins, the wife of Johannes Vermeer, threatening to beat her on diverse occasions with a stick, notwithstanding the fact that she was pregnant to the last degree. The witness added that this would have happened had she not prevented it (i.e. that she had put an obstacle in the way of his aggression). De Koorde then declared that on various occasions, upon the complaints of Bolnes's sister, he had barred Bolnes, who was making a great deal of violence before the door of his sister, from entering. He also had seen Bolnes several times thrust at his sister with a stick with an iron pen at the end of it. All the witnesses testified that Maria Thins had greatly suffered from the violence of her son, who showed himself to be a man out of his mind, and that the petitioner finally had obtained from the magistrate of Delft that she be allowed to have her son 'set fast' (committed to custody). The behavior of Willem Bolnes as depicted in this document is strikingly similar to that of his father at the time the family was still together in Gouda⁵². Reynier Bolnes had not only assaulted his wife Maria but also his children Cornelia and Catharina on a number of occasions in the period 1639 to early 1641. It would seem that Willem identified with and took over the role of his father in the Delft household.

Willem de Koorde was a master carpenter and innkeeper, son of the well known innkeeper (and collector of paintings) Jan Coordij; he lived on the Oude Langendijck about ten

⁵² Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . . 'pp. 10–11 gives extensive evidence on the basis of extracts from notarial depositions in Gouda of the father's violence.

houses to the West of Maria Thins's residence⁵³. The second was a stonecarver who had worked as a journeyman for Heyndrick Jansz. van der Schriek and, after his death, for Adriaen Simonsz. Samuels, both masters in the guild of St. Lucas, whose workshop was almost next door to the house where Vermeer lived⁵⁴. Samuels, like Heyndrick van den Velden, was active in the Roman Catholic community⁵⁵. Who was Tanneke Everpoel? An illiterate person living in the Thins household at the time of the incidents described in the deposition, she can hardly have been anything but a family servant. She may well have been the only servant named by Maria Thins in her testament of 1662 (document no. 19). She was probably also the 'Tanneken' who had a claim on Vermeer's estate at the time of his death⁵⁶.

27) 21 January 1667 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2006)*: Maria Thins names the attorney Martin Kemels to represent her before an appropriate court of justice against Maria Gerrits of Waelwijck, to obtain a sentence against her and to appeal if necessary.

28) 23 January 1667 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2006)⁵⁷: Willem Bolnes, at present confined in the house of Harmen Taerling, declares that he had formerly also been confined in this house by order of Juffr. Maria Thins, but, having obtained permission to go in and out, he had been told by the maid Mary Gerrits that his mother had given an order to have him locked up. Whereupon, being intimidated, he had been persuaded by Mary Gerrits that he should go away and thus escape his mother's tutelage. He had been so misled that he had intended to marry her, and to this end, had registered the banns (*siyne geboden mette selve heeft laten aenteijcken*). His mother, having intelligence of this had set herself in opposition. She had told him of the misbehavior of Mary Gerrits, who had confessed about certain thefts, which she claimed to be of little importance. Now that he, the attestant, was again under obedience to his mother and various attestations had been shown to him about the dishonesty of Mary Gerrits, he fully realized that she was devoid of virtue and he had no desire to frequent her again or to marry her. Moreover he declared himself to be grateful to his mother not only that she had dissuaded him but that she had set herself in opposition (to the marriage). He also had his mother to thank for having brought him again 'under her discipline and government'.

29) 10 May 1667 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2006)⁵⁸:

Maria Thins, on her own behalf and as mother and guardian of her son Willem Bolnes and as the authorized administrator of his properties, names Johannes Vermeer to act in her name to collect from her debtors the sums owed to her, and especially a sum of 3,400 guildens⁵⁹ and the interest accruing therefrom, owed to her by Pieter Crijnen, secured by a *steenplaets*⁶⁰ located 'over Moort near Gouda' (in Moordrecht) that she, Maria Thins, had sold to Crijnen, plus a sum of 250 guildens owed to her by Crijnen as heiress of Cornelia Thins, also with the accrued interest. She further empowers her son-in-law to collect 1000 guildens plus accrued interest from the churchmaster or the regents of Moort and a sum of 289 guildens 10 stuivers owed to her as proceeds from the sale of osier-lands (*grienden*), sold on behalf of her son, under the supervision of the judges of Liesvelt. Finally she empowers Vermeer to invest these sums or otherwise to alienate (*te demanueren*) these assets according to his judgement and discretion, to pay any costs or charges devolving upon her (from these transactions), and in general to effect receipts and expenditures (in connection with these transactions), as if she were present.

30) 27 September 1667 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2006)⁶¹: Maria Thins living on the Oude Langendijck, very well known to the notary, having revoked all past testaments, codicils, and acts of last will bequeathes to her son Willem Bolnes a sixth part of her estate, as his legitimate share, and to her daughter Catharina, wife of Jan Vermeer, the remaining five sixths. Even though she does not have to give any reasons for her decision, she wishes to declare, in order to dispel all false presumptions, that her son Willem Bolnes, from his youth on, behaved in an unruly way towards her, scolded, abused, and threatened her, and extorted money from her under pressure. This had gone so far that she had been compelled to complain to the town authorities (*heere van de Weth*) and to have him confined, which authorities had also vested in her the administration of his property. After he had spent a few years in this confinement, he had asked her, on pretext of his great improvement, to be allowed to go in and out under supervision of the person who was in charge of him. This had been tolerated in the hope that it would come to a good issue, but he had so far forgotten himself that with the help and protection (*onder 't faveur*) of a certain Mary Gerrits, a housemaid who was living there, he had packed his goods and run away, the same Mary Gerrits having followed him a few days

⁵³ On 14 February 1654, Jan de Coorde had sold to his son Willem the house on Ouden Langendijck, formerly known as 'Pater Noster' and now as 'Koning van Engelandt' (Prot. not. F. van Hurck, no. 2095)*. Willem de Coorde was in contractual association with the master carpenter Albrecht de Swart who co-signed a document as witness with Johannes Vermeer on 18 January 1674 (the contract is given in Prot. not. N. Vrijenbergh, no. 2058, 3 August 1661; Vermeer's signature as a witness is cited in Blankert, op. cit., p. 149).

⁵⁴ Deposition of 16 August 1667 (Prot. not.

N. Vrijenbergh, no. 2064)*. On the entrance of Samuels's house on the Molen Poort, see deposition of 18 September 1663, (Prot. not. J. Spoors no. 1678)*.

⁵⁵ See note 38 above.

⁵⁶ Van Peer, 'Drie collecties schilderijen van Jan Vermeer,' *Oud Holland*, 72, 1957, p. 96. It was usual in Delft at the time to leave a small legacy to a family servant, who was often identified in estate papers only by a first name.

⁵⁷ Summarized less completely than in the

present text in Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . .' pp. 27–28.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 25–26.

⁵⁹ Van Peer read 'drie duizend zes honderd gulden'. The third word is partly written over but appears to be 'vijer'.

⁶⁰ Note that Reynier Bolnes was a *steenbacker* or brickmaker.

⁶¹ First cited in 'Drie collecties . . .', p. 98, note 17.

later. Mary Gerrits, who was herself a notorious person and a thief (*een fameus persoon ende een diefwegge*) had wanted to marry him and to this end had proclaimed the banns. The marriage would have taken place if she, Maria Thins, with the help of the law and of the town authorities, which had good knowledge of the bad comportment of her son, had not prevented it, whereupon Mary Gerrits had brought a suit against her, testatrix, before the Court of Holland. Even though she, Maria Thins, had cause to disinherit her son she preferred to bequeath to him his legitimate share and further, to show him her tender-hearted and motherly affection (*moederlijke teerhertige genegenetheit*) and to ensure that he should not dilapidate his goods, she, testatrix, willed and desired that, in place of his legitimate share, her son should be allowed to choose the usufruct and income from half her estate, which would then be considered to be in lieu of his legitimate share, and in case he did choose the usufruct (which choice must be made within six weeks after her death, else he must be content with the smaller legitimate share), he must not be given disposition over these goods or the capital therefrom, but this disposition must be vested in Catharina Bolnes and, after her death, in her children and children's children. In case he should content himself with his legitimate share (i.e. the sixth part of her estate) then the goods in this share should be placed under the direction or administration of the Orphan Chamber of this city or wherever the gentlemen of the *Weth* (the town authorities) may decide. These authorities will name a person or persons to supervise the disposition of the capital and usufruct under the stated conditions.

In either case – whether he chooses his legitimate share or half of the fruits of her estate – the gentlemen of the *Weth* will decide whether he should stay in his present place of confinement or elsewhere, unless they became aware of such an improvement in his behavior that they decided upon his release; but she, testatrix, with all due regard for the wisdom of these gentlemen, recommends that they keep a sharp eye over her son and, except under the conditions stated, that they not be inclined to his release. The act concludes with the usual formulae about the authenticity and value of the testament, which was drawn up in the house of the testatrix in the presence of the notary's clerks. It may be noted in passing that Maria Thins on this occasion made no donation either to the poor or to any servant.

31) 2 May 1668 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007)*: Maertge Wouters, wife of Francoijs, corporal in the company of Captain Limburgh, testifies that she had met Maria Gerrits from Wacławijck in The Hague fourteen days ago, who told her that since she (the witness) was ordinarily washing the clothes at the house of Harmanis Taerlingh where Willem Bolnes was confined, she should tell Bollenes that he should patiently wait in the house, that she was working on effecting his speedy release, that she hoped this would occur within six weeks, and that in case it did not occur within that time, he should endure one more

year (of confinement). Eight days later, the witness doing the wash at the house of Taerlingh gave the message to Bollenes, who said that he had nothing to do with Maria Gerrits and that, even though she had won her suit, he would not marry her. Whereupon the witness answered that if she had known the message would not be received favorably, she would not have undertaken to convey it, adding that she would tell Maria Gerrits the next time she spoke to her that he did not want her and that she need not make any efforts to get him. Bollenes then gave her order freely to convey this message to Maria Gerrits.

32) 1668 (Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague, no. 85, Sententien)⁶²: From this document we learn that Maria Gerrits had won her suit against Maria Thins in a lower court. Maria Thins had then appealed to the Court of Holland in The Hague. It was indeed little more than six weeks after the date of this last attestation that the court pronounced its verdict. It found for Maria Thins, now plaintiff in the appeal, and condemned Mary Gerrits to pay the costs of the suit amounting to 32 pounds *vlaems* or 192 guldens. This is the last we hear of Maria Gerrits. Willem Bolnes, under the guardianship of his mother to the end of his life, was buried on 23 March 1676 in the Nicuwe Kerk in the family grave bought by Maria Thins in 1661.

33) 2 June 1668 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007)*: Maria Thins appears before the notary and declares that her late mother's sister, Diewertge Heijndric Dirxdr. van Hensbeeck, in her testament dated 27 November 1603, had named Catharina Heindrix, her mother, together with the children of the late Dirck Hendrixsz. and Cornelis Hendrixsz., as her heirs. Diewertge Heijndric Dirxdr. had stipulated that the assets that were to be divided after her death among her three principal heirs were to remain intact and that only the usufruct was to be consumed, while the capital sums should accrue in freehold to these heirs' children's children. Thus, after Catharina Heindrix and her daughter Maria Thins, who had only enjoyed the usufruct of their part of the estate, Catharina Bollenes, the wife of Johannes Vermeer, and her children were entitled to the assets in freehold. Maria Thins, by this act, empowered Johannes Vermeer, her son-in-law, to collect a sum of 400 guldens plus accrued interest out of her share in the estate from the Orphan Chamber in Gouda, where, according to the testament, the funds proceeding from the goods left by Diewertgen Heindrix were to be deposited. She then adds:

*Ingevalle ooc nog eenige verdere capitalen mogten werden afge-
lost, alwaerd tot de helfte toe van het gene tot voorsz. Weescamer
van den goederen van den voorn. Diewertgen Heindrix mogte
voorden comparants portie berusten, vermits de voorn. haere
comparants voorsz. dogter off den geconstitueerde als de selve
getrouw hebbende, de eene helfte als maer twe kinderen hebbende
daer van is competerende, dat sij constituante hem geconstitueerde
ordre heeft de selve ter voorsz. Weescamer te ligten ende ont-
fangen als sullende de vrugten die haer comparante haer leven*

⁶² Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . .' p. 28.

lang geduerende syn competerende uijt handen van haren soon ontfangen.

This complex sentence may be interpreted as follows. In case it might be possible to redeem more capital assets from the Orphan Chamber, Johannes Vermeer is instructed to collect up to one half of the share accruing to Maria Thins out of her inheritance from her aunt Diewertge Heindrix, the limit of one half being due to the fact that she, Maria Thins, had only two children⁶³. She, Maria Thins, will then receive from the hand of her 'son' (Johannes Vermeer) the usufruct to which she is entitled her life long.

34) 2 January 1669 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007)*: On this date 'Dina Baltens widow and custodian of the estate of the late Reynier Vermeer' put up for sale at auction her house, located on the South West corner of the Oudemanshuysteege ('Mechelen'). She has brought all the deeds relating to the house, the oldest recording a sale of the house by the Court of Holland on 23 May 1597 and the latest in date being the sale of 23 April 1641 (whereby Reynier Vermeer had acquired the house).

The purchaser will take possession of the house on 1 February or 1 May of the current year at his choosing. He will pay the seller 1000 guildens at the time of the transfer. For the rest he will draw up an appropriate acknowledgement of debt (*schuldbrief*). 'In abatement of which purchase price', the buyer will take over and assume first a (mortgage) debt amounting to a capital sum of 2,100 guildens owed to Nicolaes van Tetrode, brewer in Haarlem, running at five percent interest, and second a debt of 400 guildens owed to Arent Jorisz. Pynacker, as guardian of the children of -- (left blank) also running at five percent interest. The seller promises that no other charges or mortgages, incurred during the time of her possession or that of her late husband, encumber the property.

The auction took place on 2 January 1669. In the third phase of the bidding, the price came down, starting from 5,000 guildens and descending finally to 3,700 guildens, at which point the inn was still not 'vacated' and was evidently withdrawn. After this unsuccessful attempt to sell 'Mechelen', Dingnum Baltens was reduced to renting the inn.

35) 1 February 1669 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007)*: Dina Baltens, widow of Reijnier Vermeer, and Leendert van Ackerdijck, shoemaker, draw up a contract before the notary Boogert, for the rental of Dina Baltens's house named 'Mechelen', 'in order to be used as an inn as she has done for many years'. The rental contract is to run for the next three years, starting on 1 May 1669. The rent is set at 190 guildens a year, to be paid each quarter⁶⁴. The lessor will allow the lessee the use of the beer and wine racks, together with the *kanebort* (the board on which jugs and tankards were placed) in the cellar, which is nailed fast

(to the wall). The inn probably did not prosper under the new management either, considering that when it was rented again, in January 1672, the lessee was an apothecary (named Johan van der Meer) and that his rent was only 180 guildens per year⁶⁵. This was, however, just before the outbreak of the war with France, when business was already very poor.

36) 11 February 1670 (Prot. not. G. van Assendelft, no. 2128)*: In their second testament Anthony van der Wiel and Geertruy Reyniersdr. Vermeer again name each other universal heirs. If Geertruy should die before Anthony, he must, within five years, turn over all her clothes and personal possessions as well as the sum of 400 guildens to her relatives and heirs *ab intestato* (i.e. the individuals who would legally be considered her heirs if she had died without making a will). The 'relatives and heirs', in my opinion, can only refer to Johannes Vermeer, her sole brother and heir, since by that time the couple had no live children, her father was long dead, and her mother Dingnum Baltens was buried on 13 February, two days after the new will was signed. (Burial normally took place either two or three days after death.) Indeed, her death may have been the immediate motive for the couple's decision to draw up a new testament. It is notable that if the couple's old testament⁶⁶ had been valid, Johannes Vermeer would not have inherited any property whatever upon Geertruy's death. The testament further stipulated that if Anthony should happen to die before Geertruy, the widow would be obligated to pay his unmarried sister Maria van der Wiel the sum of 300 guildens and his brother Jacobus van der Wiel in The Hague all his equipment for working ebony, with the exception of his stock of ebony wood. Finally, reverting to the possibility of Geertruy's dying before Anthony, we learn that any assets 'unsold and unspent' left after her death (presumably after the aforementioned bequest of 400 guildens had been paid out) must be shared equally by Anthony and by Geertruy's 'relatives and heirs *ab intestato*'.

Anthony van der Wiel, in place of a signature, sets his mark; Geertruy signs in a trembling hand, 'Geertruit Vormeer'.

37) Geertruy Vermeer was buried on 2 May 1670, less than three months after this testament was made (*Begraafboek* no. 41, fol. 142v)*. Dingnum Baltens, who, as we have seen, had been buried on February 13, was living at the time of her death on the Vlamingsstraat, presumably with her daughter. The entries in the *Opperste kleeboek*, which records death donations to the Camer van Charitate, were 6 guildens 6 stuivers each for Dingnum Baltens (on 26 August 1670) and for her daughter Geertruy (donated on 27 May 1671)⁶⁷. In an act that may be considered a sequel to the testament of Geertruy Vermeer and Anthony van der Wiel,

⁶³ The sentence may also be read to mean that Catharina had only two children, but this interpretation is unlikely to be correct, given what we know about the artist's progeny.

⁶⁴ At 5 percent interest, the capitalized sum of the rent would be 3,800 guildens, or just

over what appears to have been the reservation price of 3,700 guildens at the Dutch auction of the preceding month, at which price, when the house was still unsold, Dingnum Baltens had withdrawn it from sale.

⁶⁵ Document cited in A. Bredius, 'Nieuwe

bijdragen over Johannes Vermeer', in *Oud Holland*, 28 (1910) p. 62.

⁶⁶ Summarized in 'New Documents I', no. 36.

⁶⁷ Camer van Charitate, *Opperste kleeboek* no. 74, fol. 8 and fol. 11v of Part II, respectively.

Johannes Vermeer, artist-painter in Delft, acknowledged having received his share of the estate of his sister Geertruijt Vermeer, except for 648 guildens still owed to him by his brother-in-law Anthony van der Wiel. Already on 13 July 1670, Vermeer, in the settlement of his late mother's estate, had received the inn 'Mechelen' as his part of the inheritance⁶⁸.

38) September 1673⁶⁹: Johannes Vermeer appears before the magistrates of Gouda and declares that he, Vermeer, is married to Catharina Bolnes, daughter of Maria Thins, residing in Delft, and that Dievertje Hensbeek, the great aunt of his mother-in-law had left a capital sum, the usufruct of which was to be consumed by Maria Thins, while the capital itself would devolve 'on her children'. In the name of his wife and with approval of Maria Thin, he asks for half the capital, which amounts to 5,183 guildens, promising that he will turn over the interest on the sum obtained to his mother-in-law. The magistrates approve the request and allot Vermeer about 2,500 guildens in obligations. Vermeer in January 1674 sold and converted into cash two obligations worth 800 guildens apparently proceeding from the Gouda inheritance⁷⁰.

39) On 5 March 1675 (Prot. not. C. P. Bleiswijk)⁷¹, Johannes Vermeer *constryck schilder* (distinguished artist painter), was given power of attorney by Maria Thins, widow of Reynier Bollenes and guardian of her son Willem Bollenes, to act in her name in the division of the estate of Reynier Bollenes and to collect the sums to which her son was entitled out of the estate. Finally, on 26 March 1675, he showed up in Gouda, for the last time as far as we know, to lease three *morgen* of land located in Wilnis on behalf of Maria Thins⁷². Reference is made in the document to the difficulties the tenants had to pay their rents, due to the war (with France)⁷³, so that Vermeer was forced to agree to let them omit the rents for 1673 and 1674.

In July 1675, Vermeer travelled to Amsterdam to borrow 1000 guildens from a notary's *Comptoire*. He was buried on 15 December 1675.

40) 16 December 1675 (*Oppertste Kleed boek* no. 74, fol. 50v of second part)*: 'Johannes Vermeer *kunstschilder aan de Oude Lange dijk niet te halen*'. I take this last expression to mean that the chest, which was supposed to go to the house of the deceased so that his best upper (or outer) garment or a suitable donation for the poor might be deposited therein, was not to be sent to his home on the Oude Langendijk, by reason of the widow's poverty, burdened as she was with eight under-age children, because there was nothing to get, or perhaps even because his wife was Roman Catholic and chose not to give. On the same

day as Catharina Bolnes was buried on 2 January 1688, an entry appeared in the *Opperste kleed boek* (no. 75, first part) 'Catharina Bolnes wed^e van Johan van der Meer'. Next to her name stands the laconic inscription 'niet'.

For the sake of comparison, we may note that the heirs of the painter and merchant Louis Elsevier, who also died in December 1675, paid 31 guildens 10 stuivers for the *Opperste kleed* (no. 74, second part, fol. 27v). On the other hand, there was no donation for the aged Leonart Bramer, who was buried on 10 February 1674 (*Opperste kleed boek*, no. 74, first part, fol. 38v).

A fair number of documents have already been published on the settlement of the affairs of Johannes Vermeer after his death. I will comment only on the creditors of the estate, mentioned in his widow's petition in bankruptcy of 30 April 1676⁷⁵. I have already referred to 'Tanneken', who may have been the family servant, mentioned in no. 26 above. Hendrick van Buyten (±1638–1702) was the baker to whom she had transferred two paintings in January 1676 in payment (or as surety) for a debt of 617 guildens 17 stuivers that she owed him for bread delivered. He was probably also the 'boulanger' at whose house Mr. de Monconys saw works by Vermeer in August 1663. Emmerentia was the name of van Buyten's sister. Van Buyten was no ordinary baker – although he was on the board of headmen of the bakers' guild in 1668⁷⁶. He and Emmerentia had received inheritances that made them wealthy enough to lend money out regularly⁷⁷. It is not so surprising therefore that he should have been a collector of paintings.

Conclusions

The new documents summarized in this article support the evidence I had already collected in 'New Documents I' concerning the cohesiveness of Johannes Vermeer's extended family on his father's and on his mother's side. His relatives on both sides lent each other money, stood security for each other, and generally provided each other with mutual support (which was undoubtedly crucial for Vermeer's uncle, Reynier Balthensz., when he was arrested in 1619 and in 1652). Vermeer's father emerges from the documents as an impulsive but compassionate person, perhaps what we should call today an extrovert, a character trait that would have stood him well in his innkeeping business. (Cf. above, documents no. 2, 3, and 4.)

The slow repayment of debts incurred by Reynier Jansz. in his innkeeper's trade indicates that the Vermeer family was financially embarrassed about the time of and in the next two or three years after Vermeer's father's death. By

⁶⁸ These well-known documents were first published by Bredius in 1885 (*Oud Holland*, 3, p. 218) and L.N.G. Bouricius in 1925 (*Oud Holland*, 42, p. 271) respectively.

⁶⁹ Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . .' p. 30.

⁷⁰ Bredius, 'Nieuwe bijdragen . . .' p. 62.

⁷¹ Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse . . .' p. 31.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Also referred to by Vermeer's widow in 1676 as a prime cause of her husband's financial difficulties (30 April 1676, cited in Bredius, 'Nieuwe bijdragen . . .' p. 62).

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 64.

⁷⁵ Van Peer, 'Drie collecties . . .' p. 96

⁷⁶ Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007, 10 April 1668*.

⁷⁷ On these legacies, see Prot. not. D. Rees, no. 2144, April 1668* and Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 264*.

1657, however, these debts had been settled, thanks to Vermeer's growing ability to sell his paintings or, less probably, to Dingnum Baltens's successful continuation of her late husband's inn-keeping business.

After Vermeer marries into the Thins's higher-class family, he apparently cuts himself off from his relatives. The only contacts he seems to maintain, if we may judge from surviving documents, are with his sister Geertruy and her husband Anthony van der Wiel, which contacts were obviously of great material advantage to him (no. 36 above). Interestingly enough, aside from Vermeer himself, the family members, at least on his father's side, continue to entertain relations with each other, into the 1660's⁷⁸. Vermeer's detachment may be due to his presumed conversion to Roman Catholicism, to his newly acquired higher-class status or to both. The family Vermeer was born into was united, but the morality of some of its members in their contacts with the rest of the world was far short of Calvinist standards. (No one seems to have been very concerned, for instance, over the illegality of grandfather Balthasar's counterfeiting operation⁷⁹; Neeltge Gorisdr.'s business dealings do not seem to have been scrupulously honest either⁸⁰.) The family he married into was outwardly far more respectable, but it was profoundly disunited. No doubt, Reynier Bolnes was a violent and brutal individual, and his son Willem, who attempted on several occasions to beat his mother and sister Catharina, took after him. But we should recall a witness's testimony (no. 15) which asserted that a sister of Jan Thins, presumed to be Maria Thins, had been seriously mistreated by her brother. I find it difficult to believe that she was innocent of all blame in her difficulties with all three of her male relatives.

There is little doubt in my mind that Maria Thins, whatever might have been her other qualities, was a contentious⁸¹, domineering⁸², and vindictive⁸³ woman. It is all the more remarkable that Vermeer, after his nearly aborted marriage with Catharina, got along so well with her – well enough to receive a testamentary bequest of a life-long allowance as early as 1662 and to become her *homme de confiance* in the late 1660s. This perhaps says something about his accommodating and tactful, if not docile, character. That he was raised with no other sibling but a sister twelve years older than himself may help to explain his ability to get along

with his mother-in-law. (This sister, Geertruy, we recall, made sure, shortly before her death, that he would inherit from her.) Was it a passive trait in Vermeer's character or was it his prolonged or repeated absence from the house that explains why he took no part in repressing Willem Bolnes's repeated assaults on his wife? Additional research may eventually reveal more about Tanneke Everpoel, who was apparently the family's servant and a person of sufficient strength and authority to defend Vermeer's pregnant wife from Willem Bolnes's attacks.

Vermeer's new family was Roman Catholic, and so predominantly was the neighborhood called 'The Popish Corner' to which he moved some time between 1653 and 1660. The 'hidden church' of the Jesuits was, if not in Maria Thins's house, next door to it. Vermeer's 'Allegory of Faith', the iconography of which seems to reflect Jesuit tenets⁸⁴, is the only evidence we have during his own life time of possible contacts with this religious order.

Where did Vermeer actually carry out his painting in the 1660s? That he lived on the Oude Langendijk by no means excludes the possibility that he might have had an atelier elsewhere, perhaps in his mother's inn⁸⁵ or in Maria Thins's second house in the Haegh Poort. This point is of some importance in view of P.T. Swillens's contention that Vermeer's painting, *Het Straatje*, represents a view of the Old Men's House just before its reconstruction in 1661, as seen from the upper floor of 'Mechelen'⁸⁶. On balance I find this hypothesis unconvincing, for reasons which I can summarize as follows. First, the long side of the Old Men's House, which ran parallel with the Voldersgracht, as drawn in Willem Blacu's map of 1648 (plate 62 in Swillens's book), bears little resemblance to the gabled house on the right of *Het Straatje*, the short side of which abuts the street. Secondly, the masonry work that would have been necessary to transform the house pictured in *Het Straatje* into the new quarters of the guild of St. Lucas, as the superposition of the outline of the latter on the former shown in Swillens's book (plate 61) reveals, would seem to be far more extensive than contemporary accounts suggest was actually carried out. The burgomasters of Delft, at their session of 3 September 1661, had consented 'at the repeated demand of the St. Lucas guild . . . to allow the guild the use of the great upstairs hall with a small room beside it (*de grote bovenzaal*

⁷⁸ See the joint testimony of Heymen van der Hoeve (son of Jan Gysbrechtsz. van der Hoeve) and Aryaentge Claes van der Minne of 16 May 1660 (Prot. not. J. Ranc, no. 2116)*.

⁷⁹ The authorities of the States General considered the crime sufficiently serious to condemn his grandfather's partners to death. However, it is possible that in this period counterfeiting may not have been a very reprehensible crime from a social point of view.

⁸⁰ 'New Documents I', no. 16.

⁸¹ Note her lawsuits against a debtor in Schip-luyden and a tenant in Schoonhoven, not to speak of her lawsuits against her husband, her

son, and Maria Gerrits.

⁸² Maria Thins opposed, but finally tolerated her daughter's marriage with Vermeer; she prevented her son's marriage with Maria Gerrits; she induced her sister Cornelia to change her testament just before her death.

⁸³ Observe, for example, how she appealed her suit against Maria Gerrits after her son had seemingly given up all thought of marrying her. Also, the last admonition to the gentlemen of the *Weth* in her testament of 27 September 1667 to keep a watchful eye on Willem and not to let him go free seems like a gratuitous reinforcement of points she had already made.

⁸⁴ Blankert, op. cit., p. 169.

⁸⁵ The evidence of documents nos. 33 and 34 makes it virtually certain that Dingnum Baltens lived in 'Mechelen' until 1669. It is probable, but less certain, that she continued to use the house as an inn, perhaps on a reduced scale. (I could not find any notarial protocols, during Dingnum's tenure, mentioning deliveries to the inn or debts due by clients for bed and board, whereas six such documents turned up from the period when her husband was alive.)

⁸⁶ Swillens, pp. 93–94.

met een kamertje daarbenevens) in the Old Men and Women's House on the Voldersgracht⁸⁷. The superposition of the two images in Swillens shows that, if his conjecture holds true, extensive work would have been required on the bottom floor, including a westward extension of the entire building by at least six feet (thus eliminating an entry way into the old men's house's inner court on the West side), lowering the windows on the second floor by a few feet, moving the entrance door eastwards by a foot or so and widening it significantly. It might be argued that the reconstruction went farther than the burgomasters had originally intended, if the financial evidence did not speak against this. The work of transforming the old guild hall, according to the burgomasters' instructions, was to be paid for exclusively by the guild of St. Lucas⁸⁸. The accounts of the guild's expenditures on the transformation, which appear to be complete (*'den heelen wtgeef'*)⁸⁹, show that 1,343 gulden 12 stuivers were spent, of which 145 gulden 3 stuivers on painting the hall and on furnishings⁹⁰. This leaves a maximum of 1200 gulden for masonry work, which would have been sufficient to build the decorative additions shown in 18th century prints representing the St. Lucas guild house but not the reconstruction implicitly assumed by Swillens. Many documents summarized in this article concern the financial transactions of Maria Thins; a few concern those of Vermeer. Unfortunately, the evidence is not sufficiently complete to form a precise estimate of the assets of either Maria Thins or of Vermeer's household. Maria received 15,616 gulden from her settlement with her husband Reynier Bolnes in 1649. The assets she obtained from legacies in Gouda and from other sources totaled nearly 11,000 gulden. If she did not consume any of this capital, of about 26,000 gulden, the interest on it alone (at 5 percent) would have been of the order of 1,300 gulden per year. The revenues from her landed properties brought her another 500–600 gulden per year. If she received no other benefit, she probably lived on 1,500 to 2,000 gulden per year, out of which she had to pay at least 300 gulden from 1663 on to keep her son Willem in a 'house of betterment'. While it is clear from van Buyten's unpaid bill for bread delivered at the time of the artist's death that the accounts of Maria and her son-in-law were kept separate, it is hard to believe that the couple did not benefit from Maria's patrician income (aside from the legacies Johannes and Catharina received directly from her). I find it difficult to square the

drabness of Johannes Vermeer's possessions, as listed in his death inventory⁹¹, which possessions seemed to be scattered throughout Maria Thins's eleven-room house, with the gold jewelry and the silverware she gave Catharina during her own lifetime, which presumably represented only a part of her movable property. Even if Vermeer himself, as distinguished from his wife, did not own very valuable things, with the possible exception of his paintings⁹², he must at least have lived in fairly luxurious surroundings, more in keeping with those he represented in his paintings than the mediocre items listed in his inventory would suggest. After an initial phase during which he painted religious and mythological 'histories' ('Christ in the House of Martha and Mary', 'The Visit to the Grave', 'The Rest of Diana'), Vermeer turned to genre painting. 'The Procuress', dated 1656, is his earliest known work in this new vein. It still betrays the dramatic emphasis characteristic of the Carravaggio school. These early pictures, as far as we can tell from our minute sample of two paintings for which prices are known ('The Visit to the Grave', painted in or before 1657, and the painting in the collection of Cornelis de Helt painted at the latest in 1661 but probably some years earlier) were inexpensive, as were the works of such minor artists as Egbert van der Poel and Pieter van Asch in Delft. From 'then' on – we still do not know the date of the transition, or even whether there was an abrupt transition – the character and the technique of the paintings undergo an important change, to which there also corresponds a new schedule of contemporary prices (again as far as we can tell from Monconys's remark and from the prices of the two paintings held by Hendrick van Buyten in 1676 in lieu of or pending repayment of a debt of 617 guildens and 17 stuivers)⁹³.

With his new *fijnschilder* technique and with the correspondingly higher prices he was able to get for his paintings, Vermeer emulated other successful artists of the period such as Gerard Dou and Frans van Mieris, both of whom probably anticipated him in these developments.

The facts we now know of the Vermeer family life in Maria Thins's house in the 1660's are still not circumstantial and varied enough to allow us to speculate on the relation between the artist's life and his oeuvre. Our conclusions so far are only of a negative character. We would never guess from looking at his paintings 'marked by withdrawal or silence . . . where passion and suffering and sex are

⁸⁷ Van Peer, 'Rondom Jan Vermeer van Delft', *Oud Holland*, 74 (1959), pp. 243–244.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ J. Soutendam, 'Eenige aantekeningen betreffende Delftsche kunstenaars', *Nederlandsche spectator*, 1870, p. 11.

⁹⁰ The six headmen of the guild of St. Lucas borrowed 800 guildens on 19 October 1661 to finance '*t macken ofte prepareren van de gilde camer*' (Prot. not. W. van Assendelft, no. 1688)*. The difference between the total expense of

1,343 guildens 12 stuivers and the sum borrowed must have been paid from the guild's accumulated assets and current revenue. I doubt whether the guild could have supported an even greater financial burden than the one the surviving accounts of expenditures suggest.

⁹¹ Van Peer, 'Drie collecties . . .' pp. 98–103.

⁹² It is curious, for instance, that the inventory mentions no silverware of any kind nor musical instruments such as are represented in many of his paintings. A plausible explanation is

that the inventory was drawn up with an eye to the future demands of Vermeer's creditors on his wife, and that all his valuable objects were assumed to belong to his mother-in-law. It is relevant to note in this connection that Maria Thins, on 11 December 1676, denied that she had secluded any goods belonging to her daughter or to Johannes Vermeer in *fraudem creditorum* (Bredius, 'Nieuwe bijdragen . . .' p. 63).

⁹³ A. Bredius, 'Iets over Johannes Vermeer', *Oud Holland*, 3 (1885) pp. 219–220.

banished'⁹⁴ that there were fights and disputes in his household of the type described in document no. 26. None of his paintings, moreover, represent children⁹⁵, even though he fathered at least twelve of them, four of whom died in infancy⁹⁶. Even this negative correlation is not sufficient evidence to put forward the hypothesis that Vermeer took refuge in his art from his daily life and that his paintings should be viewed as a reaction against, rather than a reflection of, the conditions in which he lived. For all we know he may have been serenely painting in a room in 'Mechelen', while Maria Thins, his wife Catharina, and Tanneken were left to cope with Willem's outbursts. In any event, by 1665 Willem had been safely put away in Taerling's house of correction and Vermeer still had many years of activity left before him.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that the archival research carried out for this article still leaves many more aspects of Vermeer's life in the dark than it illuminates.

Not one new document was found, for example, referring to his picture-dealing business (alluded to by his wife in 1676). I can only advance the negative suggestion that if this business had been as important as Abraham or Meynard de Coge's (the principal dealers in Delft in the 1660's) or even as significant as his own father's in the 1640s, some trace of it would have emerged in the archival material. It was also disappointing not to find any link of the artist with the scientist Anthony Leeuwenhoek, who was named as trustee of his estate after his death. Neither did any evidence crop up on the *camera obscura* or optics in connection with Vermeer⁹⁷. I am optimistic enough to believe that additional research in the archives in Delft and elsewhere may eventually throw light on some of these essential questions.

Appendix

1) 11 January 1597 (Prot. not. H. van Overgaeuw, no. 1543)*: Jan Reyersz., tailor (the artist's paternal grandfather, who was buried on 2 May 1597) transfers an obligation for 48 guildens to Pieter Clement, attorney. Claes Corstiaensz., who became the second husband of Neeltge Gorisdr., the artist's paternal grandmother, signs as a witness.

2) 29 April 1608 (Orphan Chamber of Delft, *boedel* of H. van Overgaeuw, no. 1283 I)*: Claes Corstiaensz. borrows just over 600 guildens from Notary Overgaeuw.

3) 27 May 1625 (Prot. not. G. de Graeff, no. 1701)*: Claes Corstiaensz. is said to have borrowed 50 guildens from

Clement Verarch on 19 January 1613.

4) 17 December 1610 (Prot. not. H. van Overgaeuw, no. 1541)*: Cornelis Ariensz., broommaker, stipulates in his will that if one of his heirs named Annetgen Bouwens marries or dies before his death, then his bequest of 6 pounds *vlaems* (36 guildens) to Annetge will go instead to Neeltge Gorisdr., wife of Claes Corstiaensz. and after her death to her children and children's children.

5) 29 May 1615 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 1287)*: Claes Corstiaensz. borrows 200 guildens from Thielman Wouters van der Brugge. The loan is guaranteed by Jan Heymansz. (the husband of Vermeer's aunt Maertje Jansdr.) and by Dirck Claesz., the borrower's son.

6) 11 November 1617 (Prot. not. P.A. de Roon, no. 1619)*: Neeltge Gorisdr. sells to her 'son' (actually her stepson) Dirck Claesz. *cramer*, one obligation for 250 guildens and the other for 160.

7) 24 May 1621 (Schiedam archives, marriage books): Reynier Balthensz., Vermeer's maternal uncle, is betrothed in Schiedam. He is accompanied by his 'mother' (actually his stepmother) Beatrix Gerrits. She is the second wife of Balthasar Claes Gerritsz., merchant's servant and counterfeiter.

8) 1619–1623 (Orphan Chamber *boedel* no. 283 I and II)*: Neeltge Gorisdr.'s debts to notary Overgaeuw were rescheduled after his death in 1619. Payments on the debt were made from 1620 to 1623. She was not able to repay the debt to Thielman van den Brugge (no. 5 above) which fell due on Jan Heymansz. and Dirck Claesz. who were still making payments on the debt in 1632 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 1287).

9) 12 May 1620 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 1177)*: Neeltge Gorisdr., wife of Master Claes *speelman*, owes 53 guildens 5 stuivers for ticking delivered. She claims that she had already repaid 12 guildens 15 stuivers, but the heirs of the estate are not aware of this repayment.

10) 17 January 1623 (Prot. not. C. Brouwer, 17 July 1627)*: On this date Neeltge Gorisdr. borrowed 200 guildens from a sailor, 75 guildens of which had been used to outfit her son Anthoni, who was back in Delft from a stay in the East Indies, for a new trip to the East. Anthoni Jansz., the brother of Vermeer's father, was a stone carver or sculptor (*steenhouwer*).

11) 13 December 1623 (Prot. not. H. Vockestaert, no. 1588)*: Neeltge Gorisdr.'s son-in-law Jan Heymansz., baker, pays a debt of 147 guildens incurred by Neeltge to the merchant Gerard Welshouck.

12) 4 January 1624 (Prot. not. A. Ryshouck, no. 1788)*:

⁹⁴ Editorial quoting Marcel Proust, 'Vermeer and the future of Exhibitions', *The Burlington Magazine*, 108, August 1966, p. 387.

⁹⁵ Except the very small-scale boy and girl playing in front of the gabled house in *Het Straatje*.

⁹⁶ I count here the eight under-age children left after Vermeer's death in 1675, plus the

children buried in 1660, 1667, 1669, and 1673. If Catharina was speaking the truth in 1676 when she claimed she had been left with eleven live children, the number rises to fifteen.

⁹⁷ It is noteworthy, however, that Evert Harmensz. Steenwijck (±1579–1654), the father of the painters Harmen and Pieter Steenwijck, the latter of whom was acquainted with Ver-

meer's father, was a spectacle- and lens-maker. As early as 1628, he was owed 7 guildens for the delivery of 'a telescope with three crystal lenses' (*een veersich met 3 chirstaline brillen*) (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* Gysbrecht Pietersz. van Castel, no. 301, 8 August 1628)*. If he could make a telescope, it should have been easy for him to grind lenses for a *camera obscura*.

Hans Lemmes, merchant, claims that he delivered 328 pounds of feathers to Neeltge Gorisdr. for her bedding business which had not been paid for.

13) 27 January 1624 (Prot. not. H. van Ceel, no. 1639)*: Anthoni Jansz. guarantees a loan of 793 guildens 15 stuivers that his mother Neeltge Gorisdr. owed, mainly for ticking. Anthoni puts up the wages he was slated to earn on this forthcoming voyage to the Indies as collateral.

14) 8 December 1624 (Prot. not. H. van Ceel, no. 1639)*: Anthoni Jansz. testifies about the death in the Port of Jakkarta of Jacob Jansz., whom he had helped to bury.

15) 20 March 1624 (Prot. not. H. van Ceel, no. 1639)*: Neeltge Gorisdr. is forced by financial necessity to rent the family house 'de drie Hameren' to Willem Meyns, drummer in the Guard of Prince Maurice.

16) 25 September 1624 (Prot. not. H. van Ceel, no. 1639)*: Neeltge Gorisdr. transfers the entire sum owed to her for the rent of the house in the next three years to her stepson Dirck Claes van der Minne and her son-in-law Jan Heymansz. van der Hoeve, her guarantors for a previous loan, to compensate them for the money they had had to put up when she had failed to meet her obligation.

17) 4 January 1625 (Prot. not. W. de Langue, no. 1684)*: Neeltge Gorisdr. living on the corner of the Cruystraet, is said to owe 62 guildens to the estate of Cornelis Bastiaensz.. In February 1638, the unpaid portion of the debt, amounting to 54 guildens 10 stuivers, was still carried in the trustee's report on the settlement of Cornelis Bastiaensz.'s estate (Orphan Chamber, *boedel*, no. 980)*.

18) 17 January 1625 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 1263)*: Neeltge Gorisdr. and her daughter Ariaentge Claes (from her second marriage to Claes Corstiaensz.) are said to owe 250 guildens and 50 guildens respectively to Pietertgen Claesdr., the widow of a roof slater. By 6 May 1626, Neeltge and Claes had paid their debts in full after the creditor had resorted to civil procedure to collect the debts.

19) 2 August 1625 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 551)*: Neeltge Gorisdr. owed a small sum (the amount is illegible in the manuscript) to Doctor Jacob Thielmans van der Eynde 'for visits to her daughter's child and to her son'. On 15 October 1627 (shortly after Neeltge's death), it was claimed that the debt still had not been settled.

20) 17 November 1625 (Prot. not. A. van Twelle, no. 1653)*: Willem van Bylant, the soldier wounded by Reynier Jansz. and two other men (A.C. Boogaard-Bosch, *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 25 January 1939) was buried on 14 November 1625 (Delft archives, files of *Begraaf-boeken*). Three days later his mother gave Hans Pietersz., corporal, power of attorney to collect 24 guildens from Dingeman Cornelisz., *caffawercker*, one of the assailants, as compensation for the wounding of her son (Prot. not. H. van Twelle, no. 1653)*.

21) 29 September 1626 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 315)*: Reynier Jansz., the father of Vermeer, is said to have paid in full a debt of 17 guildens that he owed to the estate of the brandy merchant Cornelis Claesz. who had died in 1624. He was apparently able to remain solvent during the period of his mother's final financial collapse ('New Documents I' no. 25).

22) 3 June 1631 (Prot. not. H. Vockestaert, no. 1598)*: Reynier Jansz., *caffawercker*, is said to owe 9 guildens 15

stuivers to the estate of Franchois Camerling, silk-cloth merchant. This debt is classified among the 'middling debts' (*middelbare schulden*).

23) 13 October 1635 (Prot. not. G.A. van der Wel, no. 1938): Reynier Jansz. Vos, '*Caffawercker ende waert in de vliegende Vos aende Voldersgracht*' (*caffa* worker and innkeeper in the Flying Fox on the Voldersgracht), discharges Hugh Jansz. van Boodegem, brewer in the Oeyevacr, of his guarantee or surety for an obligation incurred by him, Reynier Jansz., amounting to 202 guildens 6 stuivers for beer delivered by Hester van Bleyswijk, widow of the brewer Ghysbrecht van Zuijle. He also binds his person and his goods to guarantee repayment of any future deliveries of beer delivered to him, Reynier Jansz., by van Boodegem.

24) 1 March 1638 (Prot. not. G. Rota, no. 1976)*: Reynier Vosch on the Voldersgracht owes 4 guildens 15 stuivers to the estate of a peat merchant for peat delivered. The painter Anthony Palamedesz. is a trustee of the estate.

25) 30 July 1645 (Orphan Chamber, *boedel* no. 589)*: In the estate papers of Johan Crosier, brewer *Int swaenhals*, Reynier de Vos appears as a debtor for 82 guildens 10 stuivers for beer delivered (probably for Reynier's customers in the inn 'Mechelen').

26) 22 June 1647 (Prot. not. W. de Langue, no. 1098)*: Bayke (Barbara) de Meijer, widow of Gerrit Jansz. van der Wiel, ebony worker, bequaths to her son Anthony van der Wiel (the brother-in-law of Vermeer) all the ebony equipment that he has been using in his shop to this day, in recognition of the loyal services he had performed on behalf of his family since her husband's death. Reynier Jansz. Vosch witnesses the deed.

27) 10 August 1649: 'Reynier de Vosch' is said to have settled a debt of 64 guildens 15 stuivers for beer delivered to the estate of Cornelis Lourisz. van der Hoeve (Cf. 'New Documents I' no. 39). A small rebate of 5 stuivers per vat of beer had been deducted from the debt.

28) 24 June 1650 (Prot. not. G. Rota, no. 1981)*: Reynier Jansz. Vosch, 58 years old, Jacob Corstiaensz. Goosens, instrument maker, 54, and Pieter Corstiaensz. Operust, leather tanner, 48, testify at the request of Frans Adriaensz. Le Cock, shoemaker, and of his wife, now living in Haarlem, that they had been well acquainted with the petitioners when they lived in Delft a number of years ago and they had never heard anything but good reports about them. Pieter Operust (or Hopprus) was the landlord of Reynier Jansz. at least from 1635 to 1641.

29) 20 January 1653 (Orphan Chamber archives, Delft, no. 84, fol. 368)*: Dingnum Jans (sic) appears before the Orphan Chamber in Delft to show the testament that she and her husband Reynier Jansz. Vos had drawn up on 17 February 1638 (no. 31 in 'New Documents I'). This testament, now 'confirmed by her husband death' stated that the Orphan Chamber 'was not to become involved in supervising the succession'.

30) 4 April 1656 (Prot. not. J. Ranck, no. 2114)*: Maria Thins names Gerrart Vinck, attorney before the Court of Holland, to represent her in the settlement of a suit concerning a mortgage loan that she had made to Tryntgen Jansdr., the widow of Adriaen Jansz. Bacx in Schipluyden. The mortgage being in default, she had obtained from a lower court a decree permitting her to sell the house in Schip-

luyden securing the loan.

31) 18 July 1666 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2066)*: Further testimony by Hermanus Taerling and his wife Mayken Katersvleet concerning the escape of Willem Bolnes from Taerling's house.

32) 7 March 1667 (Prot. not. F. Boogert)*: Maria Thins, as administrator of the goods of her son Willem, names Jan van Putte, attorney in Schoonhoven to represent her in various affairs including a suit against Cornelis Jansz. Facke, tenant of some lands belonging to her son.

33) 28 and 31 January 1668 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007, summarized in Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse familie . . .', p. 29). Maria names Isaac Luijt, secretary of the Orphan Chamber in Gouda, to act in her name before the Collector of Taxes of Gouda to cash five obligations totaling 2,900 guildens, plus the accrued interest (January 28) and another 800 guildens from accrued interest on mortgages held by her (January 31).

34) 13 November and 11 December 1668 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2007, cited in Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse familie . . .', p. 29): Maria Thins, on behalf of her son Willem, leases osier lands in Gelkenes for 84 guildens a year and hay and pasture lands in Bovenbergh for 115 guildens a year.

35) 25 October 1671 (Prot. not. G. van Assendelft, no. 2131)*: Anthony van der Wiel names notary Willem Nolet in The Hague to collect all the sums due to him for frames

delivered from the heirs of the painter Adriaen van der Venne.

36) 21 January 1674 (Prot. not. A. van der Velde, no. 2177)*: Maria Thins testifies at the request of Elgbert van Issendoorn that she lived for four years with Maria van Blijenburch, who was married to Heer Hugo Cools. 'Sr. Johan Vermeer' witnesses the deposition.

37) 31 March 1674 (Prot. not. J. Spoors, no. 1680)*: Maria Thins, in her own name and as custodian of the estates of Jan and Cornelia Thins, names Geerlofs Verborn to represent her in the next session of the accounting of the common lands in Oudt-Beyerlandt. 'Sr. Johannis Vermeer *Mr. schilder*' witnesses the act.

38) 4 and 7 April 1674 (Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse familie . . .', p. 30): Reynier Bolnes, the estranged husband of Maria Thins, dies on April 4 and is buried three days later in the Church of St. Jan in Gouda.

39) 4 May 1674 (Prot. not. Straffintveldt, Gouda, summarized in Van Peer, 'Een zeventiende-eeuwse familie . . .', p. 30): Johannes Vermeer travels to Gouda to settle some of his late father-in-law's affairs, both on his own behalf and on behalf of Willem Bolnes, as heir of his father. He leases a house on the Peperstraat for one year for 140 gulden.

40) 24 May 1674 (Prot. not. F. Boogert, no. 2009)*: Maria Thins and Johannis Vermeer approve a compromise made by Reynier Bolnes and the heirs of Heijndrick Hensbeeck made in Gouda on 25 July 1672.