



PISCIUM VIVAE  
ICONES

ENTE AB ADRIANO COLLARDO, ET EXC

A  
Nicolao Ioannis Visscher.

anno

1634.



# The Sign of Claes Jansz Visscher and his Progeny

## The History and Significance of a Brand Name\*

• HUIGEN LEEFLANG •

Nowadays, when we come across the terms branding and brand names, we tend to think of twentieth-century phenomena like the penguins on paperbacks or iconic trademarks such as Nike's swoosh, the Ferrari stallion and the Apple logo – images familiar to a huge swathe of the world's population. However, as art historian Martin Kemp recently pointed out in *From Christ to Coke: How Image Becomes Icon*, this is actually nothing new.<sup>1</sup> The picture that arises from Kemp's case studies can be summarized thus: 'Images lodge in the mind and remain there, influencing our thoughts and actions, governing our tastes and purchasing habits by drawing on deep and hidden emotions for their power.'<sup>2</sup> As we shall see, an early-modern print publisher like Claes Jansz Visscher (1586/87-1652), the focus of this essay, understood this power of images very well, and made ingenious use of it.

### The Visschers

The printmaker and publisher Claes Jansz Visscher, born in Amsterdam around 1587, was the son of Jan Claesz Visscher, a ship's carpenter. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Visscher was one of the most common Dutch names (as it still is today) and in consequence the literature on the printmaker was long dominated by

Detail of fig. 23

Fig. 1

DETAIL OF  
JACOB VAN DEVENTER,  
*Plan of Amsterdam  
and Its Surroundings*,  
1558-61.  
Pen and ink, wash  
in various colours,  
430 x 350 mm.  
Haarlem, Noord-  
Hollands Archief,  
Provinciale Atlas  
Noord-Holland,  
inv. no. A (492.629.  
0005)73. The third  
house in Jan Oomen-  
steegje is indicated.

confusion as to where he came from. Even the ground-breaking and generally very well documented 1958 monograph by Maria Simon contributed to it.<sup>3</sup> It is thanks to Isabella van Eeghen's thorough research in the Amsterdam City Archives that light was shed on the Visscher family tree.<sup>4</sup> For example, it emerged that Claes Jansz Visscher was named after a deceased grandfather of the same name who had lived in Jan Oomensteegje on the edge of the 'Eiland', a hamlet outside the then Haarlemmerpoort surrounded by a waterway, the Braak (fig. 1).<sup>5</sup> This grandfather owned a water boat ('waterschip') that his widow pledged as security in 1574, a year after his death. Van Eeghen stated that the



boat was used to convey fresh water to breweries. However, there were different sorts of ‘water boats’.<sup>6</sup> One type was indeed employed to supply breweries with water, but another kind fetched seawater from which the salt used to preserve meat and fish could be extracted. The commonest type of water boat, though, was used for fishing with trawl nets on the Zuiderzee. These broad, flat vessels had a well – an open reservoir – in the

centre which held seawater so that the catch could be transported alive.

In his *Beschrijvinghe ... van Amsterdam* (1612), Johannes Pontanus gives a lively description of the variety of fish for sale at the Amsterdam fish market; they were supplied alive by the many water boats.<sup>7</sup> Three late sixteenth-century examples of a fishing boat of this kind have recently been excavated: two near Lelystad and one in the Outer IJ in Amsterdam.<sup>8</sup> The home ports of the

Fig. 2  
NICOLAUS VISSCHER,  
(publisher),  
*Plan of Amsterdam*,  
after 1682. Engraving,  
hand coloured,  
485 x 575 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-AO-20-45-A.

The following residences are indicated:

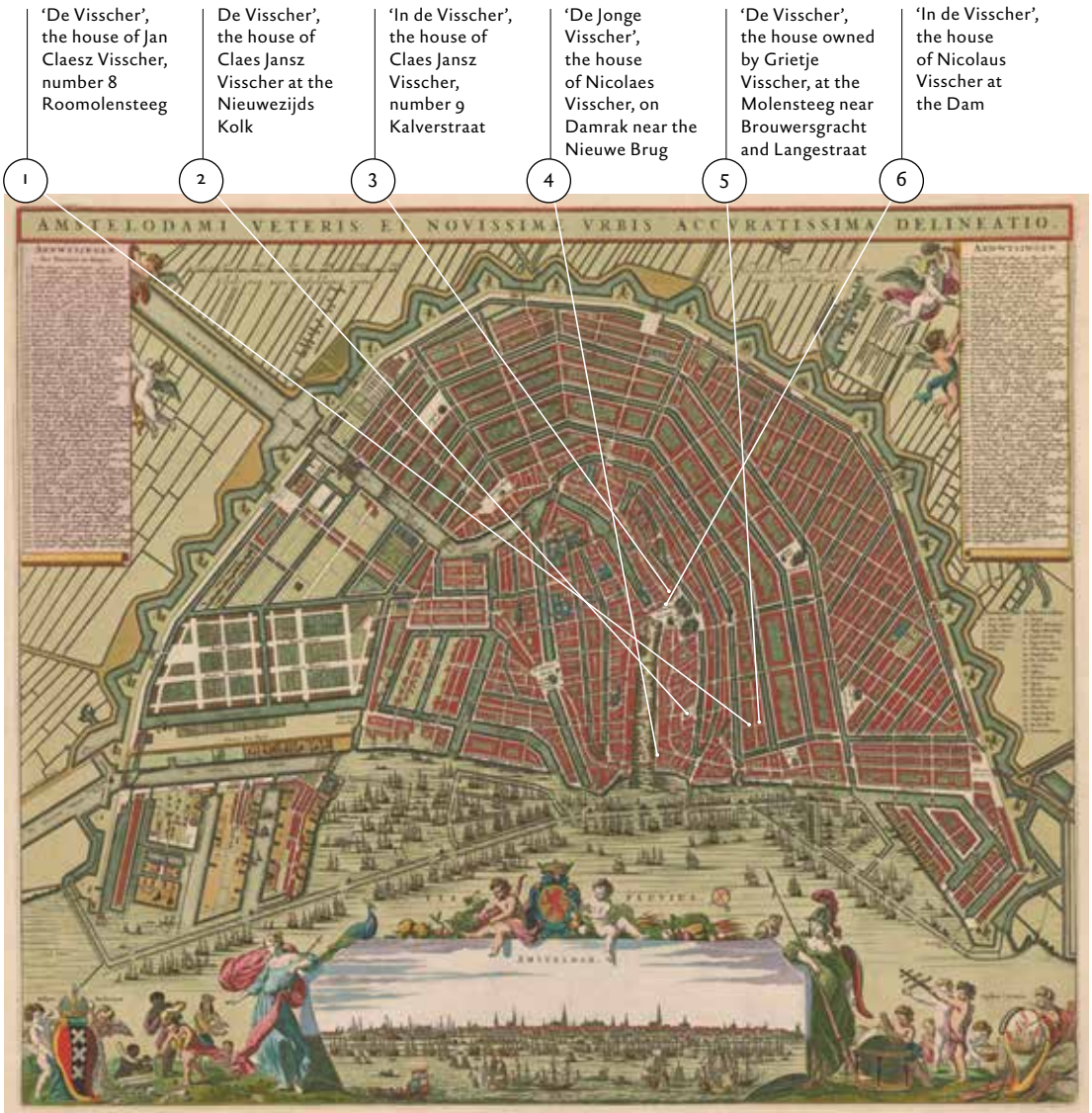




Fig. 3  
 CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*The Fish Market*,  
 decoration for *Map  
 of North and South  
 Holland and West  
 Friesland* published  
 by Herman Allartsz,  
 1608.  
 Etching, 103 x 155 mm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
 RP-P-OB-2586.

water boats were villages in the Waterland, like Uitdam and Spaarndam, as well as Amsterdam itself. It is estimated that around 1600 there were 130 or so water boats sailing the Zuiderzee from Amsterdam. It is likely that the old Claes Jansz, called Visscher, living on the IJ, owned this type of water boat and earned his living by supplying the Amsterdam market with fish. The fact that the publisher Claes Jansz Visscher's grandfather and namesake was a fisherman is not without significance. The family name refers to this occupation and members of the family went on to make conspicuous use of the image of a fisherman as a trademark on their houses, business and products.<sup>9</sup>

#### At the sign of the 'Visscher'

Jan Claesz Visscher (1561/62-1618), the son of the old Claes Jansz Visscher, did not follow in his fisherman father's footsteps, but pursued the relatively well-paid trade of ship's carpenter. In 1597 he bought two parcels of land outside the Korsgenspoort. He had a house built there and hung out the sign of the fisherman – 'Visscher' (fig. 2).<sup>10</sup>

His son, Claes Jansz, began his career as a printmaker from this corner house, number 8 Roomolensteeg. We

do not know who taught him the trade. In 1605, when he was about eighteen, he worked for the publisher Willem Jansz Blaeu on a monumental world map printed from twenty plates.<sup>11</sup> The cartographic elements were engraved by Josua van den Ende. Visscher, who was probably not trained as an engraver, used the etching technique to apply decorations from designs by David Vinckboons, whose manner was to have a great and enduring influence on Visscher. His drawing and figure styles are so indebted to those of the painter and draughtsman from Brabant that it is possible Vinckboons may have trained Visscher and that he was instrumental in getting him into printmaking and working with Blaeu. Blaeu published a number of Visscher's individual etchings from designs by Vinckboons, but in 1607 the signature and address *CIVisscher fecit et ex[cutit]* (made and published this) appeared on them for the first time.<sup>12</sup> The influence of Vinckboons's crowded genre scenes can also be seen in Visscher's first prints to his own design, for example in his illustrations ('ornaments') to the large *Kaart van Noord- en Zuid-Holland en West-Friesland*, published by Herman Allartsz in 1608 (fig. 3).



**Fig. 4a**  
 CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER  
 AND PIETER BAST,  
*Profile of Amsterdam*  
*Seen from the IJ, 1611.*  
 Engraving and etching  
 from four plates with  
 four additional  
 etchings and texts  
 in letterpress,  
 441 x 1474 mm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
 RP-P-1884-A-7654.  
 Reworked and  
 extended reissue by  
 Claes Jansz Visscher  
 and Herman Allartsz  
 Coster of the 1599  
*Profile* by Pieter Bast.

Visscher demonstrates his skill in characterizing places, human activities and customs on the small scale of the map borders. The picture of a harbour and a bustling fish market with water boats contains a remarkable detail: the sign above the stall on the right shows a fisherman with a large fish and a landing net with the inscription 'De visser' (The Fisherman) below it.

It is quite possible that it is a smaller version of the board that hung outside 'De Visscher', Visscher's parents' house. Visscher made a more topographically accurate image of the Amsterdam fish market for his 1611 reissue of Pieter Bast's large *Profile of Amsterdam Seen from the IJ* of 1599 (fig. 4b).<sup>13</sup> The fish market, situated at the lock in front of the stock



**Fig. 4b**  
 < Detail showing the  
 Amsterdam fish  
 market (fig. 4a).

**Fig. 4c**  
 Detail showing  
 the fishermen and  
 fishwife in the  
 foreground (fig. 4a).



exchange to the north of Dam Square is praised in the legend for its varied and wholesome wares. According to Pontanus's account, there were anything from two to three hundred fishmongers in Amsterdam, selling more varieties of fish than the hundred and seventy described by the Roman historian Pliny.<sup>14</sup>

The sea fisherman who went to sea to supply this resource enjoyed a good reputation as a diligent, sober, typically Dutch group of people. Fishermen as embodiments of the simple, hard-working local population often featured in maps and cityscapes and also, for example, in the *Profile of Amsterdam Seen from the IJ* of 1611 (see fig. 4c). Visscher replaced the strolling burghers originally portrayed in Pieter Bast's profile of 1599 with new figures coming to offer their gifts to the Maid of Amsterdam. Along with merchants from all kinds of exotic places, there are local farmers, huntsmen and

fishermen hauling their produce and their catches, including dairy items and game. In the foreground a fishwife and three fishermen carry a landing net and baskets full of fish to the Maid. As the legend states, they owe their prominent position to a circumstance described in all the chronicles – the fact that the founders and first inhabitants of Amsterdam were fishermen. Through their 'groote neersticheyt' (great diligence) they not only provided food for their own people in abundance, but attracted many people from other faraway areas and welcomed, fed and housed them. The message, in short, is that Amsterdam owed its foundation, growth and wealth to fishermen.<sup>15</sup>

The fact that the fishing community was able to count on general sympathy is evident, for instance, from the lottery organized in Holland for the benefit of the home for old men and women in the fishing village of Egmond for which Visscher made an advertisement in 1615 (fig. 5). While the old fishermen and fisherwoman are not idealized in the monumental print, they are certainly portrayed with a certain dignity. The

large *Coastal Landscape with Fishing Boats*, published by Visscher and made in his workshop, probably based on one of his own drawings, also testifies to an interest in fishing villages and fishermen (fig. 6).<sup>16</sup>

Some of his earliest publications carry the address *Tot Amsterdam Ghedruckt by Claes Jansz. Visscher, woonende op de Kolck inde Visscher*, referring to the house in Nieuwezijds Kolk which the printmaker, printer and publisher had managed to buy in 1609 when he was in his early twenties. He named it 'De Visscher' after his parent's house of the same name nearby (see fig. 2).<sup>17</sup> He sold the house after two years in order to buy a much more expensive and prestigious property in Kalverstraat (number 9), between Dam Square and the Stock Exchange (the Beurs) (see fig. 2). The house bore the fitting name 'De Gouden Beurs' (The Golden Purse), but Claes Jansz renamed it 'In de Visscher'.<sup>18</sup> At this strategically located address he built up his impressive stock, covering maps, cityscapes and other topographical

Fig. 5  
CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Announcement of the Lottery for a New Old Men's and Women's Home at Egmond-aan-Zee*, 1615. Etching and drypoint, 327 x 579 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-08-80.803.





publications, topical prints and landscapes, made by him and others, many biblical prints and much besides; in due course he became Amsterdam's most productive and innovative print publisher. It is estimated that a thousand or so prints were produced in Visscher's workshop and more than four thousand others were printed from bought in second-hand plates,<sup>19</sup> making the print publisher one of the largest in Europe. Later the print publishers Jodocus Hondius I, Cornelis Danckerts, Hugo Allardt, Frederick de Wit, Justus Danckerts and Clement de Jonghe also set themselves up in Kalverstraat, creating a huge concentration of activity in printmaking and print dealing.<sup>20</sup>

Soon after his move to Kalverstraat, Visscher made his well-known series of *Plaisante Plaetsen* (Pleasant Places) in the surroundings of Haarlem and published it with the address

*t'Amsterdam. Gedrukt by Klaes Ian[s] Visscher wone[n]de inde Kalverstraet inde Visscher* (fig. 7).<sup>21</sup> Below the pinned-up note with the address sits a bearded fisherman with a large net, a smaller one and a basket of fish. It may be a reduced reproduction of the sign hanging outside the workshop and shop, but, as we shall see, the print-maker and publisher used pictures of fishermen in many variations and guises.

In seventeenth-century Amsterdam, the idea of fishermen as the founders and original residents of the city seems for the most part to have evoked positive associations. This does not alter the fact that the social status of the occupation was not particularly high. Even so, the publisher Claes Jansz Visscher, son of a ship's carpenter and grandson of a fisherman, made little effort to hide his humble origins. On the contrary, the countless

Fig. 6  
WORKSHOP OF CLAES  
JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Coastal Landscape  
with Fishing Boats  
and the Lighthouse  
at Zandvoort*,  
c. 1615-20.  
Etching, 370 x 517 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-2003-189;  
purchased with  
the support of the  
F.G. Waller Fonds.





Fig. 7

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*The Lighthouse at  
 Zandvoort: Second  
 Title Print to the Series  
 'Plaisante Plaetsen'  
 (Pleasant Places) in  
 the Surroundings of  
 Haarlem, c. 1611.*  
 Etching, 102 x 156 mm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
 RP-P-1879-A-3463.

references to his ancestry reflect a degree of pride.

There are other examples of artists and publishers with surnames alluding to occupations with a lower social status who used them as trademarks. One well-known example is the sixteenth-century, Antwerp-born publisher Hieronymus Cock (1517/18-1570), son of the painter Jan Wellensz de Cock of Leiden, who used a picture of a cockerel as a personal emblem on prints he published, adding humorous puns on his name, which translates as Cook, and on that of his wife Volcxken Diericx.<sup>22</sup> The jokes were remarked upon by Karel van Mander in his *Schilder-boeck* (1604) in the short biographies of the brothers Matthijs and Hieronymus Cock: 'Thus Jeroon [Hieronymus] became rich and bought one house after the other. ... He was witty and a rhetorician, he often said or wrote

as his motto: let the cook do the cooking for the sake of the people.' The people – 'volck' in the Dutch – is a punning reference to Cock's wife Volcxken.<sup>23</sup> Cock published his prints under his family name, occasionally followed by *In De Vier Winden* | *Aux Quatre Vents*, the name of his house. This address did not appear consistently on prints until after his death, when Volcxken Diericx successfully carried on the business.<sup>24</sup>

A list of seventeenth-century Parisian publishing houses reveals that the majority were named after biblical or other religious subjects.<sup>25</sup> Signs with religious motifs, such as *L'Arbre de Jesse* (The Tree of Jesse) or *Le Bon Pasteur* (The Good Shepherd), hung outside almost a third of the two hundred and ten houses of seventeenth-century Parisian publishers. References to worldly power like *Armes du Roy* (The King's Arms) or *La Fleur du Lys*

were frequent. Names of animals (*Les Trois Pigeons*) and mythological subjects (*La Toison d'or*, The Golden Fleece) were also popular. There were few publishers working under family names and plays on words in Paris, however: Antoine de Fer's *L'Age de Fer* (The Age of Iron) and Gabrielle Landry's *L'Image Saint-Landry* were among the rare exceptions.<sup>26</sup> In seventeenth-century Amsterdam – which also housed many publishers, although not as many as Paris – it seems that family names and puns on them were used more often. The mapmaker and publisher Jodocus Hondius I and later his son Hendrick Hondius ('hond' is Dutch for 'dog') worked from the house named *In de wackere Hont* (In the watchful Dog) in Kalverstraat. In the same street there was Dancker Danckerts's publishing house *In de Danckbaerheijdt* (In Gratitude).<sup>27</sup> As well as advertising their products by means of the addresses on their prints and the signs on their premises, print publishers used stock lists and address prints.<sup>28</sup> A splendid example of the latter is Clement de Jonghe's publisher's device for his publishing house *Gekroonde Konst en Kaart Winckel* in which a print seller – possibly Clement de Jonghe himself – shows a street map of Batavia to three clients.<sup>29</sup>

The way Claes Jansz Visscher personalized his printing house and launched his family name as a brand name is uncommon, however. He used fishermen as an address, as a trademark for his houses and his prints, and as the basis of countless visual jokes. In this regard, Claes Jansz was a worthy successor to Hieronymus Cock, with whom he also had other things in common.

### Fishing in 'Pleasant Places'

Hieronymus Cock, the Antwerp printmaker and successful publisher, who was a specialist in landscapes, must have been one of the most important examples for the young

Claes Jansz Visscher. The various series of landscape etchings Cock published were a model for Visscher's own initiatives in this field, particularly the forty-four landscapes around Antwerp drawn 'from life' and made into prints by the Van Doetecum brothers, which Cock published in 1559 and 1561.<sup>30</sup> In 1612 Visscher produced twenty-five copies of prints from these series.

On the title page Visscher advertised the landscapes as having been drawn by Pieter Bruegel and published by 'NICOLAO IOANIIS PISCATORE'.<sup>31</sup> In 1611-12, by analogy with Cock's Antwerp landscapes, Visscher also published two series of his own etchings of landscapes around Amsterdam and Haarlem.<sup>32</sup> These were based on drawings that Visscher himself had made on the spot in 1607-08.<sup>33</sup> The etchings made by the Van Doetecums and published by Cock are based on drawings by the as yet unidentified Master of the Small Landscapes. Visscher, in contrast, went out and drew landscapes around Amsterdam and Haarlem, transferred them to etching plates himself and took care of the distribution too.

Visscher's importance as a pioneer of Dutch landscape art, a speciality that was to become immensely popular during the seventeenth century, has been recognized for some time.<sup>34</sup> Much attention has been devoted to *Plaisante Plaetsen*, Visscher's Haarlem landscapes in particular, and its two allegorical title pages.<sup>35</sup> A fisherman features in both of them. As well as the fisherman below the publisher's address on the second title page (see fig. 7), on the first page on the right there is a small angler holding a fishing rod with both hands (figs. 8a, b). Anglers fishing from banks for freshwater fish are figures that frequently feature in seventeenth-century Dutch landscape paintings, drawings and prints. Their appearance is more ambiguous than that of 'normal' sea fisherman.

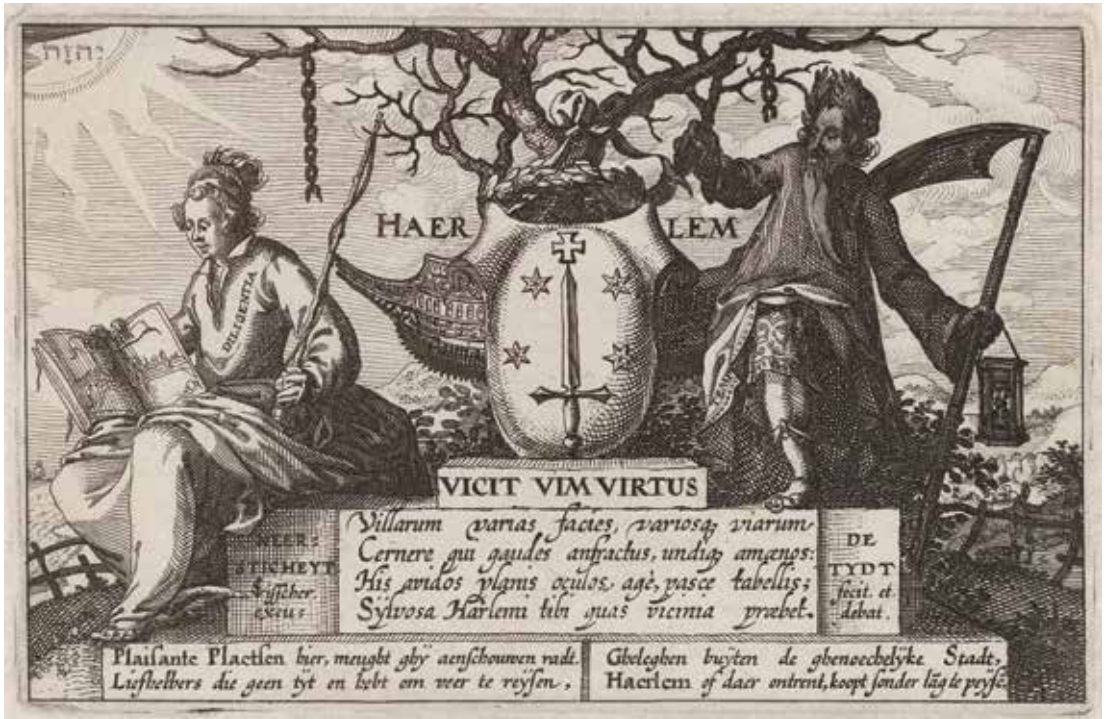


Fig. 8a

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Allegory of God's  
 Creation, Haarlem,  
 Time and Diligence.*  
 Title Print to the Series  
 'Plaisante Plaetsen'  
 (Pleasant Places) in  
 the Surroundings  
 of Haarlem, c. 1611.  
 Etching, 103 x 160 mm.

Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
 RP-P-1879-A-3462.

Fig. 8b

Detail showing the  
 figure of the angler  
 (fig. 8a).



In emblem books and genre scenes anglers are quite often associated with negative characteristics like idleness and deceit.<sup>36</sup> Another meaning is ascribed to an angler in the emblem book *Sinnepoppen* by Roemer Visscher, published in 1614, with prints designed and executed by Claes Jansz Visscher (fig. 9).<sup>37</sup>

The history of this first 'realistic' emblem book is complex.<sup>38</sup> In his foreword the author – the merchant and poet Roemer Visscher – states that he had had made a large series of *Poppen or Beelden* (images) to use

as 'conversation pieces'. This was to be the source of the emblems that Roemer Visscher published years later – reluctantly, he said, and only to oblige his friends. However, it is more likely that the *Sinnepoppen* is the product of a preconceived close collaboration between the two unrelated Visschers, the humorous poet and the younger draughtsman and printmaker. Roemer Visscher's caption to the image of the angler with the two fishing rods is a wry commentary on the restless existence of men who hunt and fish for riches.<sup>39</sup> The emblem appears to have an autobiographical meaning that applies both to the sixty-seven-year-old international grain dealer and merchant, Roemer Visscher, and to Claes Jansz, the ambitious printmaker and publisher in his late twenties. The

comment by the emblem concludes with a reference to collectors of women, paintings, flowers, shells, diamonds, pearls and other precious objects that have to be fished for and caught with difficulty. The lesson to learn is that their obsession brings so many concerns with it that they wished that they had never cast their lines into such dangerous water. Collectors of art and objects from the natural world are also addressed in an emblem with shells entitled 'Tis misselijck waer een geck sijn gelt aen leijt' ('What a fool spends his money on is disgusting').<sup>40</sup> Once again collectors' mania is the object of derision. However, Roemer Visscher maintains that one cannot blame those who make their living by selling collectors what they covet.

Anglers appear quite frequently in Claes Jansz Visscher's drawings and

Fig. 9  
CLAES JANSZ  
VISSCHER AND  
ROEMER VISSCHER,  
*The Emblem*  
'Wie weet waer',  
from *Sinnepoppen*,  
Amsterdam 1614,  
p. 151. Etching and  
text in letterpress.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum  
Research Library,  
shelf mark 325 G 12.





prints, for instance in his 1612 print after one of the *Kleine landschappen* that Cock had published almost fifty years before (fig. 10). In his copies Claes Jansz Visscher often replaced the staffage in the Brabant landscapes

with figures of his own invention. In this case he replaced the mercenary and a peasant girl in the original with an angler holding a fishing rod in each hand.<sup>41</sup> As an angler of my acquaintance has assured me, this way of fishing is

Fig. 10

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER  
AFTER JOANNES  
AND/OR LUCAS VAN  
DOETECUM AND  
THE MASTER OF THE  
SMALL LANDSCAPES,  
*The Pond*, from the  
series *Landscapes in  
the Surroundings  
of Antwerp*, c. 1612.  
Etching, 104 x 158 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-OB-2519.



Fig. 11

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*View of Kostverloren  
Manor*, from a series  
of four *Landscapes in  
the Surroundings of  
Amsterdam*, c. 1610-12.  
Etching, 58 x 99 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-OB-2588.

totally impractical. Claes Jansz Visscher, it would seem, was not picturing an ordinary angler here; he has reused the image of the fisherman with two rods he drew for Roemer Visscher – perhaps, as in the title page of the *Plaisante Plaetsen*, as an in-joke for those in the know.

In *View of Kostverloren Manor*, part of Visscher's series of small landscapes drawn around Amsterdam, there is an artist apparently engaged in capturing the same landscape from life (fig. 11). To his left an angler sits fishing under the watchful eye of an old woman leaning on a stick. The combination of angling and drawing frequently features in Claes Jansz Visscher's works, as for example in the pen and ink drawing of a water-dominated polder landscape in the Rijksmuseum (fig. 12).<sup>42</sup> This shows an artist sitting at the water's edge and drawing in a sketchbook, having cast a line. Behind his back stands a figure watching him

draw. There is little doubt that the fisherman drawn here alludes to the maker of the sheet and can be interpreted as a humorous signature or perhaps even as a kind of miniature self-portrait suggesting that 'I, Claes Jansz Visscher, actually sat there and drew this landscape from life'.

### Visscher's Fishermen as Ideograms

A connection between fishing and drawing and the fact that the fishermen in Visscher's landscapes can be interpreted as signatures had already been suggested by Cornelis de Bie in *Het Gulden Cabinet vande edele Vry Schilder-Const* of 1661.<sup>43</sup> The typesetter titled the poem in question *Cornelis Visscher Plaedt-snijder*. There can be no doubt, however, that the text referred to Claes Jansz Visscher's landscapes and not to the prints by the 'unrelated printmaker Cornelis Visscher' (1629-1658).<sup>44</sup> After a number of puns on the

Fig. 12  
CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Road between  
Watercourses in a  
Polder Landscape*,  
c. 1615-20.  
Pen and brown ink  
and brown and grey  
washes, 106 x 161 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-T-1883-A-238.



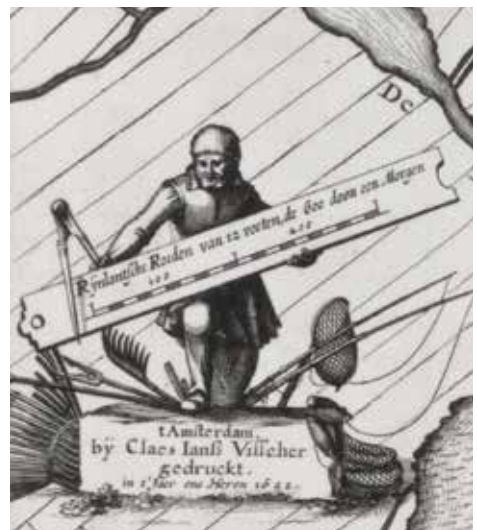
name Visscher and the art of fishing, De Bie praises his prints as examples from which people can learn.

Oh what patience a *Visscher* must have  
 As he waits, half despairing, for a bite  
 And sits whole days with quiet, melancholy pleasure,  
 To catch a fish on his sharp hook.  
 Just so, the young should rack their brains  
 And with great diligence strive for knowledge,  
 As did *Visscher*, who teaches in his prints  
 How one may become a master in this art:  
 How one must persist in fishing for a name  
 Whose fame is spread by art alone.  
 The sign of the *Visscher* (wherein his honour lies),  
 A solitary man at the water's edge, forever fishing,  
 Teaches us clearly and makes it plain  
 Who made these works, and even without words  
 Proves that *Visscher* has been most fruitful  
 In the composition of landscape above all,  
 Where one sees a wonder of pleasant views,  
 Prospects, stands of trees and beautiful sunlight,  
 Mountains so steep and high that Nature can  
 Add no more to *Visscher's* highest honour.<sup>45</sup>

And indeed the fisherman De Bie refers to frequently features as a signature and proud trademark in Visscher's prints, not only in his landscapes, but especially in his maps. Visscher began his career working on maps for other publishers. In 1621 he began to produce sizeable cartographic publications himself. One of his first major contributions in this field was his map of the Purmer Polder, dated 1622 (fig. 13a). An inscription in the cartouche lower right states that the dimensions of the polder were measured from the ice by eight named official surveyors. On the left, above the publisher's address, is a fisherman holding a pair of compasses and a surveyor's rod on which the scale of the map is indicated (fig. 13b). His foot rests on a stone inscribed with the publisher's address and the date, surrounded by fishing tackle, including two fishing rods. There is a certain irony concealed in this image: the

reclamation of lakes like the Purmer meant that the fishermen in those waters lost their livelihoods. Their place was taken firstly by surveyors and then by farmers and cows. The surveying fisherman does not, however, allude to those who once fished the Purmer, but unmistakably to Visscher's printmaking business. The firm's trademark, with surveyor's rod and pair of compasses, underlines the precision of the map and guarantees its quality and reliability.

Visscher himself engraved his early maps, like that of the Purmer, on the basis of drawings by surveyors and cartographers. Later he left the task to assistants and confined himself to designing and perhaps also etching the decorations on the maps he published. In his designs for map ornaments with fishermen in various roles and guises he displayed great ingenuity and a keen sense of humour. In the *Map of the Scheldt and the Redoubt at Zandvliet* of 1627 there is a fisherman reclining among his fishing tackle above the cartouche lower right (fig. 14). He holds two rods in his right hand and points to the inscription with the explanation and the publisher's address in the cartouche with his left.



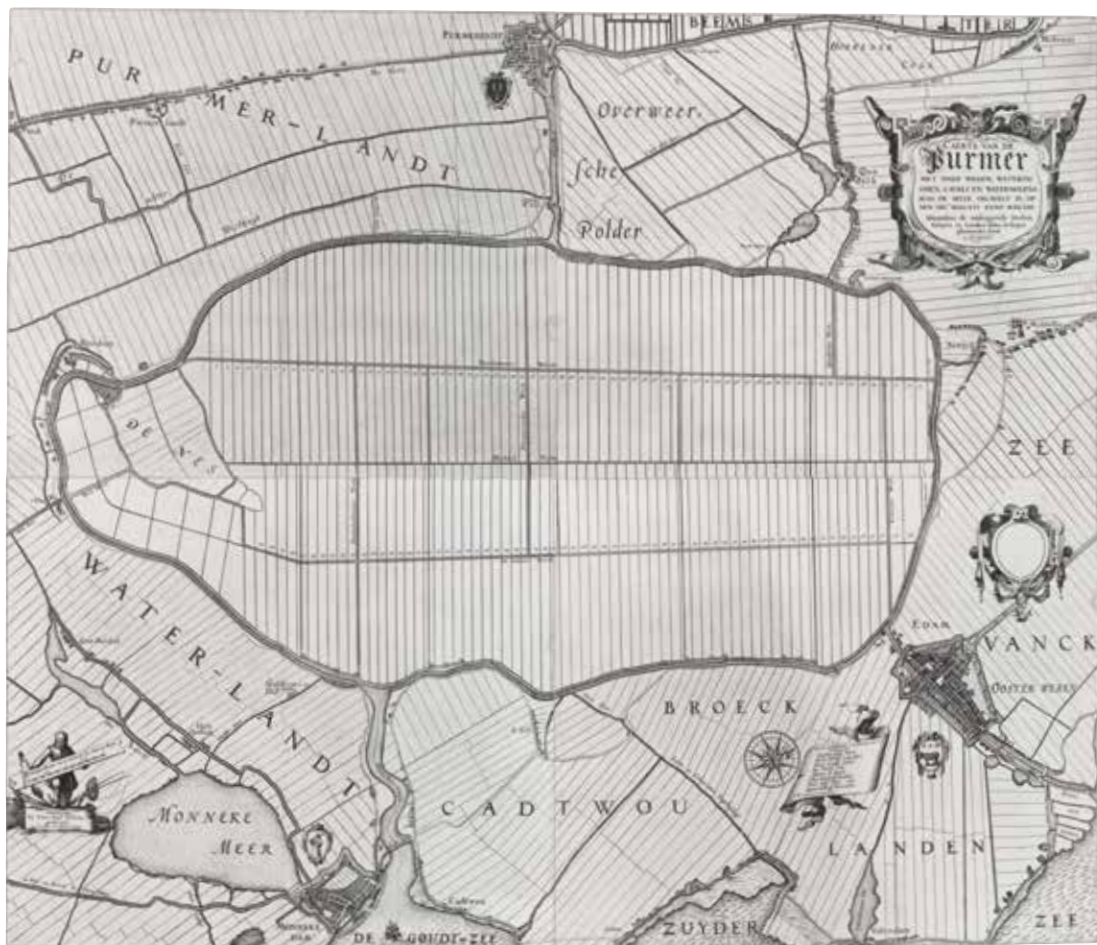


Fig. 13a

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER  
AFTER LUYCKAS JANSZ  
SINCK AND OTHERS,  
*Map of the Purmer  
Polder*, 1622.  
Etching from four  
plates, 857 x 1007 mm.  
Paris, Bibliothèque  
Nationale, Cartes et  
Plans.



Fig. 14

DETAIL OF CLAES  
JANSZ VISSCHER AFTER  
JOSUA VAN DEN ENDE,  
*Map of the Scheldt  
and the Redoubt  
at Zandvliet*, 1627,  
reworked and reissued  
in 1640, showing  
the cartouche with  
the address and  
the fisherman.  
Etching, 410 x 680 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-OB-81.618.

Fig. 13b

Detail showing the  
address and the  
fisherman with the  
scales (fig. 13a).



Fig. 15

DETAIL OF CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER'S WORKSHOP AFTER JOHANNES JACOBUS SCHOT, *Map Showing the Siege and Conquest of the Schenkenschans by Frederik Hendrik in 1635-1636*, 1636, showing the figures and scales on the right. Etching, 473 x 569 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-81.391.



The function of cartouches like this is similar to that of title prints of books or sets of prints.<sup>46</sup> They are in fact a sort of advertisement, designed to inform the viewer and to attract potential buyers. The fisherman focuses attention on the description of the map and the publisher's address, which he also personifies. It seems

as if the sign outside Visscher's workshop has been brought to life to attract the attention of would-be customers and persuade them to buy. Perhaps the soliciting fisherman in his prints can even be regarded as a kind of alter ego through which Visscher the printmaker and publisher recommended his products. In the map

Fig. 16

DETAIL OF CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER'S WORKSHOP, *Map of the Siege of Breda in 1637, 1637*, showing the address, scales and fisherman. Etching, 518 x 517 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-81.410.



commemorating Frederick Henry's victory at the Siege of Schenkenschans in 1635-36 a jovial fisherman is placed opposite a group of soldiers (fig. 15). He holds two fishing rods and a pair of compasses with which he points to the legend that gives the scale of the map in Rhenish rods. Aside from the witty *tromp l'oeil* effect he creates, the fisherman again emphasises the accuracy of the map. The same applies to other fishermen used as ideograms in prints from Visscher's stock (figs. 16, 17).

### Getting Hooked

Later in his career Visscher published four atlases, largely compiled and printed from older plates that he had bought in. In 1649 he produced a reissue of a pocket atlas previously published by Barent Langenes, to which he added various plates, including the remarkable title prints.<sup>47</sup> The section devoted to Europe opens with a fisherman who is measuring a globe with a pair of compasses and a ruler (fig. 18). Beside him there is a large painter's easel with a kind of signboard on it bearing the title and the publisher's address. Two fishing rods protrude above it. The sections on Africa and America are preceded by title prints with an African and a Native American fisherman respectively (figs. 19, 20). The larger size of the title print gave Visscher the opportunity to further expand his repertoire of visual jokes with fishermen.



Fig. 17  
WORKSHOP OF CLAES  
JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Supplement to the  
Siege of Gennep  
in 1641, 1641.*  
Etching, 404 x 151 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-OB-81.500C.

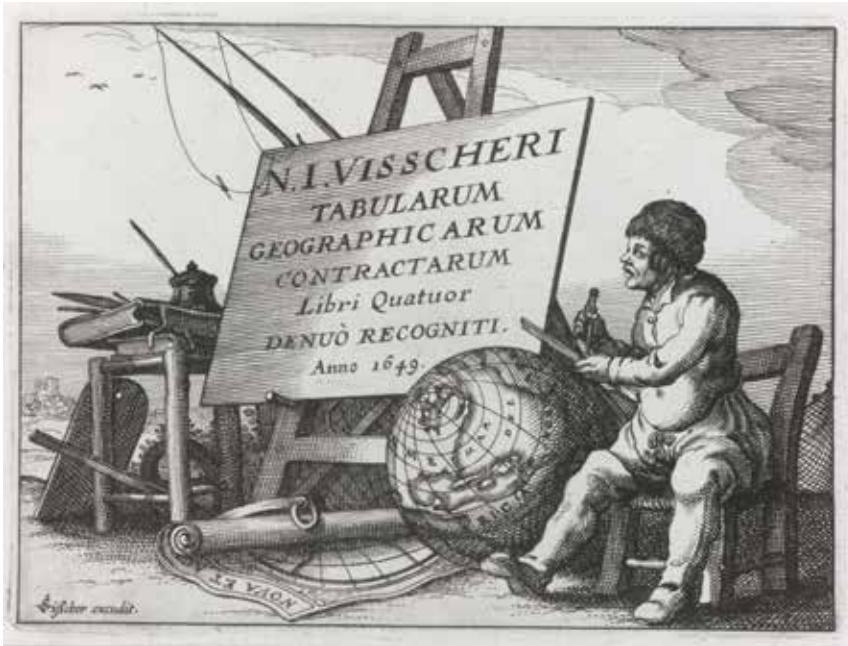


Fig. 18

ATTRIBUTED TO CLAES  
JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Title to the European  
Section of Tabularum  
Geographicarum  
Contractum ...*, 1649.  
Etching, 96 x 121 mm.  
London, British  
Library (Map Room).

Fig. 19

ATTRIBUTED TO CLAES  
JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Title to the African  
Section of Tabularum  
Geographicarum  
Contractum ...*, 1649.  
Etching, 97 x 119 mm.  
Paris, Bibliothèque  
Nationale, Cartes et  
Plans.

Fig. 20

ATTRIBUTED TO CLAES  
JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Title to the American  
Section of Tabularum  
Geographicarum  
Contractum ...*, 1649.  
Etching, 96 x 120 mm.  
London, British  
Library (Map Room).





Fig. 21  
 CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
*Design for a Title  
 Print for a Series  
 of 'Playsante  
 lantschappen'*  
*(Pleasant Landscapes)*  
 by Jan van de Velde II,  
 c. 1641.  
 Pen and brown ink,  
 brown and grey  
 washes over a  
 sketch in black chalk,  
 165 x 283 mm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum,  
 inv. no. RP-T-00-743.

One of the most interesting examples of a title print intended as a recommendation and advertisement is the design for a title print that Visscher drew in 1641 for a series of landscape prints by Jan van de Velde II (1593-1641) (fig. 21).<sup>48</sup> The printmaker had died that year and Visscher acquired thirty-five copper plates of landscapes, some possibly unfinished, that Van de Velde had left. On the title page Visscher designed for the posthumous publication, a fisherman shows the viewer a gigantic book with a picture of a mill in a landscape. It could be a sketchbook, but also an album of landscape prints. The inscription on the page on the left beside the landscape reads 'Now Velde has moved on and lies in his grave, Visscher shows the former's spirit, the content of his brain and fruits of his last work'. The caption in the margin below reads, 'Several Playsante lantschappen (delightful landscapes) and views drawn from life and reproduced on copper by Jan van de Velde, these being his last works before his death'.<sup>49</sup>

The message in both inscriptions is literally conveyed by the fisherman standing in the landscape at the water's edge, proudly showing a book of landscapes. Two fishing rods rest against the book or album. In the foreground there is more fishing tackle and a skull and two hourglasses, attributes that refer to death and transience. Remarkably, the design that surpassed all Visscher's earlier title pages in ingenuity and humour was not executed. This might lead one to suspect that the publisher had after all had some misgivings about the rather opportunistic and blunt way he was trying to sell the work of his deceased colleague. This, however, is belied by the title print that Visscher ultimately used to market Jan van de Velde's series (fig. 22a). The fisherman, no longer holding a book, now sits on an upturned basket beside a square block, a combination of a frontispiece, so it seems, and a tomb or monument topped with Vanitas attributes – a skull, a pipe and a dying torch. His right arm rests on the stone, as he



Fig. 22a

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
Title Print to the Series  
'Playsante lantschappen'  
(Pleasant Landscapes)  
by Jan van de Velde II,  
c. 1641.  
Etching, 150 x 280 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-1898-A-20494;  
D. Franken Bequest,  
Le Vésinet.

slumps down a little, fishing at his ease. The addition of the stone tomb turns the title page in to a kind of monument to the dead printmaker and publisher and appears to treat the exploitation of his legacy with a little more piety. Nevertheless, to modern eyes the image of the fisherman lolling on Van de Velde's tomb as he holds his rod is in questionable taste. The same applies to the inscription on the base of the stone, 'Now that Velde has moved on and lies in his grave, the Visscher brings his last work to light for you'.<sup>50</sup>

The personalized text leaves it in no doubt that the fisherman shown speaking here can be regarded as Visscher's alter ego. The workshop, its founder, its sign and brand name all truly converge here in an attempt to persuade us, the viewers, to purchase its product. As an extra visual joke, Visscher signed the title print with his monogram on a little box in which the fisherman has his bait. On closer examination, the monogram proves to consist of a C, an I and a V with barbs (fig. 22b). The mark in fact is a fish hook and refers subtly to the publisher's name and origins. The fish-hook mark appears in hundreds of prints from Visscher's stock. It is not just the fishermen in his prints who angle for the viewers' favour; Visscher even used his monogram to hook potential customers.

### Visscher and his Progeny

Despite his formidable output and stock, we know little about Claes Jansz Visscher the man. He married Neel Floris (1588-1638) in 1608 and they had ten children, five of whom reached adulthood.<sup>51</sup> There is no surviving portrait of Visscher, but this is true

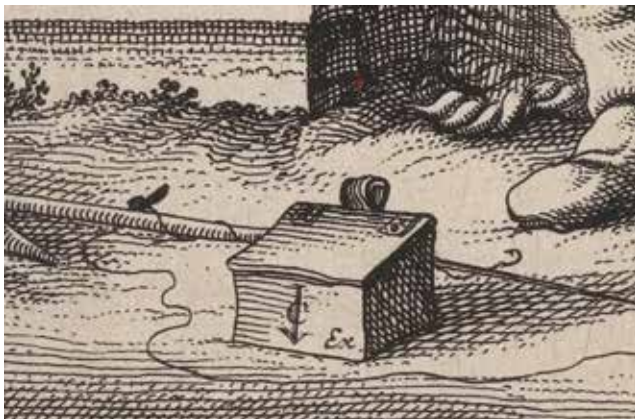


Fig. 22b

Detail of the bait  
box with Visscher's  
monogram (fig. 22a).

of almost all seventeenth-century Amsterdam print publishers. Clement de Jonghe, who was immortalized by Rembrandt in an etching, is one of the few exceptions.<sup>52</sup> Other publishers made no effort to distribute their likenesses; there was probably little call for them. In Claes Jansz Visscher's case, though, we have a large number of symbolic self-portraits. The fishermen pointing, measuring and fishing in his products represented more than an ideolectic game with a brand name. The print-maker and publisher also used it to convey the principles of his trade, such as the importance of precision and reliability in cartography and landscapes 'drawn from life'. Visscher's fishermen thus become metaphors for his professional skill.

There are many sides to Visscher's stock and, so it would appear, to the man, too. He was an active member of the Reformed Church and of the Anti-Arminian or Contra-Remonstrant party. His topical prints contain fierce propaganda against Catholics and the Remonstrants, such as Johan van Oldenbarnevelt and Gillis van Leedenberg, whose executions he supported in print. As a strict

Calvinist, he had burnished out all images of God from older plates he had purchased. And as representative of the New Church in Amsterdam, he was involved in attempts to ban the performance of Vondel's play *Gijbsbrecht van Amstel*, because it showed the re-enactment of a Catholic Mass.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand – and this is by no means a contradiction – his art often conveys a good sense of humour. Visscher's personal games with the image of the fisherman include visual jokes verging on apparent self-mockery. On the title page designed for a series depicting all kinds of fish after Adriaen Collaert, the appearance of the fisherman, carrying Visscher's monogram as a huge piece of fishing tackle, is perhaps appropriate this time, but it is also over the top (fig. 23). More serious, though, is the caption that surrounds the sun: 'Van Godt alleen' (From God alone).

Visscher's career is a perfect example of the social mobility that was possible during the Golden Age. Alongside the print business, he and his family made a fortune buying property in the booming Amsterdam real estate

Fig. 23

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER,  
Title Print to a Series  
of Fish and Sea  
Creatures (after  
Adriaen Collaert),  
1634.  
Etching and engraving,  
124 x 189 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-OB-2477.



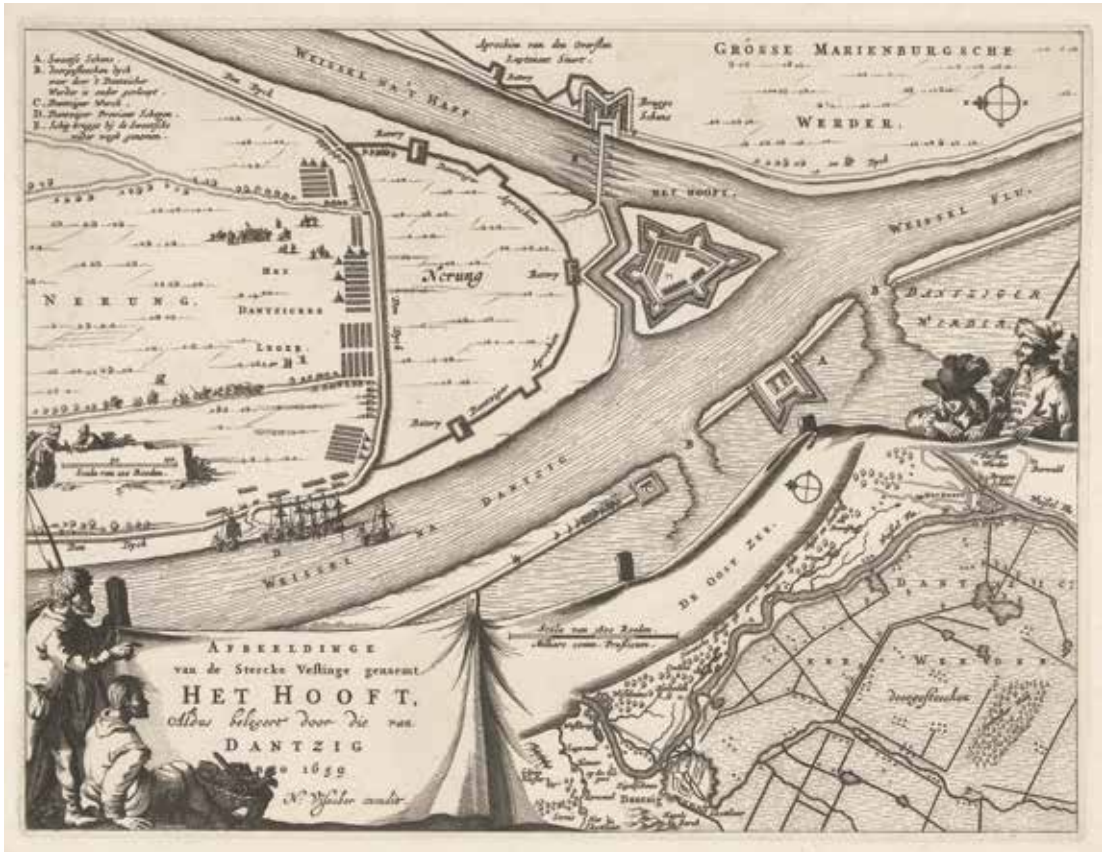


Fig. 24  
DETAIL OF  
NICOLAES VISSCHER  
(publisher), *Siege  
of the Fortress  
'Het Hoofd' near  
Gdansk, 1659.*  
Etching,  
259 x 340 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.  
RP-P-OB-81.881.

market. Adorning their houses and prints with 'Visschers', the descendants of an Amsterdam fisherman refer to their family background with a distinct sense of pride. Viewed in this light, the fisherman also personifies the formidable social climbing of the self-made man – Claes Jansz Visscher, who started as a talented draughtsman and etcher and became one of the most important print publishers in Europe. The way the family name, sometimes Latinized to Piscator, and the brand name converged and were used equates, in a sense, to the use of heraldic devices by rich patrician families. For some talented printmakers and businessmen in the Golden Age, the prospects of a career in printmaking were truly golden.

Claes Jansz's son Nicolaes (1618-1679) joined the business, probably at

an early age. After his marriage in 1644 at the age of twenty-six, he was able to buy a house on Damrak, near the New Bridge, for the impressive sum of 17,000 guilders (see fig. 2).<sup>54</sup> For ten years the house named 'De Jonge Visscher' (The young Visscher) served as an annex to the business in the Kalverstraat. Another house called 'De Visscher', near the Brouwersgracht, was owned by Grietje Jansz, a sister of Nicolaes, until it was sold by the family in 1685 (see fig. 2).<sup>55</sup> The parental house, in the Roomolensteeg, named 'De Visscher', also remained in the family until 1685 (see fig. 2). After the death of his father in 1652, Nicolaes returned to the house in the Kalverstraat and lived and worked there until his own death in 1679. Nicolaes does not seem to have had much interest in making prints

himself. His name only occurs on prints as a publisher and only after his father's death.<sup>56</sup> In some of these publications, he, too, uses the sign of the fisherman (fig. 24).

Nicolaes's son, called Nicolaus (1649-1702), also entered the family business as a publisher.<sup>57</sup> After the death of his father and his marriage in 1680, he moved to a house on Dam Square, moving the stock and the sign of the fisherman with him (see fig. 2).<sup>58</sup> It will come as little surprise to learn that fishermen inhabit Nicolaus's output as well (fig. 25). Before moving to Dam Square around 1682, Nicolaus published the only Visscher family stock list that is known to exist, listing thousands of prints published by the

various members of the family.<sup>59</sup> In 1684 he staged various auctions of large parts of the stock and the collections built up by his grandfather and father.<sup>60</sup> After Nicolaus's death in 1702 his widow, Elizabeth Versey, successfully continued the business until her death in 1726.<sup>61</sup> When this last descendant of the Visscher dynasty died, the shop came into the possession of the publisher Andries de Leth, who also took over the sign 'in de Visser'.<sup>62</sup> De Leth was succeeded by his son Hendrick, who used the address *op de Beurssluyt in de Visser* until his death in 1766.<sup>63</sup> Only then did the brand name introduced more than a century and a half earlier by Claes Visscher really cease to exist.

Fig. 25  
DETAIL OF  
NICOLAES VISSCHER  
(publisher), *Wall-  
Map of Catalonia*,  
c. 1690-1700, showing  
the address, scales  
and a fisherman.  
Etching, printed  
from six plates,  
1508 x 1210 mm.  
Paris, Bibliothèque  
Nationale, Cartes  
et Plans.





## NOTES

- \* This article is a revised version of a keynote lecture given at the International Conference *Claes Jansz. Visscher & His Progeny: Draftsmen, Printmakers and Print Publishers in 17th-Century Amsterdam*, Leiden University, 17-18 January 2013. My thanks go to Amanda Herrin and Maureen Warren, organizers of this productive conference, to Jane Turner for her valuable suggestions during the editing of the lecture and to Peter van der Coelen, Boudewijn Bakker and Jeroen van der Vliet (curator of the Rijksmuseum's maritime collections) for their much appreciated, highly pertinent and expert corrections and additions.
- 1 M. Kemp, *From Christ to Coke: How Image Becomes Icon*, Oxford 2011.
  - 2 In a review by R. Scruton, see <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/uncategorized/from-christ-to-coke/#.UwW6V4XO-u4>.
  - 3 M. Simon, *Claes Jansz. Visscher*, Freiburg 1958 (diss. Freiburg), pp. 9-10.
  - 4 I.H. van Eeghen, 'De familie van de plaat-snijder Claes Jansz Visscher', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam* 77 (1990), no. 4, pp. 73-82. See further the introduction by Chris Schuckman on Visscher's life and work in N.M. Orenstein et al., 'Print Publishers in the Netherlands 1580-1620', in G. Luijten et al. (eds.), *Dawn of the Golden Age: Northern Netherlandish Art 1580-1620*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 1993, pp. 167-200, esp. pp. 189-95, and the excellently documented overview by Peter van der Coelen almost entirely devoted to Visscher, 'Something for Everyone? The Marketing of Old Testament Prints in Holland's Golden Age', in P. van der Coelen et al., *Patriarchs, Angels & Prophets: The Old Testament in Netherlandish Printmaking from Lucas van Leyden to Rembrandt*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (The Rembrandt House Museum) 1996, pp. 37-61. For Visscher's autograph prints and a selection of his publications and those of his progeny see C. Schuckman and D. de Hoop Scheffer (ed.), *Claes Jansz. Visscher to Claes Claesz Visscher [Nicolaes Visscher II]*, F.H.W. Hollstein et al., *Dutch and Flemish Etchings and Engravings and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 72 vols., Amsterdam 1949-87; Roosendaal 1988-93; Rotterdam 1995-2004; Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2005-2010, vols. 38, 39.
  - 5 Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 73-75.
  - 6 Van Eeghen corrected her interpretation of Claes Visscher's water boat (*Amstelodamum. Maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam* 77 (1990), p. 120) referring to S. Hart, 'Het waterschip', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam* 39 (1952), pp. 153-54. See further R. Daalder and E. Spits, 'Waterschip', in R. Daalder and E. Spits (ed.), *Schepen van de Gouden Eeuw*, Zutphen 2005, pp. 43-50.
  - 7 'Wy noemen dese Schepen gemeynelick Water-schepen.' J.J. Pontanus, *Historische Beschrijvinghe der seer wijt beroemde Coop-stadt Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1614, p. 151.
  - 8 See [http://www.academia.edu/795762/Wrak\\_Waterschip\\_IJmeer](http://www.academia.edu/795762/Wrak_Waterschip_IJmeer).
  - 9 Other family members who Van Eeghen also mentions as owners of a water ship or 'water ship men' were very probably also fishermen. Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 73-74.
  - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
  - 11 G. Schilder, *Monumenta Cartographica Neerlandica*, 9 vols., Alphen aan den Rijn 1986-, vol. 4; Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), no. 202.
  - 12 The signature and address first featured on the etching of *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player*, dated 1607. Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), no. 110. *The Story of the Prodigal Son* series of 1608 also has Blaeu's address. There is no address on other prints by Visscher after Vinckboons, the earliest of which is dated 1605. Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), nos. 1-9, 107-09.
  - 13 Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), nos. 125, 147. B. Bakker and E. Schmitz, *Het aanzien van Amsterdam. Panorama's, plattegronden en profielen uit de Gouden Eeuw*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Amsterdam City Archives) 2007, pl. 1, pp. 143-46, 259-60, nos. 22a, 60.
  - 14 Pontanus, op. cit. (note 7), p. 151.
  - 15 By no. 22 the legend on the right describes the fisherman as 'D'eerste Amsterdamsche Bouwers ofte Borgers/ gheweest zijnde visschers/ soo ons de Cronijcken verhalen/ hebben door hare groote neersticheyt/ hare inwoonende Borgers niet alleenigh wel ghevoedet/ maer hebben oock tot sich ghetrocken alle verre gheleghen Natien/ ende deselve niet alleen even vriendelijck ghevoedet/ maer oock met blijdschap ontvangen ende gheherberghet.' See further on the programme of Visscher's profile, B. Bakker, 'Het imago van de stad: zelfportret als propaganda', in Bakker and Schmitz, op. cit. (note 13), pp. 60-61. Fisher-

- men are also referred to positively in poems about Haarlem and urban topographies, for example in the description of the beach at Zandvoort in S. Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland*, Haarlem 1628, p. 78. There is consequently reason to doubt the negative interpretation of Frans Hals's paintings of fishermen's children. See S. Koslow, 'Frans Hals's Fisherboys, Exemplars of Idleness', *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975), pp. 418-32.
- 16 'Keuze uit de aanwinsten. Zeventiende-eeuwse prenten', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52 (2004), nos. 3-4, pp. 349-50, no. 7. The print was previously undescribed.
- 17 Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), p. 77.
- 18 *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
- 19 Schuckman estimated that a thousand or so prints were produced in Visscher's workshop and a thousand others were printed from bought-in second-hand plates. This estimate is far too low, as Van der Coelen rightly noted. Many of the biblical prints, for example, the core business of Visscher's company, are not included. Van der Coelen calculated that close on 5,000 prints are named on the stock list that Claes Jansz's grandson Nicolaus Visscher published in 1680. Many of the second-hand plates that Claes Jansz Visscher had used previously, in particular for pictorial Bibles, are not included on this list. They were probably worn out by 1680 and no longer in use. The total number of plates from which impressions were distributed by the publishers who succeeded Visscher must have been more than 5,000. See Schuckman, op. cit. (note 4), p. 189; Van der Coelen, op. cit. (note 4), p. 39 and note 10, p. 48 and notes 44, 45 with more literature.
- 20 In Kalverstraat there was Jodocus Hondius I in 'de Wackere Hondt' (no. 5); Cornelis Danckerts in 'de vette Zwarte Hen' (no. 41); Justus Danckerts in 'Het hof van Utrecht' (no. 7); Hugo Allardt in the 'Werelt Caert' (no. 3); Frederick de Wit in 'de Crab' (no. 1); Clement de Jonghe in 'Gekroonde Konst en Kaart Winckel' (no. 10). See J. van der Veen, 'Danckerts en Zonen. Prentuitgevers, plaatsnijders en kunstverkopers te Amsterdam c. 1625-1700', in E. Kolfin and J. van der Veen (eds.), *Gedrukt tot Amsterdam. Amsterdamse prentmakers en -uitgevers in de gouden eeuw*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (The Rembrandt House Museum) 2011, pp. 58-119, esp. p. 64, fig. 8. See for an informative overview, E. Kolfin, 'Amsterdam, stad van prenten. Amsterdamse prentuitgevers in de 17de eeuw', *ibid.*, pp. 10-57. A similar concentration of printers, in fact even larger, was to be found in seventeenth-century Paris in and around the Rue St Jacques. See M. Grivel, *Le commerce de l'estampe à Paris au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Geneva 1986, pp. 57-62.
- 21 On this series see H. Leefflang, 'Het landschap in boek en prent. Perceptie en interpretatie van vroeg zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse landschapsprenten', in B. Bakker and H. Leefflang, *Nederland naan 't leven. Landschapsprenten uit de Gouden Eeuw*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (The Rembrandt House Museum) 1993, pp. 18-32; B. Bakker, 'Levenspelgrimage of vrome wandeling? Claes Janszoon Visscher en zijn serie *Plaisante Plaetsen*', *Oud Holland* 107 (1993), no. 1, pp. 97-115.
- 22 See J. van Grieken in J. van Grieken et al. (eds.), *Hieronymus Cock: The Renaissance in Print*, exh. cat. Louvain (M-Museum Leuven)/Paris (Fondation Custodia) 2013, pp. 78-79, nos. 4a-b.
- 23 For the translation and the commentary see H. Miedema, *Karel van Mander, Lives*, 6 vols., Doornspijk 1994-99, vol. 1, pp. 186-87, vol. 3, p. 244. The author Jan van de Velde I, father of the printmaker Jan van de Velde II, provides another example of playing with a 'simple' family name. Instead of his name, the portrait that his son made of him in 1621 is accompanied by the border inscription *T LEEFT AL VAN DEN VELDEN* (Everything Lives from the Fields) and a 'family coat of arms' with three calves. G. Luijten, C. Schuckman and D. de Hoop Scheffer (ed.), *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings and Engravings and Woodcuts, ca. 1450-1700*, 72 vols., Amsterdam 1949-87; Roosendaal 1988-93; Rotterdam 1995-2004; Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2005-10, vol. 33, p. 132, no. 414.
- 24 An imaginary cityscape engraved after a design by Vredeman de Vries shows a house with a hanging sign with personifications of the four winds. The publisher Hieronymus Cock is portrayed in the doorway and his wife Volcxken is shown standing behind a counter inside the house. The fact that this is actually the publishing couple is confirmed by an inscription immediately below the house: *laet de Cock coken om tvolckx wille*. Van Grieken, op. cit. (note 22), pp. 76-77.
- 25 Grivel, op. cit. (note 20), pp. 235-38.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 238.
- 27 For family trees and addresses of the Danckerts and Hondius families see F.G. Waller, *Biographisch Woordenboek van Noord Nederlandsche graveurs*, Amsterdam 1938, pp. 74-75, 146-48. For puns and other witty inscriptions on seventeenth-century signboards see the collection that

- was amassed at the end of the century by Hieronymus Zweerts (alias Jeroen Jeroense): *Koddige en Ernstige Opschriften op Luuyffels, Wagens, Glazen, Uithangborden en andere Tafrelen, Van langerhand by een gezamelt en uitgeschreven door een liefhebber derzelve*, Amsterdam s.a. For a selection of the 2,500 inscriptions and an introduction see B. Hageman, *Kelken van hout. Koddige en ernstige opschriften op luifels, wagens, glazen, uithangborden en andere tafereelen*, Apeldoorn 1993. Visscher's visual jokes fit in this tradition of witty advertising and 'branding'.
- 28 The earliest known lists of prints by Dutch publishers are Cornelis Claesz's catalogue of 1609 and the much later *Catalogus Van Groote en kleene Land-kaerten, Steden, Print-kunst En Boeken. Van Nicolaes Visscher van Amsteldam. T'Amsteldam, Op den Dam, in de Visscher* of around 1680. The latter was also published in a French and a German edition. Given that only one or a few examples of these catalogues have survived, the possibility that other seventeenth-century Dutch print publishers produced lists cannot be ruled out, although we know of no examples to date. B. van Selm, *Een menigte treffelijcke Boecken. Nederlandse boekhandelscatalogi in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw*, Utrecht 1987, pp. 217-25; J. van der Waals, *De prentschat van Michiel Hinloopen. Een reconstructie van de eerste openbare papierkunstverzameling in Nederland*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 1988, pp. 20-22, 199; J. van der Waals, *Prenten in de Gouden Eeuw. Van kunst tot kastpapier*, exh. cat. Rotterdam (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) 2006, appendix 5, pp. 219-29, and Van der Coelen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 39-41 with references to literature on stock lists by Italian, English and French print publishers. Peter Fuhring is preparing a complete catalogue of European and American stock and publishers' lists up to 1900.
- 29 Clement de Jonghe used the print on the title page of the architectural treatise by the Post brothers of 1665, which he published, and also as an address print in its own right. Van der Coelen, op. cit. (note 4), p. 49 and fig. 13. The shop sign of De Jonghe's business 'Gekroonde Konst en Kaart Winckel', probably included a similar depiction. F. Laurentius, *Clement de Jonghe (ca. 1624-1677). Kunstverkoop in de Gouden Eeuw*, Utrecht 2010 (diss. Utrecht), pp. 115-16.
- 30 N.M. Orenstein and M. Sellink (ed.), *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700: Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2006, pp. 197-235, nos. A68-111; Van Grieken et al. (eds.), op. cit. (note 22), pp. 352-57, nos. 97a-b.
- 31 Orenstein and Sellink (ed.), op. cit. (note 30), pp. 236-51, nos. A112-37; Schuckman and De Hoop Scheffer, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 144-47, nos. 292-317. For a comparison between the *Small Landscapes* published by Cock and the copies by Visscher, see the article by A. Onuf: <http://www.jhna.org/index.php/past-issues/vol-3-1/130-envisioning-netherlandish-unity-claes-visschers>. Onuf maintains that Visscher specifically aimed the Brabant landscapes, published at the beginning of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-21), at immigrants from the Southern Netherlands, for whom their country's landscapes would have evoked both nostalgia and hope.
- 32 Schuckman and De Hoop Scheffer, op. cit. (note 4), vol. 38, pp. 81-82, nos. 140-43 and pp. 84-86, nos. 149-60; Luijten et al. (eds.), op. cit. (note 4), pp. 650-55, nos. 324-27; Bakker and Leeftang, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 54-57, nos. 8, 9.
- 33 For Visscher's approach to drawing and etching his landscapes 'from life' see J. Peeters and E. Schmitz, 'Belangrijke aanwinst voor Gemeentearchief: een blad met twee onbekende tekeningen van Claes Jansz Visscher', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam* 84 (1997), no. 2, pp. 33-44. Luijten et al. (eds.), op. cit. (note 4), pp. 650-52, nos. 324-26.
- 34 D. Freedberg, *Dutch Landscape Prints*, London 1980, pp. 28-32; P. Sutton, 'Introduction', in P. Sutton et al., *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum)/Boston (Museum of Fine Arts)/Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art) 1988, pp. 1-63, esp. pp. 18-19, 23-24; W.T. Kloek, 'Northern Netherlandish Art 1580-1620. A Survey', in Luijten et al. (eds.), op. cit. (note 4), pp. 15-111, esp. pp. 104-05. C. Levesque, *Journey through Landscape in Seventeenth-Century Holland: the Haarlem Print Series and Dutch Identity*, Pennsylvania 1994 offers far-reaching political and moral interpretations of Visscher's series and other early Dutch landscape series. For my objections to this, see the review in *Simiolus* 23 (1995), no. 4, pp. 273-80.
- 35 Aside from the literature mentioned in note 21 see H. Leeftang, 'Dutch Landscape: the Urban View. Haarlem and Its Environs in Literature and Art, 15th-17th Century', in *Natuur en landschap in de Nederlandse kunst 1500-1850*, Zwolle 1998 (*Nederlands*

- Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, vol. 48), pp. 52-115, esp. pp. 69-71, 85-87; W.S. Gibson, *Pleasant Places: The Rustic Landscape from Bruegel to Ruysdael*, Berkeley et al. 2000, pp. 27-49; B. Bakker, *Landscape and Religion from Van Eyck to Rembrandt*, Farnham 2011, pp. 235-46.
- 36 E. de Jongh and G. Luijten, *Spiegel van alledag. Nederlandse genrepenten 1550-1700*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 1997, pp. 272-75, no. 55.
- 37 Chris Schuckman and I independently established a link between the angler on the title page of Visscher's *Plaisante Plaetsen* and the angler in Roemer Visscher's *Sinnepoppen*, Amsterdam 1614, *Schock* III, p. 151, no. xxviii. C. Schuckman in Luijten et al. (eds.), op. cit. (note 4), p. 653, no. 327; Leeftang, op. cit. (note 21), pp. 26-27.
- 38 For *Sinnepoppen* see Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 165-75, nos. 427-611, and K. Porteman and M.B. Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1560-1700*, Amsterdam 2008, pp. 248-52 and the literature mentioned on p. 902.
- 39 The image of the fisherman with two rods was adopted in Zacharias Heyns, *Emblemata Moralia*, Rotterdam 1625, pp. 42-44. Here the fisherman with two rods indicates perseverance and serendipity in science: 'Gestadich velt u hengel-roed,/ T'vis bijt daermen minst vermoed.'
- 40 Roemer Visscher, op. cit. (note 37), *Schock* I, p. 5, no. iv.
- 41 For the two versions see New Hollstein, op. cit. (note 30), nos. A96, A120.
- 42 M. Schapelhouman and P. Schatborn, *Land & water. Hollandse tekeningen uit de 17de eeuw in het Rijksprentenkabinet*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 1987, no. 6; M. Schapelhouman and P. Schatborn, *Dutch Drawings of the Seventeenth Century in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam: Artists Born between 1580 and 1600*, 2 vols., Amsterdam/London 1998, vol. 1, p. 182, no. 394; vol. 2, p. 196, no. 394.
- 43 C. de Bie, *Het Gulden Cabinet vande edele Vry Schilder-Const*, Antwerp 1661, p. 461.
- 44 De Bie rectified the mistake and identified Claes Jansz Visscher as a 'cloveck Plaedtsnijder in Landschap' ('clever engraver of landscape') as distinct from Cornelis de Visscher 'Plaedt-snijder in Figuren de welcke hy selver ordonneert, teeckent ende snijdt' ('engraver of figures which he composes, draws and cuts himself') and from his brother Jan Visscher. *Ibid.*, p. 524. Although Claes Jansz Visscher is still known today chiefly as a landscape specialist, he was also very skilful at drawing figures, as can be seen from the emblems, topical prints, title pages and vignettes with fishermen he designed for his maps.
- 45 O wat verdueligheyt moet niet een Visscher lijden/ Als hy half hopeloos een nooptjen gaet verbeyden/ En wacht heel daghen lanck met stil en droef vermaeck,/ Te krijghen eenich visch aen sijnen scherpen haeck./ Soo oock behoort de jeught de hersenen te breken/ En met veel arrebeyt naer wetenschap te steken/ Als Visscher heeft ghedaen, die in sijn printen leert/ Hoe datmen in des' Const can worden eens volleert;/ Hoe datmen stadichlijck moet visschen naer een naem/ Die door Const alleen verbreydt word vande Faem,/ Het Visschers teecken is (waer in de eere leyt)/ Daer eenich man aen t'water sit en vist altijd./ Dit teecken leert ons al en gheeft ghenoch te kennen/ Van wie des' wercken sijn, jae sonder schrift der pennen/ Bewijst, dat Visscher overvloedigh is gheeweest/ In't ordonneren van het Landtschap aldermeest;/ Daer sietmen wonderheyt van aerdighe ghesichten/ Perspecten, boom-ghewas, en schoone Sonnen lichten,/ Gheberghten steyl en hoogh soo dat Natuur niet meer/ Kan storren in't verstandt tot Visschers hoogste eer.
- 46 For the function of title pages for books and sets of prints see M.C. Corbett and R.W. Lightbrown, *The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title-Page in England 1550-1660*, London 1979, and B. Bakker, 'Pictores adeste! Hieronymus Cock Recommending his Print Series', *Simiolus* 33 (2007/08), *Nine Offerings for Jan Piet Filedt Kok*, pp. 53-66. For decorations on maps see J.F. Heijbroek and M. Schapelhouman (eds.), *Kunst in kaart. Decoratieve aspecten van de cartografie*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 1989.
- 47 Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 92-93, nos. 196-201.
- 48 Schapelhouman and Schatborn 1987, op. cit. (note 42), pp. 7-8; Schapelhouman and Schatborn 1998, op. cit. (note 42), vol. 1, pp. 184-85, no. 401; vol. 2, p. 198, no. 401; Hollstein, op. cit. (note 23), pp. 105-15, nos. 333-67.
- 49 The first inscription reads, 'Nu Velden is geweest/ verhuist en in sijn grafste woont/ de Visscher hier syn geest/ t hol van t Breyn en laetste vrucht/ werck vertoont.' And the second, 'enige vermakelijcke seer playsante lantschappen en gesichten naet/ leven getekent ende int koper gemaeckt door Jan vande Velden, synde syn laetste werk met de doot geeyndicht.'

- 50 'Als Velden was verhuyst en in sijn Grafstee lach./ Bracht u de Visscher dit, sijn lest noch aen de dach.'
- 51 Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), p. 82.
- 52 E. Hinterding, J. Rutgers and G. Luijten (ed.), *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700. Rembrandt*, 7 vols., Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2013, vol. 2, pp. 201-04, no. 264; vol. 3, pp. 44-53, no. 264. According to Frans Laurentius it may be the publisher himself who features on Clement de Jonghe's address print (see note 29). At the same time, with rather far-fetched arguments, the author calls into question the identification of Rembrandt's portrait of Clement de Jonghe. Laurentius, op. cit. (note 29), pp. 15-17.
- 53 For these aspects of Visscher's life see Schuckman, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 191, 195, and Bakker, op. cit. (note 21).
- 54 Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 79, 81.
- 55 This Grietje had inherited three other houses from her father, but continued to live in the family house in Kalverstraat until her death in 1669. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- 56 Hollstein, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 255-66.
- 57 *Ibid.*, pp. 267-89. The mention of Claes Jansz Visscher's son and grandson in Hollstein as Claes Claesz I and Claes Claesz II is confusing; they themselves did not use these names. As Peter van der Coelen observed, Visscher's son and grandson consistently used their individual names of Nicolaes and Nicolaus. Van der Coelen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 38-39, note 9.
- 58 Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), p. 80.
- 59 *Catalogus van groote en kleene land-kaerten, steden, print-kunst en boecken van Nicolaes Visscher van Amsterdam. T'Amsterdam Op den Dam, in de Visscher*. The appearance of the stock list under the name Nicolaes rather than Nicolaus Visscher was most probably an error on the part of the typesetter – the Visschers themselves did not have a letterpress. Van der Coelen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 38-39, note 9. For a transcription of the Dutch edition of Visscher's stock list see Van der Waals 2006, op. cit. (note 28), appendix 5, pp. 219-29. For the different copies and editions of Visscher's list in Dutch, German and French see Van der Waals 1988, op. cit. (note 28), p. 199, and Van der Coelen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 38-39 and the Appendix, p. 61.
- 60 Van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), p. 81.
- 61 Kolfn, op. cit. (note 20), p. 53, note 52.
- 62 Waller, op. cit. (note 27), p. 199.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 199.



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