



The Sword and the Album: Material Memories and an Eighteenth-Century Poetic Account of the Execution of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1619)*

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In 1878, the Nederlandsch Museum van Kunst en Geschiedenis, an immediate predecessor of the Rijksmuseum, was gladdened by the receipt of two gruesome gifts: the executioner's sword supposedly used to behead Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619) and an eighteenth-century album of poems about the horrific event (figs. 1a-b, 2). Sword and album are reminders of one of the most controversial episodes in the Dutch Golden Age: the conviction and execution of the Land's Advocate, the chairman of the States of Holland and the leader of the pro-Republic States Party.¹ At first Oldenbarnevelt had been able to work well with the stadholder, Prince Maurice (1567-1625), who was twenty years younger than the Advocate and regarded him as his mentor. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, mentor and pupil grew ever further apart on both political and religious issues and eventually things came to a head. The initial cause of the heated conflict was a theological dispute about the doctrine of predestination, but at the same time it was about the relationship between Church and State, foreign policy and, last but by no means least, the power in the Republic. Maurice advocated stronger central control – under his leadership, needless to say – whereas in Oldenbarnevelt's eyes ultimate sovereignty should rest

< Figs. 1a-b
ANONYMOUS,
*Executioner's
Sword Said to
Have Been Used to
Behead Johan van
Oldenbarnevelt*
(front and back),
Germany, late
sixteenth century.
Iron, 110 x 22.6 cm.

Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
NG-NM-4245; private
gift to the museum.

Fig. 2
FRANS GREENWOOD,
*Album of Poems
on the Sword Said
to Have Been Used
to Behead Johan*

van Oldenbarnevelt,
1743-45.
Paper, cardboard,
leather, ink,
290 x 228 mm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. NG-NM-4282;
private gift to the
museum.





with the provinces. On 29 August 1618 the senior figures in the States party were taken prisoner. In what was later described as a political show trial, Oldenbarnevelt was condemned to death by a specially appointed court on 12 May 1619 and some of his supporters were sentenced to life imprisonment. The following day, the old statesman was led to the scaffold and went forward to meet his executioner, leaning on the stick that Joost van den Vondel would later eulogize in a famous poem, 'Het Stockske van Joan van Oldenbarnevelt' (fig. 3). A single stroke of the sword ended the life of the Advocate, but he lived on among his political heirs as an example of selfless patriotism, a champion of true freedom and an opponent of absolute power and tyranny. Oldenbarnevelt became part of the Dutch historical canon.

When the executioner's sword entered the Rijksmuseum collection, it became one of the most iconic objects in the History Department. It was given a permanent place in the display along with other relics, including Oldenbarnevelt's 'stockske'. But while the sword was the subject of consider-

able public attention, the accompanying collection of poems was forgotten until Wim Vroom drew attention to it again in a 1997 book about national relics, and in a 2012 article Mary Eggermont-Molenaar explored the history of the album. So far, though, there has not been a thorough analysis of the content of the album.²

And yet the album presents a unique view of Early Modern memorial culture.³ Recent studies of the cultural memory focus on the way people relate to the past and, more particularly, the complex interaction between the representation of the past and processes of appropriation and the formation of identity. The past is seen not as an objective and immutable fact that is transmitted from generation to generation, but as an essentially subjective image that is constantly open to rewriting, adaptation and transformation. The representation of the past can consequently not be viewed in isolation from ideological interests and contemporary positions – political and otherwise.⁴ The appropriation of Oldenbarnevelt's memory by disparate groups in different

Fig. 3

CLAES JANSZ VISSCHER (II), *Iustitie aen Ian van Oldenbarnevelt geschied*, 1619. Etching, 202 x 371 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-77.318.

historical periods has been the subject of several recent studies. Maureen Warren, for instance, wrote about the memorial culture surrounding Oldenbarnevelt in the seventeenth century, and Niek van Sas and Lieke van Deinsen investigated the way the memory of the Land's Advocate was deployed during the revolutionary period at the end of the eighteenth century.⁵

Cultural memory studies originally concentrated on textual sources, but there has recently been a growth in interest in the role of objects in memorial processes.⁶ Objects are no longer regarded as passive carriers of a static past but are given an active role in the process of remembering as – to borrow from Pierre Nora's influential conceptual framework – a *lieu*, or more specifically *objet de mémoire*. Again, there is a process of attribution: 'things do not "have" a memory of their own, but they may remind us, may trigger our memory, because they carry memories which we have invested into them', states Jan Assmann.⁷ This attribution process is inextricably linked with the observer.⁸ As a result, the meaning and function of an object as a carrier of memory can change not just with the passage of time (diachronically), but also and at the same time within different social groups (synchronously).

The relic is a particular type of memorial object. Vroom described how in the course of the seventeenth century, religious relics in the Republic increasingly acquired profane pendants and the popularity of and cult surrounding the material souvenirs of revered (or despised) secular figures grew significantly. Such profane relics could fulfil a crucial role in the creation of a shared past. A remarkable number of relics of Oldenbarnevelt have survived. The most famous, without doubt, is his 'stokske' – of which there is more than one doing the rounds (figs. 4, 5)⁹ – but we also have his spectacles, a gold ring,

a snuffbox and the armchair he used in prison (fig. 7). And finally, there is the executioner's sword, the subject of this study.¹⁰

In this article we explore the history of the sword and the album, and the role they played in the memorial culture around Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. Who were the owners of the sword, what stories did they attach to it and how did they transpose the tragic events of 1619 to their own political and cultural context? In this regard we look particularly at the interaction between the memory, the sword as a tangible object and the album of poems written about it. These are at least as interesting as the object itself and have contributed significantly to the memorial culture surrounding Oldenbarnevelt.

The Sword or A Sword?

The earliest record of the sword now in the Rijksmuseum dates from more than a century after the disastrous execution. In 1742, the Dordrecht glass engraver, poet and art lover Frans Greenwood (1680-1761), who had acquired the sword not long before, circulated an album among his friends and acquaintances and asked them to write poems to the executioner's sword. For Greenwood, whom we shall encounter again later, there was absolutely no question that this sword really was the instrument of execution that had put an end to Oldenbarnevelt's life. To demonstrate its authenticity, he included in the album an extract from a letter from the previous owner, Maximiliaan van Berchem (1706-1761).¹¹ Van Berchem had had the information about the provenance of the sword straight from his father's mouth and could consequently assure Greenwood that 'all the signs are that it is genuine'.¹² Maximiliaan van Berchem, who would later become burgomaster of Den Briel, was married to one of Frans's nieces, Francina Greenwood (1713-1741). According to Van Berchem



Fig. 4
 ANONYMOUS,
Het Stokske van
Oldenbarnevelt
 (Oldenbarnevelt's
 stick), seventeenth
 century.
 Wood, iron, ivory,
 96 x 4 cm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum,
 inv. no. NG-NM-548.



Fig. 5
 ANONYMOUS,
Het Stokske van
Oldenbarnevelt
 (Oldenbarnevelt's
 stick), seventeenth
 century.
 Wood, iron, ivory,
 h. 96 cm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum,
 inv. no. NG-C-1998-1;
 on loan from the
 University of
 Amsterdam.

Fig. 6
 ANONYMOUS,
 'Het Stokske
 van Johan van
 Oldenbarnevelt'
door Vondel,
 nineteenth century.
 Lithograph,
 331 x 224 mm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
 RP-P-OB-80.898.

HET STOCKSKE

Joan van ^{va,} Edenbarnevelt,
Van de Vredelant.

Angen minste begaafte u onbekrot,

O STOCK is stout, die, gedin' verkracht,

Maak' (krijgs) stout de Soelant's vanden

Gefut gort, in dat wicket fiesalot;

Torn sy dorst' eening's zwaart moet hi niet,

Verhoordet, aeb dus Soudha,

Door Turkoo's zant is ongenad.

Tot droefheid die zandfiet ziele.

Geg' zult wot, jaer's artike die,

Die uitgangh van die Soet gekuigt,

En sod' Gewet zult Punt de f' Beigt,

Tot smakt die onduidelijke stak.

Soe diekwige stak die oeg, ondu' t' stakpog

Maak' t' Soe x' : 'stus stakpog' aeg

Sin' door wot.

En Reimmet, op die oeg' :

Aeb sy, deaft' , ondu' dom

Paerik is f' sniftus, ondu' dom,

En ondu' t' castings lantepark stakpog!

Wie gmg, 300 Rrom gebuikt, mit Rrom!

Geg' nuffel was un' trouwe geieft,

Maak' nuffel was die ondu' stak,

Gurmet door' (beu'kand) bitus, wotk:

Ten stak is stak geg' wot myn dieft.

J. V. Vonder

the sword had come into the family through his maternal grandfather, Maximiliaan van Steenhuysen (c. 1650-before 1721), a colonel in the States army and also a resident of Den Briel. Van Steenhuysen, 'a lover of Antiquities', supposedly purchased the sword from the estate of a Hague burgomaster, whose name, regrettably, was no longer known in the family. Evidently that burgomaster's heirs attached extraordinary value to the sword, for Van Berchem stated that 'through confusion or carelessness' it had been sold along with the rest of the estate and that members of the family later made frantic efforts to get it back. They wanted to buy back 'the sword, as said to be the one with which Oldenbarnevelt was decapitated' and 'even offered a high price'. Maximiliaan van Steenhuysen did not take them up on it.

This hard to verify information aside, virtually nothing is known about the earliest history of the sword.¹³ Older written sources have not survived, but we do, of course, have the sword itself (figs. 1a-b). It has a flat, broad blade with a groove ending in a point and a short, slim crossguard with a simple knob at the end. The covering of the grip is missing, but we know from nineteenth-century descriptions that at that time the sword had a grip bound with black cloth.¹⁴ The crossguard, which does not fit properly to the blade, and the knob are not original: they are probably eighteenth-century, possibly even nineteenth-century additions.¹⁵ A four-line verse was engraved on one side of the blade around 1743 (fig. 8), about which more later, and on the other is a mark: an orb with a cross crosslet (a cross whose arms are themselves crosses) (fig. 9). The orb was quite widely used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in cities like Passau, Munich and Solingen, where it was a sort of general quality mark. This means that it is not possible to attribute this sword to a specific maker

on the basis of the mark.¹⁶ Swords with an identical mark have also been found in other collections, where they are dated to late sixteenth-century Germany on the basis of typology.¹⁷ That would also seem to be a likely date for the Rijksmuseum's sword.

If this is the sword that put period to Oldenbarnevelt, it must have been used as an execution weapon in 1619. The flat, broad blade and the slim guard (which after all had no function) are indeed typical of executioners' swords. The dating similarly does not rule out such a use: a late sixteenth-century sword could perfectly well have been used by an executioner in 1619. The only feature that is unusual in an execution sword is the pointed tip of the blade; these weapons would usually have a flattened or rounded tip: they were after all used for slashing, not stabbing. There are however, exceptions to this rule, including a number of mid-seventeenth-century executioners' swords hanging in Deventer town hall.¹⁸ An executioner's sword with a point, while admittedly unusual, is not unknown.

But is this possible executioner's sword really the sword that ended Oldenbarnevelt's life? Oldenbarnevelt's execution was not carried out by the regular executioner of the Court of Holland, Jacob Mosel, who was ill. He was replaced by the executioner of the Court of Utrecht, Hans Pruijm.¹⁹ Pruijm was an experienced executioner who had earned his spurs in the witch hunts in the Palatinate and later as the city executioner for Zutphen and Utrecht. A professional of his calibre would undoubtedly have had first-class equipment and it seems obvious that he would have used his own sword to behead Oldenbarnevelt. The German historian Gisela Wilbertz very recently made an interesting discovery, which she will publish later this year: she was able to identify a sword in the armoury of the Staatliche Kunstkammer in Dresden as an executioner's sword

that once belonged to the man who carried out Oldenbarnevelt's death sentence (fig. 11).²⁰ The sword's blade is inscribed 'Hans Pruum of Mesenem' (fig. 10).²¹ When Hans Pruijm was appointed executioner for the city of Utrecht in 1604, the record states that he was 'born in Meysenheim [Meisenheim] in the Duchy of Zweibrücken'.²² Both the family name Pruijm and the place name Meisenheim were spelled in various ways.²³ This sword, unmistakably an executioner's sword with a blunt tip, comes from the 'Garderobe' of Augustus the Strong, who gave it to Dresden armoury in 1700. Unfortunately, it is not clear

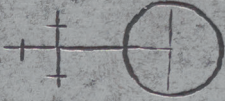
how this sword came into the possession of the Elector of Saxony. If the sword of 'Hans Pruum van Mesenem' is indeed the executioner's sword belonging to Hans Pruijm of Meisenheim – which we feel is highly likely – that does not prove that it is the sword used in the beheading of the Dutch statesman. Hans Pruijm may well have had more than one execution weapon. Nevertheless, we are of the opinion that the likelihood that the sword in Dresden put paid to Johan van Oldenbarnevelt's existence is significantly greater than that the Rijksmuseum's sword must be held responsible.

Fig. 7

ANONYMOUS,
*Armchair from
 Oldenbarnevelt's
 Prison Cell, 1600-50.*
 Wood, mock velvet,
 87 x 61.5 x 43 cm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum,
 inv. no. BK-NM-1008.



Stokoude schuldloze Helt,
 Rampzalige Odenbarnerelt,
 Dit waart sloeg door in' hals den Staat
 Eindiepewonde in synen Raade,
 Ten op het Saagse moortjescharre
 Uw dierbaar leven werd geknot.



† H A N S † B R V M † V A N N E S E N † †

< Fig. 8

Detail of the sword
(fig. 1a): engraved
six-line verse.

< Fig. 9

Detail of the reverse
of the sword (fig. 1b):
maker's mark.

< Fig. 10

Detail of the Dresden
sword (fig. 11), showing
the inscription on the
blade: *HANS PRVVM
VAN MESENEM*.

> Fig. 11

ANONYMOUS,
*Executioner's
Sword*, Solingen,
sixteenth/seventeenth
century.
Iron, wood,
103,5 x 5,9
(blade width) cm.
Dresden,
Rüstammer,
Staatlichen
Kunstsammlungen,
inv. no. IV 0198.
Photo: Jürgen Lösel.

**From Sword to Relic**

From the moment, around 1740, Frans Greenwood got his hands on the sword, it awakened in dozens of eighteenth-century writers the need to recount their versions of the past – usually in relation to their own times. It swiftly metamorphosed into a bearer of memories.

Frans Greenwood, of English descent, was born in Rotterdam in 1680 (figs. 12, 14).²⁴ After a brief career as a merchant he became a tax officer at the Admiralty on the Maas. In 1726 he settled in Dordrecht, where he died in 1763. Alongside his professional activities, Greenwood emerged as one of the most all-round artistic figures in the eighteenth-century Republic. A productive poet, he was also an accomplished painter of miniatures and is credited as the inventor of stipple engraving on glass (fig. 13).²⁵ Greenwood was a welcome guest in Dutch literary and artistic circles. He was a member of the Dordrecht artists' society, the Brotherhood of St Luke, and maintained active contacts with various culture lovers in other towns and cities. His name appears, for instance, in the circle of poets who gathered in the house of the Amsterdam patron Michiel de Roode to sing the praises of the *Panpoëticon Batavûm*, a wooden collector's cabinet with the portraits of more than three hundred poets and poetesses (fig. 14).²⁶ Greenwood's house in Dordrecht, a stone's throw from the studio of his good friend, the painter Aert Schouman (1710-1792), was a meeting place for lovers of art and literature. Greenwood shared with many of them a love of the arts, his patriotic ideals and his pro-Republic sympathies.

Soon after Greenwood acquired the sword, he must have realized that it could serve a greater good and embarked on a very effective campaign to elevate the object to the status of a relic with public recognition. He began by associating it with Oldenbarnevelt's

Fig. 12
 AERT SCHOUMAN,
 Portrait Medallion
 of Frans Greenwood
 Held by a Muse, 1748.
 Mezzotint,
 hand-coloured,
 200 x 158 mm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
 RP-T-1901-A-4545.



execution once and for all by engraving a six-line verse on the blade, most probably with his own hands (fig. 8):

Venerable guiltless hero,
 Ill-fated Oldenbarnevelt,
 Through your neck this sword sliced
 A deep wound in the Council of the States,
 When your precious life was cut short
 On the murderous Hague scaffold.²⁷

These lines at one and the same time claimed the authenticity of the sword and presented the viewer with an

immediate, interpretative and expressly pro-Republic context in which the relic was to be placed: Oldenbarnevelt was a 'guiltless hero' who had been unjustly executed on a 'murderous scaffold', and the sword was the materialization of this memory.

Greenwood then made the sword accessible to a wider audience by placing it in his art cabinet. 'Those who wish to see it from close by/ Must climb Greenwood's Parnassus of art,' wrote Dirk Smits.²⁸



Fig. 13
 ANONYMOUS
 (glass blower) and
 FRANS GREENWOOD
 (glass engraver),
*Goblet with a
 Man Holding a
 Berkenmeier*, 1724.
 Glass with stipple
 engraving,
 22.5 x 8.5 cm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum,
 inv. no. BK-NM-2925.

Lastly, Greenwood endeavoured to increase the relic's reputation by asking contemporaries to write poems to the execution weapon. To this end, he started the album we referred to earlier and circulated it among his poet friends. Beginning in the winter of 1743, the album went on tour from Dordrecht, via Vlaardingen, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague, returning to Greenwood's house by post in March 1745. In the interim forty-seven poetic reflections on the sword had been written in the album. By way of a



Fig. 14
 AERT SCHOUMAN,
*Portrait of Frans
 Greenwood for
 the Panpoëticon
 Batavûm*, c. 1750.
 Oil on copper,
 11 x 9.2 cm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum,
 inv. no. SK-A-1968.

preface, Greenwood also added the accompanying letter with which Arnold Hoogvliet returned the album on 17 March 1745, together with the provenance note from his nephew by marriage Maximiliaan van Berchem and a list of the 'Poets and Poetesses' who had contributed to the album. The contributors were a motley crew: from the well-to-do former theatre director and writer Balthazar Huydecoper to Mattheus van den Broek (aged twelve years and eight months, according to the inscription). Mattheus had found the album in his father's possession and illuminated it in his best calligraphy with a few childish lines of verse and an equally touching drawing of the sword (fig. 15) (see the appendix for brief biographical details of the contributors).

The contributors to the album were not the first to devote their poetic talents to an object associated with a particular Dutch patriot. They were part of a tradition dating back more than a century. As we have seen, no less a celebrity than Joost van den Vondel had put the genre on the map in the Republic with his famous ode *Het stokske van Joan van Oldenbarnevelt, vader des vaderlands* (the stick belonging to Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, father of the fatherland) written in 1657 (fig. 6).²⁹ A whole series of patriotic relics inspired poets to break into verse: from Hugo Grotius's book chest to the 'first finger of the right hand' of Johan de Witt, the Grand Pensionary who was lynched by the furious mob in 1672.³⁰ Greenwood did achieve a first, however: as far as we can discover, no one had ever devoted a whole album to a single relic before.³¹

Living Memory

The confrontation with the sword, and the direct contact with the past this created, triggered a strong emotional reaction in virtually all the contributors. Katharina Froet, for instance, was profoundly affected by the sight of the sword because it conjured up for her a vivid image of Oldenbarnevelt's execution.

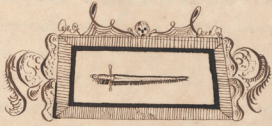
Oh! Gruesome murder weapon, it
makes my heart quake,
When I think of the hideous blow,
With which, on that unspeakable day,
You robbed the aged Barnevelt of
his life.³²

For many poets, the sword was first and foremost an *objet de mémoire*, a tangible witness to a controversial episode in Dutch history. 'Now shall the terrible steel,' wrote J. Haverkamp, 'preserve the memory of that deed forever.'³³

All the contributors, in line with the vision Greenwood had stressed in his inscription, regarded the trial of the

Land's Advocate as a black page in the country's history. Oldenbarnevelt was called a 'grey hero'³⁴, 'pious Patriot'³⁵, 'pillar of the State'³⁶ and 'Holland's greatest Father'.³⁷ He was above all 'innocent',³⁸ and by giving his own life in the cause of freedom he had become a 'martyr of the State'.³⁹ Some recorded only in veiled terms who was responsible for the death of the Land's Advocate,⁴⁰ whereas others spoke out, not hesitating to point the finger of blame at the stadholder: 'Maurice's vengefulness' or 'Maurice's hate' were the root cause of Oldenbarnevelt's execution.⁴¹

The ferocity of the accusations levelled at the Orangist camp did not appear out of the blue, but were part of the contemporary political climate in Holland. Oldenbarnevelt's execution was not a neutral event in a dim, distant past, it was in fact a highly charged historical episode with direct ties to the political present.⁴² In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Oldenbarnevelt, together with Grotius and, later, the De Witt brothers, was a symbol of pro-Republic sentiment and his violent death became a fixed element of republican iconography.⁴³ Greenwood's album was created between 1743 and 1745, the last years of the Second Stadholderless Era (1702-47).⁴⁴ After William III died childless in 1702, the States of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Drenthe, Overijssel and Gelderland decided not to appoint a successor. Friesland and Groningen alone continued with a stadholder from the Frisian branch of the House of Orange. In the other provinces it was now the senior figures of the States faction who had the upper hand. Nevertheless, they had to stand by and watch as the Prince of Orange gained influence in the seventeenth and thirties. In 1722, Gelderland and Drenthe, which was not represented in the States General, moved to recognize the eleven-year-old William IV of the Frisian branch



't Zwaard! dat er den Hele van **OLDENBARNEVELD**
 Doorloft, en met 'n Slag de Vryheid heeft geveld,
 Na dat hy toen hy tot 't Lande Voorspraak was Verkooren,
 Gestaag zyn wyzen Raad liet aan zyn Beiden hooren!
 Hy stierf, en daaldde in 't Graf, terwyl zyn eer en lof
 Leeft door al 't aardryk, en zyn Ziel in 't Hemels Hof.

Mattheus Van den Broek.
 Gedr. d' 2 Junij en 3 Maanden

Amsterdam den 25 van Herftmaand,
 1744

as their future stadholder. William consequently became stadholder of Friesland, Groningen, Drenthe and Gelderland when he attained his majority in 1729. The young stadholder gradually strengthened the power of his position, among other things by marrying the daughter of the English king in 1734. At the end of the seventeen-thirties, the old factional conflict flared up again in all its fury. It found expression in a variety of ways, including an intense polemic between republican and Orangist authors about the desirable form of government.⁴⁵ The States faction invoked the 'True Freedom' and warned of the dangers of concentrating too much power in the hands of one person.

It is interesting to read how in his *Verhandeling van de Vryheit in den Burgerstaet* (1737), a comprehensive defence of a republican government, Lieven Ferdinand de Beaufort sought his arguments not just in classical antiquity, but also referred to the fate of the republican heroes of the seventeenth century. In a typically pessimistic passage, he wrote that it took a good deal of courage to stand up for freedom and the fatherland:

If one sees that such excellent men are abandoned by the very people whose rights they defend, are sent into exile, are condemned to a violent death, yes are even torn apart by the rabble, is that not enough to deter everybody from the service of the Fatherland and of Liberty.⁴⁶

Readers undoubtedly recognized the references to Oldenbarnevelt ('condemned to a violent death') and the De Witt brothers ('torn apart by the rabble'). The Orangists responded with the accusation that the States politicians were only out for their own interests and had run the country into the ground with their incompetence and corruption: only a strong

Fig. 15

MATTHEUS
 VAN DEN BROEK,
*Poem to the Sword in
 Greenwood's Album*
 (fig. 2), 1744.

Ink, 275 x 220 mm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
 NG-NM-4282-46.

stadholder who was concerned for the general good could restore the glory days of the Republic.

The conflict between the republicans and the Orangists was not confined to paper. William also tried to increase his power in the political arena, making several attempts to acquire a generalship, but was thwarted each time by the republican authorities, who feared that it would be a step towards a stadholdership.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) had broken out in 1740. The Republic sided with the British and Austrians against the French and the Prussians. French troops advanced on the Southern Netherlands in 1744, threatening the Republic's southern borders. At the same time hunger riots broke out in several towns and cities.⁴⁸ When French troops finally did invade Dutch Flanders in 1747, the population succumbed to panic that was to have far-reaching political consequences. Public opinion turned against the incumbent powers and the people demanded the return of Orange. Now Holland and the other Republican provinces appointed William IV as stadholder.

It was inevitable that the combination of an ambitious Orange, internal unrest and external threats would make the Republican politicians nervous: the parallels with the 'disaster year', 1672, which had ended the First Stadholderless Era and brought William III to power, were all too obvious. The fear of a repetition certainly preyed on the mind of François Teresteyn van Halewijn, Pensionary of Dordrecht, Greenwood's home town. In 1739 the English diplomat Horace Walpole wrote that this Dordrecht official 'talks of being De Witted for his republican principles as a glorious thing', a direct reference to the tragic end of the De Witt brothers, murdered by the mob in 1672.⁴⁹

Again and again, the poets in the album referred in their contributions to the topicality of the past embodied in the sword. For one or two, it was a good reason to let the past go: it would only cause the old factional strife to flare up again. 'Why do you scratch open again that old political wound?/ Which were better scratched out of the book of memory,' Johannes van Braam wondered.⁵⁰ In her recent study of memory in early modern Europe, Judith Pollmann underlines the importance of deliberate 'forgetting' in the memory culture in this period, to promote reconciliation.⁵¹ These acts of oblivion were even given official status; various decrees and treaties explicitly stated that recent events had to be 'forgotten', which essentially meant that that past had to be 'deactivated'. And that is probably precisely what Van Braam had in mind here.

The great majority of the contributors, however, not only did not believe that the fateful episode in the nation's history should ever be forgotten, they thought that lessons should be learned from it. This was why Willem van der Pot urged his contemporaries not to be deterred by seeing the sword, but, on the contrary, to tread in Oldenbarnevelt's footsteps with 'proud courage'. The sword should, wrote the poet, inspire action in the present:

Oh Freedom! Hang this sword in
glory in the vaulting of the court,
So that it may inspire all who see it
to the service of the Free Country!⁵²

In his concluding verses, Hendrik van Bracht seems to refer directly to the growing power of the stadholder so feared by the republican faction:

But should the public not demand this
fate?
So that the tyrant shall not rise
again? ⁵³

Fig. 16a
FRANS DE HAES,
'Het Zwaard aen
den Dichteren' in
Greenwood's Album
(fig. 2), 1743.
Ink, 275 x 220 mm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
NG-NM-4282-19(R).

Het Zwaerd

aen
den Dichteren

Wat hoort, wat grieft ge mij, o drufuge Poëten,
 Dus door uw felerpe pen; of de, oorzaak van den dood
 Des grooten Baarnevelts met reelt mij wierd' geweten?
 Die yver is voor waer, dat onbesleit te groot!
 1) Verftreкке, o Dichters, u des tot geen wonder teken,
 Dat ik, ik Tongeloore, u aenfpreek in uw tael.
 Waer't de eer der Onfchulte geld, en, zij niet uit mag fpreken,
 Verdedigt from gefteente of exts haer meernigmael.
 De wreedde Dwinglandij, vol onbefuist vernogen,
 Heeft mij Gerechtigleit, aen wie ik, op den dag
 Van mijn geboorte reeds verlooft werd, stout onttoogen,
 En tegen mijnen wil gedwongen tot dien flag.
 Oel! had het Noodlot mij, ter kwader uur geboren,
 Het stale Noodlot mij toch nimmer voortgebragt;
 Of in een bergfpelonk' en duifstre mijn' doen fnoeren!
 Kiep ik wel vaeck toen uit in bange jammer klagt.
 Iet is'er eelter, iet, dat mij tot troost kan ftrekken,
 In mijn voorleden fnoert, en't geen, o Tebus kroost,
 Wel ver van gramfchap in uw' boezem te verwekken,
 U en wat deugd bemint verftrekken moet tot troost.
 Wanneer ik wierd' geperst dien Grijs aerde te duin fneven,
 Wiens fchuld of onfchulte zooveel herten heeft verdeelt,
 Weid mij gelegenleit tot onderzoek gegeven,
 Wat bloed dien Patriot door de aders heeft gespeelt.
 Dit heb ik van nabij, (wat wil men meer begeren)
 Dit heb ik van nabij voorzigt ja, zelfs geproeft.
 Nu kan, nu mag, nu moet ik zeggen, tuigen, zweren,
 Bij al wat waerleit is, die thans mijn' eed beloeft,
 En bij Gerechtigleit aen wie ik ben verbonden,
 Ja by dien grijzen kop, getroffen door mijn' flag;
 Ik heb alleen geen drup verraedts daer in gevonden,
 Geen ftep van 't geen men felidmef of eerloos herten mag.
 Aen;

Neen; 'k vond in tegendeel ja proefde de elste geuren,
 Van d' allerreinfte den gden trouw, en een gemoed,
 Dat moedig op zijn recht ziel zelf wist op te beuren,
 In 't vreeslyk drukken, van den wreedsten tegen spoed.
 Dit zal ik eeuwiglyk getuigen en vertellen,
 Tak smek, o Dichters, u, die door mijn reden ~~is~~
 Mijn trouwste vrienden werdt, laet my uw kunst verzellen,
 En trekken tot een steun van mijn belijdenis.
 Eiseht iemand voor de zaak nog klaerer selets of teeken;
 Hy kan my zelf' aen 't huis van Greenwood zien en spreken.

Frans de Haes

Memory in Ink

The essence of an object as a repository of memory lies in the story attached to it and its application to the present. Poets, of course, were second to none in providing attractive and relevant stories for relics. The poets in Greenwood's album were well aware of their task in giving significance to the sword and the history associated with it. The sword poems, according to the Amsterdam hosier Pieter Bakker, had a dual function: 'To strike terror into those who violate right,/ As an example for posterity.'⁵⁴

But how did the poets acquit themselves of this task? Most of those who contributed to the album tried to bring the past to life as vividly and dramatically as they could. They had at their disposal an arsenal of literary techniques which gave them far greater licence than historians, who as a rule had to provide as objective an account as possible. The poets in the album took undisguised delight in playing games with different viewpoints. It was an approach that enabled them to allow people and even objects that normally remained silent to speak. In his poem, the Rotterdam merchant and poet Nicolaas Versteeg even brought Oldenbarnevelt himself on to the stage.⁵⁵ After hearing the sword poems by Greenwood's contributors, the Land's Advocate decides to make a brief return to the land of the living and comes face to face with the executioner's sword in Greenwood's house. Almost a century and a half after his death, Oldenbarnevelt regains his voice and addresses his words to the sword that killed him. No blame attaches to the sword, the executioner, the judges or Maurice, says the deceased. In retrospect they have only done himself and the fatherland a service. Thanks to them Oldenbarnevelt had exchanged fleeting mortality for eternal dedication to freedom. Approvingly, he observes that, more than a century later, the sword which cost him his

head has become the ultimate symbol of freedom in Greenwood's hands.

More spectacular still are the poems in which the sword itself speaks. In Frans de Haes's contribution, *Het Zwaard aen den Dichteren* ('The Sword to the Poets'), the sword – the 'Tongueless' – at last has the opportunity to tell its story itself (figs. 16a-b). The sword addresses 'angry poets' and tells them about the tragedy of its existence as a sword: how it was compelled to strike the fatal blow against its will. This dubious privilege did, though, give it the unique opportunity to investigate first-hand the guilt or innocence of the Land's Advocate. It had examined Oldenbarnevelt's blood 'intimately, even tasted it' and 'found not a drop of treason in it'.

This shall I eternally attest and tell
Aye, I beg, Poets, you who certain of
my reason
Became my most loyal friends, let me
attend upon your art
And serve as a support of my
confession,
Should someone demand a yet clearer
sketch or sign:
He can even see or speak to me in
Greenwood's house.⁵⁶

The sword is presented here as a witness. This was not just about a material testimony of martyrdom – one of the most fundamental functions of religious and patriotic relics: proof that the martyrdom really had happened – it was also a literary testament. The poet gives the relic a voice and it is presented as the ultimate witness of the innocence of the martyr.

Memory in Print

By displaying the sword in his cabinet of art and inviting his poet friends to write a poem in the album, Greenwood certainly extended the relic's reach, but it was still confined to a limited circle of like-minded souls. The strength of

Fig. 16b
FRANS DE HAES,
'Het Zwaard aen
den Dichteren' in
Greenwood's Album
(fig. 2), 1743.
Ink, 275 x 220 mm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
NG-NM-4282-19(V).

't Stokske, was not solely that Vondel wrote a poem to it, but also because this poem was published and thus found its way to a much wider audience.

Greenwood probably toyed with the idea of publishing his album, but decided against it because several authors made plans of their own. This, at least, is what Arnold Hoogvliet seemed to suggest in the covering letter he sent when he returned the album to Greenwood on 17 March 1745.⁵⁷ He wrote that he had been surprised to discover that the two contributions by the prominent literary figures Sybrand Feitama (1694-1758) and Jan de Marre (1696-1763) were missing. He was all the more astonished because two months earlier he had seen these poems 'in their own hands'.⁵⁸ The authors had told him then that their contributions had been secretly copied. Hoogvliet promised Greenwood that he would impress upon Feitama and De Marre the fact that Greenwood would protect their poems against 'this discourteous thievery', but he apparently failed to persuade them, for both poems are still missing from the collection. It is quite possible that the fear of this 'discourteous thievery' also deterred the renowned writer of comedies Pieter Langendijk (1683-1756) from entrusting his verses to paper in the album. Langendijk did, though, pen a poem titled 'For the album of Mr N.N., who has in his cabinet the sword with which J. Van Oldenbarneveld was beheaded'.⁵⁹ This work appears in the third volume of his *Gedichten* (1751), but is absent from Greenwood's album. Even before this, Herman Franciscus Ketelanus and Jan Willem van Steenbergen had removed their contributions from the album. On the pages that had once displayed their poems, Greenwood noted with irritation that they had been 'clandestinely torn out here' (fig. 17).⁶⁰ The most plausible explanation for this is that a pirate edition was being planned, something that was by no means

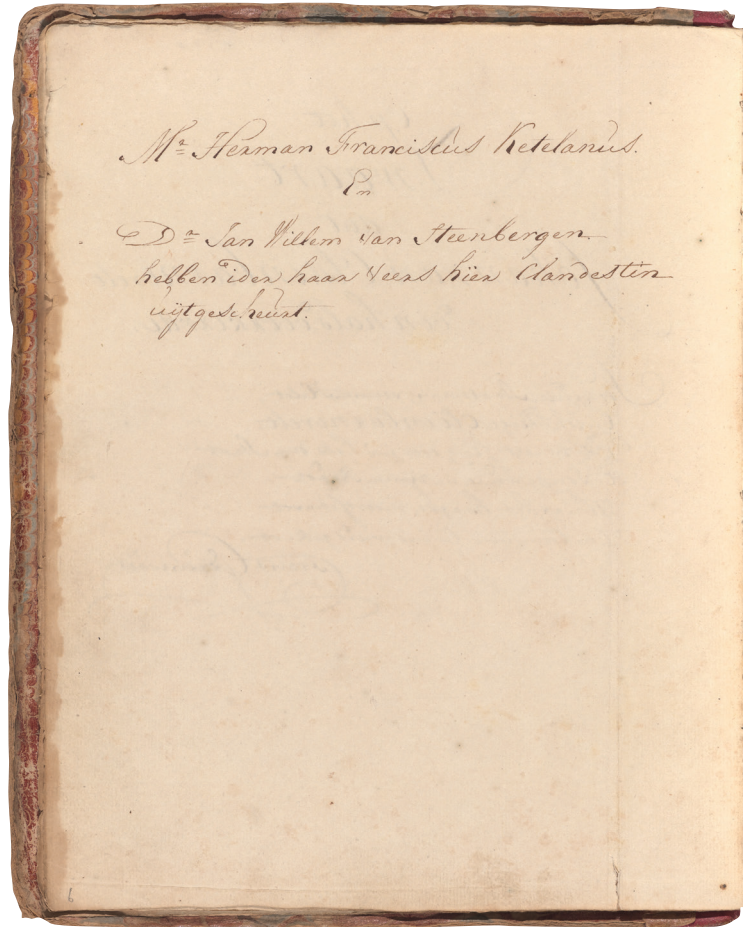


Fig. 17
Note in Greenwood's
album (fig. 2), 1745.
Pen and brown ink,
275 x 220 mm.

Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
NG-NM-4282-6(v).

unusual in the eighteenth century. Tellingly, there is a manuscript in the National Library of the Netherlands with eleven poems taken virtually verbatim from Greenwood's album. These are primarily the contributions of the literary heavyweights, but neither Feitema's and De Marre's poems, nor those of Ketelanus and Van Steenbergen appear in this selection. The poems that were included are those by Greenwood, Hoogvliet, De Haes, Smits, Van der Pot, Huydecoper, De Bosch, Willink, Hartsen, Stamhorst, Pater and De Haen.⁶¹

Greenwood never published the album, nor was there a full pirate edition, but some of the poems in the collection did eventually find their way into print. Dirk Smits's contribution appeared in print separately, possibly with the goal of making it part of a more extensive collection of his poems,⁶² but for the reputation of the collection it was much more important that in 1748, probably clandestinely, a substantial proportion of the contributions were included in the third volume of the anthology of political satires *Dichtkundig praal-tooneel van Neerlands wonderen*.⁶³ In the section 'Collection of diverse poems to the sword that severed the neck of the late Johan van Oldenbarnevelt in the year 1619' we find the poems by Greenwood, Hoogvliet, Smits, Huydecoper, Elias Michielsz, De Bosch, Van Braam and Van Bracht. The selection also included another four poems that are not found in the album now: some rather uninspired lines of verse by the eminent professor at the Amsterdam Athenaeum Illustre, Hubertus Gregor van Vryhoff (1704-1754), and three works whose authors are indicated only by the initials J.B., J.W.v.S. and H.T.K. We have been unable to identify the first of these anonymous writers, but the second is undoubtedly Jan Willem van Steenbergen, who had secretly torn his contribution out of Greenwood's

album a few years before. The initials of the third, H.T.K., appear to contain a printing error: it should be H.F.K. for Herman Franciscus Ketelanus, who had likewise removed his poem from the album.⁶⁴

When the most important of them were published in *Dichtkundig praal-tooneel*, the sword poems not only reached a wider audience, they also took on a different connotation because of the new context, wedged in as they were between the other contributions in the *praal-tooneel*. This anthology, behind which lurked the republican Jacob Baroen and the bookseller Gerardus van Hattum, was a collection of prose and poetry responding to the unstable political climate in the late seventeen-forties after the restoration of the stadholderate in 1747.⁶⁵ In this collection of chiefly republican poems, the political complexion of Greenwood's album was reinforced and deployed in a new political reality. When Greenwood's friends wrote their contributions, they were expressing the views of the republican authorities who were in power, but at the time of the publication in the *praal-tooneel* they represented the voice of the opposition. In this hardened political climate, in which the differences between the republicans and the Orangists intensified, the memory of Oldenbarnevelt became even more politicized. The old statesman regularly cropped up in the fierce war of words in an exchange of pamphlets in 1757, known as the De Witt War, the anniversary of his death was commemorated in 1771 at one of the anti-Orangist services Pieter Burman Jr staged at his country house, Santhorst, and the republican Patriot movement later regarded him as one of their great forerunners. In the arts, too, he was immortalized as an example to contemporaries, for instance in the shape of a porcelain bust or a grisaille for an Amsterdam town house whose owner had decidedly Patriot sympa-



Fig. 18
 Manufactuur
 Oud-Loosdrecht,
 Bust of Johan van
 Oldenbarnevelt,
 c. 1782-84.

Porcelain, biscuit,
 22.5 x 9 cm.
 Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum,
 inv. no. BK-NM-5844.

thies (figs. 18, 19).⁶⁶ Yet again, the flexibility of memorial culture was expressed in concrete terms.

Memory in the Museum

Greenwood probably gave the sword and the collection to his friend, the burgomaster of Dordrecht, Paulus Gevaerts (1697-1770), during his lifetime.⁶⁷ It then passed to his son, the well-known Patriot Ocker Gevaerts (1735-1807), who when he was a deputy for the States of Holland and West-Friesland, offered the Orangists deliberate provocation in 1786 when he and the Dordrecht Pensionary Cornelis de Gijselaar drove in a coach into the Binnenhof through the Stadhouderispoort, a privilege traditionally reserved for the stadholder.⁶⁸ The sword then remained in the family, and around the middle of the century was loaned to exhibitions where the general public could also see it.⁶⁹ In 1857, for instance, it appeared, with the album, at the exhibition of 'antiquities and curiosities important to the Netherlands', organized by the Provinciaal Utrechtsch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen (Province of Utrecht Society of Arts and Sciences), and in 1869 at the exhibition of arms and attributes of war at the Amsterdam artists' society *Arti et Amicitiae*. The family had already offered the sword to the Province of Utrecht society for five hundred guilders in 1849, but the sale did not go through.⁷⁰ It was not until 1878 that the sword and album entered a public collection. In that year, Jonkheer P.O.H. Gevaerts van Simonshaven gave both objects to the Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst. This great-grandson of the fervent Patriot Ocker Gevaerts had made a political U-turn from his forefathers and was Queen Sophie's chamberlain and gentleman in waiting to William III.⁷¹ This close connection with the Orange family probably explains why he stipulated in writing,



Fig. 19
JOHANNES
VAN DREGT,
*Allegory of Freedom
with a Portrait Bust
of Oldenbarnevelt*,
1790.
Grisaille on canvas,
195 x 82 cm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. SK-A-4978;
gift of J.J. Halsema,
Amsterdam.

when the sword was transferred, that his name was never to be made public.⁷³

With the sword in the collection of the *Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst*, its 'public reach' suddenly became much greater. From now on, it could play a role in the more or less official national memorial culture. This also continued a trend that had begun earlier: the story associated with the sword was no longer that of the republican, anti-Orangist faction, but rather a national story about the turbulent history of the Low Countries at the time of the Revolt. It now metamorphosed from a republican relic to a national relic. Niek van Sas earlier described how nationalism – he refers to 'neo-nationalism' or 'mass nationalism' –

changed its character in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Nationalism was embraced by a much larger proportion of the Dutch population, and the emphasis shifted to national reconciliation and the unity of the country. The House of Orange, now a royal house, was gradually transformed from a party symbol to a national symbol, and even the painful history of Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt was no longer interpreted from the perspective of party interests, but seen by all as a shared memory of the discord of the past that added lustre to the unity of the present.⁷³

It was precisely this that became the new function of the sword. In 1879, director David van der Kellen (1827-1895) published a series of articles about the collection of the *Nederlandsch Museum*, which later became part of the *Rijksmuseum*. In his view, the museum was dedicated first and foremost 'to the memory of our famous men, of historic places and events'.⁷⁴ The first galleries were dedicated to the now generally loved Orange family; the subsequent rooms focused on other great men in the nation's history, 'of whom we are justly proud, whom we also love and honour', illustrated by means of relics devoted to them.⁷⁵ Memorials to Oldenbarnevelt included the *Stokske*, the chair from his cell and the sword. Van der Kellen saw the Land's Advocate as the most distinguished victim 'of those unhappy internal disputes' during the Twelve Years' Truce that were now described in general and neutral terms.⁷⁶ Greenwood's collection of poems was mentioned, but without going into the very specific political connotations of many of the poems. It was, when all was said and done, the greatness and, above all, the unity of the nation that were celebrated in the new museum.⁷⁷

As the twentieth century progressed, national relics gradually fell from grace. Professional historians certainly no

longer took them seriously once recent research increasingly often revealed that these objects could not possibly be genuine. At the same time, however, the recent rise in memory studies brought them a fresh audience and renewed interest. When the Rijksmuseum's history department was redesigned in 1998, wholly in line with Wim Vroom's vision, the national relics were rehabilitated as *objets de mémoire*.⁷⁸ The sword was displayed in close proximity to other republican relics that had held wide appeal in the course of history, such as Oldenbarnevelt's *Stokske*. That *Stokske* was now shown not just with Vondel's famous poem, but also with another Oldenbarnevelt *Stokske* held by the University of Amsterdam (fig. 20). This display made it clear at a glance that what mattered was not the authenticity of these objects, but their role in the memorial culture. In the 2013 rehang, the sword was placed in a glass case with the two sticks, and the label explains the doubtful authenticity of the instrument of execution. And so we see how down through the centuries the sword has had different meanings and functions: from a possible executioner's weapon to a republican and then national relic to an *objet de mémoire*.



Fig. 20

Display in the Rijksmuseum's history department including the sword and Oldenbarnevelt's two sticks, 2001.

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, historical archive, no. HA-0014552.

ABSTRACT

In 1878 the Rijksmuseum acquired two objects related to the violent death of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt: the executioner's sword allegedly used to behead the Land's Advocate and an eighteenth-century album of poems about the weapon of execution. The article describes how these objects have functioned in the Oldenbarnevelt memory culture and shows how they have taken on new functions and meanings over the centuries – from a possible executioner's weapon, to a republican and then national relic, to an *objet de mémoire*.

- * The authors wish to thank Laura Schoots, who during her internship contributed to making the album accessible, Niek van Sas for his comments on an earlier version of this article and, especially, Gisela Wilbertz, who discovered Hans Pruijm's executioner's sword in the armoury of the Staatliche Kunstkammer in Dresden, for sharing her knowledge.
- 1 J. den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt*, 5 vols., Haarlem 1960-72; Ben Knapen, *De man en zijn staat. Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, 1547-1619*, Amsterdam 2005; G.H. Janssen, *Het stokje van Oldenbarnevelt*, Hilversum 2001.
 - 2 Wim Vroom, *Het wonderlid van Jan de Witt en andere vaderlandse relieken*, Amsterdam/Nijmegen 1997, esp. pp. 31-35; Mary Eggermont-Molenaar, 'Over het beulzwaard in het Rijksmuseum en de poëzie erop en eromheen. Een kwestie die opkwam bij onderzoek naar de geschiedenis van Huize Bijdorp en haar bewoners te Voor-schoten', *Canadian Journal of Netherlandic Studies* 33 (2012), no. 1, pp. 16-30. A very select number of the poems in the album were published previously in F. Smit, *Frans Greenwood, 1680-1763: Dutch Poet & Glass Engraver*, Peterborough 1988, pp. 79-82.
 - 3 Jan Assmann's conceptualization of the cultural memory is still very relevant: Jan Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique* 65 (1995), pp. 125-33; Jan Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', in Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds.), *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, Berlin 2008, pp. 109-18. See also Mieke Bal et al. (eds.), *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, Hanover 1999; A. Erll, *Memory in Culture*, Basingstoke 2011. For the Dutch Early Modern situation see Judith Pollmann (ed.), *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden 2013 and Judith Pollmann, *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800*, Oxford 2017.
 - 4 See M. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, Stanford 2009, esp. chapter 1; L. Jensen and L. van Deinsen, 'Het theater van de herinnering. Vaderlands-historisch toneel in de achttiende eeuw', *Spiegel der Letteren* 54 (2012), no. 2, pp. 193-225, esp. pp. 196-200.
 - 5 Maureen Warren, *Politics, Punishment, and Prestige: Images of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt and the States Party in the Dutch Republic, 1618-1672*, Evanston, IL, 2015 (diss. Northwestern University, Evanston); N.C.F. van Sas, *Metamorfose van Nederland. Van oude orde naar moderniteit 1750-1900*, Amsterdam 2004, esp. chapter 33; L. van Deinsen, 'Een zwart kleed van schuld. Zoeken naar de herinnering aan Johan van Oldenbarnevelt in een digitaal *Dagverhaal*', *Tijdschrift voor Tijdschriftstudies* 31 (2012), pp. 20-34.
 - 6 See L. Munteán, L. Plate and A. Smelik, 'Things to Remember. Introduction to Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture', in L. Munteán, L. Plate and A. Smelik (eds.), *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*, London 2017, pp. 1-25. More specifically for the Netherlands: M.F.D. Eekhout, *Material Memories of the Dutch Revolt: The Urban Memory Landscape in the Low Countries, 1566-1700*, Leiden 2014.
 - 7 Assmann 2008 (note 3), p. 111.
 - 8 Willem Frijhoff, *De mist van de geschiedenis. Over herinneren, vergeten en historisch geheugen van de samenleving*, Nijmegen 2011, pp. 10-11; Eekhout 2014 (note 6), pp. 14-15.
 - 9 Cf. the several examples of Hugo Grotius's book chest: Gijs van der Ham, 'De boekenkast van Hugo de Groot', in Els Kloek (ed.), *Verzameld verleden. Veertig gedenkwaardige momenten en figuren uit de vaderlandse geschiedenis*, Hilversum 2004, pp. 76-79 and Vroom 1977 (note 2), pp. 19-25.
 - 10 Vroom 1977 (note 2), pp. 50-56.
 - 11 *Greenwood Album*, [51]. Because the manuscript is not paged or foliated, we refer to our own continuous foliation based on the present state of the album; sheets that have been stitched in have been incorporated in the consecutive page numbering.
 - 12 'alle blijken zijn dat het Echt is', *ibid*.
 - 13 Sadly, we have been unable to find anything about a collection of antiquities Van Steenhuysen may have owned, nor could we discover the name of the Hague burgomaster.
 - 14 *Kronijk van het Historisch Gezelschap te Utrecht* 5 (1849), p. 440.
 - 15 With thanks to Carl Koppeschaar and Jan Piet Puype.
 - 16 With thanks to Lutz Hoffmeister of the Klingensmuseum in Solingen.
 - 17 We are indebted for this information to Carl Koppeschaar. He drew our attention to a sword with an identical orb with cross crosslet in the Wallace Collection, London (A 490, Comte de Nieuwerkerke collection, probably German, 1570-80).

- 18 Derck Daniels, *Six executioners' swords on a board with a wooden frame*, c. 1650-60, Deventer Town Hall (Deventer Museums collection). There are also some executioner's swords with sharp points in Kampen. According to written information from Carl Koppeschaar these could be former battle swords.
- 19 Cornelis R.H. Snijder, 'Hans Pruijm, scherprechter te Zutphen 1595-1604. Executeur van Johan van Oldenbarnevelt', *Zutphen. Tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van Zutphen en omgeving* (2016), no. 4, pp. 105-11; Cornelis R.H. Snijder, 'Het scherprechtersgeslacht Pruijm/Pfraum, ook Prom/Praum/Sprong genoemd, deel 1: Meester Hans Pruijm, "executeur" van Johan van Oldenbarnevelt', *Gens Nostra* 69 (2014), pp. 488-500.
- 20 Dr Gisela Wilbertz has written a comprehensive article on the Dresden sword, which will be published later this year: Gisela Wilbertz, 'Das Schwert des Scharfrichters Hans Prum in der Dresdner Rüstammer', *Signa Ivris. Beiträge zur Rechtsikonographie, Rechtsarchäologie und Rechtlichen Volkskunde*, vol. 16 (2018).
- 21 Since April 2017 the sword has been on display in the permanent exhibition 'On the way to electoral power' in the Residential Castle of Dresden. We thank Cornelis Snijder, Dr Jutta Charlotte von Bloh, senior curator of the Rüstammer Dresden, Dr Christine Nagel, research associate, Grünes Gewölbe Dresden, and, most of all, Dr Gisela Wilbertz for bringing this sword to our notice, providing information about it and sharing their knowledge with us.
- 22 'gebooren van Meysenheim [Meisenheim] int Hertochdom van Swyburch [Zweibrücken]'; Snijder 2016 (note 19), p. 106.
- 23 Snijder gives 'Pfraum', 'Praum' and 'Prom' as variants of the name Pruijm (Snijder 2014 and Snijder 2016 (note 19)). Meisenheim was also sometimes spelled 'Mesenhem'.
- 24 For a detailed biographical sketch of Frans Greenwood and his ancestors see Smit 1988 (note 2), pp. 7-34.
- 25 As well as various individual poems, Greenwood published two collections during his lifetime: *Gedichten*, Rotterdam (Arnold Willis) 1719 and *Vervolg van F: Greenwood's Gedichten*, Dordrecht (erven Joannes van Braam) 1760. See also Smit 1988 (note 2), pp. 111-82 and W. Buckley, *Notes on Frans Greenwood and the Glasses that He Engraved*, London 1930.
- 26 Shortly after he acquired the cabinet in 1732, De Roode started an album in which visitors to the *Panpoëticon* could write their odes. This album was probably the inspiration for Greenwood's album to the sword. See L. van Deinsen, *The Panpoëticon Batavum: The Portrait of the Author as a Celebrity*, Amsterdam 2016; L. van Deinsen, *Literaire erflaters. Canonvorming in tijden van culturele crisis, 1700-1750*, Hilversum 2017. Greenwood wrote at least one ode to the cabinet, see *Arnoud van Halen's Panpoëticon Batavum: verheerlijkt door lofdichten*, Leiden 1773, pp. 116-17.
- 27 'Stokoude schuldeloze helt, Rampzalige Oldenbarnevelt, Dit zwaard sloeg door uw hals den Staat Een diepe wonde in zynen Raadt, Toen op het Haagse moortschavot Uw dierbaar leven wierd geknot.'
- 28 'Wie zulks wil gaëslaen van naby/ Moet Greenwood's kunstparnas beklimmen.' This Dirk Smits had previously displayed his interest in patriotic relics in a poem about Oldenbarnevelt's spectacles he wrote in 1735. *Greenwood Album*, [20v]; Vroom 1997 (note 2), p. 50.
- 29 Karel Porteman and Mieke Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen*, Amsterdam 2009, pp. 514-16. Vondel's poem was included in the third volume of the anthology *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* published in Amsterdam by Jan Rieuwertsz Sr in 1658. For later poems on the stick see Vroom 1997 (note 2), p. 34.
- 30 'Voorste Vinger der Rechterhand.' Vroom 1997 (note 2), p. 68.
- 31 Vroom 1997 (note 2), pp. 26-27.
- 32 'O! gruwzaam moortgeweer, dat mijn hart doet beven, Wen ik gedenk den ijslijken slach, Waar door gij, op dien haattelijken dach Den grijzen Barnevelt beroofde van het leven.' *Greenwood Album*, [16r].
- 33 'Nu zal 't verschrikkelijke staal 't Geheugen van dat feit in eeuwigheit bewaren.' *Greenwood Album*, [44r].
- 34 'grijzen held'; *Greenwood Album*, [9r].
- 35 'vromen Patriot'; *Greenwood Album*, [11r].
- 36 'Pijler van de Staat'; *Greenwood Album*, [15r].
- 37 'Hollants besten Vader'; *Greenwood Album*, [18r].
- 38 'onschuldig'; *Greenwood Album*, [12r]; [18r].
- 39 'Martelaar van Staat'; *Greenwood Album*, [21v]; [29r].
- 40 According to Wouter de Kemp, 'lust for power and violence, reinforced by flattery' ('Heerszucht en Geweldt, gesterkt door Vleerij') were the causes of Oldenbarnevelt's death. *Greenwood Album*, [25r].

- 41 'Maurits wraakzugt'; 'Maurits haet'; *Greenwood Album*, [23v]; [34r].
- 42 Pollmann 2017 (note 3), esp. chapter 2, 'Past and Present: The Virtues of Anachronism', pp. 47-72. Pollmann concludes 'the early Modern European preferred to legitimize the present by drawing analogies with the past' (p. 151).
- 43 Frans Grijzenhout, *Feesten voor het Vaderland. Patriotse en Bataafse feesten 1780-1806*, Zwolle 1989, pp. 17-37.
- 44 See Marijke Bruggeman, *Nassau en de macht van Oranje. De strijd van de Friese Nassaus voor erkenning van hun rechten, 1702-1747*, Hilversum 2007; Wim Dral, *Tussen macht en onmacht. Een politieke biografie van Anthonie van der Heim, 1693-1746*, Hilversum 2016 and the earlier Herbert H. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange: The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic*, Cambridge 1988, esp. pp. 148-62.
- 45 Wyger R.E. Velema, *Republicans: Essays on Eighteenth-Century Dutch Political Thought*, Leiden/Boston 2007, pp. 53-76.
- 46 Quoted from *ibid.*, pp. 63-64.
- 47 Bruggeman 2007 (note 43), p. 366.
- 48 Of the twenty-six food riots or revolts recorded in the 1690-1795 period, more than half (fifteen) occurred between 1740 and 1744. The prince's supporters suggested that fanning the flames of this unrest could work to his advantage. See Bruggeman 2007 (note 43), pp. 315, 376.
- 49 Quoted from P. Geyl, *Willem IV en Engeland tot 1748 (Vrede van Aken)*, The Hague 1924, pp. 64, 72-73.
- 50 'Waarom die Staatwond nu door u weer opgekrabt?/ Die in 't geheugenisboek waar beter uitgeschrabt.' *Greenwood Album*, [9r]. See also Jacobus van der Streng with a similar import: *Greenwood Album*, [42r]; [45r].
- 51 Pollmann 2017 (note 3), pp. 140-58. See also Frans Grijzenhout, 'Between Memory and Amnesia: The Posthumous Portraits of Johan and Cornelis de Witt', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 7 (2015), no. 1, <https://jhna.org/issues/vol-7-1-2015/>.
- 52 'Ô Vrijheit! Hangt dit ZWAARDT aan 't hofgewelf te pronk, Opdat het elk, tot dienst van 't Vrije Land, ontvonk!' *Greenwood Album*, [21r].
- 53 'Maar moet nu 't Algemeen niet voor dit noodlot yzen? Dat ook de Dwingeland op nieu eens zal verrijzen?' *Greenwood Album*, [8r].
- 54 'Ten schrik van hun die 't recht verkrachten,/ Ten voorbeeld voor de Nageslagten'; *Greenwood Album*, [48r].
- 55 *Greenwood Album*, [23r-24r].
- 56 'Dit zal ik eeuwiglijk getuigen en vertellen Ja 'ik smEEK, Dichters, u die voor mijn reden wis
Mijn trouwste vrienden werdt, laet mij uw kunst verzellen
En strekken tot een steun van mijn beleidenis,
Eischt iemand voor de zaak nog klaerer schets of teeken:
Hij kan mij zelfs aen huis van Greenwood zien of spreekken.' *Greenwood Album*, [19v].
- 57 Strikingly, Hoogvliet concluded this letter with a specific greeting to Johannes van Braam (1677-1751). Van Braam was not only a co-author of the compendium, he was also a well-known bookseller and publisher in Dordrecht, whose heirs oversaw the publication of *Vervolg van F: Greenwood's Gedichten* in 1760. Might he have been the prospective publisher of the sword album?
- 58 'uit hunner eigene hand'; *Greenwood Album*, [3r].
- 59 'Voor het stamboek van den Heere N.N. die het zwaerd, daar J. Van Oldenbarneveld mede onthoofd is, in zyn Kabinet heeft.'
- 60 'hier Clandestin uytgescheurt'; *Greenwood Album*, [6v].
- 61 The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, KB: 135 D 2.
- 62 Rotterdam City Archives hold a separate, uncut copy of Dirk Smits, *Op het zwaerd waer mede Johan van Oldenbarneveldt; onthalt is; thans in bewaring van den heer Frans Greenwood, s.l. 1743 (?)* (inv. no. v E 116). The poem is also included in Smits's bound manuscripts in Ghent University Library, which opens with *Israëls Baalfegorsdienst of Gestrafte wellust: begrepen in drie boeken*, Rotterdam (Phil. Losel) 1737.
- 63 *Dichtkundig praal-tooneel van Neerlands wonderen. Derde deel. 'Gedrukt voor de Liefhebbers: te Embden'* 1748, pp. 218-24. The collection was reprinted in 1751. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jacobus Scheltema discussed the sword poems at length in his overview publication *Staatkundig Nederland of 1806: Jacobus Scheltema, Staatkundig Nederland, een woordenboek tot de biographische kaart van dien naam*, Amsterdam 1806, p. 157.
- 64 'Versameling van verscheide gedichten op het sword dat wylen den Heere Johan van Oldenbarneveld In den Jaare 1619 den Hals doorkerfde.' We know without doubt that this does relate to the two poems that were removed, because Ketelanus's poem in Greenwood's collection is followed

- by the poem by Petronella de Court van Steenburgen (Jan Willem van Steenbergen's sister) titled 'Ter beantwoording op het vaars van de heer H.F. Ketelanus, hier voor p. 2' (In response to the verse by Mr H.F. Ketelanus, p. 2 above). Petronella refers directly to Ketelanus. His poem concludes with the rhetorical question 'Wat best is, *Overheerd* of zonder Prins te leeven?' (What is best, to be ruled over or to live without a prince?). Petronella replies in the first line of her contribution: 'Zou't best zijn overheerscht te leven in den band van slavernije: neen ...'. (Would it be best to be ruled over and live in the bonds of slavery: no...)
- 65 Ton Jongenelen, 'Een prettig gestoorde achttiende-eeuwer. Pieter Bakker (1703-1761) en Godsdienst zonder bijgeloof', *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman* 29 (2006), pp. 101-17; Ton Jongenelen, 'Vuile boeken maken vuile handen. De vervolging van persdelicten omstreeks 1760', *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse boekgeschiedenis* 2 (1995), pp. 77-92, esp. pp. 78-83; P. Geyl, *De Witten-oorlog. Een pennestrijd in 1757*, Amsterdam 1953.
- 66 D.H. van Wegen, 'Een Patriotse oproep aan de porseleinfabriek te Loosdrecht', *Vormen uit vuur* 211 (2010), no. 4, pp. 22-28; 'Keuze uit de aanwinsten', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52 (2004), pp. 184-85. See also Janssen 2001 (note 1); Frans Grijzenhout 1989 (note 42), F. Grijzenhout and N.C.F. van Sas, *Voor vaderland en vrijheid*, exh. cat. Utrecht (Centraal Museum) 1987; F. Grijzenhout, 'De patriotse beeldenstorm', in F. Grijzenhout, W.W. Mijnhardt and N.C.F. van Sas (eds.), *Voor Vaderland en Vrijheid: de revolutie van de patriotten*, Amsterdam 1987, pp. 131-56.
- 67 The chairman of the Zeeuws Genootschap, Nicolaas Cornelis Lambrechtsen van Ritthem (1752-1823), wrote that Ocker Gevaerts (1735-1807) had acquired the sword from his grandfather. This must have been a mistake, however, since his grandfather (Ocker Johansz Gevaerts (1656-1727)) died in 1727, before Greenwood even had the sword in his possession. It is therefore more likely that Ocker Gevaerts got the sword from his father, Paulus Gevaerts (1697-1770), and that Paulus had got it from his friend Greenwood. Greenwood wrote a poem for Paulus Gevaerts's fourth marriage and for the marriage of his daughter Maria. Lambrechtsen van Ritthem, *Nopens het zwaard, waarmede de hr. Johan van Oldenbarneveld is onthoofd in Den Hage, 13 mey 1619* (Middelburg, Zeeuwse Bibliotheek, Hs 3916). The manuscript also contains the two poems by Greenwood and a list of the authors who wrote a contribution in the album.
- 68 Vroom 1997 (note 2), p. 34.
- 69 *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 55, 56; Mary Eggermont-Molenaar 2012 (note 2); *Herinneringen aan den baron Strik van Linschoten*, Amsterdam 1855, vol. 1, pp. 290-91.
- 70 *Kronijk van het Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht* 5 (1849), pp. 440-41.
- 71 A political turnabout like this was not uncommon in the nineteenth century. For examples earlier in the century see Matthijs Lok, *Windvanen. Napoleontische bestuurders in de Nederlandse en Franse Restauratie (1813-1820)*, Amsterdam 2009.
- 72 According to a letter from Victor de Stuers to H. van der Kellen, The Hague, 2 May 1978, reproduced in Den Tex (note 1), vol. 4, p. 663.
- 73 Niek van Sas, *De metamorfose van Nederland. Van oude orde naar moderniteit, 1750-1900*, Amsterdam 2004, esp. pp. 551-92.
- 74 'aan de herinnering van onze beroemde mannen, van historische plaatsen en zaken'; David van der Kellen, 'Het nederlandsch Museum van Geschiedenis en Kunst te 's Gravenhage', *Eigen Haard* 5 (1879), p. 11.
- 75 waar we met recht trotsch op zijn, die wij ook liefhebben en vereeren'; *ibid.*, p. 70.
- 76 'van dien ongelukkige inwendige twisten'; *ibid.*, p. 153.
- 77 The display and the story of the historic objects in the Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst essentially remained unchanged after the move to Amsterdam in 1885. See e.g. David van der Kellen Jr, *Gids voor de bezoekers van het Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst*, Amsterdam [1888], pp. 117-21; W.P. Brons, *Beknopte wegwijzer door het Rijks-Museum te Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1897, p. 88.
- 78 Vroom 1997 (note 2), pp. 37, 38.

APPENDIX

Contributors to the Album in Chronological Order of their Contributions*

Frans Greenwood (Rotterdam 1680-1763 Dordrecht). Painter, glass engraver, poet and the man who created the album. Greenwood published the collections *Gedichten* (1719), *Boere-Pinxter-vreugt* (1733) and *Vervolg op Gedichten* (1760).

Herman Franciscus Ketelanus (Amsterdam 1712-1761 Dordrecht). Lawyer and historian.

Jan Willem van Steenberg (Dordrecht 1708-1772 Dordrecht). Physician, lecturer in anatomy and Neolatin poet.

Petronella Catharina van Steenberg-De Court (Dordrecht 1705-1782 Dordrecht). Occasional poetess. Sister of the above.

Hendrik van Bracht (Dordrecht 1685-1750 Dordrecht). Cleric and (stage) poet. Among other works, Van Bracht published the stage plays *Fedra en Hyppolytus* (1715), *Valentinaan* (1716) and *Herstelde Vrijheid* (1718).

Joannes van Braam (Dordrecht 1677-1751 Dordrecht). Bookseller and poet.

Kornelis Boon van Engelant (Rotterdam 1680-1750 Rotterdam). Bailiff of Heenvliet, poet and playwright.

Joannes Badon (Leiden 1706-1790 Vlaardingen). Burgomaster and poet. Among other works, Badon published the collections *Mengeldichten van K. Ghjben en J. Badon* (1756) and *Mengeldichten en Bijchriften* (1783).

Klara Ghijben-Badon (Dordrecht 1708-1747 Vlaardingen). Occasional poetess. Wife of the above.

Willem van der Linden
No details known.

Jacob Brouwer
No details known.

Fr. Froet
No details known.

Katharina Froet
No details known.

Jan Blijenburg
No details known.

Arnold Hoogvliet (Vlaardingen 1678-1763 Vlaardingen). Clerk, bookkeeper, silversmith and poet. Hoogvliet's best-known collection is *Abraham den Aartsvader* (1727).

Frans de Haes (Rotterdam 1708-1761 Rotterdam). Poet and linguist. De Haes was one of the founders of the Rotterdam poets' society *Natura et Arte*.

Dirk Smits (Rotterdam 1702-1753 Hellevoetsluis). Official in the Rotterdam wine tax office and poet. Smits was a member of the poets' society *Natura et Arte*. His best-known collection, *De Rottestroom*, was published in 1750. The poems he left were edited in 1754 by Nicolaas Versteeg in association with Kornelis Westerbaan.

Willem van der Pot (Rotterdam 1704-1783 Rotterdam). Merchant and poet. Van der Pot was a member of the

poets' society *Natura et Arte*. His works included *Endeldijk*, an ode to his country house, which had previously belonged to Johan van Oldenbarnevelt.

Kornelis Westerbaan (Katwijk 1690-1774 unknown). Remonstrant minister and poet. Among other things, Westerbaan translated the *Algemeene Historie* from English. His collected poems were published posthumously under the title *Zwanenzang* (1774).

Nicolaas Versteeg (Rotterdam 1700-1773 unknown). Merchant and poet. Versteeg was a member of the poets' society *Natura et Arte*. His principal collection was *Mozes in xii boeken* (1778).

Wouter de Kempe (dates and places of birth and death unknown). Occasional poet. In Van der Aa's biographical dictionary (vol. 2), De Kempe is described as one of the 'shining and civilizing verse-smiths of the eighteenth century'.

Jacob Michielsz Elias (Amsterdam 1698-1750 Amsterdam). Lawyer, poet and cousin of Balthazar Huydecoper. He wrote several farces and comedies and also contributed to Justus van Effen's *De Hollandsche Spectator* (1731-35).

Balthazar Huydecoper (Amsterdam 1695-1778 Amsterdam). Poet, linguist, director of the Amsterdam theatre, later bailiff of Texel. Huydecoper is regarded as one of the leading representatives of French classical theatre in the Republic.

R. Blok
No details known.

Bernardus de Bosch (Amsterdam 1709-1786 Amsterdam). Poet. Among other things, De Bosch was a member

of the arts society *Laus Deo, salus populo* that worked on a translation of the Psalms. His poems were published in five volumes under the title *Dicht-lievende Verlustingen* (1741-85).

Dirk Willink (Amsterdam 1714-1781 Amsterdam). Occasional poet. Willink was a member of the society *Oefening beschaaft de Kunsten*.

Antoni Hartsen (Amsterdam 1719-1782 Amsterdam). Mennonite merchant and poet. Hartsen was a member of various poetry societies, including *Oefening beschaaft de Kunsten*, *Diligentiae Omnia*, the *Donderdagsgenootschap*, *Laus Deo, salus populo* and the *Dichtlievende Welsprekendheids Genootschap*. He translated several plays, including works by Voltaire.

Anna van Oostrum (dates and places of birth and death unknown). Poetess. Her work appeared in *De Boekzaal der Geleerde Wereld* (1705-1863) and elsewhere.

Philip Zweerts (Amsterdam 1704-1774 Weesp). Notary and poet. Zweerts was a member of the poets' society *Ars Usu Juvanda*. In 1759 he published the collection *Gedichten* and also wrote a number of tragedies, including *De Beloonde Deugd*, *of Gestrafte Wreedheid* (1723), *Semiramis*, *of de Dood van Ninus* (1729) and *Scipio* (1736). He produced a translation of Voltaire's *Merope* (1746).

Jacobus van Stamhorst (Amsterdam 1719-1784 Amsterdam). Solicitor, playwright and theatre director. Among other things, Van Stamhorst translated several tragedies from French.

A[bel?] Hobrink (Amsterdam unknown-1740 Amsterdam)
No details known.

Lucas Pater (Amsterdam 1707-1781 Amsterdam). Merchant and poet. Pater was a member of the poetry societies *Donderdagsgenootschap*, *Diligentiae Omnia* and *Oefening beschaaft de Kunsten*. His works include the tragedy *De Dood van Cajus Gracchus* (1733), the morality play *Leeuwendaal hersteld door de vrede* (1749) and the tragedy *Gustavus* (1761).

Adriaan van Ommering (Leiden c. 1703-after 1750 Amsterdam). Grocer and poet in Amsterdam. Among other things, Van Ommering published a poem on the death of Willem Friso in 1751. He also wrote poems on portraits in the *Panpoëticon Batavum*.

Henrik van Elvervelt (Aalten c. 1700-1781 Amsterdam). Surgeon and poet. Van Elvervelt concentrated on translating French stage plays. He also wrote some chamber pieces.

Joannes van der Heijde (Amsterdam 1697-1756 Amsterdam). No details known.

J(acobus?) de Later (Amsterdam c. 1711-1748 Amsterdam). Owner of a sawmill.

Magdalena de Neve-de Later (Amsterdam 1723-1782 Amsterdam). Wife of the above.

Jacobus van der Streng (Amsterdam 1704-1749 Amsterdam). Timber merchant, poet and writer. Among other things, Van der Streng contributed to *De Boekzaal*.

Abraham de Haen de Jonge (Amsterdam 1707-1748 Amsterdam). Linguist and lawyer. His poems were published posthumously in the collection *Herderszangen en mengeldichten* (1751).

Joannes Haverkamp (Amsterdam-dates of birth and death unknown).

Haverkamp moved in the circles of the Leiden poets' society *Constantia et Labore*. He concentrated primarily on writing plays and historical works.

Lambertus van den Broek (Amsterdam c. 1690-1744 Amsterdam). Bookkeeper and poet. Van den Broek was a member of *Ars Usu Juvanda*. He published a number of plays, most of them under pseudonyms.

Mattheus van den Broek (Amsterdam c. 1732-unknown). Wine merchant and son of the above.

Jacob Rippers van Hoolwerff (Hoorn 1709-1779 Hoorn). Son of a patrician and occasional poet.

Pieter Bakker (Amsterdam 1703-1761 unknown). Hosier and occasional poet.

Govert Klinkhamer (Amsterdam 1702-1774 Amsterdam). Mennonite poet and silk merchant.

Mattheus de Ruusscher (Hamburg 1690-before 1762 unknown). Lawyer and poet. Among other works De Ruusscher wrote *Den Patriot, of Duitschen Zedemeester* (1732) and *De Knibbelaar of vrijdenker* (1733). His poems were published posthumously under the title *Dicht-lievende Verlustingen* (1762).

Jan van Hoven (Den Bosch 1681-1750 The Hague). Tobacconist and actor in, and later director of, Jacob van Rijndorp's touring theatre company. As well as some plays, he wrote the collection *J. van Hovens Leedige Uuren*. For a while, Van Hoven was a member of the arts society *Ars Superat Fortunam*.

Adriaen Heckenhoek (Dordrecht unknown-unknown). Lawyer and theologian.

* With thanks to Anna de Haas and Ton Jongenelen.