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Citation

Hartog, E. den. (2022). Pieter de Hooch's window shutter with the Habsburg Emperor Charles V (1661). *Oud Holland. Journal For The Art Of The Low Countries*, 135(4), 225-236.
doi:10.1163/18750176-13504005

Version: Publisher's Version

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Pieter de Hooch's window shutter with the Habsburg Emperor Charles V (1661)

A particularly charming painting by the Dutch artist Pieter de Hooch (1629 - after 1679) features a woman in a garden who has just filled her basket with produce from the beanstalks behind her. A male figure emerging from a shed in the background moves towards her (fig. 1).¹ Beside the shed, three pewter plates are placed on the shelf of a fence that is covered by a lean-to roof. This suggests washing facilities in the shed and, possibly, a cess-pit where garbage could be disposed of. Behind the fence, sunlit and in the centre, the stepped gable of an early seventeenth-century red brick house with white stone ornaments is depicted. A one-storey red brick building, decorated with regularly-spaced white pilasters of the Tuscan order, dominates the left side of the painting. It is partly blocked from view by a larger edifice in the foreground that, rather intriguingly, features a window shutter with an oval portrait in grisaille of a middle-aged man.

Over the years, the painting has undergone minor alterations. For one, the shutter image was painted over at some stage, to be recovered only between 1913 and 1927. De Hooch's signature appears on the window ledge just under the shutter, in conjunction with '1651'. This year is clearly wrong and was probably altered to its present form during the twentieth-century restoration. The presumed date of the painting is 1661.² Based on this, the painting has been attributed to De Hooch's period in Amsterdam, where he was active from 1660 onwards.³ During these years, De Hooch increasingly introduced sculpture and the classical orders into the backgrounds of his paintings.⁴

The portrait on the shutter gives this supposed genre scene a rather unusual twist. In his 1980 biography of the artist, Sutton described the portrait as that "of a man wearing a courtier's golden chain" and related it to one of the emblems in Jacob Cats' book *Proteus ofte minne-beelden verandert in sinne-beelden* (Rotterdam 1627, no. XXI), that warns against excessive ambition in the pursuit of rank by describing a beanstalk grown so tall as to extend precariously beyond its stake, threatening to bring it down.⁵ Although Sutton himself dismissed this idea, in view of De Hooch's general disregard for such 'disguised' references, Franits returned to it in an article from 1989 dealing with De Hooch's depictions of servants. He writes: "This little portrait is completely unexpected in this ostensibly straightforward context and besides [...] portraits were not actually painted on window shutters in the seventeenth century. The very incongruity of this motif is further underscored by the fact that the man wears a sixteenth-century costume adorned with the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, which only confirms that De Hooch included the portrait for a purely symbolic purpose."⁶ Taking his cue from Sutton's remarks, he suggested that the portrait was intended to represent the "epitome of status", with the beanstalks' unbridled growth symbolising the danger of too great an ambition, whilst the demure and humble servant girl in the painting offset the image of the man wearing the paraphernalia of the Order of the Golden Fleece. In the catalogue of the De Hooch exhibition in Delft (2019), the man's identity, and the reasons for him having been painted over, are termed "puzzling".⁷



¹
Pieter de Hooch, *Woman holding a basket with beans in a garden*, 1661, oil on canvas, 69.5 x 59 cm, Basel, Kunstmuseum Basel, inv. G 1958.22.

This article sets out not only to identify the man on the shutter as the Habsburg Emperor Charles V, but also argues that the building in the painting reflects the Leiden *Eva van Hoogeveenshofje*, the painting's true subject. By contrasting the building's lavish architecture with the demure woman in the garden, and by portraying the emperor on the window shutter, De Hooch may have intended to, humorously, critique the almost 'palatial' architecture of some contemporary almshouses, before thinking the better of it and blotting the image out.

The man on the window shutter

Although seventeenth-century window shutters were, as far as we know, not decorated with portraits, on palaces, castles, and buildings belonging to the estates of the landed gentry they were painted in the heraldic colours of the ruling families. When ownership changed, the window shutters were altered accordingly. In towns and cities, the shutters of municipal buildings were painted in the city's colours. Window shutters thus expressed ownership of, and jurisdiction over, land and the buildings and/or people thereon.⁸ This connects the presence of the man on the window shutter to authority and rulership. His chain identifies him as a member of the Burgundian/Habsburg Order of the Golden Fleece, an honour bestowed on very few noblemen in the Northern Netherlands.⁹

A study of portrait imagery in the public sphere indicates that the figure most frequently represented was the Emperor Charles V (fig. 2). Even in the seventeenth century, long after the emperor's demise and long after the northern Netherlands had become a republic, his image, emblems and heraldic devices still adorned city gates and municipal buildings,

2
Frans Hogenberg, *Portrait of Charles V*, c. 1560-1590, engraving, 18.8 x 18.7 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-1974-4.



3

Anon., *Statue of Charles V*, c. 1550, wood, h. c. 60 cm, Amersfoort, Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, inv. 362261.



4

Albert Martin, *Portrait of Charles V and his wife Isabella of Portugal*, 1870-1879, drawing, 25.3 x 14.7 cm, Leeuwarden, Fries Museum, inv. PTA092-008.



proclaiming his sovereignty and legitimising the office of those who upheld law and justice in his name. Medallions showing the profile heads of Charles V and his son Philip II feature in the gable tops of the town hall facade in Zierikzee of c. 1550-1554 (Meelstraat 8). In Goes,



5
Anon., *Bust of Charles V*, sixteenth century, painted stone, dimensions unknown, Enkhuizen, Westerstraat 197.



6
Anon., *Head of Charles V in a cartouche*, 1571, painted sandstone, dimensions unknown, Zwolle, Sassenstraat 33, Amersfoort, Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, inv. 298-09.

a c. 60 cm high gilded wooden statue of the emperor of around 1550 once stood over the main doorway of the town hall (fig. 3).¹⁰ Charles also featured, together with his wife Isabella of Portugal, on one of the Bolsward (Friesland) city gates (fig. 4). Another city gate with an image of the emperor on it was the Deventer Brinkpoort of 1544. The image of Charles V even adorned private houses. For one, the top of the facade of Groenmarkt 13 in Dordrecht used to feature a carving of a hugely inflated 'gouden reaal' (a Spanish golden coin) bearing the portrait of Charles V, who introduced this type of coin in the Netherlands in 1521. The date 1564 on the coin's edge probably refers to the date of the house, as the emperor was dead by this time.¹¹ Another coin-like image of Charles occurs in Amsterdam, on the corner of the Zandhoek. The facade of Westerstraat 197 in Enkhuizen displays a bust of the emperor, wearing a crown and the chain of the order of the Golden Fleece (fig. 5).¹² The house Sassenstraat 33 in Zwolle is known as the Charles V House from the bust set into its gable (fig. 6).¹³ The 1559 facade of Huis Cardinaal, formerly in the Kijk-in-'t-Jatstraat in Groningen, has busts of King David, Charlemagne and Alexander the Great, with (probably) a full-length-statue of Charles V presiding over these ancient worthies.¹⁴ A polychrome statue of Charles V took centre stage on the facade of Utrecht's Oude Gracht 120, known as the 'keyser karels huys', where it was flanked by statues of his father Maximilian and his son, the later Philip II.¹⁵ Taking this into account and considering that the sovereign headed the Order of the Golden Fleece, the man in sixteenth-century attire wearing the chain of the order in the De Hooch window shutter can be none other than Emperor Charles V (d. 1558), who ruled the Netherlands from 1506 until 1555. Indeed, the portrait in the De Hooch painting closely resembles Frans Hogenberg's 1560/1590 engraving of the emperor (fig. 2).

All the above-mentioned public images of the emperor predate 1572, when the Republic of the Seven United Provinces was established, and their presence is thus unsurprising, as such portraits played a crucial role in proclaiming Charles' sovereignty over the Northern Netherlands. The continued existence of most of these images in the public sphere may be more startling, taking into account the prolonged struggle that took place between 1568 and 1648 to gain independence from the Habsburg rule after Charles' son and successor Philip II had initiated a regime of terror and bloodshed. This is, however, not the subject of this article. The question to be asked here is why De Hooch included the Emperor's portrait on a painting made slightly over a hundred years after Charles' demise. This addition must have been significant, underscoring that this was not (at least initially) to be a straightforward genre scene.¹⁶

The classicising architecture of Pieter de Hooch's almshouses

To understand what the painting is about, it is important to first identify the setting, which can be characterised as a rather splendid one-storey building with a small garden and a shed at the back.

Generally speaking, it was the poorest echelons of society who lived in one-storeyed houses. These dwellings were so small that the cooking and cleaning facilities tended to be situated outside, in the back of the yard. In addition, there were the so-called 'hofjes' (almshouses). These were made up of series of one-storey units (chambers) that were either built in a single row or arranged around a courtyard. The building in the painting appears to be of the latter type. Although the use of classical orders on its facade may seem incongruous (a 'hofje', after all, was a building designed for poor relief), some seventeenth-century Dutch almshouses did have a rather grand appearance, as the founders' intentions often focused not only on providing housing and relief for the poor, retired servants and impoverished family members, but also on self-aggrandisement.¹⁷ As the English consul William Carr (1631/2- after 1691) observed, in the Netherlands "the Almshouses are many, and look more like Princes' Palaces than Lodgings for poor people."¹⁸

The architecture of the almshouses in the De Hooch painting is typical of the so-called 'Hollands classicisme', a style marked by sobriety, restraint, and the use of the classical orders, which had been introduced in the Netherlands by the princely court of Orange. It therefore came to be favoured by those who wanted to demonstrate their allegiance to the ruling dynasty.¹⁹ When used for almshouses, the style was generally reserved for the street-facing facade, where the classical orders served to distinguish the entrance porch and the regents' chamber above, displaying also, amongst other things, the heraldry of the founders and/or a commemorative plaque, as is exemplified by the Van Brouchovenhofje (Papengracht 16) of 1640, the first Leiden almshouse to be built in the new style. The architect was Arent van 's-Gravesande (c. 1610-1662), Leiden's newly appointed town architect.²⁰ The entrance porch with the regent's chamber above has a facade built in Bentheim sandstone, with four pilasters of the Ionic order supporting a cornice and tympanum. On either side are three one-storeyed chambers of red brick, divided by flat pilasters of the Tuscan order on which rest a simple cornice and a black-tiled roof. The facades facing the inner courtyard lack any kind of architectural ornamentation, thus reflecting the lower status of the inhabitants vis-à-vis the regents of the almshouses.²¹

The architectural quality of the almshouses in the De Hooch painting, with their Tuscan pilasters facing the inner courtyard, is thus atypical. Even so, a parallel for them is provided by the Eva van Hooegeveenshofje, Doelensteeg 7, that was also designed by Van 's-Gravesande (fig. 7).²² Eva van Hooegeveen was a member of the ruling protestant elite, who, in her will of 1650, bequeathed 32,000 guilders towards the foundation of the almshouse named after her, thus securing a lasting memorial to herself and her family.²³ The money was to be used to acquire a plot of land on which twelve or thirteen small houses could be built for the benefit of women aged above forty and without a husband. Following her death in 1652, a somewhat secluded site was acquired on a prestigious location just behind the Rapenburg with its elite residences and university.²⁴ The almshouses in the original design drawing by Van 's-Gravesande catered for two times six chambers on either side of a courtyard, but this plan needed to be somewhat altered because of the irregularity of the site and the problem of where to place the entrances if the plan were to remain symmetrical. The complex is entered through a porch and alley from either the Doelensteeg or the Doelengracht. The Doelengracht entrance porch was in place by 1655, while the Doelensteeg entrance dates from 1659.

As pre-existing buildings enclosed the location where the almshouses arose, an imposing street front was out of the question. This probably accounts for the unusual architectural allure of the inward-facing facades of the almshouses.²⁵ Their red brick walls, that were given a finish of red paint, are subdivided by pilasters of yellow brick with simple Tuscan capitals of Bentheim stone that used to be painted white. Between the pilasters,



7
 Arent van 's-Gravesande, *Eva van Hoogeveenshofje, west wing*, 1652-1959, Leiden, Doelensteeg 7.

windows and doorways alternate and are crowned by headings in yellow brick. As in the *De Hooch* painting, the pilasters support a tripartite cornice, with a lower part in Bentheim stone that was painted white, topped by a yellow brick frieze, with the wooden base of the red-tiled roof forming the upper section.²⁶ Each house has a rectangular dormer window and a tall red brick chimney. The houses have changed little over time, although the original cross windows made way for French windows.

Today's view from the Doelensteeg entrance into the *Eva van Hoogeveenshofje* loosely resembles the setting shown in the *De Hooch* painting (fig. 7). The similarity between the Leiden 'hofje' and the almshouses depicted by *De Hooch* is close enough to make one wonder whether he modelled the 'hofje' in the *Basel* painting on the Leiden ensemble. If so, he changed various details. For one, there is more red in his walls and the yellow brick of the pilasters has been altered to Bentheim stone or white plaster, as *Van 's-Gravesande* had originally planned.²⁷ Also, *De Hooch* left out several chimneys and dormer windows, enriched the window he did include with a pediment. He also changed the number of doors. Whereas the chambers of the *Eva van Hoogeveen* almshouses each have their own doorway, in *De Hooch's* painting only the unit to the right has a clearly visible door. The first unit probably also has one, in view of the brick path leading to it.

De Hooch's altering the details of the building does not hinder the proposed identification of the 'hofje', as scholars have indicated that this is characteristic of his way of handling architecture. *Lokin* mentions that at first sight, *De Hooch* seems to do little more than picture reality, while in fact he carefully construed his compositions using elements from existing buildings.²⁸ *Kersten* also remarks on the artist manipulating the architectural backgrounds of his paintings in such a way that one can only guess what he saw in reality.²⁹ To this *Weve* added that *De Hooch* placed recognisable architecture into the backgrounds of his paintings that could not be seen from the vantage point he was using.³⁰ Such alterations and variations are also manifest when comparing the architecture of the *Basel* painting with his two representations of the same almshouses in the *Rijksmuseum*



8
Pieter de Hooch, *Figures in a courtyard behind a house*, c. 1663-1665, oil on canvas, 60 x 45.7 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. SK-C-150.



9
Pieter de Hooch, *Woman and maidservant with a pail*, c. 1660-1665, oil on canvas, 53 x 42 cm, Saint Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. 943.

(fig. 8), and the State Hermitage Museum (fig. 9). In all three paintings, dormer windows and chimneys are in different places, while pavements and settings vary.³¹ The Saint-Petersburg version even has the almshouses to the other side of the yard (suggesting that, as in the *Eva van Hoogeveenshofje*, there were two series of chambers on opposite sides of the courtyard) and a canal in the background.

So far, De Hooch has been claimed as a painter of Delft and Amsterdam. If I am correct, he did some work in Leiden as well. This is not surprising as, given the fact that his in-laws lived there, he is likely to have visited the city on numerous occasions. In 1653, he witnessed the christening of a child of the Delft silversmith Barend Gast and his wife Anna van der Burch in Leiden's Hooglandsche Kerk.³² In 1654, he married Anna's sister Jannetje.³³ In 1656, he was in Leiden to witness the christening of the first child of his friend, brother-in-law and fellow-painter Hendrick van den Burch.³⁴ From 1656 onwards, Van der Burch rented Rapenburg 42.³⁵ From here, it was but a two-minute walk to the *Eva van Hoogeveenshofje*. By 1660 Hendrick van der Burch seems to have moved to Amsterdam, with De Hooch soon following suit. Pieter de Hooch may even have lived in Leiden for a while, as in 1653 he names himself as the painter and servant ('dienaer') of Justus de la Grange (1623-1664), a wealthy linen merchant and art collector who resided near Leiden. In 1655, De la Grange owned as many as eleven paintings by De Hooch. Bakker has shown that the word 'dienaer' should probably not be taken to mean 'huisknecht' (man servant), as in notary deeds 'dienaer' is generally used for the function of office assistant, which strengthens the idea of a Leiden connection.³⁶ All in all, it is very probable that De Hooch knew the *Eva van Hoogeveenshofje* well enough to be inspired by its architecture.

A palace for the poor?

One of the tenets for the use of the classical orders in architecture is that they should be applied appropriately, reflecting the status of the building and its occupants. Classical orders evidently do not belong on a building intended for the needy. The woman with her

basket full of beans in De Hooch's Basel painting therefore appears disconnected from the classy architecture behind her. No wonder Franits identified her as a serving girl. But what would a servant girl be doing in an almshouse?

The building in the Basel painting recurs in the Saint-Petersburg painting (fig. 9), which portrays a well-dressed, sickly woman with a letter in her hand sitting in front of the doorway of her house, with a sewing basket placed next to her on the floor. She is shown talking to a servant girl who approaches her from the left, holding a brightly polished brass pail. The garden featuring in the Basel painting has gone. Instead, the floor has been paved with costly large black-and-white tiles, which again belies the status of the almshouse as an institution for the poor, as do the woman's dress, her servant, and the brass pail. The same almshouses recur in the painting in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum (fig. 8). Here a finely dressed woman and man are sitting just outside the building, drinking wine, while an elderly woman serves them, and a younger girl is washing a tin plate in a water barrel. Again, these are not the kind of people one would expect in an almshouse. In all three paintings therefore, the decoration of the building is either too grand for its purpose – yet, as the Eva van Hoogeveenshofje proves, such palaces for the poor did exist – or the status of the residents of the almshouse is not what one would expect.

In his study of the Leiden almshouses, Looijesteijn showed that the residents of Dutch almshouses were not the poorest of the poor. Indeed, quite often these charities were used as “safety valves for the lower middle class by allowing elderly people of modest means to enjoy their remaining years with a decent quality of life”, not having to fear that their lives would outlive their means.³⁷ He also found that, while the majority of the residents were older than fifty, there was even a small percentage of children living in almshouses. In addition, some of the older residents had younger relatives living in to take care of them.³⁸ Some were not poor at all. To be lodged in the Eva van Hoogeveenshofje, for instance, one needed to hand over the sum of 500 guilders as an entry fee.³⁹ This was considerable, as the average yearly income of a member of the lower middle class (schoolmasters, artisans, shopkeepers) was between 300 and 600 guilders, while domestic servants, soldiers, sailors, and relatively low-skilled artisans subsisted on between 350 and 400 guilders.⁴⁰ From this, it appears that the women admitted to the Eva van Hoogeveenshofje were reasonably well to do and could easily afford to keep a servant or have a younger family member live in to look after them.

The Eva van Hoogeveenshofje and the Van Brouchovenhofje were both founded by members of the Leiden town council that had made it its aim to beautify the city. Indeed, almost all the projects undertaken by the town council (the planting of trees, water management of the canals, housing, etc.) were intended “tot beter cieraet ende aensien” (to beautify and improve the appearance) of the city. As a rule the facades facing the main thoroughways and areas were to conform to the perimeters laid down by the town council.⁴¹ The classicising style of these projects served as a display of order, regularity and decorum, that showcased the city (and indeed the Dutch Republic) as a well-organised entity, where law and order abided. This explains why the almshouses were built in bourgeois residential areas.⁴² The further away from the public eye, the less grand the architecture.

Seventeenth-century tourist accounts generally expressed admiration for how the Dutch took care of the poor, weak and elderly, by raising money in the streets, in churches, and even by organising lotteries.⁴³ However, the truth is that in 1661, when De Hooch made his painting, Leiden's large, but poor migrant working population was living in overcrowded, unhygienic slums on the fringes of the city. Rents were rocketing sky high, the price of ryebread had also almost doubled and people were starving. When the city was hit by plague in 1655 over 15,000 people died, and the plague of 1665-1666 again demanded a heavy death toll.⁴⁴ These harsh facts place the ‘poor relief’ provided by Jan van Brouchoven and Eva van Hoogeveen into perspective. They did more to bolster their own public image than to alleviate the lot of the really poor.

Conclusion

The image of Charles V on the window shutter was blotted out at some stage. This may have been done by one of the respective owners of the painting (prior to the restoration that took place between 1913 and 1927), but it is also possible that it was De Hooch himself who had second thoughts about this uncharacteristic inclusion. After all, the insertion of the portrait on the window shutter has generally been considered as an incongruous element in his oeuvre and was a one-off occurrence.

De Hooch may initially have considered mildly critiquing the 'hofjes', built for the not so poor, by introducing the emperor's portrait as a pun on the word 'hof', which in Dutch also means 'court', thus hinting that the almost palatial architecture of the almshouses was incongruous with its purpose. This idea was underscored by the humble servant picking beans in the garden. Similar associations may have underlain the Amsterdam Pronckenhofje (Tuinstraat 199-225), built in the 1640s and named after its founder Cornelis Martenszoon Pronck. It was nicknamed 'de Zeven Keurvorsten' from at least 1739 onwards, after the seven prince-electors who together were entitled to elect the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁵

This having been said, De Hooch could ill afford to express such societal critique, as he was dependent on the bourgeois elite to make a living himself. He may therefore have decided to blot out the Emperor's countenance. In doing so, the painting's imagery became more conventional, celebrating Leiden's grand new architecture, and increasing its appeal for prospective buyers. That the painting was successful is shown by the two slightly later variants featuring elements of the same building, but without the emperor's portrait.

Following his move to Amsterdam, De Hooch started painting lavish interiors with and without portraits for the ruling classes. It cannot be denied that these works lack the unfeigned directness of the Basel painting in which the artist may have attempted – in a good-humored sort of way – to produce a little more than just a pleasant genre scene for his bourgeois clientele.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth den Hartog (1962) is a lecturer in medieval art and architecture at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. She has written extensively on Dutch architecture and architectural sculpture of the Romanesque and Gothic periods, including monographs on the medieval sculpture of the churches in Maastricht, the cathedral of Utrecht, the St. Eusebius church in Arnhem (with Ronald Claudemans), and the church of St. Martin in Kerkdriel (lost after World War II). She is presently working on a monograph of building inscriptions and emblems on Northern-Netherlandish architecture in the period before 1600.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my colleagues Juliette Roding, Marika Keblusek and Stijn Bussels for their encouragement and for reading earlier drafts of this article. Any mistakes that remain are of course entirely my own.

NOTES

¹ P.C. Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch: Complete edition*, London 1980, p. 89, cat. 45; A. Jansen, 'Vrouw met een mand met bonen in een moestuin', in A. Jansen (ed.), *Pieter de Hooch in Delft: Uit de schaduw van Vermeer*, Zwolle 2019,

pp. 194-196, cat. 26. When the artist died is unknown. He disappears from the documents in 1679, as does his family. It is possible that he emigrated to the East-Indies, see J. van der Veen, 'Pieter de Hooch, contouren van een

- schilder in Rotterdam, Delft en Amsterdam', in Jansen 2019, p. 31.
- 2 Sutton 1980 (note 1), p. 89, cat. 45; Jansen 2019 (note 1), p. 195.
 - 3 Jansen 2019 (note 1), p. 195.
 - 4 M. Finnegan, 'Pieter de Hooch and the classicizing phenomenon in Dutch 17th-century genre painting', *Athanas* 36 (2018), pp. 35-55.
 - 5 Sutton 1980 (note 1), p. 70, n85.
 - 6 W.E. Franits, 'The depiction of servants in some paintings by Pieter de Hooch', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 52 (1989), no. 4, pp. 559-566, esp. 562. It should be noted that the beanstalks in the De Hooch painting have not grown out of control; their supports are not in danger.
 - 7 Jansen 2019 (note 1), pp. 194-196, cat. 26.
 - 8 D.J.G. Buurman, 'Over de toepassing van heraldische kleuren op deuren en luiken, voornamelijk van kastelen', *Castellogica: Verkenningen: Mededelingen van de Nederlandse Kastelen Stichting* (1983), pp. 19-31.
 - 9 Under Charles V these men were Jan of Wassenaar, Count (burggraaf) of Leiden (d. 1523), Maximilian van den Bergh, Lord of Zevenbergen (d. 1545), Jan IV, Count of Egmont, Lord of Baer (d. 1528); Reinoud III, Lord of Brederode (d. 1556); Anton of Glymes, Marquis of Bergen op Zoom (d. 1567); Georg Schenck, Lord of Toutenburg (d. 1540); Maximilian of Egmond, Count of Buren (d. 1548); Maximilian of Burgundy, Marquis of Veere (d. 1558), and during Philip II's reign: Jan IV, Marquis of Bergen op Zoom (d. 1567) and William of Nassau, Prince of Orange (d. 1584). For lists of the orders' members, see H. Pauwels, *Het Gulden Vlies: Vijf eeuwen kunst en geschiedenis*, Bruges 1962, pp. 35-49.
 - 10 The statue is now in the Historisch Museum de Bevelanden, see K. Heyning, *Zeeuws Behoud: Behoud van houten voorwerpen in Zeeuwse musea*, Middelburg 2007; K. Heyning, 'Beeld Karel V', www.zeeuwseankers.nl/verhaal/beeld-karel-v.
 - 11 Dordrecht, Coll. Bouwhistorie M 166; K. Sigmund et al. (red.), 'Een steengoed verhaal: Dordtse gevelstenen spreken', *Vereniging Oud Dordrecht Jaarboek* (2019), p. 116.
 - 12 H.M. van den Berg, *Westfriesland, Tessel en Wieringen*, The Hague 1955, p. 88. This bust, together with the bust of his son Philip II, was found in a cellar of the house at Breedstraat 47. According to D. Brouwer's 1848 *Gids voor Enkhuizen* (unp.) the stones derived from the town hall that was demolished in the late seventeenth century.
 - 13 R. Meischke et al., *Huizen in Nederland: Utrecht, Noord-Brabant en de oostelijke provincies*, Zwolle/Amsterdam 2000, pp. 284-293; 'Karel V-huis', www.hendrickdekeyser.nl/de-huizen/karel-v-huis-o.
 - 14 Huis Cardinaal was pulled down in 1893 and rebuilt on the Martinikerhof 13 in 1927, see V.M. Schmidt, 'Deugdzaamheid voor de buitenwacht: De gevel van huis de Cardinaal in Groningen', *Bulletin van de Koninklijke Oudheidkundige Bond* (1992), no. 1, pp. 18-20; Meischke et al. 2000 (note 13), p. 104.
 - 15 Meischke et al. 2000 (note 13), p. 95, m3; J. Klinckaert, *De verzamelingen van het Centraal Museum Utrecht: 3 Beeldhouwkunst tot 1850*, Utrecht 1997, pp. 501-502, cat. 282.
 - 16 For a discussion of the debate on realism versus 'apparent realism' in Dutch seventeenth-century genre painting, see S. Bussels, 'Discussions on naturalism in the Dutch golden age: Junius and Vondel', in R. Felfe and M. Saß, *Naturalismen*, Berlin/Boston 2019, pp. 97-115, esp. 'Realism, apparent realism & naturalism', pp. 97-99.
 - 17 W. Weve, *Huizen in Delft in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, Zwolle 2013, pp. 171-179; H. Looijesteijn, *Hoffes als paleizen: Stichters, bouwers en bewoners in de 17de en 18de eeuw*, The Hague 2014, pp. 37-59.
 - 18 W. Carr, *An accurate description of the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, London 1691, p. 23; Looijesteijn 2014 (note 17), p. 7.
 - 19 G. Steenmeijer, *Tot cieraet ende aensien deser stede: Arent van 's-Gravesande, architect en ingenieur ca. 1610-1662*, Leiden 2005, pp. 39-41.
 - 20 Looijesteijn 2014 (note 17), pp. 75-81.
 - 21 H.M. Turck, *Die Leidener Wohnstiftungen vom 15. bis 17. Jahrhundert*, PhD dissertation University of Cologne 1989, pp. 161-168; Steenmeijer 2005 (note 19), pp. 217-221.
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SUMMARY

This article deals with Pieter de Hooch's enigmatic painting *Woman holding a basket with beans in a garden* of 1661 (Kunstmuseum, Basel), and, more specifically, with the identity of the man depicted on the window shutter of the building in the foreground of the painting. The author argues that this portrait, which was hidden behind a layer of paint for a long time and only uncovered sometime between 1913-1927, represents the Emperor Charles V, whose portrait still decorates many buildings in the Netherlands. It is also argued that the building in the background of the painting can be typified as a 'hofje' or almshouse, and that its architecture resembles that of the Leiden Eva van Hoogeveenshofje, built by the architect Arent van 's-Gravesande in the 1650s. This suggests that De Hooch did not only paint locations in Delft and Amsterdam, but also in Leiden.

The Dutch Republic's seventeenth-century 'hofjes' were renowned, eliciting praise from foreign visitors, not only because of the way the Dutch Calvinist elite took care of the needy but also because of their superb architecture that enhanced the beauty of the Republic's cities. Interestingly, De Hooch painted a servant girl in the garden of the almshouse, which at first may seem incongruous with an institution intended for the poor. However, as will be shown, residents of almshouses in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic were not as poor as is generally thought. Some were even quite well-off and did indeed keep servants. In fact, some contemporaries even likened the Dutch almshouses to palaces. The portrait of the emperor on the window shutter may thus have criticised this type of 'poor relief' and could well have been intended to bring out the resemblance between the 'hofje' and an emperor's palace. The word 'hofje' after all means 'small court'.

As such an overt criticism is unique in De Hooch's oeuvre, it may have been the artist himself who blotted the emperor's portrait out, thus changing the image into a straightforward genre scene. It was precisely this type of scene that was to bring De Hooch some success following his move to Amsterdam in 1660.