

**James P. Ward**

**A Selection of Letters (1507-1516) from the Guelders War**

Guelders, or Gelderland, was formerly a large dukedom to the east of Holland and north-east of Brabant which controlled access to Germany over the great rivers, the Rhine and the Waal. For several decades in the second half of the 15th century and up to 1543 a struggle for power and possession of the dukedom went on between successive generations of noblemen in which Arnold, duke of Guelders, his son Adolf and his grandson Charles of Guelders were pitted against Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, his son-in-law emperor Maximilian I, Maximilian's son Philip I and grandson Charles V.<sup>1</sup> An aim of the present publication is to draw attention to lesser known sources relating to the Guelders wars.<sup>2</sup> Those wars and the incorporation of Gelderland finally into the Habsburg-Burgundian state were factors determining the borders of present day states in the Low Countries.

The Burgundian-Habsburg claim to Guelders was based on arguments of legality, one of the results of which was a propaganda offensive in the form of letters and remonstrances to friend and foe. Maximilian, Philip and Charles V found allies in Henry VII and Henry VIII of England. Their toughest and longest lasting adversary for the mastery of Guelders, Charles of Egmond, styled duke of Guelders, obtained material help, money and men from successive kings of France, together with advice from his kinsman in Scotland, king James IV, who was allied to France. This internationalization of the Guelders' problem strengthened the hand of Charles of Guelders by giving him a semblance of legality. Without help from France he would otherwise have been unable to prolong the struggle for the several decades which he did.

A woodcut by Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostzanen which was first published in 1518 is an expression of the propaganda war then being waged. It shows the four Burgundian-Habsburg rulers of those decades, Mary of Burgundy, Maximilian her husband, Philip I their son, and Charles V their grandson, with explanatory texts included below their effigies.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Dates and some biographical data for these and other persons named here are included in footnotes accompanying the English translations of the letters, etc. (below); This is a revised version of part of the author's unpublished doctoral thesis *The Cities and States of Holland (1506-1515). A participative system of government under strain* (University of Leiden, 2001); J. D. Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg rule, 1506-1566. The formation of a body politic* (Berkeley, 1990), Ch. 3, 'The Guelders Wars', pp. 64-74; H. Wiesflecker, *Maximilian I. Das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit* (5 Vols. Munich, 1971-1986), Vol. 4, pp. 320-329 and pp. 606-609; A. F. Mellink, 'Territoriale afronding der Nederlanden' in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (Haarlem, 1980), Vol. 5, pp. 492-506; P. J. Meij, 'Gelderland van 1492-1543' in P. J. Meij *et al.* (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Gelderland 1492-1795* (Zutphen, 1975), Ch. 1, pp. 13-78 and (notes) 481-491; J. Struik, *Gelre en Habsburg 1492-1528* (Arnhem, 1960); I. A. Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden van de Geschiedenis van Gelderland*, Vol. 6, Part 1 (Arnhem, 1859); M. van Driel, 'Gelre voor 1543' in: F. Keeverling Buisman *et al.* (eds.), *Verdrag en tractaat van Venlo; Herdenkingsbundel 1543-1993* (Hilversum, 1993), pp. 83-ff.

<sup>2</sup> The author thanks Prof. Dr. C. L. Heesakkers, Dr. J. G. Smit and Dr. A. van der Lem for encouragement and help in preparing the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> E. S. Jacobowitz and S. L. Stepanek, *The prints of Lucas van Leyden and his contemporaries* (Washington, 1983), pp. 272-273. The woodcut there is attributed to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Mary of Burgundy's death in 1482 resulted from a fall from her horse while hunting. An iconographically interesting detail of the woodcut, therefore, is that while the men are mounted on chargers Mary of Burgundy is seated on a mule. [NOTE ADDED 19 JAN. 2007: for the authorship of the Latin texts under the woodcuts see James P. Ward, 'Hadrianus Barlandus etc.', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, in press.

woodcut can be found reproduced sometimes in a form in which the Latin texts have been excised. For the first two principals, Mary and Maximilian, their marriage and the conflict with France is highlighted. To later writers on wars and military events those early confrontations between the houses of Valois and Habsburg appeared minor in scale.<sup>4</sup> But contemporaries such as Erasmus were well aware of the dangers which the wars posed and the damage and destruction which they caused to Holland and Brabant.

Part of the text below Philip I's effigy refers to postliminy. Definitions of postliminy include: 'restoration to their former state of persons and things taken in war when they come again into the power of the nation they belonged to', and the following antique definition: *Postliminium est ius amissae rei recipiendae ab extraneo et in statum pristinum restituendae inter nos ac liberos populos regesque moribus legibus constitutum.*<sup>5</sup> Enthusiasm for Roman law was widespread in princely circles in the sixteenth century. A French scholar, François de Nemond, born at Angoulême in about 1533, planned to translate into French the whole of Roman law. He gave as his reasons for preparing the translation that it would free France from the 'labyrinth' of the common law, and moreover 'affin que s'il plaist toujours à notre Prince que son peuple soit gouverné de ce Droit, il en ait plus facile intellegense'.<sup>6</sup>

The term postliminy from Roman law, regulating restoration by the victor of persons and things taken in war to their former state, set the tone for a discussion about Guelders which has continued to the present day, although there is now consensus that the legal issue was settled long ago.<sup>7</sup> There is agreement among scholars that Charles of Guelders, despite his efforts and the negotiations which he conducted, was never formally recognized as duke of Guelders by the Habsburg authorities, although there was a popular misconception among his supporters that that was the case.

In the Latin texts which follow, punctuation has been added and contractions which are indicated as such in the original have been resolved. Others (e.g. *Marie, Austrie, Hec, etatem*) have been left unchanged in order to convey some of the 'flavour' of the original.

<sup>4</sup> F. H. W. Kuypers, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Artillerie van de Vroegste Tijden tot op Heden* (5 Vols. Nijmegen, 1869-1871), Vol. II; C. Oman, *A history of the art of war in the sixteenth century* (London, 1937).

<sup>5</sup> Fowler and Fowler, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*; A. Maffi, *Ricerche sul postliminium*, (Milan, 1992), p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> T. Peach, 'Le droit romain en français au XVIe siècle: deux Oraisons de François de Nemond (1555)', *Rev. Hist. de Droit Français et Étranger*, 60 (1982) 5-44, especially pp. 23 and 29; compare, however, N. Henshall, *The myth of absolutism. Change and continuity in early modern European monarchy* (London and New York, 1992), section 'Bodin and absolutist theory?', pp. 126-128. For the Romanizing and rationalizing influence of Charles V's reform of criminal law embodied in the edict called 'Carolina' of 1532 see J. Wiltenburg, 'The Carolina and the Culture of the Common Man: Revisiting the Imperial Penal Code of 1532', *Renaissance Quarterly* 53 (2000) 713-734.

<sup>7</sup> P. Van Peteghem, "'El ducado de Güeldres, que le (Carlos I) pertenecia". Inleidende beschouwingen bij de rechtsvraag' in: F. Keverling Buisman *et al.* (eds.) *Verdrag en tractaat van Venlo. Herdenkingsbundel 1543-1993* (Hilversum, 1993), pp. 41-57.

**Texts from a woodcut by Jacob Cornelisz. Van Oostzanen, published in 1518.**

*De Maria Caroli filia;*

*Mariam Caroli (de quo modo loquuti sumus) filiam unicam forma excellentem virginem cum nobilissimi principes Fredericus imperator et Ludovicus Gallorum rex certatim hic Carolo ille Maximiliano filio uxorem peterent, convocati sunt Lovanium patrie primores qui auditis quae postulabantur censuerunt ex patris Caroli voluntate Maximiliano Frederici imperatoris filio Mariam dandam in matrimonium; quod adeo iniquo animo tulisse Gallus dicitur, ut statim omnibus quibus imperat Maria bello indicto, Atrebatum hostiliter adortus admissusque per conditiones pacis in urbem, cesis primoribus direptisque eorum bonis, etiam sine discrimine iusserit occidi omnes qui Marie fauerent. Vastavit inde quicquid agri opido circumiacet. In Hannoniis Avennas vi captas incendit, missis Parrhisios iis quibus ducibus incole restiterant; ii postea non nisi ingenti pecunia sese redemerunt. Eodem tempore, cum Gallus et mari premeret, ab Hollandis auspicio ductuque Amstelredamorum potissimum prospere pugnatum est, capta navi a Januensibus emissa, cuius magnitudinem nostri homines admirabantur.*

Concerning Mary the daughter of Charles [of Burgundy];

When the most noble princes Emperor Frederic and Louis, king of the French, contentiously requested Mary, the only daughter, who was remarkably beautiful and unmarried, of Charles (of whom we have just spoken) in marriage, the former for his son Maximilian, the later for his son Charles,<sup>8</sup> the leading men of the country were called to Louvain.<sup>9</sup> When they heard what was being asked, based on the wish of her father Charles their opinion was that Mary should be given in marriage to Maximilian, the son of Emperor Frederic. The French king is said to have been so vexed that he immediately declared war on all Mary's subjects and advanced with hostile intent to Arras. He was allowed to enter the city on conditions of peace, but when the patricians had been killed and their goods plundered he even ordered to be killed without regard to person all those who supported Mary. He ravaged all the farm land surrounding the city. In Hainaut he seized and burned Avesnes after he deported to the region of Paris those under whose leadership the inhabitants had resisted.<sup>10</sup> Afterwards they had to pay ransoms at high cost to redeem themselves. At the same time when the French king was also pressing hard at sea, a battle was waged which by the good luck and leadership

<sup>8</sup> Frederick III of Habsburg (1415-1493) was Holy Roman Emperor 1452-93, and his son Maximilian I (1459-1519) was Holy Roman Emperor 1508-1519. Louis XI (1423-1483) was king of France 1461-1483, and his son Charles VIII (1470-1498) was king of France 1483-1498. Mary (1457-1482), duchess of Burgundy, countess of Holland, etc. (1477-1482) was the only child of Charles the Bold (1433-1477), duke of Burgundy, count of Holland, etc. (1467-1477).

<sup>9</sup> For this and other place names here see Graesse, Benedict and Plechel, *Orbis Latinus* (3 Vols Brunswick/Braunschweig, 1972).

<sup>10</sup> Primary sources by J. Vaesen and E. Charavay (eds.), *Lettres de Louis XI Roi de France* (Paris, 1883-1909); C. Samaran and M.-C. Garand (transl., eds.), *Thomas Basin, Histoire de Louis XI*, (Paris, 1972), Vol. III; G. Doutrepoint and O. Jodogne, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, (Brussels, 1935), Vol. I; cf. J. M. Tyrrell, *Louis XI* (Boston, 1980), p. 165; M. Spencer, *Thomas Basin (1412-1490). The history of Charles VII and Louis XI* (Nieuwkoop, 1997), pp. 178-180, and p. 263-265.

of the Amsterdammers was exceedingly favourable, and a ship sent out by the Genoese was captured which our people admired for its great size.<sup>11</sup>

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*De Maximiliano Austrio Imperatore, Duce Austrie;  
Maximilianus, Caroli ducis filia in matrimonium Gandavi recepta, factusque Hollandie  
Comes dicionis sue principes omnes litteris et nuntiis hortatus est, ut ad bellum Gallo  
quousque in eam diem Marie provincias magnis cladibus affecerat inferendum arma secum  
induerent, ad quam expeditionem cum non pauci nobiles viri opinione celerius advenissent,  
in Morinensem agrum egressus cum Gallis acie conflictit; fuit ea pugna Gallorum ducibus  
infelix. Hec tum ab eo adhuc comite gesta quae postea gesserit et nunc Imperator ad  
communem utilitatem bella gerit meditaturque, neque huius est instituti scribere neque si  
cetera omnia scriberem. Nolunt enim homines nostri nisi restrictissime aliquid litteris  
mandari de iis qui vi vivunt et, o utinam, Tithoniam etatem vivat Maximilianus Dux  
Austriae de cuius unius fato omnes nostre pendent fortune.*

Concerning the Austrian Maximilian, Emperor and [Arch]duke of Austria;  
When Maximilian had received the daughter of duke Charles [of Burgundy] in marriage at Ghent<sup>12</sup> and was made count of Holland in his own sovereignty he encouraged all the chief people by letters and ambassadors to become involved in the war against the French king by bearing arms wherever he at that time had caused destruction in Mary's provinces. For that campaign, when some noblemen arrived more quickly than expected, he [Maximilian] marched into Artois in the neighbourhood of Théroouanne and joined battle with the French. That battle was a defeat for the French generals.<sup>13</sup> The deeds were proper which Maximilian did from then till now as count [of Holland] and afterwards as emperor; he waged war and made plans for the common good. It is neither customary to write of these things, nor that I should write of all the other things. For our people do not want anything put into writing, unless very succinctly, concerning those who live forcefully. And, o!, would that Maximilian [arch]duke of Austria, from whose destiny alone all our fortunes depend, may live a Tithonian lifetime.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This event is presumed here to be an oblique reference to an action against some of Louis XI's allies and their interests in Northern Italy at that time. Thomas Basin in his chronicles described successes of the Hollanders at sea; Basin, *Histoire* (ed. Samaran and Garand), Vol III, pp. 82-83.

<sup>12</sup> The marriage took place first by proxy at Bruges on 21 April and then on 18 August 1477 at Ghent with the bridal pair present.

<sup>13</sup> A reference to the battle of Guinegate near Théroouanne/Terwaan, 7 August 1479, in which Maximilian was victor over the French; Thomas Basin, *Histoire*, Vol. III, pp. 72-73.

<sup>14</sup> At the request of the goddess Eos, Zeus granted Tithonus, prince of Troy, eternal life but not what Eos had intended for her lover, eternal youth. She finally turned Tithonus into a grasshopper.

*De Philippo Maximiliani filio. Philippus per etatem administrationi maturus ultro cedente Maximiliano patre gubernacula Hollandie suscepit. Nostra memoria hic princeps magno peditum et equitum globo ingressus Gheldriam ut eam terram olim a maioribus suis subactam repeteret atque adeo veluti iniustis possessoribus occupatam iure postliminio assererent omnia terrore complevit pleraque opida percussa metu ad primum statim potentissimi ducis adventum sese dedidere. In his principiis videbatur brevi universam Gheldriam domiturus nisi repente mutatis (ut fieri solet) rebus in Hispaniam profectus fuisset, ut Castellano regno inauguraretur; fuit ea Philippo maxime pacata magnificaque profectio ut altera illa nobis plane non tristis solum verum etiam luctuosa, nam tunc in Hispaniis decessit ad huc iuvenis et amplissimis imperiis destinatus.*

Concerning Philip, the son of Maximilian. Philip, ripe on account of his age for the administration, his father Maximilian conceding voluntarily, undertook the government of Holland on his own. We recall how this prince entered Guelders with a large force of infantrymen and cavalrymen in order to reclaim that country which had been made subject by his forefathers, and like those who claim to recover by right of postliminy their property from unjust owners he filled all with fear, and numerous towns, struck by terror, surrendered immediately on the first advance of the most mighty general.<sup>15</sup> In these first successes he seemed to be about to conquer the whole of Guelders in a short time if fortune (as usually happens) had not suddenly changed and he proceeded to go to Spain to be installed with the kingdom of Castille. So that that magnificent and for Philip greatly pleasing journey was for us something completely different, not only sad but also lamentable, for the young man destined until then for such a vast empire died in Spain.<sup>16</sup>

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*Ad Carolum catholicum Philippum filium illustrissimum Hispaniarum regem. Perduximus iuvante deo cathologum Hollandie comitum ad celsitudinem tuam, illustrissime Carole, de quo iam pridem tui cives omnes nihil expectant mediocre, omnibus certissima spes est te aliquando magnum illum Philippum pietate, Carolum qui ob rerum gestarum magnitudinem bellator a quibusdam dictus et quem tu nomine refers bellica virtute, avum Maximilianum clementia, Philippum patrem comitate facilitateque superaturum. In hanc autem amplissimam spem tui amantissimos tuisque obsequiis impensissime deditos cives adduxit cum nature tue bonitas tum exacta sub incorruptissimis magistris pueritia tua ex qua iam egressus maiorum morum indolem aperte representas. Cum gratia et privilegio Caroli Catholici Hispaniarum regis.*

<sup>15</sup> Philip's adversary in Guelders was Charles of Egmond (1467-1538), whose grandfather Arnold had effectively lost possession of the dukedom to Charles the Bold before 1477. In 1543 the surrender of Venlo to Charles of Habsburg (Holy Roman Emperor Charles V since 1519) effectively marked the end of the struggle.

<sup>16</sup> Emperor Maximilian's son Philip (1478-1506), archduke of Austria, duke of Burgundy, count of Holland, etc., (called Philip the Fair) became Philip I of Spain through his wife Johanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. He died unexpectedly in Spain on 25 Sept. 1506.

To Charles, most illustrious Catholic king of Spain, son of Philip.<sup>17</sup> We present with God's help this catalog of the counts of Holland to Your Highness, most illustrious Charles, of whom all your subjects long since expect nothing ordinary, and for all of whom the most certain hope is that you will finally exceed that great Philip [the Good] in piety, Charles, who on account of the greatness of his deeds is named by some the Bold or Valorous and whose name you represent, in warlike bravery, your grandfather Maximilian in clemency, and your father Philip in kindness and pleasantness. Both the goodness of your nature as well as the years of your minority completed under the most incorruptible teachers have led your most loving and most earnestly obedient subjects to this very strong hope of you. Having now progressed from boyhood, you clearly present the natural talents of your ancestors. With grace and privilege of Charles, the Catholic king of Spain.

### **Holland in the early sixteenth century; sources; city archives**

In financial terms the cities of Holland formed the strongest group in civic and political society. There were two groups of cities and towns: the six large cities, Dordrecht, Haarlem, Delft, Leiden, Gouda and Amsterdam which are referred to as such ('*grote steden*') in the sources, and the small towns ('*kleine steden*') such as Gorinchem, Rotterdam, Schiedam and Vlaardingem, besides many others. A problem for historians of the early sixteenth century in Holland has been the lack of published primary sources. In studies of the period J. D. Tracy remarked that 'sources for political opinion in the Habsburg Netherlands for the first two decades of the sixteenth century are sparse and indirect', and similarly K. Tilmans: 'For the period 1482 to 1517 there was only a limited amount of historiographic material available in Holland', and 'much of the contemporary history of Holland was hearsay'.<sup>18</sup>

This lack in turn has increased dependence on printed sources from other parts of the Netherlands, particularly from Flanders and Brabant, on the letters and papers of royal correspondents and their courtiers, and on the chronicles of Holland. Political and military events in the war between the Burgundian Habsburgers and Charles of Guelders have been studied by several authors, including Nijhoff, Kooperberg, Meij and Tracy. In all of their works there is a strong dependence on the published correspondences of the principals involved at the time, edited by Le Glay, Van den Bergh and Nijhoff, and to a lesser extent on the chronicle writers.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Charles of Habsburg (1500-1558), archduke of Austria, duke of Burgundy, count of Holland, etc., was at that time (1518) king of Spain in succession to his father Philip I but not yet Emperor Charles V, which he became on the death of his grandfather Maximilian in 1519.

<sup>18</sup> J. D. Tracy, *Holland under Habsburg Rule*, p. 70; K. Tilmans, *Historiography and Humanism in Holland in the age of Erasmus: Aurelius and the 'Divisiechroniek' of 1517* (Nieuwkoop, 1992), pp. 193-194.

<sup>19</sup> E. A. J. Le Glay (ed.), *Correspondance de l'Empereur Maximilien Ier et de Marguerite d'Autriche de 1507-1519* (2 Vols., Paris, 1839); E. A. J. Le Glay (ed.), *Negociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche durant les trente premières années du XVIe siècle* (2 Vols., Paris, 1845); L. P. C. van den Bergh (ed.), *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche, gouvernante des Pays-Bas, avec ses amis sur les affaires des Pays-Bas de 1506-1528* (2 Vols., Leiden, 1845, 1847); R. L. Mackie and A. Spilman (eds.), *The letters of James IV, 1505-1513; Calendared by Robert Kerr Hannay, LL.D.* (Edinburgh, 1953); I. A.

An aim, therefore, is to provide here some insight into other sources which are available in the city archives of Holland in the early modern period and during the first regency (1507-1515) of Margaret of Austria in the Burgundian-Habsburg Low Countries, besides works already published.<sup>20</sup> Hitherto relatively unexploited for this period are the minutes and resolutions of meetings and discussions within the local councils, the *vroedschappen*, of some of the principal cities of Holland, in particular Haarlem and Leiden, which are extant for most of the years of the first decades of the sixteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The attractions of these sources are not only in their importance for political and social studies. Linguistically they sometimes possess a charm and forcefulness of expression which on occasion lends them an almost dramatic character. Two reasons can be adduced for this. Firstly there were the terrible events of the time which were caused not only by the Guelders war but also by an unprecedented series of natural disasters in Holland and surrounding regions in the early sixteenth century resulting from repeated storms, dyke failures and flooding of the land.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, despite some evidence for breaches of the rule, the minutes and resolutions of the local councils (*vroedschappen*) were secret and confidential, so that they contain expressions which at times are picturesque and less than diplomatic.

Some examples may suffice to give this particular flavour. In 1512 when the government under the regency of Margaret of Austria imposed a series of extra-ordinary

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Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden uit de Geschiedenis van Gelderland door onuitgegeven oorkonden opgehelderd en bevestigd*, Vol. 6, Part 1 (Arnhem, 1859); J. Gairdner (ed.), *Letters and papers illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII* (2 Vols., London, 1863; Kraus Reprint 1965); *Lettres du roy Louis XII et du cardinal George d'Amboise, avec autres lettres, memoires et instructions ecrites depuis 1504 jusque et comptis 1514* (4 Vols., Brussels, 1712).

<sup>20</sup> L. M. G. Kooperberg, *Margaretha van Oostenrijk; Landvoogdes der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 1908); J. De Iongh, *Margaretha van Oostenrijk; Regentessen der Nederlanden I* (Amsterdam, 1941, English transl. 1953); U. Tamussino, *Margarete von Österreich. Diplomatin der Renaissance* (Graz, 1995); J. Strelka, *Der Burgundische Renaissancehof Margarethes von Österreich und seine literar-historische Bedeutung* (Vienna, 1957).

<sup>21</sup> Inventories: P. A. Meilink (ed.), *Archieven van de Staten van Holland vóór 1572* (The Hague, 1929); P. A. Meilink (ed.), *Inventaris van de archieven van de Staten van Holland vóór 1572*, revised by H. J. Ph. G. Kaajan (The Hague, 1993); P. A. Meilink and J. L. van der Gouw (eds.), *Inventaris van het Archief van de Grafelijkheids-Rekenkamer of Rekenkamer der Domeinen van Holland. Tweede deel: Afgehoorde en gedeponeerde rekeningen* (typescript, The Hague, 1946); J. L. van Dalen (ed.), *Inventaris van het archief der gemeente Dordrecht I. De grafelijke tijd, 1200-1572* (Dordrecht, 1909); J. L. van Dalen (ed.), *Regestenlijst behorende bij den inventaris van het archief der gemeente Dordrecht, 1200-1572* (Dordrecht, 1912); P. van den Brandeler (ed.), *Inventaris van het Archief der Gemeente Dordrecht* (Dordrecht, 1869); P. van den Brandeler (ed.), *Suppletoire inventaris van het archief der gemeente Dordrecht* (Dordrecht, 1878); A. J. Enschedé (ed.), *Inventaris van het archief der gemeente Haarlem* (3 Vols., Haarlem, 1866-1867); J. C. Overvoorde and J. W. Verburgt (eds.), *Archief der secretarie van de stad Leiden 1253-1575. Inventaris en regesten* (Leiden, 1937); J. E. J. Geselschap (ed.), *Inventaris van het oud-archief van Gouda* (Gouda, 1965); H. ten Boom and B. Woelderink (eds.), *Inventaris van het oud-archief van de stad Rotterdam 1340-1813* (2 Vols., Rotterdam, 1976); P. D. J. van Iterson and P. H. J. van der Laan (eds.), *Resoluties van de vroedschap van Amsterdam 1490-1550* (Amsterdam, 1986).

<sup>22</sup> M. K. E. Gottschalk, *Stormvloeden en rivieroverstromingen in Nederland. Storm surges and river floods in the Netherlands* (3 Vols. Assen, 1975); Ward, *Cities and States of Holland*, pp. 164-192.

taxes on Holland in order to pay for the war, the magistrates at Haarlem complained in their meetings that the measures were being 'forced down their throats' (*'mitgaders oick tguent dat men tlant over den hals drucken wil'*), and that 'this kind of taxation had never been imposed by any princes or princesses before, contrary to the privilege[s] of Holland' (*'dese manieren van ommeslagen bij geenen princen of princessen hier voirtijts onderhouden en zijn geweest, directelick tegens de privilegie van den lande'*).<sup>23</sup> About that time Margaret of Austria expressed in the draft of a letter to her father, Emperor Maximilian, but not in the final version, her concern that 'the provinces are in such a bad mood and the common people use such evil language that I am very much afraid a calamity will overtake us'.<sup>24</sup>

Elsewhere in the sources proverbs or proverb-like phrases can be found, such as 'of many evils one has to chose the least' (*'dat men van veele quaden tminste quaet behoirt te kiezen'*), uttered by Leiden's magistrates during a mutiny of soldiers in 1512. The least evil in this case was that they decided to pay the soldiers. A year later 'Leiden had to bite into a sour apple' (*'dat die stede van Leyden in eenen zueren appel bijten moet'*) when obliged to hire soldiers again in 1513. When a government officer, Jan van Duivenvoorde, asked Leiden during a period of acute crisis in 1516 to provide a hundred soldiers for the defence of Haarlem and North-Holland the magistrates refused at first, protesting that they were unable to pay for the men. 'Whereupon Master Jan replied, saying: "when the wound is struck then it is the master that is stabbed"' (*'Dairop den voirs. Meester Jan repliceerde, zeggende: "als de wonde geslagen is, zoe stect men den meester"'*),<sup>25</sup> a reference to Charles (V) of Habsburg and the implied hurt to him if the magistrates remained recalcitrant.

Included in the minutes of the local council (*vroedschap*) meetings there are numerous direct and indirect references to letters received from the regent Margaret of Austria, from the stadholder count John of Egmond (Graaf Jan van Egmond) and his nephew Floris of Egmond,<sup>26</sup> from government officials at The Hague, Mechelen and Brussels, from foreign friends and foes (at that same time Amsterdam was waging a naval war against Lübeck), and from the arch-enemy Charles of Guelders himself. The essential contents of those letters can usually be deduced from remarks and occasional indirect quotations contained in the council minutes. The subjects of the letters concerned diets of the States of Holland and of the States General, events in the wars affecting Holland, alarms, warnings of attack, government calls to arms, reports of military defeats and of occasional successes, news of truces, calls for prayers

<sup>23</sup> GA Haarlem, Vroedschapsres., 1501-1516, f. 101v-102, dated 26 Oct. 1512; Ibidem, f. 103-104, dated 16 Nov. 1512; '*privilegie*'; the reference is to the Great Privilege of 1477 by which the Burgundian cities and States acquired, among numerous other privileges on taxation etc., the right of convocation; contractions used here are GA for Gemeente Archief (municipal archives), Vroedschapsres. for the resolutions of the local council (*vroedschap*), and Tres.rek. for the accounts (*Rekeningen*) of the city treasurers.

<sup>24</sup> H. G. Koenigsberger, *Estates and Revolutions. Essays in Early Modern European History* (Ithaca and London, 1971), pp. 137-138, footnote 37 there.

<sup>25</sup> GA Leiden, SA I, Vroedschapsres., inv. no. 383, f. 130-130v, dated 20 September 1512; Ibidem, f. 147-147v, dated 20 April 1513; Ibidem, f. 209v, dated 22 Sept. 1516.

<sup>26</sup> John of Egmond (Jan van Egmond; 1438-1516), First Count of Egmond, was stadholder in Holland (1483-1516), and his nephew Floris of Egmond (c. 1470-1539), Lord of Ysselstein, was stadholder in Guelders and later in Friesland. Floris deputized for his aged uncle in Holland.



for the emperor and the royal family, and government orders for celebrations to mark military victories and royal wedding engagements, to name but some of the subjects. Only very few of the original letters from that period have survived in the archives of the cities of Holland. Of the estimated thousands of letters which were sent by the government at The Hague summoning the cities and towns of Holland to diets of the cities and States of Holland only 10 are known for the period 1477-1494, and 8 for the period 1506-1515.<sup>27</sup> In some cases the letters were left inserted loosely between the pages of the resolution books, e.g. of the council at Leiden, and some have been bound into other volumes where it may have seemed appropriate. An exception is formed by a collection of letters preserved in the municipal archives at Dordrecht, which have been cataloged separately and provided with summaries (*regesten*),<sup>28</sup> and which are the subject of the present publication.

### **The Guelders war and military innovation in the early sixteenth century**

Monographs by G. Kalsbeek and by J. E. A. L. Struik treated the period of the Guelders war in its entirety but largely from the viewpoint of the history of Guelders, as did an early study by Nijhoff.<sup>29</sup> These authors depended heavily on the researches of Van den Bergh, Le Glay and others who edited and published the correspondences of the principal rulers of the period. In what follows here military episodes as reflected in some of the surviving letters in the archives at Dordrecht are examined at a little length.

In the early part of the sixteenth century the military initiative in the Guelders war lay almost entirely with Charles of Guelders. The Guelders war might be described in modern terms as a guerrilla war. Those wars should not be compared, as some historians have done, with the massive wars of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries.<sup>30</sup> Fighting sometimes on two fronts at once, his method was to attack Holland with small mobile forces numbering, for example, about 800 infantrymen, 130 cavalrymen, and armed with a few cannon. Those attacks were made unexpectedly, irrespective of truces and cease-fires to which he might have agreed beforehand. Towns in Holland and Brabant near the borders with Guelders were attacked, for example from out of the nearby Guelders strong-point at Poederoyen. They were overrun, plundered, burnt and then evacuated. Burgundian-Habsburg response to the attacks by those so-called 'rebels, arsonists and murderers' appears by contrast to have been

<sup>27</sup> H. Kokken, *Steden en Staten; Dagvaarten van steden en Staten van Holland onder Marie van Bourgondië en het eerste regentschap van Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk (1477-1494)* (The Hague, 1991), p. 103; Ward, *Cities and States of Holland*, p. 58.

<sup>28</sup> P. van den Brandeler (ed.), *Suppletoire inventaris van het archief der gemeente Dordrecht* (Dordrecht, 1878); the letters are inventorized in GA Dordrecht, Old archive I, inv. no. 1 and 2.

<sup>29</sup> G. Kalsbeek, *De betrekkingen tusschen Frankrijk en Gelre tijdens Karel van Egmond* (Wageningen, 1932); J. E. A. L. Struik, *Gelre en Habsburg 1492-1528*, Werken Gelre no. 30 (Arnhem, 1960); Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden*.

<sup>30</sup> Kuypers, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Artillerie*; Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century*; see there e.g. the expression 'scuffles along the tops of dykes', p. 541; c.f. also L. Gorter-Van Royen, 'De regentessen van Karel V in de Nederlanden. Beeld en Werkelijkheid', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 110 (1997) 169-197; p. 178.

reaction rather than effective military action. Some contemporary observers, including Erasmus, went so far as to believe that the government of Holland was guilty of complicity in the war in order to make the magisterial classes more compliant in paying taxes to meet the costs of the military.<sup>31</sup>

### **Letters relating to the Guelders war**

The following is a selection of original letters kept in the municipal archives at Dordrecht.<sup>32</sup> The several hundred original letters and other missives of this collection dating from the later fifteenth century until about the middle of the sixteenth century appear all to deal with matters of government of the city of Dordrecht and of Holland more generally. Only a small number which relate directly to the Guelders war in the period 1507 to 1516 are discussed here. It has been postulated that the early decades of the 16th century were years of transition and evolution in political, economic and military affairs in Holland.<sup>33</sup>

Three of the letters were signed by the principals, Margaret of Austria as regent and governess of the Low Countries, and her nephew Charles as (still uncrowned) king of Castille. Others were signed by government officials and secretaries under the authority of the stadholder and the Court of Holland. The letters form in a nutshell a kind of summary of much that happened in Holland during the early phases of the Guelders war. As an illustration of military affairs the series begins with the unsuccessful siege of Poederoyen in 1507. The letters proceed through the years, touching on other subjects, until 1516 when Charles of Habsburg was beginning to take the lead in military affairs and, in the example here, ordered armed vessels to be made ready for the defence of the Zuyderzee. In between there is a first hand description of a military skirmish at Oudewater in 1512. A so-called 'letter of warning' about a threatened attack from Guelders is included as a rare surviving example of the perhaps thousands of such letters sent from The Hague to the magistrates of Holland. Finally, a letter ordering religious processions for the wellbeing of Emperor Maximilian and of his grandson Charles completes the selection, again as an example of a characteristic type to be found for this period only seldom now in the archives. These last two letters appear to be routine in character, and references to letters of warning or to government orders for public prayers are frequently to be found under other headings in the archives; for example, under the costs for messengers and couriers who carried the letters from The Hague.

The letters at Dordrecht are written on paper. Most are in a fair to good condition, although, here and there, there is some damage to the edges, and staining, so that a few words or phrases are illegible or lost. The letters were written on one side of the paper only, which

<sup>31</sup> See e.g. Erasmus' letter to Beatus Rhenanus about the sack of Alkmaar in 1517: 'the storm was deliberately unleashed upon them', printed in: R. A. B. Mynors, D. F. S. Thomson, and P. G. Bietenholz (trans, eds.), *The collected works of Erasmus* (Toronto) Vol. 5, pp. 73-74; J. D. Tracy, *The politics of Erasmus. A pacifist intellectual and his political milieu* (Toronto, 1978), pp. 83-87.

<sup>32</sup> GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, inv. no. 1 and inv. no. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Ward, *Cities and States of Holland*, especially the section entitled 'A description of historical change', pp. 375-385.

was then folded shut. In some cases traces of the wax seal which was applied to secure the letter are visible. After the letter was closed and sealed in that way the address was written on what then became the 'outside' of the paper. In the case of an authenticated copy of an original letter from Margaret of Austria to the deputies of the States of Holland the copyist included the address in his transcript and referred to it as 'written on the outside' (*buyten up gescreven*).<sup>34</sup>

The addressees are indicated here by square brackets [ ] which are used for this and other editorial remarks and additions. Punctuation has been added. Each of the letters is accompanied by a near literal translation into English. The choice of the indefinite article here is deliberate. The standards and requirements of classical scholars and philologists<sup>35</sup> are stricter than those attempted here. But for readers unfamiliar with Middle Dutch the translations may offer some insight into the directness of style, the charm and historicity of the originals and of their authors. Historians and scholars should regard only the original texts, and the possibility or indeed probability that one or other of them, and other similar letters in the archives of Holland, were drafted originally in French by secretaries and then translated into Dutch.<sup>36</sup>

It will be observed that the letters are replete with references to matters of military technology: siege warfare and the emplacement of blockhouses to surround the Guelders stronghold at Poederoyen in 1507, archers sent by the king of England for the fruitless campaign against the city of Venlo in 1511 at a time of transition when armies on the Continent were being filled with pikemen, arquebusiers and cannoniers, Glasmaker's description of a siege at Oudewater in 1512 when his castle there was attacked by gunfire, emphasis on the importance of water and waterways both as a hindrance to the enemy and as a help in their transport of heavy artillery by boat, Charles of Habsburg's measures to ensure the safety of the Zuyderzee area by commissioning and stationing small warships in those waters, and more besides. Sources elsewhere record costs for the transport of guns (harquebuses, serpentines) by ship (*mitten scepe*) over water from Leiden to Haarlem at this time (1512), and the fact that Charles of Habsburg sent other letters in April 1516 ordering the cities to provide similar warships for the defence of the Zuyderzee.<sup>37</sup>

All of these and similar features of warfare in Holland and the Low Countries are well known from historical sources dating from the late sixteenth to mid-twentieth century.<sup>38</sup> But

<sup>34</sup> GA Dordrecht, Old archive I, inv. no. 2, letter no. 133, dated 12 Sept. 1514.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. for example, G. Maurach, *Methoden der Latinistik. Ein Lehrbuch zum Selbstunterricht* (Darmstadt, 1998), p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Consider, for example, with reference to a tax on salt, the remark: 'which is called in France the permission of the salt' (*'dat men noempt in Vranckrijck oirloff van tsoudt'*), contained in the copy of the letter alluded to above from Margaret of Austria; fn 34.

<sup>37</sup> GA Haarlem, Tres.rek. 1512-1513, f. 65v, dated 26 Dec. 1512; GA Haarlem, Vroedschapsres. 1501-1516, f. 171v-172, dated 17 April 1516 [NOTE ADDED: There is a remark in this entry about the letter signed by Charles' 'own gracious hand'. Cf. letter no. 5 here below].

<sup>38</sup> J. Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (London, 1993); C. J. Rogers (ed.), *The Military Revolution Debate* (Boulder, 1995); R. E. Dupuy and T. N. Dupuy (eds.), *The Collins Encyclopedia of Military History From 3500 B.C. to the Present* (4th edn., Glasgow, 1993). In Chapter XIII, 'Spanish Square and Ship of the Line 1500-1600' the editors describe military trends, small arms weapons, artillery, fortifications and siege craft,

documentary sources from the early sixteenth century, in particular the first two decades, with the possible exception of works of graphic art<sup>39</sup> are less plentiful. Glasmaker's 1512 letter in particular, despite its brevity, contains much information of interest in military matters. The castle at Oudewater was attacked not once but several times by Charles of Guelders during that phase of the Guelders war, and Glasmaker reveals details of the enemy's use of artillery (curtalls, serpentines) and gun emplacements made of earth-filled wicker baskets which correspond well with details in a late fifteenth century drawing of a similar siege.<sup>40</sup>

Later changes in the conduct of sixteenth century wars distinguished them from earlier wars above all by the greatly increased scale of military operations, and by the rate at which the armies expanded within a few decennia. It has been proposed that the first two decades of the sixteenth century were a period of evolution and transition in military matters in the Low Countries marking that change from the late medieval kind of warfare to the increasingly modern. From other evidence it has been proposed that the period was also a time of evolution and transition in political, fiscal and economic affairs.<sup>41</sup>

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tactics of land warfare, etc. in the 16th century.

<sup>39</sup> G. Parker (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare. The triumph of the West* (Cambridge, 1995); J. R. Hale, *Artists and warfare in the Renaissance* (Yale University Press, 1990).

<sup>40</sup> G. Parker (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare*, p. 46.

<sup>41</sup> B. S. Hall, *Weapons and warfare in Renaissance Europe; gunpowder, technology and tactics* (Baltimore and London, 1997), especially the section 'Patterns of growth', pp. 202f; Ward, *Cities and States of Holland*, pp. 395-396.

**1. From Margaret of Austria to the deputies of the States of Holland at The Hague;  
concerning the first siege of Poederoyen (1507);  
dated 23 September 1507; GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, inv. no. 2, letter no. 78.**

[Adres:] Onsen lieven beminden, die gedeputeerde van den Staten van Hollandt ende Vrieslandt alsnu bijeen vergadert zijnde in den Haghe.

Margriete van Oistenrijcke ende van Bourgongnen, hertoghinne douagiere van Savoye etc. Lieve beminde, wij hebben tot meer stonden gescreven ende bevolen onsen neve den greve van Egmonde wederom te trecken voir tslot van Pourroyen om tselve van nyeux te beleggen of te besetten ende benouwen met blochuysen ende anderssins, zoedat die schade ende schande die met quader fortuynen aldaer geschiet es gebetert ende verhaelt mochten worden. Ende hoewel onse voirs. neve ende oick eenige van u genoech hiertoe genegen hebben geweest ende noch zijn, nietmin wij verstaen dat die zomege van u des onwillich zijn ende liever belet sagen, twelcke, op dat zoe es, ons zeer vervreymden zouden, zonderlinge dat ghij onse ende u zelfs eeren ende welvaert niet meer achten en zout, ende wilden wel weten degene die van zulken quaden opsette ende meyninghen zouden willen zijn. Ende want wij boven alle saken begeeren tvoirs. slot van Pourroyen, dat u ende den geheelen lande van Hollant zoe schadelick ende schandelick geweest es ende noch meer wesen sal indien daerinne niet voorsien en worde, van stonden an beleyt ende van nieuws beset zij, opdat men tselve bij eenigen middel tot behoirlijcke gehoorsaemheit bringen moge, soe scrijven wij aen u, begeerende ende versouckende ende nietmin lastende ende bevelende zeer ernstelick op alzooveulle als ghij onsen ende u selfs eeren ende welvaert beminnende zijt, dat ghij onsen voirs. neve van Egmond totten voirs. belegge ende besette doet ende gheeft elck int zijne alle die hulpe, troost ende bijstandicheit die u mogelick zullen wesen, u adverterende dat wij gescreven ende oirboden hebben heeren Florijs van Egmond hem met eenen zekeren getale ruyteren ende knechten tot onsen voirs. neve die grave van Egmond voir tvoirs. slot te voegen, om hem aldaer bijstandt te doen ende tselve te helpen becrachtigen ende besetten, zoe datter geen schade meer uuyt en geschie. Geloevende voirts tgene des heeren Willem Drake, ridder, bringer van desen, u seggen ende verclaeren sal van onsen wegen der saken voirscreven angaende, gelijk onsselven, ende u hierinne voegende ende bewijsende als ghij zelve kennen mueght dat den nood dat heysscht ende begeert, ende zoe wij u des gans toebetrouwen. Lieve beminde, onse Heere God zij met u.  
Gescreven tAndwerpen den XXIII/en dach in septembri.

[Getek.]

Marguerite

[Address:] To our dearly beloved, the deputies of the States of Holland and Friesland presently meeting at The Hague.

Margaret of Austria and of Burgundy, Dowager Duchess of Savoy etc.

Dearly beloved, we have several times written to and ordered our cousin, the Count of Egmond, to proceed once more against the castle of Poederoyen,<sup>42</sup> to besiege it and to hem and close it in with blockhouses and the like, so that the damage and oppression which ill fortune has caused there can be remedied and alleviated. And although our aforementioned cousin and indeed some of you have been sufficiently inclined, and still are, to do that, nonetheless we understand that some others of you are unwilling and prefer to see obstruction and delay, which if it be so would unpleasantly surprise us very much, especially since you would thereby disregard our and your own honour and wellbeing, and we should wish to know which of you would be of such ill intention and opinion. And since we desire above all that the above-named castle of Poederoyen, which has been the cause of such damage to you and to the whole of Holland, and which will continue to be so if nothing is done about it, should be besieged and occupied at once so that it may by all means be made properly subservient to us, therefore we write to you, desiring and requesting but none the less charging and ordering you most earnestly in so far as you love and respect our and your own honour and wellbeing to give all possible help, comfort and assistance to our above-named cousin Egmond, in the aforementioned siege and occupation, each of you doing as much as he can. We inform you that we have written to and ordered Lord Floris of Egmond to proceed with a certain number of cavalry and infantry to join our cousin, the Count of Egmond, before the above named castle, to assist him and help him storm and occupy it in order that no more damage can be caused from there. You should believe the instructions that Sir William Drake, knight, the carrier of this letter, will tell and explain to you on our behalf concerning the matters above, as you would us, and comply with them, proving thereby that you understand, as you should know, how necessity demands it be so, and so that we entrust the matter to you entirely. Dearly beloved, may God be with you.

Written at Antwerp, 23rd September [1507].

[Signed:]

Marguerite

<sup>42</sup> This first siege of Poederoyen in 1507 led by stadholder Jan van Egmond was unsuccessful. The stronghold was finally destroyed at the second siege in 1508 under the leadership of the Habsburg general, the duke of Anhalt.

**2. From Margaret of Austria to the magistrates of Dordrecht; on welcoming an English force of archers**  
**14 July 1511; GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, nr. 2, letter nr. 85.**

[Adres:] Onsen lieven beminden, Burchmeesteren, scepenen ende raide der stede van Dordrecht.

Marguerite, eertshertoginne van Oistenrijck, hertoginne ende gravinne van Bourgonien, dowagiere van Savoyen, regente ende gouvernante etc.

Lieve beminde, wij houden u te vollen onderrecht hoe onse lieve heere ende neve die coninck van Ingelant uuyt zijnder goetwillicheyd, die hij thoont te hebben tot onsen lieven heere ende neve den ertshertoge ende desen zijnen landen, hem tot behulpe van den tegewoordiger orloige van Ghelre zeyndt ende schickt up zijns selfs ende eygen cost zekeren getal van zijnen besten archiers, die zeere corte in de havene van Dordrecht wesen zullen. Ende int geselschap van den voirs. Ingelsschen vele goede eerlicke mannen zijn die wij, gelijk redelick is, geerne wel ende goedelick ontfangen ende tracteren zouden. Soe scrijven wij aen u, begeerende ende versouckende zeere ernstelick dat zoe wanneer die voirs. Ingelsschen omtrent Dordrecht voirs. arriveren ende commen sullen dat ghy in goeden ende notablen getale hen wilt tegen varen, ende die eerlicken inhalen soe dat behoirt, hen schijnkende den wijn, ende voirts besorgende van goeden herbergen ende logijsten binnen der voirs. stede van Dordrecht ende elders, den selven oick bewijsende alle gunst, goetwillicheyd ende eere die ghy sult connen ende mogen. Ende ghy sult ons daeraen zunderlinge liefde ende vruntscap doen ende bewijzen, ende zullent zeere danckelick van u nemen. Dus wilt u hierinne vougen ende bewijzen als wij u des toe betrouwen, lieve beminde, onse heere God zij mit u. Gescreven te Mechelen den XIII/en dach van julio anno XV/C/XI.

[Getek.]

Marguerite

[Postscriptum:] Wij hebben gelast Le Bon ... bringer van desen u te seggen eenige dingen aengaende deser saken, zoe wilt hem geloven ende u voegen na dat hij u zeggen sal.

[Address:] To our dearly beloved burgomasters, aldermen and council of the city of Dordrecht.

Margaret, Archduchess of Austria, Duchess and Countess of Burgundy, Dowager Duchess of Savoy, Regent and Governess etc.

Dearly beloved, we keep you completely informed of the fact that our dear lord and cousin, the king of England [Henry VIII] out of his own kindness which he has shown our own dear lord and nephew the archduke [Charles] and these his lands is sending as help in the present war against Guelders,<sup>43</sup> and at his own expense, a certain number of his best archers who will arrive very soon in the harbour of Dordrecht. And in the company of the aforementioned Englishmen there are many good and honest men whom we, as is only reasonable, wish to be

<sup>43</sup> This English force under the command of Sir Edward Poynings was employed at the (failed) siege of Venlo in 1511 before being called home by king Henry VIII at the approach of winter; E. Halle, *The union of the two noble families of Lancaster and York. The triumphant reign of kyng Henry VIII* (London, 1550, facsimile 1970), Ch. 'Kyng Henry VIII', f. 13-15 inclusive.

well and kindly received and entertained. Therefore we write to you, desiring and requesting most earnestly that when the abovementioned Englishmen arrive in the neighbourhood of Dordrecht aforesaid you should voyage out to meet them in good and notable numbers, accompanying them honourably into harbour just as that should be, presenting wine to them, and furthermore providing them with good inns and lodgings within the abovenamed city of Dordrecht and elsewhere, showing them every favour, friendliness and honour which you possibly can. Thereby you shall show and prove to us especially your affection and friendship and [we] shall most gratefully accept it from you. Therefore, please comply with this and prove to us as we trust you to do, dearly beloved, and may God be with you. Written at Mechelen, 14th July 1511.

[Signed:]

Marguerite

[Postscript:] We have empowered Le Bon ..., carrier of this letter, to say a number of things to you concerning this matter, and so you should believe him and comply with what he shall say to you.

\* \* \*

**3. From Cornelis Glasmaker to the magistrates of Dordrecht; Oudewater attacked by Charles of Guelders;  
3rd May 1512; GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, inv. no. 2, letter no. 117.**

[Adres:] Aen mijn lieven heren, scout, borgmeesteren der stat van Dordrecht, mijn lieven heeren.

Wet, mijn lieven heren, hoedat die here van Gelderen self in parsoen is gewest myt hondert perd XXX ende VIII hondert knechten ende tussen ses ende seven hondert huslude; die voetlude vaeren voer Audewater after aent slot, ende hadden daer IIII korf geset die halfvoll erde gevult vaeren, ende daer hadden sij een groete korttals ende een half korttals myt vier slangen, ende soet die van Audenwater voor uyt vorden hebben sij haer slangen gestelt en hebben hem drief of vier daer gescoeten van die Geldersen, ende soe heft daer een husman uut den land van Montfort gewest die bij den Gheldersen hoep gynck ende seyde `vat maect gij myt u gescut hier bynnen, sullen sij u al drenken?', ende dye van Audewater had die slus opgeset, hadden sij nyet van stonden aen vechgetoegen dat gescut had daer gebleven; daer hebben sij scuppen prepade laten leggen ende elx is veder teruge getogen nae Uutert ende hebben hem daer neder geslagen ende die hartoch is self vierder bynnen Uutert ghevest; merckt vat daer om gaet.

Item ick heb veder twe nae hem gesent om te vernemen var sijt hoeft hem keren; als die kommen selck ick u lyeffden atverteren. Item die van Audevater hebben een groeten jongen gevangen van den hoep; dan sij en hadden hem noch nyet te degen gevraecht doen mijn knecht vandaen sceyde, dus en kan ick u gen besceyt daervan scrijven.

Item laet mij doch veten van comende saeken opdat ick nijet weder kom bij uu lieffde afterwollegende opdat ick opten hus mach blijven, vant also lange gij mij nyet en troest soe en kan ick nyet vrolyck sijn etc.

Gescreven mytter haest, den III/en in meye anno XV/C/XII.



[Getek.]

Uw goetwyllege dynder

Cornelis Glasmaker

[Address:] To my dear sirs, sheriff (*scout*), burgomasters of the city of Dordrecht, my dear sirs.

Know, my dear Sirs, how the duke [*heer*] of Guelders himself was here in person with 130 horsemen and 800 infantrymen and between six and seven hundred camp followers. The infantrymen were at Oudewater behind the castle, and there they placed 4 baskets which were half-full of earth, and they had there a large curtall and a half-curtall together with four serpentines. And as the people of Oudewater advanced they aimed their serpentines and fired three or four times, those Gelderlanders, and there was a yeoman there from the region of Montfort who went to the Guelders forces and said: 'What are you doing with your artillery here inside? Do you want them to drown you all?'. The people of Oudewater had opened the sluice, and if they had not retreated at once their artillery would have stayed there. But they had boats lying prepared, and each of them withdrew towards Utrecht and they have encamped there. And the duke [*hartoch*] himself was further on, in Utrecht. Take note of what is happening there.

Item: I also sent two men to find out in which direction they were going. When they return I shall inform Your Worships. Item: the people of Oudewater took prisoner a big fellow from their forces, but they had not questioned him thoroughly when my servant came away from there, so I cannot write you any information about that. Item: let me know what is happening, since I cannot come to Your Worships as a result of having to remain here at the castle, because so long as you do not reassure me I cannot be easy in my mind etc.

Written in haste, 3rd May 1512.

[Signed:]

Your willing servant

Cornelis Glasmaker

\* \* \*

**4. From the Count of Nassau, Stadholder, and the Council to the sheriff, burgomasters and magistrates of Dordrecht; a warning of impending danger from Charles of Guelders;**

**4 April 1516; GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, inv. no. 2, letter no. 142.**

[Adres:] Eerbaeren, onsen bijsonderen goeden vrunden, den schout, burgermeesteren ende gerechte der stede van Dordrecht.

Die grave van Nassou, van Vianden etc., heere tot Breda etc., stadthouder generael, die president ende Raide des conincs van Castillen, van Leon, van Grenade etc., eertshertoghe van Oistenryck etc., gecommitteert ten saicken zynre genaden landen van Hollant, Zeelant ende Vrieslant.

Eerbaeren, bijsonderen goede vrunde, wij sijn geadverteert dat heere Kaerel van Gheldre tot Tyel groete vergaderinge van scepen, peenten ende anders heeft, omme eenen aenslach in desen landen te doen, scrriven daeromme an u, lasten ende bevelen van wegghen der voirs. C.M. dat ghij bij daghe ende nachte goede hoede ende toesicht hebt ende waecke houdt, ende

van stonden aen bereyt maict ende houdt alsulcke scepen als uluyden, onlanx te Bruyssel wesende, belast ende geordonneert sijn geweest van wegghen der C.M. voirs. Eerbaeren, bijzonder goeden vrunde, hiervan en zyt in geenen gebreke. Onsen heere God zij met u. Gescreven in den Hage den IIII/en dach in april anno XV/C ende XVI nae Paeschen.

[Getek.]

C. Dam

[Address:] Honourable, our especially good friends, the sheriff (*schout*), burgomasters and court of the city of Dordrecht.

The Count of Nassau, of Vianden etc., Lord of Breda etc., Stadholder General,<sup>44</sup> the President and Council of the King of Castille, of Leon, of Granada etc., Archduke of Austria etc., meeting in committee in the affairs of his grace's provinces of Holland, Zeeland and Friesland.

Honourable, especially good friends. We have been advised that the gentleman [*heere*] Charles of Guelders has assembled large numbers of ships, boats and the like at Tiel in order to attack these lands. We write to you, therefore, and charge and order you on behalf of our afore-named royal highness to be on your guard and to keep good watch by day and night, and to prepare at once and keep ready all such ships as you were ordered to do on behalf of his royal highness aforementioned when you were at Brussels recently. Honourable, especially good friends, do not neglect to do this. May our lord God be with you. Written at The Hague, 4 April 1516 after Easter.

[Signed:]

C. Dam<sup>45</sup>

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**5. From Charles, King of Castille etc., to the magistrates of Dordrecht; an order to provide armed vessels for protecting the Zuyderzee; 5th April 1516; GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, inv. no. 2, letter no. 143.**

[Adres:] Onsen lieven, beminden Burgermeesteren, scepenen ende Raedt onser stede van Dordrecht.

Bij den conynck.

Lieve beminde, gehoirt de clachten ons gedaen tot diversschen stonden van den opsetten, roeven ende pilleryen geschiet bij eenige ruyteren ende knechten liggende opte Zuyderzee, die hen gevoirdert hebben ende noch dagelicx voirderen die vreynde coopluyden ende andere hanterende diezelve Zuyderzee te vangen, spannen, roeven ende beschadegen aen

<sup>44</sup> Henry of Nassau-Dillenburg (1483-1538) was stadholder in Holland 1516-1522; A. S. De Blecourt and E. M. Meijers, *Memorialen van het Hof van Holland* (Haarlem, 1929), p. XXXII.

<sup>45</sup> Claes and Willem van Dam were both described as secretaries to the Court of Holland at The Hague (Hof van Holland); for Claes see e.g. Algeem Rijksarchief (The Hague) Rek.Rek. inv. no. 346, f. 139, anno 1512, and Rek.Rek. inv. no. 348, f. 130v, anno 1514; for Willem, Rek.Rek. inv. no. 349, f. 138v and f. 142, anno 1515, etc.

lijve ende goeden zonder yement te aenzien, om dieselve Zuyderzee, daervan den stroem ons toebehoert ende nyement el, te veyligen, ende opdat de coopluyden ende andere dieselve Zuyderzee veylichlick gebruycken mogen, hebben geaviseert ende gesloten een zeker menichte van scepen toe te maken om die voirs. zeeroevers te verjagen ende verdriven ende onsen voirs. stroem te zuveren ende vryen. Ende om ons hierinne te dienen ende te hulpen te commen, hebben geordineert dat ghij toter executie ende volcomminge van desen voirnemen leenen ende opbringen zult drie hueyden van den besten die men sal connen vinden in onser stadt van Dordrecht, elcke hueyde versien van vier goede sterke scippers mit artillerie ende houtweercke daertoe dienende, welcken scippers wij van hueren aerbeitsloen mit andere oncosten tot onsen laste zullen doen ende laeten vernoegen ende betalen. Dus begeeren wij aen u zeere ernstelick dat ghij ter eeren ende liefden van ons ende om uselfs welvaert ende prouffit die voirs. drie scepen mitten scippers voirscreven wilt doen ende laten gereet maken, ende u hierinne voegen ende bewijsen zoe Jan van Denremonde, meester van onsen artillerie, die wij dese sake bevolen hebben, voirder seggen ende verclaeren sal van onsen wegen, zonder des te willen laten. Lieve beminde, onse heere God zij met u. Gescreven te Bruessel den V/en dach van april XV/C/XVI.

[Getek.]

Charles

[Getek.]

Ph. Haneton

[Address:] To our dearly beloved burgomasters, aldermen and council of our city of Dordrecht.

By the king.

Dearly beloved. Having heard the complaints made to us at various times about the disturbances, robberies and pillaging done by some cavalrymen and infantrymen stationed at the Zuyderzee who dared and who still dare daily to take prisoner, to harass, to rob and damage in body and possessions foreign merchants and others using the said Zuyderzee without respect for anyone, now in order to make the same Zuyderzee safe, whose waters belong to us and to nobody else, and so that the merchants and others may use the same Zuyderzee in safety we have advised on and decided to prepare a certain number of vessels in order to chase off and drive those aforementioned pirates away and to free and to clear our aforesaid waters of them. And in order to serve and help ourselves in this matter we have ordered that you shall lend and provide for the carrying out of and completion of this enterprise three boats of the best quality to be found in our city of Dordrecht, each boat provided with four good strong boatmen with guns having suitable wooden equipment. We shall carry the costs of these boatmen's wages and other costs to their satisfaction and we request you most earnestly that you for the honour and love of us and for your own wellbeing and profit will arrange for the above said three boats together with the above mentioned boatmen to be prepared and made ready and to comply with and perform the wishes which Jan van Denremonde, master of our artillery, whom we have commissioned for this, will declare and explain further to you on our behalf, without neglecting this matter. Dearly beloved, may our lord God be with you.

Written at Brussels, 5th April 1516.

[Signed:]

Charles

[Signed:]

Ph. Haneton<sup>46</sup>

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**6. From the Count of Nassau, Stadholder, and the Council to the sheriff (*scout*), burgomasters and aldermen of Dordrecht; an order for a general procession to pray for the emperor and the king, and for peace; 24 May 1516; GA Dordrecht, Old Archive I, inv. no. 2, letter no. 144.**

[Adres:] Eerbaeren, onsen bijzonderen goeden vrunden, scout, burgermeesteren, scepenen ende raide der stede van Dordrecht.

Die grave van Nassou, van Vianden etc., heere tot Breda etc., stadthouder generail, ende anders die Raide des conincxs van Castille, van Leon, van Grenade etc., eertshertoeghe van Oistenryck, hertoge van Bourgognien etc., gecommiteert ten saicken zynre landen van Hollant, Zeelant ende Vrieslant.

Eerbaere, bijzonderen goeden vrunden, considerende dat alle salicheyt, voerspoet, duecht, vrede ende alle goedt compt van Godt almachtich, die men altyts wel schuldich is hartelijcken ende devotelijcken te bidden ende sufragen, wij scrijven tegenwoirdelijcken aen u ende nietmin lasten ende ordonneren van wegen der C.M. dat ghij up sondage den eersten dach van junio naistcommende bynnen uwen steden doet dragen eerwaardighe processie generale, zoe wij an den anderen steden mede gescreven hebben, ende devotelicken bidden alle menschen, geestelick ende waerlick,

dat Godt almachtich duer zijn oneyntelick goetheyt behoeden ende bescermen wille de K.M. ende de C.M., onsen genadigen heeren, mits denzelven verleenende voerspoet, goede sege ende prosperiteyt in allen hueren saicken ende afferen, ende voert voer goede gedurige pays ende vrede, zonder hiervan in gebreken te zijn. Eerbaere, bijzondere goede vrunde, onsen heeren God zij mit u.

Gescreven in den Hage den XXIII/en dach in meye anno XVI.

[Getek.]

De Beauvoir

[Address:] Honourable, our especially good friends, sheriff (*scout*), burgomasters, aldermen and council of Dordrecht.

The Count of Nassau, of Vianden etc., Lord of Breda etc., Stadholder General, and otherwise the Council of the King of Castille, of Leon, of Granada etc., Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy etc., meeting in committee on business of his provinces of Holland, Zeeland and Friesland.

Honourable, especially good friends. Considering that all blessedness, prosperity, virtue, peace and all good comes from Almighty God, to whom we are always bound to pray and beseech earnestly and devoutly, we write you now and nonetheless charge and order you on behalf of his royal majesty that you hold a solemn general procession within your city on

<sup>46</sup> Philip Haneton was *audiencier* to Charles (V) of Habsburg; J. G. Smit, *Vorst en onderdaan. Studies over Holland en Zeeland in de Late Middeleeuwen* (Louvain, 1995), p. 661 (Index of personal names).

Sunday the First of June coming, just as we have written to the other cities, and that all the citizens, clerics and lay people, may pray devoutly that Almighty God in his infinite goodness may protect and defend his imperial majesty and his royal highness,<sup>47</sup> our gracious sovereign lords, and also give them good fortune, victory and prosperity in all their acts and affairs, and also a good lasting peace. Do not fail to do this. Honourable, especially good friends, may our lord God be with you.

Written at The Hague, 24 May 1516.

[Signed:]

De Beauvoir<sup>48</sup>

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Printed in: J. P. Ward, 'A Selection of Letters, 1507-1516, from the Guelders War', *Lias. Sources and Documents relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas*, 29 (2002) 125-151, with illustrations and a facsimile on p. 139 of letter no. 5 (above) signed by Charles (V) of Habsburg as King of Castille etc. Cf. also *Bronnen voor de geschiedenis der dagvaarten van de Staten en steden van Holland voor 1544*, Part VI: October 1506 - May 1515, compiled by J. W. J. Burgers and J. P. Ward with the co-operation of J. G. Smit, publ. by Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis (ING), The Hague, 2006.

<sup>47</sup> Here and elsewhere in the sources Emperor Maximilian I is referred to as 'K.M.' (Keizerlijke Majesteit) and his grandson Charles, king of Spain, as 'C.M.' (Coninklijke Majesteit).

<sup>48</sup> Jasper (Jospijn) (De) Beauvoir was described as a secretary to the Court of Holland at The Hague; see e.g. Algemeen Rijksarchief (The Hague) inv. Rek.Rek. no. 344, f. 182-182v, dated 3 July 1510; inv. Rek.Rek. no.3412, f. 18, 1512 but undated; etc.