

Tel.023-256715

31 october 1981

Board of directors
National Gallery of Pictures
Edinburgh

Dear Sirs,

Last september, being on holiday, my wife and I visited the National Gallery. Among the Dutch paintings I have for quite a while studied your Hendrick Avercamp: the skating and colf playing people on the ice (probably the river IJssel near Kampen, the town where, as You know, "the mute" lived). What stroke in the picture were the people not on skates and looking at the colf-players. My eyes are not so good any more but I thought that those spectators were dressed in another way as the other people: look for instance at their trousers. Could not they be Scotsmen in some sort of kilts? I know that for one and a half century a Scottish Brigade was as mercenary troops in the Dutch republic. Back in the Netherlands I wrote to the Royal Dutch Army and Arms Museum, asking for exact data. The museum answered me as follows (letter enclosed): "In answering your letter I inform you that in 1606 and 1608 for sure a company of Scottish cuirassiers of Irskine were encamped in the barracks at Zwolle. We know that because the company owed money to the citizens being there an arrearage in their payments."

Hendrick Avercamp may have seen the Scots in Amsterdam or in Zwolle or in Kampen as they came to that town on sunday-leave. Zwolle is only 13 Kilo-
m^{er} from Kampen and moreover the town where his brother and sister in law lived of whom the son Barend also became a painter in the same fashion as his uncle.

Hendrick loved to paint extravagant figures: in the "Kunsthalle" (Hamburg) is a drawing of him with wandering gypsies telling fortune and begging alms, with their babies at the bosom, of Kampen-citizens. In the same Kunsthalle is, if I am not mistaken, a similar picture as yours with Scotsmen(?) looking at the colf-playing.

Also enclosed I send a copy of the book, published in Utrecht this year, on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the only still existing colf-course in that city. I translated for You what I found in that booklet with regard to the colf-connections between the Netherlands and Scotland in the 17th century:

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"In the 17th century was the height of the colf-game in the Dutch republic. The game was chiefly played in the great commercial towns; colving was also popular in Scotland and especially in the port-towns which had connections with the Dutch republic. Between Scotland and our republic was a busy commerce in colf-materials. So in the Netherlands the colves of y boxwood, three fingers broad, one finger thick, were called "Scottish sticks" (Schotse klieken), where as balls, made in the Dutch provinces of Holland and Brabant, were exported to Scotland. A stick (kliek) is of wood, nearly 1 meter in length and with a metal bend at the end. Especially in Goirle, Delft and Amsterdam the balls for pall-mall and colf were made". I think it is very likely that Scottish officers and soldiers looked with interest at the Dutch burgers colving on the frozen waters, and, perhaps, asked for sharing in the game they knew so well.

Hoping to hear your opinion on the possibility
of seeing Scottish soldiers on Avercamps pictures,
Respectfully, yours,



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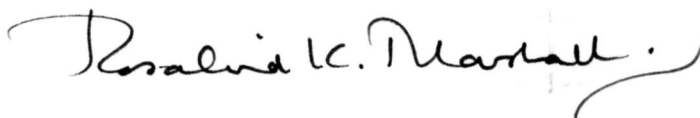
Mr E G Planten
Plantsoenlaan 19
2061 GC Bloemendaal
HOLLAND

11 December 1981

Dear Mr Planten

My colleagues at the National Gallery of Scotland have passed to me your letter of 31 October with the most interesting booklet about Utrecht Golf Course and its history. Scotland and Holland have indeed enjoyed a long connection so I was much intrigued by your remarks about the Avercamp picture. Your suggestion that some of the spectators might have been members of the Scots Brigade seem to me very convincing but, alas, when I looked again at the painting itself I could see that the figures are not wearing kilts. Upon close scrutiny they proved to be in the type of baggy breeches fashionable at the time and the material is ordinary cloth, not tartan. I must confess that I was disappointed, for I am sorry to have to disprove what was a most thoughtful and stimulating theory. Thank you for writing to discuss it with us.

Yours sincerely



Dr Rosalind K Marshall
Assistant Keeper

RKM/SS

Mr. E. G. Planten

Plantsoenlaan 19
Tel. 023-256715

2061 GC Bloemendaal,

15 oktober 1982

Den heer S.J.H. van Hengel
Bentveld

Zeer geachte heer van Hengel,

Overeenkomstig ons telefoongesprek van gisterenavond doe ik U hierbij
foto-copiën ^{.. toekomen} van mijn correspondentie met de National Gallery of Pictures
in Edinburgh, verleden najaar.

U begrijpt dat ik verrast was Uw boeiende artikel in "Spiegel
Historiael" te lezen, waarbij U ten aanzien van Adriaan v.d. Veldes
schilderij "IJsgezicht bij Spaarⁿdam" tot dezelfde conclusie kwam
(Schotten op het ijs bij het kolven) als ik had getrokken bij het
aanschouwen van Hendrick Avercamps doek in Edinburgh en andere, later
bekeken, schilderijen van hem. Ik ben gesterkt door Uw conclusie ^{in mijn opvatting} dat
ik het toch niet mis had, al ziet mevrouw Marshall in Edinburgh dan
geen pre-kilts in de gedragen kleding. Dat zij zo: maar zeer duidelijk
is m.i. dat de bedoelde personen anders, rijker en aristocratischer,
gekleed zijn dan de overige figuren op het ijs. Eigenlijk zou een deskundige
op het terrein van 17e eeuwse costumes en "buiten-model-uniformen" de
schilderijen in kwestie eens moeten bezien. Hoe bent U tot de rotsvaste
overtuiging gekomen dat de personen op v.d. Veldes schilderij
Schotten zijn? Dat boeit me zeer. Zoudt U de Avercamps ook eens in
Uw beschouwing willen betrekken, en arbitrereren tussen mevrouw
dr Rosalind Marshall en mij. Bij voorbaat mijn grote erkentelijkheid
uitgesproken!

Met gevoelens van hoogachting,

Uw dw.



beantw.
18/10

23 van Wijnmaand '82

Zeer geachte heer van Bengel,
Hartelijk dank voor de prompte
toezending van de uitstekende
foto. Inderdaad: hier is het
geen vraag meer dat tenmin-
ste één schot met een
clubje van onze voorvaders
staat te Kolven. En de
plaatsbepaling is ook duidelijk.

afzender, op de

Plantsoenlaan 19
Bloemenlaan.

Misschien kunt u
bij gelegenheid
mijn correspondentie
van de National
Gallery in Edin-
burgh nog
eens op dit
schilderij van
v.d. Velde
wijzen.

Met hart groet

A. Plant.



BRIEFKAART

carte postale

Den heer J. J. K. van Nengel
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