

#### THE RED DOOR AND SASKIA

After 1578, the 'commissioners of matrimonial affairs' became responsible for the registry of marriages. They met in the sacristy of the Old Church where engaged couples would present themselves and their witnesses. After the registration, the wedding could be announced by posting it on the chancel in the church or on the façade of the city hall. Not until the completion of the new city hall on the Dam, after 1648, did the commissioners get their own place to meet in the centre of government. Since the door of the sacristy of the Old Church was red, when people in Amsterdam spoke of 'going through the red door', they meant 'taking out a marriage license'. Above the door was written 'Marry in haste, repent at leisure'.

On 10 June 1634, Rembrandt went through the red door. He reported to the commissioners of matrimonial affairs along with Saskia's cousin who lived in Amsterdam. This cousin was the clergyman Jan Cornelis van Uylenburgh who presented himself before the commissioners on Saskia's behalf. Once all the formalities were completed and the announcements in the churches had taken place, permission was granted for the couple to marry in Friesland. On 22 June 1634, Rembrandt married Saskia in the Friesian village of Sint Annaparochie where Saskia's father was the burgomaster. Eight years later in 1642, the year in which Rembrandt painted 'The Night Watch', Saskia fell ill and died on 14 July. She was buried in the Old Church in the Weikopers Chapel. Rembrandt died on 4 October 1669 and was buried in the Westerkerk.

#### THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

##### THE WINDOWS IN THE MARIA CHAPEL

- 1 - The Annunciation; Visit of Mary to Elisabeth; below, the donor of the window J.K. Hoppen with his family;
- 2 - Adoration of the Shepherds, the Circumcision; donated by the city of Amsterdam;
- 3 - Dormition of the Virgin above portraits of the Brunt family, the donors of the window.

##### THE WINDOWS IN THE MARIA CHAPEL: DESIGN AND RESTORATION OF ORIGINALS AND REPLICAS

- 1 and 2 - designed by Lambert van Noort, made by Digman Meynaerts. (1555) repaired by De Angelis (1761), J. Schouten (1905), Bogtman Studio (1961).
- 3 - designed by Dirk Crabeth (1555); upper portion designed by G. van Houten (ca. 1700); restored by J. Schouten (1894), Bogtman Studio (1962).
- 4 – Replicas of some of the original panes restored by De Angelis in 1761, placed by the Bogtman Studio in 1979 (compare with numbers 1 and 2)
- 5 & 6 - Replicas of the Adoration of the Shepherds, by De Angelis (1761);

5 installed by the Bogtman Studio (1979),

6 installed by the Bogtman Studio (1968); (compare with no. 2).

7 - Replicas of the Annunciation and the Visitation, by De Angelis (1761); installed by the Bogtman Studio (1977); (compare with no. 1).

##### OTHER WINDOWS

8 - Arms of the Burgomasters and Aldermen from 1758 to 1807; started by De Angelis in 1758.

9 - Arms of the Burgomasters of Amsterdam from 1578 to 1757; started by Pieter Jansz., in 1654; (compare with no. 35).

10 - 11 - Rose windows: Dove returning to Noah's ark (10); Alpha and Omega, The miracle of the Loaves and the Fishes (11); designed by Karla Wenckebach (1970).

12 - Treaty of Munster 1648; designed by Pieter Jansz. (1655), restored by J. Schouten (1911).

13 - The emblems of the Dukes of Burgundy, flint and steel and crossed staffs; reconstruction after a 17th-century print by J.C. Visscher.

#### GRAVES AND MEMORIALS

14 - In the Library: a collection of copper plates (17th to 20th centuries) from coffin lids excavated during the restoration.

##### HATCHMENTS

15 - Hendrick Gerritsz. Zeehelm, admiral in the Swedish navy, died 1688.

16 - Vice-Admiral Gillis Schey (1644-1703); after 1703.

17 - Baron J. de Petersen, a member of the De Graeff family; 1780.

##### SPECIAL GRAVES

18 - Tombstone of Saskia van Uylenburgh (died 1642), wife of Rembrandt; inscription commissioned by the Amstelodamum Historical Society, 1953.

19 - Memorial slabs on tomb of Field-Marshal Paulus Wirtz (1612-1675), after 1679.

20 - In the Baptistry, grave plot bought by Burgomaster Cornelis de Graeff in 1648 as a family tomb.

#### GRAVE MONUMENTS

21 – Rear Admiral W. van der Zaan, killed in 1669; by Rombout Verhulst. (1670)

22 - Admiral Isaac Sweers (1622-1673), killed at the Battle of Kijkduin; by Rombout Verhulst. (1674)

23 – Vice Admiral Abraham van der Hulst (1619-1666), killed during the Four Days' Battle; by Artus de Wit. (1666)

##### COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES

24 - J.P. Sweelinck, composer and organist of the Old Church (a post also occupied by his father and son) from 1577 to 1621; erected in 1931 by the Netherlands Association of Organists.

25 - Feike Asma (1912-1984), organist, presented on the 27th of September 1986 by his friends.

26 - Kiliaen van Renselaer (ca. 1580-1646), one of the founders of a colony North America; erected by his descendants in 1949.

#### MEMORIAL TABLETS

27 - the poets N.S. van Winter (1718-1795) and L. van Merken (1721-1789), husband and wife; erected by the Society for Eloquence in 1828.

28 - Miss B.M. Bijtelaar (1898-1978), archivist of the Stichting de Oude Kerke Amsterdam' (1960-1978),

erected by the foundation in 1979.

29 - Carel van Mander, artist and writer (1548-1606); erected in 1936 by Dutch and Flemish admirers.

##### EPITAFEN

30 - admiraal Jacob van Heemskerck (1567-1607), gesneuveld in de Slag bij Gibraltar.

31 - Cornelis Jansz. de Haen (1580-1633), bijgenaamd 't Haentje, scheepskapitein, gesneuveld tegen de Duinkerker kapers; 1633.

## THE VAULT PAINTINGS

### NORTH

32 - The Virgin on the crescent moon, Saints Peter and Paul, the arms of Hamburg supported by two lions.

(ca. 1505)  
33 - Our Lady of the Inland Navigation Guild with text al nut-al nyet (all, and nothing) above open purses spilling coins. (15th century)

34 - Last Judgement, Christ with sword and lily. (15th century)

35 - Remains of a seated figure. (ca. 1500)

36 - Coat of arms of the crossbow archers' civic guard (Patron: St. George), with helmet and mantling. (15th century)

37 - The Annunciation. (1555)

### SOUTH

38 - Cargo ship. (ca. 1400)

39 - St. Sebastian (?), patron saint of the archers' civic guard. (ca. 1517)

40 - St. Ursula and the 11,000 virgins. (ca. 1517)

41 - Coat of arms of the archers civic guard with the date 1517.

42 - Our Lady of the Inland Navigation Guild with the text al nut -al nyet (All and nothing), above open purses spilling coins. (ca. 1470)

43 - Saint Aloysius, patron of gold and silversmiths. (16th century)

44 - St. Peter. (16th century)

45 - Coat of arms of the Counts of Holland set within four insignia with the

arms of Amsterdam. (15th century)

46 - St. Martin being consecrated bishop. (ca. 1470)

47 - Miniature: The Trinity.

(shortly after 1497)

48 - Christ as the Man of Sorrows, with two angels. (after 1497)

49 - Saints Crispin and Crispinian, patron saints of shoemakers. (after 1468)

50 - St. John, the Evangelist.

## DIVERSEN

### FURNISHINGS FOR THE PROTESTANT SERVICE

51 - Box pews, reserved for the city dignitaries; largely dating from 1802, but some parts dating from the 17th century.

52 - Baptistry (known in Dutch as the doophuis: an area set apart for baptisms in churches in the Netherlands): screen and cathedra with brass lectern. (ca. 1664)

53 - Pulpit (1642), by Jan Pietersz., cabinetmaker, and N. van Eyckelsbeeck, woodcarver; ornamental handrail by J.G. Geelgieter; 17th-century brass lectern.

54 - Wooden screen separating the south transept from the Sebastian Chapel. (17th century)

### WALL PAINTINGS

55 - Columns decorated with twelve brocade paintings that originally formed the backdrops to statues of the apostles. The statues disappeared after the 'Alteration' (change in the government of Amsterdam) of 1578.

56 - Painted arch: 'canopy of honour' over the former tabernacle; angels on either side with censers, sun and moon.

57 - Remnant of brocade painting on pillar (15th century).

### OVERIG

58 - Holy Sepulchre: Tracery baldachino in the Holy Sepulchre (ca. 1530) where a group of statues had been placed that depicted the entombment of Jesus.

59 - Inner portal (around 1621) originally taken from the Nieuwezijds chapel that had been demolished in 1908.

60 - Choir screen (1681) designed by A. Cuyper; brass work by G. Wijbrants.

61 - Doorway between former north entrance and side chapel. (ca. 1340)

62 - Brass chandeliers, designed by P.J. Gabriel, sculptor, 1833; cast by H. Keuch, brass founder, in 1835. Hung in the nave previous to restoration.

63 - Churchwarden's room: exterior (1611), interior and windows in the south façade (1769-1770).

64 - Portal to former Baptistry: purportedly designed by Artus Quellinus. (after 1651)

## CHOIR STALLS WITH MISERICORDS

Although the Old Church never had a chapter (a group of monks and priests who sing the daily prayers), the church still has choir stalls. Exactly who made the choir stalls is unknown, but it was probably a sculptor living in Amsterdam.

The clothes worn by the figures on the misericords display the fashion of 1480, so we can also assume that this was when the stalls were made. The iconoclasm that took place in the Old Church on 26 September 1566 did not affect the misericords.

The typical traces of this destruction – the mutilation of hands and faces – is missing here. Still to be seen on the misericords is a wide array of subjects, some merely decorative while others depicting everyday scenes.

Very conspicuous are the many proverbs that are illustrated: about a third of the original misericords includes one.

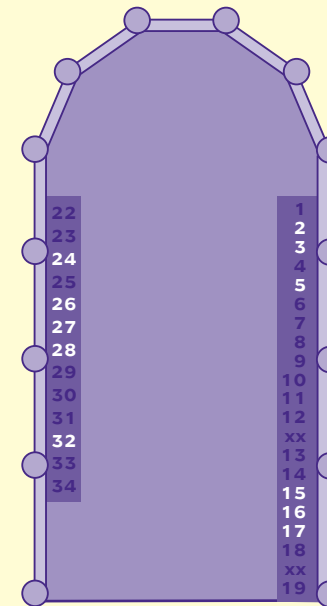
24  
'Don't pull too hard on a weak rope':  
don't be in too much of a hurry  
to get the job done.

26  
'Money doesn't fall out of my arse':  
money doesn't grow on trees.

27  
'He's sitting between two chairs':  
he can't choose so now he's  
sitting on the ground.

28  
'Banging your head against a brick wall':  
painful discovery that what you're trying  
so hard to do is simply impossible.

32  
'It's like trying to out-yawn an oven  
door': A person can't yawn as wide as  
an oven door, i.e. don't try to  
accomplish the impossible.



**misericords**  
choir stalls

2  
Here, the excessive use of alcohol  
is denounced.

3  
Money is useful but not worth  
anything in the face of death.

5  
Sail when the wind allows; anything  
is easier when you have good help.

15  
Two drunks under one roof: two people  
are in agreement about everything,  
especially what's wrong.

16  
By forging, one becomes a smith:  
one learns by doing.

17  
One attacks while the other soothes:  
'anger', one of the cardinal sins,  
and 'self-control' or 'kind-heartedness'  
are depicted here.