



Fig. 1. Abraham Rademaker, *Oude Kerk at Warmont*, etching, pl. 81, from *Kabinet van Nederlandsche Outbeden en Gezichten*, Amsterdam, 1725

The painting, when sold in 1837 from the collection of the Duchesse de Berry, was identified as being on canvas. In fact, it had originally been on a wood support and had been transferred to canvas prior to that date (see Technical Notes). When the old lining fabric was removed and the painting backed by an aluminum panel during restoration in 1982–1983, the old panel-induced craquelure returned, much improving the appearance of the painting. During the restoration it was found that the signature and date, which had read 1645, were partly reconstructed. Since 1645 seems appropriate for stylistic reasons, this date probably reflected the one originally inscribed on the painting.

Notes

1. Reproduced in Sedelmeyer 1895, 34, no. 28.
2. A replica of *The Halt at the Inn*, entitled *A Village Scene*, is in the Wallace Collection, London (inv. no. P21). It is described in the 1992 catalogue of the Wallace Collection as a "weak copy."
3. For a discussion of these prints, see Freedberg 1980, 28–38.
4. See Hollstein 1949–, 33: 18, no. 26; and 34: 20, repro.
5. *Country Inn with a Horse at the Trough* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. A303).
6. See Schnackenburg 1981, 1: 52–54.
7. Abraham Rademaker, *Kabinet van Nederlandsche Outbeden en Gezichten* (Amsterdam, 1725), plate 81. This tower is the only one depicted by Rademaker that has a central arched window flanked by two blind arches. Distinctive also is the turret attached to its side.

References

- 1829–1842 Smith, 9 (1842): 127–128, no. 17.
 1885–1900 Widener, 2 (1900): 235, repro.
 1895 Sedelmeyer: 34, no. 28, repro.

- 1907–1927 HdG, 3 (1910): 450–451, no. 37.
 1909 New York: no. 70.
 1913–1916 Widener, 1 (1913): unpaginated, no. 29, repro.
 1923 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
 1931 Widener: 92, repro.
 1938 Waldmann: 335–342.
 1942 Widener: 6.
 1948 Widener: iv, 52, repro.
 1965 NGA: 98, no. 645.
 1968 NGA: 86, no. 645, repro.
 1975 NGA: 256–257, repro.
 1981 Schnackenburg, 1: 35, 274, no. 59 repro.
 1984 Wheelock: 16–17, color repro.
 1985 NGA: 295, repro.
 1991 Washington: 72.
 1992 NGA: 126, color repro.

1991.64.1

Workmen before an Inn

1645

Oil on oak, 66 x 58.4 (26 x 23)

Gift of Richard A. and Lee G. Kirstein, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art

Inscriptions

At lower right corner: *Isack van Ostade 1645*

Technical Notes: The painting is on an oak panel with a vertical grain. The support is a single panel. The original chisel marks are visible on the back.

The ground is a smooth, light brown layer of medium thickness. It is allowed to show through the thinly applied paint layers. In the sky the paint is applied more thickly, with low impasto and strong brushwork. The painting is in very good condition, although small, scattered losses are visible in ultraviolet light. Minor pentimenti in the large tree in the center of the painting and the dogs in the foreground are visible to the naked eye. The painting has not been treated since acquisition.

Provenance: Van Tol, Souterwoude [near Leiden]; (sale, Amsterdam, 15 June 1779, no. 13); Wubbels, J. E. Fiseau, Amsterdam; (sale, Amsterdam, 30 August 1797, no. 165); (J. de Bos, Amsterdam). Baron Guillaume-Joseph de Brien van de Grootelindt, Amsterdam, by 1842; by inheritance to Baron Guillaume-Thierry-Armand-Maria de Brien van de Grootelindt, Amsterdam; (sale, Paris, 8 May 1865, no. 23); Marquis H. de V[illefosse?], Paris; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 5–6 June 1871, no. 218); Comte Henri Gref-fulhe [1848–1932], Paris. (Sale, Sotheby & Co., London, 22 July 1937, no. 74); (Roland & Delbanco, London, 1937–1939); Adolf Mayer, The Hague; (Edward Speelman, London); private collection, England; (A. Duits, London); (Christian Humann, Paris and New York, 1968–1973); Claus Virch, Paris, 1973–1977; (Brod, London, 1977). Richard A. and Lee G. Kirstein, Washington.



Isack van Ostade, *Workmen before an Inn*, 1691.64.1

Exhibited: *A Loan Exhibition of Dutch and Flemish Painting: The Collection of the Late Adolf Mayer*, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio, 1948, no. 9. *Old Master Paintings: Exhibition of Recent Acquisitions*, Brod Gallery, London, 1977, no. 20. Washington 1991: 72, repro. 73.

WHILE Isack van Ostade frequently represented travelers halting before an inn (see 1942.9.49), the focus on the activities of workmen restocking an inn, as in this painting, is exceptional. Here a horse-drawn sledge has stopped before the mottled, brown brick façade of a rustic village inn where two laborers strain under the weight of a keg of beer they are lifting with the aid of a yoke. The innkeeper stands in the doorway ready to direct them inside. Above him hang traditional Dutch symbols of welcome and promised conviviality for an inn, the beer jug and a circular wreath adorned with a grapevine.² Perched on the chimney is a stork, which, as traditional emblem of the traveler, was encouraged by innkeepers.³ Around the building are sights that would have greeted visitors to such a village. A woman seated under a canopy sells her wares, probably pancakes, to an eager clientele of men and children. Near this group a cripple hobbles along supported by his cane and stick. Farther down the road a quack, standing before a large bulletin board, tries to convince his audience of the wonders of his cures. Adding to the

picturesque character of the scene are the animals that occupy the foreground: a hen and rooster scratch and peck, and two dogs sniff the ground, nose to nose, while a third, anxious to join them, demands the full attention of his youthful master.

Inns were the social meeting point for all facets of Dutch society. Whether a welcome wayside in the midst of the dunes, an imposing building on a city square, or, as in this instance, a modest structure in one of the small villages that dotted the countryside, the inn provided food, drink, and occasional lodging. More important, however, it served as a forum for entertainment, whether it be conversing, gaming, or relaxation during the celebration of a kermis or other holiday. As is suggested in Ostade's painting, the environment may have been picturesque, but it was seldom genteel. John Ray, an English traveler who visited the Netherlands in 1663, described innkeepers as being "surly and uncivil." He also found the food hardy—stews, beef, pickled herrings, cheeses, bread—but rather basic and quite expensive: "Their strong Beer, (thick Beer they call it, and well they may) is sold for three Stivers the Quart, which is more than three pence *English*."⁴

In contrast to the horizontal format of *The Halt at the Inn* (1942.9.49), which he probably also painted in 1645, Ostade chose a vertical format for this work. As a consequence this painting is composed along a



Fig. 1. Isack van Ostade, *Halt at the Inn*, 1646, oil on panel, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

single diagonal that recedes to the left rather than with the counterbalancing diagonals found in *The Halt at the Inn*. This dynamic composition reinforces the sense of activity and enlivens the streetscape. As seems to have been his standard procedure, Ostade must have composed this painting in his studio on the basis of drawings he made from life. A comparison with his *Halt at the Inn* of 1646 in Vienna (fig. 1) suggests how he may have freely adapted his models from one painting to the next: the cripple in the Washington painting certainly derives from the same prototype as does the man carrying a bucket at the left in the Vienna painting. Presumably similar modifications occurred with building and animal studies as well.

Paulus Potter

1625–1654

PAULUS POTTER came from a family of artists. His father, Pieter Simonsz. Potter (c. 1600–1652) was a practicing artist, and his mother, Aaltje Paulusdr. Bartsius, was the sister of the painter Willem Bartsius (born c. 1612). Paulus was baptized in Enkhuizen, on 20 November 1625. In 1631, the family moved to Amsterdam, where, according to Houbraken, Potter studied painting under his father. Other writers, however, have argued that Potter studied with the Amsterdam painter Claes Moeyaert (c. 1590/1591–1655), whose style was similar to that of Pieter Potter. Since a “P. Potter” was registered in 1642 as a student of the Haarlem artist Jacob de Wet (1610–1671/72), it seems probable that Potter would have also been familiar with artistic currents in that city during the early 1640s.

By 1646, Potter was living in Delft where he joined the painters’ guild on 6 August of that year. In 1647 he seems to have moved to The Hague, for in that year his father registered with the guild in that city and his sister was baptized there. Potter himself is first mentioned in guild records there in 1649. On 3 July of the next year he married Adriana Balcken Eynde, the daughter of the city architect. From 1649 to 1652 Potter lived in a house on the Dunne Bierkade owned by the landscape painter Jan van Goyen (q.v.).

It may have been through his father-in-law, who worked on royal building projects, that Potter came

Notes

1. I would like to thank Dr. Claus Virch, a former owner of *Workmen before an Inn*, for providing information regarding the painting’s provenance (see letter of June 1991 in NGA curatorial files).

2. See Linda A. Stone-Ferrier in Lawrence 1983, 216.

3. There seems, however, to have been no scarcity of storks in the Netherlands if one is to judge from the comments of John Ray, see Ray 1673, 56.

4. Ray 1673, 50–51.

References

1829–1842 Smith, 9 (1842): 132–133, no. 32.

1877 Gueullette: 154–171.

1907–1927 HdG, 3 (1910): 466, no. 96.

1977a London: no. 20.

1991 Washington: 72, repro. 73.

to receive commissions from Amalia van Solms, widow of Prince Frederik Hendrik. Potter executed at least one picture for her, now in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, but apparently did not fulfill other obligations: in 1651 he was sued by the royal court for failure to deliver paintings.

By 1 May 1652, Potter had returned to Amsterdam, according to Houbraken at the bidding of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp. In the following year he painted the impressive life-sized equestrian portrait of Nicolaes Tulp’s son, Dirck Tulp (Six Collection, Amsterdam). Potter died from tuberculosis shortly thereafter. He was buried in the Nieuwezijdskapel on 17 January 1654. Despite the fact that he died at the age of only twenty-eight, Potter’s work was both original and influential. From very early in his career, he accorded animals an extremely important position in his compositions and was one of the first artists to depict them as subjects in their own right. He also produced some two dozen etchings of animal subjects.

Although he had no documented pupils, Potter may have influenced Karel du Jardin (c. 1622–1678); for landscapes he produced around the time of Potter’s death are quite similar in style.

Bibliography

Houbraken 1753, 2: 126–129.

Smith 1829–1842, 5 (1834): 113–165; 9 (1842): 620–628.