



Portrait of Samuel Ampzing

Frans Hals
(Antwerp 1582/83 – 1666 Haarlem)

1630

oil on copper

16.4 x 12.4 cm

inscribed and dated, center right: "AETAT 40/
ANo 163.."

FH-100

How To Cite

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This exquisite portrait, one of three known works that Frans Hals painted on copper, depicts the Haarlem clergyman, poet, and historian Samuel Ampzing (1590–1632) holding what must be the book for which he is best known: *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Description and Praise of the City of Haarlem in Holland), published in Haarlem in 1628. The portrait, painted in 1630, was engraved shortly before or after Ampzing's early death on July 29, 1632, by the prolific Haarlem draftsman and printmaker Jan van de Velde II (1593–1641).^[1] The print (**fig 1**) reverses the image and slightly reduces its scale. Somewhat later, perhaps about 1640, the Haarlem printmaker Jonas Suyderhoef (ca. 1613–86) reproduced the picture on a larger scale, also reversing the composition (**fig 2**).^[2] Both prints feature an encomium in verse signed "P.S.," for Petrus Scriverius (1576–1660), the historian and Latin scholar who was Ampzing's collaborator in writing the *Beschryvinge* and also Hals's subject in a superb small portrait on wood, dated 1626 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).^[3]

Ampzing was the youngest son of a Haarlem clergyman, Johannes Assuerus Ampzingius, who was dismissed from service in 1596 for preaching false views on predestination and other indiscretions. Nonetheless, his employers, the burgomasters of Haarlem, sent his son Samuel to Latin School at the city's expense and then to Leiden University. Ampzing continued his theological studies at Geneva and Saumur, and in 1616 became a minister in the village of Rijsoord, located between Rotterdam and Dordrecht. He married Catharina van der Wegen, of Leiden, in 1616; she died three months before her husband, in April 1642.^[4]

Residing elsewhere did not dampen Ampzing's enthusiasm for his native city. His first "Praise of Haarlem" (*Den Lof van Haerlem*), in rhymed verse



Fig 1. Jan van de Velde II after Frans Hals, *Samuel Ampzing*, 1632, 200 x 123 mm, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1898-A-20197

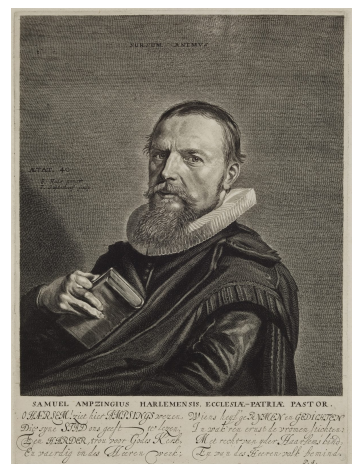


Fig 2. Jonas Suyderhoef after Frans Hals, *Samuel Ampzing*, ca 1640, engraving, The Leiden Collection, New York, JSu-100.



with classical allusions, dates from 1616 and was written with the help of Scriverius (who himself lived in Leiden from 1593 onward).^[5] A second edition of 1621 reflects a shift from a more “pagan” mode to a Christian one, following Ampzing’s appointment as a Haarlem minister in 1619 in St. Bavo’s cathedral.^[6] These first two odes to Haarlem, which were unillustrated, were published anonymously, but the 1628 edition proudly bears the author’s name (as announced in his foreword). The new publication included more information about Haarlem and its history, as well as a number of engraved views and plans of the city by, among others, Van de Velde (nine plates) and Pieter Saenredam.

Scriverius, who evidently provided funding for this publication, appended his own treatise, “Laure-crans voor Laurens Coster” (Laurel Wreath for Laurens Coster) to Ampzing’s text.^[7] Coster was a Haarlem printer credited locally with the invention of movable type. Also added to this publication was Ampzing’s important essay “Taelbericht der Nederlandsche spellinge” (Treatise on Dutch Spelling). Ampzing and Scriverius were both ardent proponents for the Dutch language, and took particular exception to the use of words adopted from Latin or French.

Hals made small paintings of this type as models for portrait prints, often sent to colleagues in other cities and countries as well as collected locally. His first such portrait may have depicted the preacher Joannes Bogaert (d. 1614) holding an open Bible, but the original is known only from Van de Velde’s engraving of 1628, and it could have been a painting of larger size.^[8] In 1617 Hals painted a small oval portrait on copper of Theodorus Schrevelius (1572–1649), a historian and vice-rector of the Latin School in Haarlem. The painting (14.5 x 12 cm), engraved by Jacob Matham in 1618 (and later by Suyderhoef, perhaps after the print), was acquired by the Frans Hals Museum in 2003.^[9] Like the 1626 portrait of Scriverius, that of Schrevelius (holding a small book) was originally accompanied by a pendant painting of his wife (known through copies). In each case, only the scholar’s portrait was reproduced in an engraving, but the companion pieces underscore the fact that Hals’s small portraits were intended not solely as models for prints but also as personal or family keepsakes. Hals used a copper support for the second time, as far as we know, in his *Portrait of a Man* (19.9 x 14.1 cm) of 1627 (Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin).^[10] As in the Scriverius panel (and portrait prints going back more than thirty years), an illusionistic oval frame opens a window in the picture field, and the sitter’s hand extends through it.



Hals exchanged this kind of realism for quite another in the Ampzing portrait, which in its remarkable luminosity takes advantage of the copper surface in a way not seen in the two earlier examples. The daylight on the textured wall behind the sitter and the highlights on passages such as the near sleeve, the collar, the face and the hand (which seems to move, with the head, in response to the viewer's interruption) shine and shift with an immediacy that matches that of the sparkling eyes and the completely focused attention of the figure. In the first published description of Hals's work, which Ampzing penned for the *Beschryvinge* of 1628, one can almost hear the author exclaim, "How dashingly Frans paints people from life!" Although Ampzing was citing here the great civic guard picture that Hals had just completed the previous year, he could as well have been referring to this small portrait.^[11]

The Latin inscription on Van de Velde's print of 1632 suggests that it might have been commissioned by Ampzing's congregation in St. Bavo's (the Grotekerk, or Great Church, of Haarlem), or at least addressed their concerns.^[12] For the most part, the stilted verse applauds Ampzing's stinging criticism of the Catholic Church (for example, in pamphlets published in 1630 and 1632) and does not mention the *Beschryvinge* or any other of his secular publications.^[13] Nevertheless, the book Ampzing holds in the painting strongly resembles the modest scale of the *Beschryvinge*, not the massive *Statenbibel* (State Bible). In fact, Hals's painting may have been intended for reproduction with a different inscription than the one printed in 1632. The Dutch inscription by Scriverius on the later Suyderhoef print again lauds him as a Haarlem teacher but drops all reference to wounded Catholics:

O Haarlem, look upon Ampzing's appearance, which his city gives us that we may know him: a shepherd true to the church of God, and proficient in the Lord's work, whose edifying verses and poetry uplift the pious with their deep gravity; rightly is he beloved of all Haarlem's children and of the Lord's people.^[14]

In this case the inscription clearly implies that the city government commissioned the engraving, which in its scale seems intended for display as well as for private contemplation.

It would be good to know who owned Hals's portrait of Ampzing after the sitter and his wife died in 1632, but no children from the marriage are



known. The earliest trace of the picture is its reported acquisition in The Hague by Richard Trench, 2nd Earl of Clancarty, during his service there as British ambassador (1813–23). The painting descended in his family until 1892, when it was sold at auction in London; by 1905 it was in the eclectic collection of the railroad entrepreneur Sir William van Horne in Montreal.^[15] A more distinguished collector of Dutch pictures, Lord Harold Samuel, owned the portrait between 1966 and 1975 (his collection was given to the City of London in 1987),^[16] and it passed through two New York collections before entering the present one.

-Walter A. Liedtke

Endnotes

1. As noted in Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–74), 3:46, under no. 76, and in Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals* (Exh. cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art; London, Royal Academy of Arts; Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (London, 1989), under no. 40, earlier scholars read the now illegible last digit of the date on Hals's painting as a zero, and this is consistent with the inscribed age of forty. On the question of whether Van de Velde's print was made before or after Ampzing's death in 1632, see Pieter J. J. van Thiel, "For Instruction and Betterment: Samuel Ampzing's *Mirror of the Vanity and Unrestrainedness of Our Age*," *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 199. Van Thiel maintains that since Ampzing's age is given as 41 on the engraving of 1632, it must have been made before his forty-second baptismal day on June 24, 1632. But this assumes that Van de Velde was privy to this information. Scriverius's Latin inscription on the print of 1632 does not mention Ampzing's death, but neither does the same writer's Dutch verse on Suyderhoef's engraving, which (without giving a date) follows Hals's painting in giving the sitter's age as forty.
2. Suyderhoef's earliest known print is his engraving (Hollstein, no. 96), dated 1638, after Hals's small portrait of the Haarlem calligrapher and schoolmaster Jean de la Chambre (1638; National Gallery, London). See Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–74), no. 122, and Neil MacLaren, revised and expanded by Christopher Brown, *The Dutch School, 1600–1900*, National Gallery Catalogues (London, 1991), 158–59.
3. See Walter Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 2007), 274–85, on the pendant portrait of Scriverius and his wife, Anna van der Aar. Petrus Scriverius served as a model for Van de Velde's engraving of the same year. Van de Velde also engraved most of the illustrations in Ampzing's book of 1628, and the eighteen plates in his *Spiegel, ofte Toneel der ydelheyd ende ongebondenheyd onser eeuwe* (*Mirror or Theater of the Vanity and Unrestrainedness of Our Age*), of 1633. See Pieter J. J. van Thiel, "For Instruction and Betterment: Samuel Ampzing's *Mirror of the Vanity and*



Unrestrainedness of Our Age,” *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 182–200.

4. Pieter J. J. van Thiel, “For Instruction and Betterment: Samuel Ampzing’s *Mirror of the Vanity and Unrestrainedness of Our Age*,” *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 197, 199.
5. Of course, Ampzing’s debt to the city fathers must have encouraged this publication, as observed in Elisabeth de Bièvre, “Violence and Virtue: History and Art in the City of Haarlem,” *Art History* 11 (1988): 308.
6. In the 1616 edition, Ampzing introduced a number of mythological figures to enhance the image of Haarlem, but in the revised version, published after he had been made minister in Haarlem, he supplanted these with references to God’s will.
7. Scriverius’s financial support is surmised from a letter to him from Ampzing in 1627, which is printed in the book; see Gary Schwartz and Marten Jan Bok, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (Maarsse and The Hague, 1990), 39.
8. Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–74), 1:28, fig. 10, for the engraving.
9. Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–74), no. 8, pl. 23; Pieter Biesboer, Irene van Thiel-Stroman, et al., *Paintings in Haarlem, 1500–1800: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum* (Ghent, 2006), 475–76, no. 176.
10. Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–74), no. 48, pl. 82. No corresponding print is known.
11. Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem, 1628), 371; see Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals* (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; London, Royal Academy of Arts; Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (London, 1989), 382, under document no. 41. The civic guard portrait of 1627 is the *Banquet of the Officers of the Calivermen Civic Guard* in the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem.
12. Pieter J. J. van Thiel, “For Instruction and Betterment: Samuel Ampzing’s *Mirror of the Vanity and Unrestrainedness of Our Age*,” *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 199, reads the line “Praeconem, pia turba, tuum quid quaeris in aere?” as indicating a commission from the congregation, but precisely how this would have worked is left unclarified. Van Thiel also gives the mistaken impression that the Van de Velde print and its inscription came after that on the Suyderhoef print (“I presume [that the Reformed Congregation was] dissatisfied with this ritual eulogy” on Suyderhoef’s engraving), which is impossibly dated “ca. 1630/31” in the caption to his fig. 4. Suyderhoef was twenty years younger than Van de Velde and no print by him is known to date from before 1638. That Scriverius asks why Ampzing’s congregation wants his image (see the next note) may be no more than one of his awkward rhetorical flourishes, rather than a reference to a job assigned to Van de Velde. Portrait engravings and their inscriptions were often separately solicited by the printer.
13. Pieter J. J. van Thiel, “For Instruction and Betterment: Samuel Ampzing’s *Mirror of the Vanity and Unrestrainedness of Our Age*,” *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 200, gives the full titles of the



two pamphlets (the *Straf-dicht* of 1630 and the *Suppressie* of 1632). Van Thiel's translation of the Latin inscription (see 199 n. 68) improves on that in Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals* (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; London, Royal Academy of Arts; Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (London, 1989), 246, and reads as follows: "There is no need for a sculpture or painting. Ampzing's public fame is imperishable. It lives on in the wounded face of the Ausonian bishop [the pope]. Ah, how many scars will you not see on the Spaniard's face! Why, devoted congregation, do you desire to have your herald [Ampzing] in print? The wounded faces of so many men testify better to him [his legacy]. The wound is still fresh. The conspicuous scar has not yet healed. And even when the wounds close, the toothmarks will remain."

14. Pieter J. J. van Thiel, "For Instruction and Betterment: Samuel Ampzing's *Mirror of the Vanity and Unrestrainedness of Our Age*," *Simiolus* 24 (1996): 199 n. 67.
15. See Walter Liedtke, "Dutch Paintings in America: The Collectors and Their Ideals," in *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, ed. Ben Broos et al. (Exh. cat. The Hague, Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis; San Francisco, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco) (The Hague and Zwolle, 1990), 47.
16. Peter C. Sutton, *Dutch and Flemish Seventeenth-Century Paintings: The Harold Samuel Collection* (Cambridge, 1992).

Provenance

- [Said to have been acquired from Johannes van Eijk, The Hague, ca. 1820].
- Richard Trench, 2nd Earl of Clancarty, Garbally, County Galway, thence by descent (sale, Christie's, London, 12 March 1892, no. 32 [700 guineas to Lesser, who sold it to Wallace]).
- Sir William C. Van Horne (1843–1915), Montreal, by 1893, by descent to Miss L. Adaline Van Horne, Montreal, by 1936, by descent to Mrs. William Covenhoven Van Horne, 1956 [with Edward Speelman, London, 1966].
- Lord Harold Samuel, Wych Cross [Edward Speelman, London, 1975].
- Lowenthal Collection, New York, 1975–96 [Bob Habeldt, New York, 1996].
- Landau Collection, New York, 1996–2007 (Sotheby's, London, 5 December 2007, no. 27 [Johnny van Haften, London, 2007]).
- From whom acquired by the present owner in 2007.



Exhibition History

- Montreal, Art Association of Montreal (now Montreal Museum of Fine Arts), “Seventeenth Loan Exhibition of Paintings in Oils and Water Colours,” 1893, no. 34 [lent by Sir William C. Van Horne].
- Montreal, Art Association of Montreal (now Montreal Museum of Fine Arts), “Paintings by Rembrandt and the Great Dutch Painters of the XVII Century,” 1906, no. 5 [lent by Sir William C. Van Horne].
- New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “The Hudson-Fulton Celebration,” 1909, no. 25 [lent by Sir William Van Horne, Montreal].
- Atlanta, High Museum of Art, “Masterpieces of the Dutch Golden Age,” 24 September–10 November 1985, no. 29 [lent by the Lowenthal Collection].
- New York, National Academy of Design, “Dutch and Flemish Paintings from New York Private Collections,” 1988, no. 24 [lent by the Lowenthal Collection].
- Washington, National Gallery of Art, “Frans Hals,” 1 October–31 December 1989, London, Royal Academy of Arts, 13 January–8 April 1990, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum, 11 May–22 July 1990, no. 40 [lent by the Lowenthal Collection].
- Phoenix, Phoenix Art Museum, “Copper as Canvas: Two Centuries of Masterpiece Paintings on Copper, 1575–1775,” 19 December 1998–28 February 1999, Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 28 March–14 June 1999, The Hague, Royal Cabinet of Paintings Mauritshuis, 26 June–22 August 1999, no. 25 [lent by the Landau Collection].
- Norfolk, The Chrysler Museum of Art, June 2009–August 2010, on loan with the permanent collection [lent by the present owner].
- Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, August 2010–July 2011, on loan with the permanent collection [lent by the present owner].
- New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Frans Hals in the Metropolitan Museum,” 26 July–10 October 2011 [lent by the present owner].
- Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, November 2011–February 2013, on loan with the permanent collection [lent by the present owner].
- Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum, “Frans Hals: Eye to Eye with Rembrandt, Rubens and Titian,” 23 March–28 July 2013, no. 44 [lent by the present owner].
- Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art, “Small Treasures: Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, and



Their Contemporaries," 26 October 2014–4 January 2015; Birmingham, Birmingham Museum of Art, 4 February–26 April 2015, no. 16 [lent by the present owner].

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Versions

Engraved

1. Jan van de Velde II after Frans Hals, *Samuel Ampzing*, 1632, 200 x 123 mm, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1898-A-20197.
2. Jonas Suyderhoef after Frans Hals, *Samuel Ampzing*, ca 1640, engraving, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1943.3.8072.

Technical Summary

The support, a rectangular-shaped sheet of copper, has been inset in a shallow recess routed into the front surface of a stained and varnished rectangular-shaped oak panel that is slightly larger than the copper panel in both directions. Although the copper reverse is obscured by the wood panel, a few areas of green copper corrosion are visible along the painted image, such as along the figure's lower lip. There are labels but no wax seals, import stamps or inscriptions along the wood panel reverse.

The lowest continuous layer is a thin, strongly colored, transparent red-orange, apparently chosen in anticipation of its contribution to an effect visible in the finished painting.

The paint has been applied thinly but opaquely, with considerable vigor of handling indicative of Hals's portraits executed after 1630, even those crafted on a small scale. The beard was executed by applying tones of gray, then drawing lines through the wet paint with a fine point, exposing red-orange underlayer lines, to suggest the whiskers, and finished off with fine lines of paint to evoke volume and highlights.

The surface brushwork is primarily wet-into-wet, with emphatic darks, enlivening color, and highlights added. The evidence of a multilayered painting process suggests Hals executed the picture in stages, despite the suggestion of speed conveyed by the wet-into-wet passages.



Inconsistent overlaps of figure and background paint indicate adjustments and corrections to the outline. This feature is typical of Hals, who set the contours of his subjects only in the last stages of the painting process. Also typical of Hals is the use of short strokes of umber to demarcate spaces between forms, such as the fingers and lips.

The painting is unsigned but inscribed in dark paint along the background, center right.

No underdrawing or compositional changes are readily apparent in infrared images; in the X-radiograph, the copper support absorbs the radiation and dominates the image produced so only the rectangular shape of the copper shows.

The painting was cleaned and restored in 1995, before its acquisition, and remains in a good state of preservation.^[1]

-Annette Rupprecht