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Gerard ter Borch the Younger was born in Zwolle in 1617. His parents were the draftsman Gerard ter Borch the Elder (1582/3–1652) and Anna Bufkens.<sup>[1]</sup> Before marrying, Gerard the Elder sojourned in Italy, chiefly in Rome and Naples, from 1600 to 1607. Testifying to this trip are drawings he made of ancient ruins in the style of Paul Brill (1553/4–1626). Ter Borch's mother died shortly after his birth, and in 1621 his father took a second wife, Gesina van Voerst, whose brother was the well-known engraver Robert van Voerst (1597–1636). Soon thereafter Gerard the Elder was awarded the lucrative office of license-master. He did not give up drawing entirely, however, as is evidenced by his contribution to a songbook, on which the Haarlem painter Pieter van Laer (1599–1642) also worked.<sup>[2]</sup> In 1628 Gerard the Elder took a third wife, Wiesken Matthys from Deventer; the couple had three children: Gesina, Harmen, and Moses who, like their half-brother, inherited their father's artistic talent.

Gerard the Younger received his first instruction from his father in Zwolle. In 1632, at the age of fifteen, he was already in Amsterdam, although it is not known with whom he lodged.<sup>[3]</sup> In 1634 he moved to Haarlem to study under the renowned landscape painter Pieter Molyn (1600–61). He completed his training the following year, whereupon he joined the Haarlem Guild of Saint Luke. His stay in Haarlem did not last long, for—as emerges from a letter his father wrote him—Ter Borch was in London in the summer of that same year (1635).<sup>[4]</sup> He lived with his step-uncle Robert van Voerst (1597–1635/6), who shortly before had been appointed as engraver to Charles I.<sup>[5]</sup> His stay in London was brief, however; presumably after a quick stopover in Antwerp, he was back in Zwolle in the spring of 1636, where he seems to have wanted to settle down for an extended period.<sup>[6]</sup>

Despite those intentions, Ter Borch was soon once again traveling beyond the borders of the Dutch Republic. Houbraken noted correctly that from the moment that "[Ter Borch] could stand on his own two feet, he was consumed with wanderlust and visited foreign countries."<sup>[7]</sup> It is highly unlikely that Ter Borch went to Italy as his father did, and all of the arguments put forward in support of such a journey ultimately prove untenable.<sup>[8]</sup> Stronger indications exist for a sojourn in Spain. A line in a poem occasioned by Ter Borch's marriage suggests that his work was esteemed at the court in Madrid and that the king himself sat for the artist.<sup>[9]</sup> Although this portrait is no longer extant, an autograph replica seems to confirm this account.



Alongside the small portrait of the Spanish king, the influence of Diego Velazquez (1599–1660) on Ter Borch's work also points to a stay in Madrid. Whether the two ever actually met is unknown, but that Ter Borch saw Velazquez's work is evidenced by several portraits he painted shortly after he returned to the Republic.<sup>[10]</sup> That his stay at the Spanish court should be dated to the end of the 1630s and not, as Houbraken supposes, after the signing of the Peace of Münster in 1648, is confirmed by the (at the time) fashionable costume worn by Philip IV in Ter Borch's replica.<sup>[11]</sup>

It is not known how long Ter Borch stayed in Spain, but he was certainly back in the Republic around 1640, although in which city is difficult to determine. Several collaborative works with his teacher Pieter Molyn suggest that he had settled in Haarlem. Portraits of a few Amsterdam regents, however, point to Amsterdam, as do his guardroom scenes in the manner of Pieter Codde (1599–1678) and Willem Duyster (1598/99–1635) from the same time.<sup>[12]</sup> It was probably thanks to his Amsterdam connections that he was invited to join the Dutch delegation brokering the peace treaty with Spain in Münster as of 1645. There, he became acquainted with Gaspar de Bracamonte y Guzman, Count of Peñeranda, and leader of the Spanish delegation, who sat for Ter Borch, a commission he doubtless owed to his earlier experience in Spain.<sup>[13]</sup> According to Houbraken, "This portrait, to which he applied exceptional diligence and which was also well done, gave him not only the opportunity to paint for the count, but also for all of the ambassadors who had gathered at the peace negotiations."<sup>[14]</sup> Among the ambassadors must also be counted the Dutch negotiators. Accordingly, Ter Borch portrayed Adriaen Pauw, Clant van Stedum and Godard van Reede as well.<sup>[15]</sup>

After the treaty was signed, Ter Borch returned to the Republic, with a stop in Brussels, where he received a gold chain with a metal bearing an image of the Spanish kings.<sup>[16]</sup> Once again, it is difficult to determine just where he settled, although it may have been in Zwolle. If so, he nevertheless traveled regularly from there. For instance, Ter Borch's equestrian portrait of Elector Palatine Charles Louis (1617–80)<sup>[17]</sup> was executed in The Hague in 1649. In 1650 he was paid one hundred guilders for twenty-three prints by the town council of Kampen.<sup>[18]</sup> Three years later he surfaced in Delft, where he signed jointly a document with painter Johannes Vermeer.<sup>[19]</sup> Also originating around this time is his famous portrait of Jan van Goyen (1596–1656), who sat for him in The Hague. In the first half of the 1650s, Ter Borch painted the likenesses of Willem Everwijn (1617–73) and his wife in Arnhem.<sup>[20]</sup> Everwijn was a license-master in Arnhem and thus held the same post as Gerard's father. Moreover, Everwijn was the brother-in-law of Abraham Tulleken, who was appointed Caspar Netscher's guardian after the death of both his parents.<sup>[21]</sup> The Tullekens and Everwijns were closely related to the Craeyvanger family,<sup>[22]</sup> for whom Ter Borch later painted several portraits together with Netscher, who would become his pupil.<sup>[23]</sup>

When Netscher went to study under Ter Borch in the mid-1650s, the latter was living in Deventer, where he had married his step-aunt Geertruit Matthys in 1654. This seems to have spelled an end to his wanderings, which was confirmed when he was granted partial citizenship the following year. In 1666 he was appointed a *gemeensman*, or representative of one of the eight wards, and thus exerted influence on the town council, although he never made it as far as alderman or burgomaster. This new position most certainly helped him secure the commission for a large group portrait of the entire Deventer town council in 1667.<sup>[24]</sup> He also

portrayed several Deventer regents.<sup>[25]</sup> Ter Borch lived in Amsterdam from the spring of 1672 when the forces of the bishop of Münster and the archbishop of Cologne occupied the city of Deventer until their withdrawal in the summer of 1674. Ter Borch died on 8 December 1681, and at his express request his body was transferred to Zwolle so that he could be buried next to his father in the St. Michaelskerk.

Although portraits constitute a substantial share of Ter Borch's oeuvre, nowadays he is known chiefly as a highly innovative genre painter. Upon his return from Münster, the guardroom scenes with soldiers at rest or playing cards in the manner of Codde and Duyster gave way to the tranquil interiors of middle-class dwellings, in which he foregrounded ordinary people going about their daily affairs. He was the first Dutch painter to develop this kind of depiction, which he did entirely independently. After settling in Deventer he radically changed the genre yet again by replacing the average citizens with members of the elite presented in all their finery and ostentatious wealth and engaged in activities in keeping with the social mores of their class. Ter Borch remained active on the Dutch art market, and works by him can be found in the major cities. This widespread dissemination of his art explains in part the significant influence he exerted on other leading genre painters, such as Gabriel Metsu, Pieter de Hooch (1629–84), Frans van Mieris, and Vermeer.

-Piet Bakker

## Endnotes

1. Unless mentioned otherwise, all of the biographical information is taken from Sturla J. Gudlaugsson, *Geraert ter Borch*, vol. 1 (The Hague, 1959–60).
2. See the biography of Pieter van Laer in this catalogue. See D. P. Snoep, "Een 17<sup>de</sup> eeuwse Liedboek met tekeningen van Gerard ter Borch de Oude en Pieter van Laer," *Simiolus* 3 (1968–69): 77–134.
3. From a letter by Gerard the Elder to his son (see note 4), it can be deduced that the younger Gerard was in Amsterdam before the summer of 1635. That this took place already in 1632 emerges from the study of a head by Ter Borch with the inscription "in Amsterdam 1632." See E. W. Moes, "Gerard ter Borch en zijne familie," *Oud Holland* 4 (1886): 150.
4. This letter was first published in J. I. van Doorninck, "Het schildersgeslacht ter Borch," in *Verzameling van stukken die betrekking hebben tot Overijsselsch Regt en Geschiedenis* (1883), 10–11. See also "Letter from Gerard ter Borch the Elder to His Son, 3 July 1635," in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Gerard ter Borch* (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Art) (Zwolle, 2005), 187–89.
5. In London, Van Voerst worked closely with Anthony van Dyck, who included Robert's portrait in *The Iconology*. The engraver and his brother Reinder succumbed to the plague before October 1636. This epidemic may have been responsible for Ter Borch's sudden departure.



6. This emerges from the purchase in April and June 1636 of panels from a cabinetmaker and the inventory of a workshop by “Meyster Gerardt de Schilder” (Master Gerard, the painter). The goods are all in Deventer, but one of the documents mentions explicitly that they were dispatched to Zwolle. In theory, this painter could also have been the elder Gerard. Arguing against this, however, is the fact that in 1636 he was no longer active as a draftsman and/or painter. J. Lugard Jr., “Gerardt de schilder,” *Oud Holland* 53 (1936): 136–37. See also Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 2:16.

7. “[Ter Borch] op eigen wieken kon dryven, hy reislustig was, en vreemde landen heeft bezocht.” Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 3:34.

8. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 2:17. See also Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., “The Artistic Development of Gerard ter Borch,” in Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Gerard ter Borch* (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Art) (Zwolle, 2005), 8.

9. This poem was recited by the Zwolle schoolteacher Joost Hermansz Roldanus at the wedding of Gerard ter Borch and Geetruida Matthyssen in Deventer in 1654. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:9.

10. For example, see Ter Borch’s portrait of two unknown gentlemen and two unknown ladies, which he painted around 1640. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:190–93 (ill.); 2:61–63, nos. 16–19. See also Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Gerard ter Borch* (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Art) (Zwolle, 2005), 9, 53–59, nos. 4–6.

11. Arthur K. Wheelock Jr. et al., *Gerard ter Borch* (Exh. cat. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art; Detroit, Detroit Institute of Art) (Zwolle, 2005), 8–10.

12. For example, his likeness of the famous Amsterdam alderman and burgomaster Jan Six (1618–1700), among others. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:72, (ill.); 2:212, no. 39.

13. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:222 (ill.); 2:81, no. 56.



14. “Dit poutret, waar toe hy inzonderheit zyn vlyt aangewend had, en het geen wel gelukt was, gaf hem niet alleen gelegenheit om nog andere meer voor de Graaf te schilderen, maar ook alle de Ambassadeurs, welke op den Vredehandel byeen gekomen waren.” Houbraken, III, 34.

15. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:213 (ill.), 216 (ill.); 2:73–74, no. 41; 77–78, nos. 46–47.

16. According to Houbraken, Ter Borch headed to Madrid when the negotiations ended. The Spanish envoys were so delighted with the portraits that they encouraged Ter Borch to enter into the service of the Spanish court in Madrid. Houbraken relates that the artist took this invitation to heart and as “proof” of this was awarded “een gouden keten met een Medalje, waar op de Beeltenis des Konings, gestempelt was” (a gold chain with a medal bearing a likeness of the king). Ter Borch did, indeed, own such a chain. He did not receive it in Madrid, but rather in Brussels, where after the peace had been closed in Münster he resigned from the Spanish service. See Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:20.

17. Jan Lievens had portrayed Charles Louis as a child in 1629; see the biography of Jan Lievens in this catalogue.

18. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:20.

19. John Michael Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton, 1989), 102–4, 308, doc. 251.

20. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:262 (ill.); 2:113–14, nos. 103–4.

21. Following Houbraken, Wieseman calls Ter Borch a cousin of Willem Everwijn, though what this is based on is unknown. Marjorie E. Wieseman, *Casper Netscher* (Doornspijk 2002), 24; Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1753; reprint, Amsterdam, 1976), 3:73, who incorrectly calls him Willem Wynand.

22. See Ariane van Suchtelen and Menno Potjer, “De Arnhemse familie Craeyvanger – een bijzondere groep 10 portretten door Paulus Lesire, Gerard ter Borch en Caspar Netscher” *Oud Holland* 127 (2014): 7–24.

23. For this series of portraits, see the biographies of Caspar Netscher and Paulus Lesire in this catalogue.



24. Sturla J. Gudlauggson, *Gerard ter Borch*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1959–60), 1:345 (ill.); 2:194–95, no. 205.

25. Alison McNeil Kettering, “Gerard ter Borch’s Portraits for the Deventer Elite,” *Simiolus* 27 (1999): 46–69.

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