

Anno 1576:
aet. 42.

Ghemeten lincck
ses voeten mm.
3½ duynen de
voeten vā 12 duynen



A portrait of Emanuel van Meteren and his wife, Hester van Corput, by Joris Hoefnagel

A manuscript by the Antwerp merchant Emanuel van Meteren in the Auckland Public Library incorporates full-length portraits of Van Meteren and his wife dated 1576. They are here attributed to Joris Hoefnagel, who was a friend of both Van Meteren and his cousin Abraham Ortelius, the celebrated geographer.

by IAIN BUCHANAN with a postscript by LORNE CAMPBELL

IN THE AUCKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY, New Zealand, there is a *Memorieboek* (remembrance book) by the Flemish merchant and historian Emanuel van Meteren (1535–1612) entitled *Comentarius dat is ghedachtenis boek ofte register vande gheschiedenissen, handel ende wesen etc. van mij Emanuel Demetrius*.¹ Begun in 1570, it is dedicated by Van Meteren to his children and was added to after 1612 by his descendants. The *Comentarius* is a register of the most important events in Van Meteren's life; it begins with an account of his birth in 1535 and the lives of his parents, who both died at sea on 15th October 1552, when their ship was seized by a French warship while crossing the English Channel. This is followed by a list of his thirteen children and details of their births. In this respect the manuscript has some features in common with German *Ehrenbücher* (family chronicles), which contain family portraits and genealogical information. Then follows a yearly account from 1570 to 1584 of Van Meteren's life and the principal political events. In addition, the manuscript includes a number of poems and sonnets dedicated to him and an explanation of the meaning of his name Emanuel and his device.

The manuscript also contains a hitherto unknown double portrait of Van Meteren and his second wife, Hester van Corput, painted on facing pages and dated 1576 (Figs.1 and 2). The portraits, which have suffered damage probably caused by offset, are here attributed to the painter, book illuminator, emblematiser and poet Joris Hoefnagel (1542–1600). If the attribution is accepted, this is one of only a small number of portraits he painted and his only known full-length double portrait.

In 1576 Van Meteren was forty-two years old, and his wife thirty-two.² The couple had been married in Breda on 7th August 1564; she

1. Detail of Fig.2.

was the daughter of the city treasurer of Breda, Nicolas van Corput. The couple is shown standing on a wooden floor against a blank background. Van Meteren wears a long purple robe, open but buttoned at the neck, with slits in the arms revealing the sleeves of a black robe underneath. He carries brown leather gloves in his left hand and keeps his other hand in a pocket. He wears a small ruff and has a beret on his head. Hester wears a tightly fitted black robe with puffed sleeves and velvet trim. Her left hand is gloved and holds another leather glove, echoing her husband. Her right hand is exposed to display her ring finger. She wears a small ruff and a bonnet.

Further information on the sitters, written by Van Meteren in 1580, is given on the verso of the portraits, a very rare occurrence for portraits of the time. Written in the first person singular, the description of Van Meteren reads:

I, Emanuel van Meteren, am six feet high minus 3½ inches, each foot of 12 inches, English measure, reckoned a tall man rather than a short. Thinnish, my person reasonably well-proportioned, my legs and all my limbs are set straight on my body. Brownish complexion, brown, thinnish hair, going bald early and going grey very early – in my fortieth year I had many grey hairs in my beard – my beard is not heavy but my moustache is fairly thick – I have a high, square forehead and brown lively eyes with nothing singular that is unbecoming except in my nose, which is a little crooked in the middle because of an accident that occurred when I was young and at school. My whole life long in fair bodily health

Iain Buchanan died on 14th November 2018, before he could complete his final revision of this article. It has been seen through the press by Lorne Campbell, who has added a postscript taking into account research on Hoefnagel published

since the article was submitted, in particular Thea Vignau-Wilberg's *Joris and Jacob Hoefnagel, Art and Society around 1600*, Berlin 2017.

¹ Auckland Public Library, Sir George Grey Special Collections, MS 237. The manuscript (hereafter

Comentarius) consists of 164 unnumbered pages and contains material written in Flemish and Latin between 1570 and c.1649.

² For Van Meteren's life, see, in addition to the *Comentarius*, S. Ruytinck: *Het Leven ende sterven van den*

eerweerden, vromen ende vermaerden, Emanuel van Meteren, in E. van Meteren: *Eigentlich und vollkommene Historische Beschreibung des Niderlendischen Kriegs*, Arnheim 1614; D. Verdun: *Emanuel van Meteren*, 's-Gravenhage 1926.

A portrait of Emanuel van Meteren and his wife

until the 45th year of my age, anno 1580. My inner self shall be judged, in times to come, according to my reputation and achievements.³

The description of his wife reads:

Hester vanden Corput my wife is 5 feet 1¾ inches high, each foot of 12 inches, a middling woman, not too fat or too thin but very well proportioned in body, very pale in the flesh and so of very good colouring, beautiful yellow hair, curling at the temples, a round forehead, her grey eyes are rather big, the face and cheeks rather elongated, smallpox scars around the nose, the mouth small and pretty, she has no unbecoming characteristics except for the back of her neck, which is rather thick or high, a white neck, a broad chest, small hands and feet, extremely courteous, very fastidious, delicate of complexion yet up to now, in the 36th year of her age, in fair health, for 16 years she has been constantly pregnant or nursing a child, and now, anno 1580, she is nursing her tenth child.⁴

The double-portrait is unsigned but it can be attributed on stylistic grounds to Joris Hoefnagel.⁵ Born in Antwerp in 1542, Hoefnagel came from a wealthy family. His father, Jacques Hoefnagel, was a merchant and dealer in diamonds and precious stones; his mother, Elizabeth Vezeleer, was the daughter of the Antwerp merchant and Mint-Master General Joris Vezeleer. According to the detailed *Life of Hoefnagel* in Carel van

Mander's *Schilder-boek* (Book on Painting; 1604), Hoefnagel's parents 'urged him towards becoming a merchant and in contradiction to his nature'.⁶ As a young man, he travelled to Spain on business in 1565 and England in 1567, making detailed topographical views, many of which were published as engravings in George Braun and Franz Hogenberg's six-volume *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (Cologne, 1572–1617). His first emblematic work was *Patientia*, a manuscript series of twenty-four images of Patience with accompanying verses by him, dedicated to the Flemish religious exile Johannes Radermacher, and composed in London in 1569.⁷

Hoefnagel's career and fortunes changed dramatically in November 1576, when Antwerp was looted by rebellious Spanish troops in the so-called 'Spanish Fury'. According to Van Mander, his father's business as a merchant in precious stones was destroyed and all his merchandise stolen.⁸ In spring 1577 Hoefnagel travelled to Italy, accompanied by his friend Abraham Ortelius (1527–98), the famed Antwerp geographer, who was a cousin of Van Meteren.⁹ On the way, the two friends stopped in Munich, where Hoefnagel was invited by Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria, to enter his service on the basis of showing the Duke his self-portrait, the portrait of his wife and a view of Seville.¹⁰

2. Emanuel van Meteren and his wife Hester van Corput, here attributed to Joris Hoefnagel. 1576. Pen and ink, watercolour and bodycolour on parchment, 19 by 27.8 cm. (From *Comentarius* by Emanuel van Meteren; Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Public Library; MS 237).





On his return to Munich from Italy in 1578, Hoefnagel entered Albrecht's service, and later, after the Duke's death in 1579, that of his son Wilhem V. From this period onwards some of Hoefnagel's most important emblematic book illuminations can be dated, including the *Four Elements* (National Gallery of Art, Washington; inv. no.1987.20.5.8), made for the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, with certain folios dated 1575, 1576, 1580 and 1582; the *Music Book of Georg Bocskay* (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; inv. no.KK975), also made for Rudolf II, with text by Georg Bocskay written in 1573–74 and illuminated by Hoefnagel in 1591–94; and the *Mira Calligraphiae Monumenta* (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; MS 20, 86.MV.527), with text written by Bocskay in 1561–62 and illustrations by Hoefnagel, completed in 1596.

In the treatment of the faces, ruffs and clothing the portraits in the *Auckland Comentarius* bear a close similarity to Hoefnagel's portrait of Catherine Gonsalvus in his *Portrait of Petrus Gonsalvus and his wife* – the

3. *Petrus Gonsalvus and his wife*, plate I from *Animalia Rationalia et Insecta (Fire)*, by Joris Hoefnagel. 1591–99. Watercolour and bodycolour on parchment, 14.3 by 18.4 cm. (National Gallery of Art, Washington).

4. *The daughter and son of Petrus Gonsalvus*, plate II from *Animalia Rationalia et Insecta (Fire)*, by Joris Hoefnagel. 1591–99. Watercolour and bodycolour on parchment, 14.3 by 18.4 cm. (National Gallery of Art, Washington).

5. *Death's head with ears of corn*, by Joris Hoefnagel. 1575. Pen and brown ink on paper, 19.1 by 12.2 cm. (From the *Album Amicorum of Emanuel van Meteren*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 68).

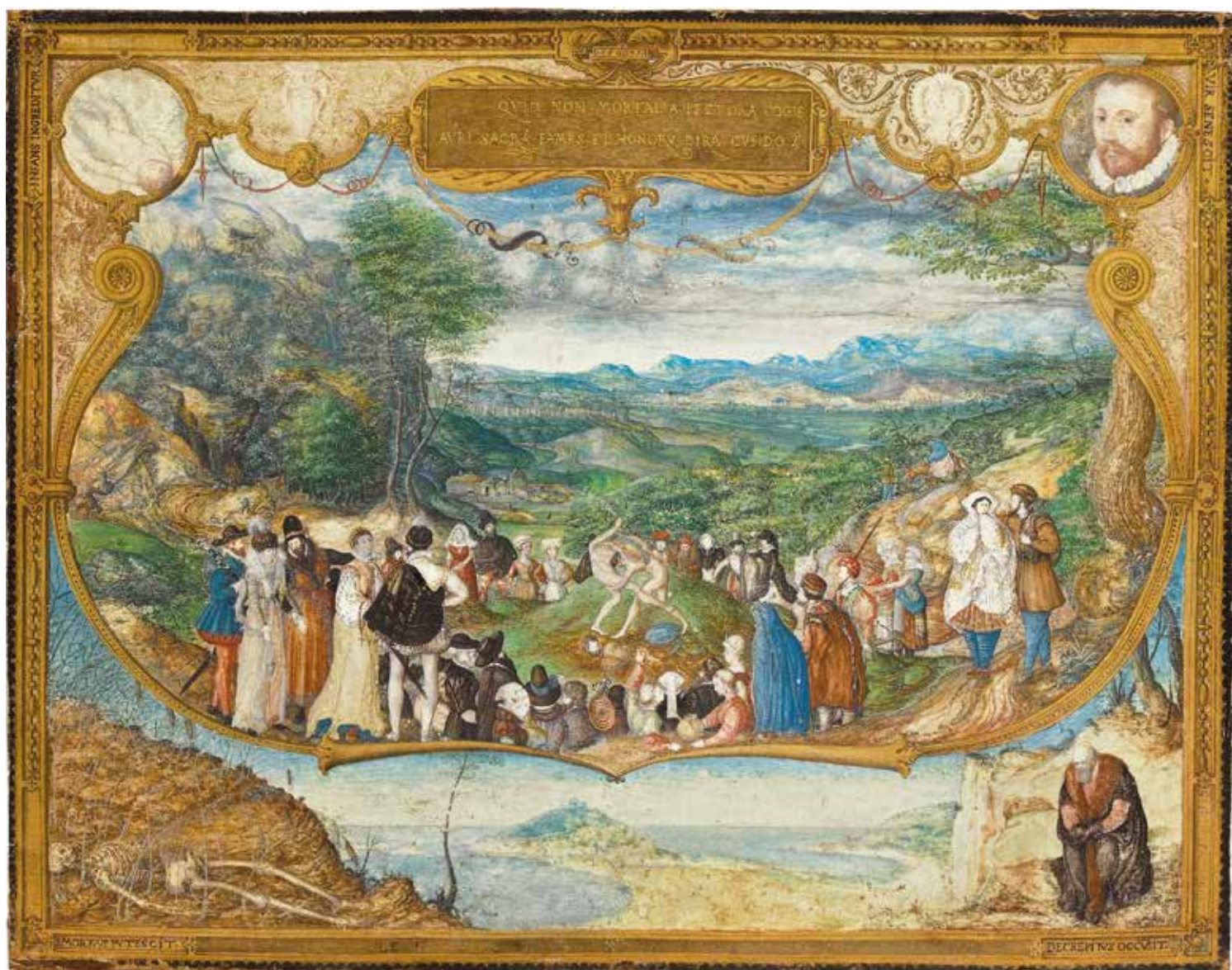
so-called 'hairy man' and his wife – at the beginning of the *Four Elements* (Fig.3).¹¹ In addition, Hester's pose may also be compared to the full-length portrait of Catherine Gonsalvus's daughter in the *Four Elements* (Fig.4), particularly in the positioning of the hands. The attribution is confirmed by the writing on the portraits, giving the date 1576 and the

3 '1580 Ick Emanuel van Meteren ben lanck 6 voeten min 3 1/2 duymen, elcken voet van 12 duymen Engelsche mate eer onder de lange mans dan corte te rekenen. Mageraghtich dan redelyck wel ghesedt va[n] lichame wel gheproportioneert van beenen en[de] van alle leden recht op myn lyf gaende. Bruynachtich va[n] coluere van haere bruyen et dunachtich oock vroech begin[en]de cael te worden en[de] seer vroegh gryse, als die in mynen veertichste jaer veel gryse haren in mynen baerd ghehad oock niet seer sterck van baerd dan den knevel grootghenoch hooghe van voorhoofde ende viercant met bruyne wackere ooghen niet sonderlinghe hebbende dat my misstaet dan den neuse wat cromachtich int middel by accident inde schole ionck ghecregen. Myn leefdache lanck

ghesont genoch van lichame ommers tot 45 jaer myn onderdoms ao. 1580. Myn inwendicheyt sullen den tyt myn nacomen fama en[de] wercken, mogen uitspreken'.
4 '1580 Hester vanden Corput myn huysvrouwe is lanck 5 voeten 1 3/4 duymen, elcken voet van 12 duymen, een middelbaer vrouwe, niet te vet ofte te mager seer wel gheproportioneert van lichame seer wit van vleesche en[de] daer by van seer goeden coluere, schoon geel haer aende tempelen crollende een ront voorhoofd grauwe ooggen wat grootachtich, tghesighte weselyck het aensighte met de wanghen wat lanckachtich, oock eenige pocputten ontrent den neuse, den mond cleyen en[de] fray niet hebbende dat moghte misstaen dan den hals achter wat dick ofte hooghachich wit van halse scheen

ende breedt van berste, cleyen va[n] handen ende voeten utermaaten curtiens en[de] reynlyck over haren persooone teer van col[m]plexie nochtans van tamelycke ghesontheit tot noch toe continuerende int 36 iaeer haers onderdoms, hebbende nu 16 jaer lancke altyt kint ghedraghen ofte ghesooght nu anno 1580 suggende haer tiende'.
5 For Hoefnagel, see in particular C. van Mander: *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters: from the First Edition of the Schilderboek (1603–04)*, transl. D. Crook-Radmore, ed. Hessel Miedema, Doornspijk 1994–99, I, fols.262r–263v, and V (Commentary), pp.10–22; T. Vignau-Wilberg: *Die Emblematischen Elemente im Werke Joris Hoefnagels*, Leiden 1969; T. DaCosta Kaufmann: *The School of*

Prague: Painting at the Court of Rudolf II, Chicago 1988; and T. Vignau-Wilberg: *Joris and Jacob Hoefnagel: Art and Science Around 1600*, Berlin 2017.
6 Van Mander, *op. cit.* (note 5), fol.262r
7 See R. Van Roosbroeck: *Patientia: 24 Emblemata door Joris Hoefnagel*, 1569, Antwerp 1935.
8 Van Mander, *op. cit.* (note 5), fol.262r.
9 For their trip to Italy, see T. Vignau-Wilberg: 'Joris Hoefnagels Tätigkeit in München', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 81/45 (1985), pp.103–67; and L. Nuti: 'The mapped views of George Hoefnagel: the merchant's eye, the humanist's eye', *Word and Image* 4 (1980), pp.545–70.
10 Van Mander, *op. cit.* (note 5), fol.262r.
11 See M. Lee Hendrix: 'Il trionfo della mimesi', *FMR* 45 (1986), pp.99–108.



ages and heights of the sitters, which by comparison with the inscription above the *Portrait of Petrus Gonsalvus and his wife* can be identified as Hoefnagel's own hand.

Hoefnagel's family had close ties with Emanuel van Meteren and, as mentioned above, he was a friend of Van Meteren's cousin Abraham Ortelius. In September 1574 Hoefnagel contributed a poem to Ortelius's *Album Amicorum* (friendship album).¹² The *Comentarius* has a companion piece in Van Meteren's own *Album Amicorum*, which contains inscriptions and emblems by Ortelius, Lucas de Heere, Philip Galle, the Danish artist and author Melchior Lorck or Lorsch, Hubert Goltzius and Abraham Bloemaert, among others.¹³ In December 1575 Hoefnagel added an emblematic drawing in brown ink, a death's head surrounded by corn (Fig.5) with accompanying verses.¹⁴

Emanuel van Meteren was best known for his chronicle of the Low Countries, *Commentarien ofte Memorien van den Nederlandschen Staet*,

6. *Struggle between Avarice and Ambition*, by Joris Hoefnagel. 1571. Pen and ink, with watercolour, bodycolour and gold on parchment laid down on paper laid down on panel, 16.7 by 21.4 cm. (Phoebus Foundation, Belgium).

Handel, Oorloghen ende Gheschiedenissen van onsen tyden [. . .], published in London in 1610. He was born in Antwerp in 1535 but spent most of his life in religious exile in London, where he was a merchant. His father, Jacob van Meteren, was a printer and later a merchant; his mother was Otilie Ortels, eldest sister of Leonard Ortels, who was Abraham Ortelius's father. In 1550, at the age of fifteen, Van Meteren was apprenticed in London to the Antwerp merchant Sebastian Dankaert and after the latter's death, to his brother Cornelis Dankaert. After nine years he set up as a merchant on his own, making frequent trips to Antwerp. His first marriage took place in London in 1562 to an Antwerp woman, Maria van Loobroeck. She died of the plague in London in 1563, of which Van Meteren gives a detailed

12 Pembroke College, Cambridge, MS 11.113. fol.6v. See J. Puraye, ed.: *Album Amicorum Abraham Ortelius: reproduit en facsimile*, Amsterdam 1969.

13 Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Douce 68.

14 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 68, fols.5v and 6r. See H.C. Rogge: 'Het Album van Emanuel van Meteren', *Oud Holland* 15 (1897), pp.159-92 and 199-210.

15 *Comentarius*. See the biography of Emanuel in J.-N. Paquot: *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire littéraire des Pays-*

Bas [. . .], Leuven 1763-70, XII, pp.340-48.

16 *Ibid.*

17 See note 8 above.

18 See J.H. Hessels ed.: *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum*, vol.III, part ii, *Epistulae et Tractatus cum Reformationis tum Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae historiam illustrantes*, Cambridge 1897, pp.2628-29, no.3843, 10th July 1680 (ns) and p.2653, no.3890, 8th September 1683 (ns). In the document of 1680, it is described as 'syn Comentarium [. . .] met syn ende syn

huysvrouw Heste van de Corput haere Conterfeytsels van hooft tot voet, heel curieus geschildert'; in the document of 1683 it is 'Met groote vaeders ende groete moeders Conterfeytsels van hooft tot voet Ao 1576, aet. Suae 42, groote moeders aetatis suae 32, Ao 1576'. With the *Comentarius* and the *Album Amicorum* were deposited two more portraits of Emanuel: a full-length that showed him as a young man and a student, in his '42nd year' (according to the 1680 document) or aged twenty-six

and inscribed 'Virtutis Laus actio. Ao 1562' (according to the 1683 document; these are evidently the correct age and date); and a half-length, described in the 1680 document as 'halfwegh, doen hy 77 jaeren oudt was in dien selfsten tyt doen hy syn Nederlandsche historie schreef, heel fray geschidert' and in the 1683 document as 'half wege in dien tyt geschildert doen hy besigh was met schryuen van syn Historie cort voor syn doot'. Emanuel was in his 77th year at the time of his death in April 1612).

description in his *Comentarius*. According to the *Comentarius*, he met his second wife, Hester van Corput, on 4th June 1564 at the country residence of Joris Vezeleer near Wilrijk, in the company of the Hoefnagels.¹⁵ The Hoefnagel and Vezeleer families were closely related – Joris Hoefnagel’s mother, Elizabeth, was the eldest of three daughters of Joris Vezeleer. Hester went on to bear Emanuel van Meteren thirteen children, eight daughters and five sons, the youngest born in 1586.

The most dramatic event in Van Meteren’s life was his arrest as a suspected heretic by Spanish troops while visiting Antwerp on 2nd May 1575. According to the lengthy and detailed description in his *Comentarius*, he was seized by Spanish troops on leaving the Antwerp Bourse on his way back to Abraham Ortelius’s house.¹⁶ He was interrogated and remained in prison until 20th May, when he was released on the basis of the testimony of letters from Jan Baptist de Boisschot, who was sent as an envoy from Antwerp to England several times between 1574 and 1575, and from friends, including Jacques and Joris Hoefnagel. Later that same year Van Meteren returned to Antwerp, when Hoefnagel inserted the emblem into his *Album Amicorum*.¹⁷ The double-portrait in the *Comentarius*, which dates from the following year, was probably painted in Antwerp.

The whereabouts of the *Comentarius* were for a long time unknown although early descriptions of it exist. It was kept together with Van Meteren’s *Album Amicorum* and in 1680 they are recorded as having been placed in the safekeeping of the Dutch Church at Austen Friars in London by Van Meteren’s grandson, also named Emanuel van Meteren.¹⁸ They were reclaimed three years later by the family. The *Album Amicorum* was bought at the Henderson sale in 1786 by Francis Douce (1757–1834), who bequeathed it to the Bodleian Library, Oxford.¹⁹ The *Comentarius* remained in the possession of Van Meteren’s descendants. It was brought to Australia in 1870 by the politician Arthur Harvey (1827–1902), who died in New Zealand, and was placed on permanent loan with Auckland Public Library in 1985.²⁰

POSTSCRIPT

The two miniature portraits in the *Comentarius* may in fact have been painted in London rather than Antwerp. Hoefnagel was evidently in London on 1st August 1576, when Lucas de Heere dedicated to him his drawing of *A shipwreck with a siren playing a lyre* (Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet).²¹ Indeed, he may have been there with his friend Abraham Ortelius, who was staying in London with his cousin Emanuel van Meteren when Antwerp was sacked in the ‘Spanish Fury’ of November 1576. The following year Hoefnagel and Ortelius left Antwerp together to make their journey to Italy.²²

Hoefnagel settled in Munich in 1578 and was employed as court painter there between 1579 and 1589.²³ He recorded that Petrus Gonsalvus, the ‘hairy man’ who came from the Canary Islands (he suffered from *hypertrichosis lanuginosa congenita*), ‘appeared in Munich in the year 1582.’²⁴ Hoefnagel’s miniatures of Petrus and his wife, in half-length,²⁵ and two of their hairy children, in full-length in the ‘Fire’ volume of his *Four*



7. Detail of Fig.2.



8. Detail of Fig.6, showing a portrait of a man, possibly Emanuel van Meteren.

Elements are claimed to be based on his four full-length portraits on canvas (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna),²⁶ which are described in the 1621 inventory of Schloss Ambras as depicting the ‘*Rauchemann zu München*’ (the wild or hairy man of Munich) and his family.²⁷ It is perhaps more likely that the miniatures were based on lost portraits that Hoefnagel made in Munich in 1582 and that the full-length portraits in Vienna are enlarged copies, made in Munich and presented by Hoefnagel’s patron Wilhelm V of Bavaria to his uncle the Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol. Buchanan may have been correct in regarding the miniatures as Hoefnagel’s unaided inventions and in perceiving the significance of their resemblances to the portraits of Emanuel van Meteren and his wife.

Hoefnagel’s painting, dated 6th December 1575, in Emanuel’s *Album Amicorum* appears to make punning references to his and Emanuel’s surnames. The skull (head or *hoofd*) and the nail (*nagel*) allude to Hoefnagel and the ears of wheat to the Greek goddess of corn Demeter and the Latin verb *metere*, to reap or harvest – Emanuel sometimes Latinised van (or de) Meteren as ‘Demetrius’. Thea Vignau-Wilberg has discovered in the lower left corner of a signed cabinet miniature by Hoefnagel, the *Struggle between Avarice and Ambition*, dated 1571 (Fig.6), a similar skull (part of a skeleton) and ears of wheat.²⁸ In the upper-right corner is a roundel with the portrait of a young man (Fig.8), whom Vignau-Wilberg tentatively identifies as Emanuel van Meteren by comparison with an engraved portrait of him dated 1599 by Henrick Hondius I.²⁹ The resemblance of the head in the roundel to that in the Auckland miniature (Fig.7) is still more striking. Vignau-Wilberg’s suggestion that the cabinet miniature was executed for presentation to Emanuel seems very persuasive.

When the *Comentarius* and *Album Amicorum* were deposited for safekeeping at the Dutch Church in London between 1680 and 1683 they were accompanied by two portraits of Emanuel van Meteren. One was a full-length of 1562 inscribed with the motto *Virtutis Laus Actio* (‘Deeds are the praise of virtue’) the other a half-length of 1612.³⁰ It is to be hoped that the publication of the Auckland portrait of Emanuel dated 1576 may lead to the rediscovery of these two paintings.

19 According to a manuscript note by Douce in the *Album Amicorum* ‘Henderson’ was probably the actor John Henderson (1747–85), whose books were sold (in 1,059 lots) by T. & J. Egerton, Scotland Yard, 20th–25th February 1786. Douce is known to have bought at this sale.

20 Harvey’s parents were John Harvey (c.1783–1867) and his wife, Louisa Ann Hall (c.1788–1860), whose parents, George Hall and Eleanor Anna Coward, were married at St Martin-in-the-Fields,

London, on 3rd September 1785. One of the witnesses at their marriage was Ann Demetrius Hall (1753–1836), who in 1790 married John Spinks. Her middle name indicates some connection between the Halls and the Van Meterens, who latinised their surname as Demetrius. The manuscript may have been inherited by Arthur Harvey from his Hall ancestors and, through them, from the Demetrius family. According to a note on the verso of the cover, it was ‘Given on permanent loan February

1985 (see correspondence 15.2.85)’ to Auckland Public Library.

21 Vignau-Wilberg 2017, *op. cit.* (note 5), p.12, fig.1.

22 *Ibid.*, pp.30–34.

23 *Ibid.*, pp.24–28.

24 *Ibid.*, p.103.

25 *Ibid.*, p.104, fig.5.

26 See, for example, Vignau-Wilberg 2017, *op. cit.* (note 5), p.103. KHM, inv. nos.GG8329–GG8332.

27 E. Scheicher, O. Gamber, K. Wegerer and A. Auer: *Kunsthistorisches Museum,*

Sammlungen Schloss Ambras, Die Kunstkammer, Innsbruck 1977, p.149.

Rauche is from the Middle High German *rûch*, meaning wild, hairy or shaggy.

28 Sale, Sotheby’s, London, 8th July 2015, Old Master and British Drawings, lot 11; Vignau-Wilberg 2017, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp.146–48.

29 Vignau-Wilberg 2017, *op. cit.* (note 5), p.148, fig.5.

30 See note 18 above. The same motto was used by Henry Fitzalan (1512–80), Earl of Arundel, and various other families.