

In de koocken: A 16th Century Dutch Miller's Widow's Kitchen.

Pieter Aertsen *The Pancake Bakery* 1560. A hanging iron (*een hangizer*) is over the fire.

Oude Maria Diresdochter, sometimes referred to as Maritgen Dircksdochter was a miller's widow who died in 1578. In 1579 her estate was drawn up. The Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen published her inventory in 1986 with scholarly articles on the items in her inventory. The book, *Huisraad van een molenaarsweduwe*, is in Dutch with brief English summaries of the articles. Most of the information about Maria and her life come from the English summaries of the articles.

Maria married the miller Barent Lambrechtsz (b. 1530), and although the dates of Maria's birth and her wedding are unknown, P.J.M de Baar, who wrote the article about Maria's life, believes it is likely they were the same age. Maria possibly came from Aalsmeer. During most of their life together they lived outside the town gate of Leiden, until the war with the Spanish, during which the Prince of Orange ordered all structures outside the town excepting mills to be torn down and moved within the town gates. The mills were outside the town gates because flour dust is very flammable. After a very destructive Spanish attack in 1572, mills were ordered to be moved to the town. Barent died not too long after the mill was moved in 1573.

After his death, Maria moved to cottage where she lived out the rest of her days. She died in 1578, and the inventory of her estate was drawn up in March or April of 1579. P.J.M de Baar believes her inventory seems to be incomplete and that her cottage had been partially cleaned out shortly after her death. Her cottage consisted of a hall, a side room, the kitchen, the annex, and the attic. She also has a small yard. H. Zantkuyl who wrote the article about Maria's possible cottage, believes this type of cottage, with one story and part of a row of cottages, was a common type of working class dwelling, and were both rented and used as almshouses. According to 16th century records, these cottages were very small and the dimensions were roughly:

- Frontage - 13.5 feet
- Outside height of cottage 15.5 feet
- Floor to ceiling 8 feet

- Peak of roof 17 feet

Maria's circumstances diminished greatly after her husband's death. During her life she was responsible for the debts of her sister's family (Jonge Maria) and had to pay for their bread yet her sister died wealthier than Oude Maria. Old Maria borrowed money heavily and pawned many of her goods. Despite debt she was not considered poor - her status early in life and her amount of material possessions guaranteed her status. Millers were fairly prosperous, and though Maria had no gold or silver objects listed in the inventory it is possible those were amongst the first things to be melted down and sold though in the scope of inventories from Leyden, the artisans and the merchants inventories did not include any silverware at all (Molen, 108). Young Maria's inventory did include some gold and silver, but unlike her older sister she didn't have any debts. (Baart, 109).

Based on images on middle class house Dutch households of the 16th century¹, Maria's inventory is a look into what is pretty typical of the middle class during this time.



Marten van Cleve *Kitchen Interior* 1565. Here we see a wash tub with a stand (*waschtobben mitte stelling*)

This translation came about because I was searching for the Dutch terms for clothing and textiles. My bachelor's degree is in German Studies and English Literature and I have done 16th century German translation work before, as well as some Old English. Due to my background, translating Maria's inventory is possible even though I don't speak Dutch. I have been working on translating sections of Maritgen's inventory, starting with clothing, since April 2015. I've relied heavily on Het INL, *Schatkamer van de Nederlandse Tal*. This is a Dutch etymological dictionary available online at <http://www.inl.nl/>. Occasionally the middle high German or English equivalent of the word is provided. If

¹ Marten van Cleve (active 1551 until 1581), Pieter Aertsen (active 1543 until 1571), and Joachim Beuckelaer (active roughly 1563 until 1574) all painted many middle class scenes featuring kitchen interiors - ignore the word peasant in the artwork titles.

the definition couldn't be parsed from that point, it was plugged into Google translate. Some words have proved more difficult than others and in those cases, I relied on the articles in the book, especially *Gebruiksvoorwerpen en citaten*, which expands on the terms and I translated those explanations to better understand what the items listed in the inventory are. Footnotes are given on the trickier terms.

kp'fg'hqengp 'kp'vj g'hksej gp+:

- een out taljoorhuisken² met een zwartschrijfbordeken (one trencher shelf with a black written/painted border);
- een besloten hangend schapray (a small wooden wall cabinet with a door);
- 12 houten ronde taeliuren (12 wooden round trenchers)
- een blaesbalch mit een bordeken voor de schoorsteen (bellows with a border before the nozzle);
- eene tinnen lamp mit een rooster, een izeren aschsschop mit eene tange (a tin lamp with a spit, one iron ash shovel) ;
- een izeren hogel mit eene aerden zoutpot (one iron rack with one stoneware salt cellar);
- eene spiegel mit eene rekenleytgen (a mirror with a cover);
- anderhalf pond vlasch ende drie pondt ongeezoden grof gaerns (one and a half pounds flax and three pounds raw coarse yarn);
- een busgen witte droom mit 2 zwarte wanten (a little white box with 2 black mittens);
- 2 ronde dooskens, 't eene mit ende 't ander zonder decsel (two round boxes, one with a lid one without);
- een zwart cannebort mit 5 aerden cruicgens mit tennen ledekens (a shelf with 5 stoneware mugs with tin lids);
- een cleyen zwart cannebort mit 5 aerden witte cruicgens, daervan de drie hebben tennen ledekens ende de twee niet (a little black shelf with 5 stoneware mugs, of which three have tin lids and two do not);
- een marctmandeken zonder decsel, eene marctemmer ende een voetstoof (a market basket without a lid, a market basket and a footstove);
- een cleerbessem mit een borstel ende 2 haspelen (a fabric brush with a brush and 2 reels);
- eene houten spillecorf (a wooden spindle basket);
- een weytonnetgen ende een spinrocken (one whey barrel and one distaff),
- 2 driestalde stoulen, d'een wit ende d'ander groen (2 three-legged stools, one white the other green);
- 3 vrouwen matte stoulen mit een mans groene³ stoul ende 3 roode zitcussenen (3 women's reed chairs with a green man's chair and 3 red seat cushions).

kp'fg'ir kpf g'kp'vj g'ht f gt legnet +:

- een cannetgen mit raepolie (a cannister with rapeseed oil⁵);
- 2 aerde bemalen platteelen (2 stoneware painted platters);
- 2 conduten (2 taps);
- 2 tennen platteelen, 3 tennen schotelen, 4 lepelen ende een tennen zoutvat (2 tin platters, 3 tin platters, 4 spoons and a tin salt cellar);
- een bierstelling mit een houten plateel (a beer stand with a wooden platter);
- een izeren ronde panne (an iron round pan);
- een aerden mostaertpot mit een tennen lepeltgen (a stoneware mustard pot with a tin lid);

² "The twelve wooden trenchers were probably stored in the *taeljoorhuisken* on the wall, a sort of open cupboard or shelf where the wooden *teljoren* could be stored so that they did not go moldy." (Pijzel-Dommisse 27).

³ Not clear if it's green wood or painted green.

⁴ A *spinde* was a piece of expensive furniture. The German equivalent is a *schränk*.

⁵ Oil used for oil lamps and not for cooking.

- een koperen pot van omtrent drie pinten (a copper pot of about 3 pints) ;
- een bedde, pelue ende 2 oorcussens mit een beddecleet (a bed, cover and 2 pillows with a bed linens);
- een roode gevoorde⁶ deken mit een oudt dekentgen mit lappen (a red quilted blanket with an old blanket with mends);
- een blaeu gaerdijn mit een izeren roede (a blue curtain with an iron rod);
- een tavereeltgen⁷ van Maria (a scene of Mary);
- een schabeltafeltgen mit opslagen⁸(a table with storage).

Kp 'h'c hgt nqgengp vi gp 'h'p 'vj g'lcenihsej gp lppgz' ±

- een bort mit een snijtmes (a board with a cutting knife);
- een ront scherfbort met een mes (a round board with a knife);
- een bancgen daer men de vaten op zet (a bench with barrels on it) ;
- een lepelemandeken mit houten lepelen (a spoon basket with wooden spoons);
- een houten gortvat, een izeren treeft ende een aerden stolp¹⁰ (a wooden barley barrel, an iron trivet and a stoneware fire cloche);
- een hangizer mit een vouthengel (a hanging iron with a pan rack)
- een houten lampknaep (a wooden lantern);
- een zwart stroyen stolpgen (a black straw hat¹¹);
- 2 houten candelaers ende een smoorcan¹² (2 wooden candlesticks and a tinderbox);
- een tobbetgen mit twee ooren mit noch een ander tobbetgen (a tub with two handles with yet another tub) ;
- een turfmandeken, 2 waschtobbens mitte stellinge (a peat basket, 2 wash tubs with stands).

Qr w' r' n' g' u' g' *dcenl' ctf ±

- 2 regenwaterstonnen ende 2 oude zandtobbens (2 rain water barrels and 2 old sand tubs);
- 3 wateremmeren mit izeren houpen (3 water buckets with iron hoops);
- 12 hennen ofte capoenen (12 hens and capons);
- een pottebanc mit 16 stux aerdewa(r)cs van potten, pannen, plattelen, kannen ofte cogens (a pot rack with 16 pieces stoneware of pots, pans, platters, pitchers and cups);
- 2 houten plateelen (2 wooden platters)
- eene aerde Coolsche pot¹³ ende 6 houten taelioren (1 stoneware pot from Cologne and 6 wooden trenchers).

Kp 'h'xgt v'ge'f'cv'b gp 'h'cg'dlq'xp' l'cgv'*vj g'lwck' u'wr 'h'q'vj g'c'wle±

⁶ Literally padded

⁷ This could be a print or a painting (Pijzel-Dommisse 106).

⁸ This is unclear to me - most likely a table, but I haven't seen many tables with storage in the paintings so I'm unsure of what is meant by *opslagen*.

⁹ "It had an additional fireplace which was primarily used for preparing greasy or strong-smelling food and in summer when the inner fireplace was not used." (Pijzel-Dommisse 106).

¹⁰ Also called a *vuurstolp*.

¹¹ "In the 16th century one of the meanings of *stolp* was hair cover. It's likely called this because the shape was reminiscent of *vuurklokken*." (Woestenburg 46)

¹² *Smoren* modernly means to smother, but it's also related to smolder.

¹³ "The pot from Cologne probably acted as a preserving or a stock pot." (Woestenburg 44).

