



HOORN AND ENKHUIZEN.

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With Illustrations by the Writer.

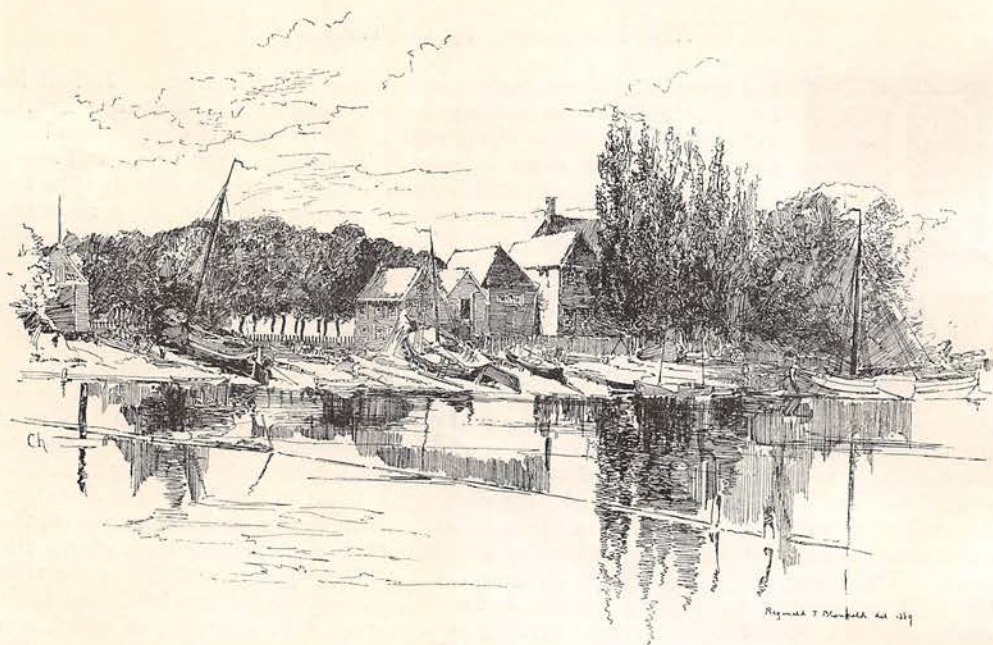


THE history of Hoorn begins in the fourteenth century. It had its brilliant flash of prosperity in the seventeenth century; in the eighteenth it went to sleep, and in the present century it has been slowly recovering consciousness. The citizens took their full share in the great struggle with Spain. Velius records that in 1572 the silver out of the churches was melted down, no doubt to meet the cost of building the ships which defeated Bossu and the Spanish fleet off Hoorn, October 11, 1573. The action took place within sight of the town, in the bay between Hoorn and Oosterleek, and the tradition is that it was from the houses on this side of the town that the citizens watched the fight. As at Alkmaar with its famous defence, all the local traditions of Hoorn seem to gather round this memorable victory. Bossu's cup is preserved in the town, while his sword went to Enkhuizen. There is a seventeenth century picture of the fight in the Stadhuis, there are pictures and prints of it in the museum, and all over the town there are carved panels to commemorate the action. On the front of the first floor of three of the houses referred to above there are long panels showing the ships engaged. The panel to the centre house shows the town of Hoorn in the distance. The old inner water-gate, with its four turrets and bulbous roofs, is conspicuous on the right, and in the centre is the great belfry of the Groote Kerk rising high above the town. The carver has attempted a bird's-eye view of the place, with the result that the adjacent country is running up and down hill. The panel to the left is the most spirited of the three: in the centre is a big ship of war, on either side of which are figures of Venus riding on the waves, and to the right and left an inextricable jumble of ships which gives a very good notion of the fight. Dirkzoon, the Dutch captain, took the earliest opportunity of closing with the Spaniards, and after a brief engagement the whole of the Spanish fleet was either captured or routed, excepting Count Bossu and his flagship, *The Inquisition*. Three ships grappled with the latter; one was very soon silenced, but *The Inquisition* and the other two lashed themselves together, and the crews let the ships drift and engaged in a hand-to-hand fight which lasted from the afternoon of October 11 till about eleven o'clock on the following day. In the grey morning light of the 12th, John Haring, of Hoorn, climbed across into Bossu's ship and hauled down his flag. Haring was shot, and died on the enemy's deck; it was this same John Haring who, at the siege of Haarlem earlier in the year, had held the Diemerdyke single-handed against the Spanish troops. A few hours later Bossu surrendered. He was brought to Hoorn and imprisoned in the Klooster of St. Mary, now the "Tweeshuys" or Home for Orphans.

Throughout the seventeenth century Hoorn was exceedingly prosperous. It was called the metropolis of West Friesland. Hither came embassies from Venice and Sumatra, and merchants from every part of the world. Among its citizens were men of learning, such as Rombout Hoogerbeets, and the brothers Velius, sailors like William Schouten and Tasman, and able administrators like Jan Koen, the first governor-general of East India. There is a well-painted portrait of Koen in the museum. The clear-cut features, with plenty of bone in cheek and forehead, and the keen dark

eyes, suggest that strong intellectual ascendancy which made the great Dutchmen of the seventeenth century a match for the astutest diplomacy of the time. It is curious to notice how this masculine beauty vanished with the decay of the national character: the Dutchman of the later seventeenth century portraits is usually an obese, lethargic-looking person who would naturally bury his patriotism in his profits. De Ruyter was not a native of Hoorn, but it was here that he fitted out the fleet with which he sailed up the Thames. There is a bad portrait of the admiral in the museum, by Ferdinand Bol, which has been cleaned and varnished out of all relationship either to Ferdinand Bol or to the great sea-captain.

The decay of the town began in the eighteenth century. Compared with other Dutch towns, there is not much work of this period in either Enkhuizen or Hoorn. Both places have contentedly slumbered since the beginning of the last century, and it is only recently that Hoorn has roused itself to put up one or two buildings of quite exceptional ugliness. The old city walls no longer exist, but their site can be easily



THE POOL, HOORN.

traced in the high grassy bank to the moat which bounds the eastern part of the town. Of the two bastions, one is laid out as a garden, and the other is occupied by a clubhouse, and between these two is the only surviving tower of the old city walls. All that part of the moat which existed from the second bastion to the western gate has been filled up; of the six water-gates, four have been destroyed. The old Koe Port, or cow-gate, which faced towards Enkhuizen, was pulled down in the last century, and the stone figures of the cows which used to adorn its gable are preserved in the town museum. The east gate is still standing. It is in two stories, and the road winds under the archway between massive walls supporting the vaulting. The original gates of oak, four inches thick, are still on their hinges. The lower part of this building was begun in 1511. In 1578 the façades to the lower story at both ends were added; that towards the town is comparatively plain. It consists of an archway flanked by brick pilasters with stone rustications. The outer side is much more elaborate. All except a small space by the angle pilaster is in stone; the central arch has cartouches in the spandrels, and double pilasters fluted and rusticated on either side. Between the pilasters are niches with segmental pediments. The two lower niches have cannon-mouths carved in stone and painted black, which the guide-books describe as real guns. In the frieze over the archway is carved a Latin version of the words, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." The upper story, with its

pretty *fliche* and little lead-covered dormers, was added in 1601. The gateway has been restored, but not much injured in the process.

The harbour gate is perhaps the finest water-gate in Holland. There are two dates on the gable, 1532, and 1651; but the lower part of the building looks older than 1532. The plan, roughly speaking, is a square terminating in a semi-circle on the seaward side. The upper story of the building projects slightly from the face, and is carried by an arcade or corbels. In 1651 a new stone coping with two lions at the top was built on to the gable, and the beautifully proportioned clock turret was constructed on the top of the roof. This turret stands on a square staging, above which the turret is octagonal, but the angles of the square in the first stage are merged into the lines of the octagon by means of detached Ionic columns, set on the diagonals of the square. The whole of the turret, except part of the lower stage, is covered with lead, painted like stonework. The clock turret and the gateway below are in two different styles, the one is Renaissance, the other Gothic; but the two blend together as if they had been designed *uno ietu*; so much so, that it hardly occurs to one that the designer of the turret ignored entirely the technicalities of the earlier style. He set to work with his clock turret in his own way, and his complete success justifies the robust individualism of the seventeenth century, and its hearty contempt for archaeological scruples.

Till the end of the last century Hoorn was very rich in municipal buildings. It had a fine Raadhuis, or house of the Deputies, which was destroyed on August 23, 1797. Why it was *afgebroken* I do not know; perhaps the French had something to do with it. It was a two-story building with a steep slate roof, a wooden belfry, and a flight of stone steps in front, reaching to the first floor, as appears from the excellent picture by J. Ouwater (1784) in the museum. It stood to the west of the cheese market, on the site now occupied by some trees and cottages. On the north side of this market square the old weigh-house is still standing. It is a two story building of stone with a slate roof and many dormers; the first floor is carried by an open arcade of five bays at the side and two at the end; in the centre bay of the side is the unicorn with the town crest. The ground floor which contains the great weighing machines was originally open, but the sides have been closed in, and a cast iron verandah along the sides, and the abominable modern glazing go far to conceal the excellent proportions of this building. Immediately opposite this is the old Staaten College, or court-house, now the town museum. The building was begun in 1573, and the remains of this earlier work can be seen in the massive floor joists inside and the steep pitched roof with its dormers. A new front was built in 1683, but this appears to have been destroyed, and the existing front, with the sides of the courtyard, and the iron gates and railing, dates from 1729. It is in grey stone and extremely ugly. The outline of the gable is formed by lions, three on each side and one in the middle, which sprawl about over shields in the successive stages of the gables. The effect at the back is quite grotesque. The gable does not affect to follow the outline of the roof, and it is tied in with a whole net-work of iron rods. In the top stage of the gable are carved two figures of armed men, supporting the English arms. M. Havard gives a tradition that this shield was captured from an English ship in the days of the redoubtable Van Tromp, and set up as a trophy. He describes it as the original shield supported by the effigies of the negroes who took it. One would more easily credit this tradition if it were less circumstantial, for the shield is not of wood but of stone, and the figures that support it are not negroes at all.

The museum inside contains some good wood-carving, and a few hardly painted "Regent" portraits. Ouwater's views of the town are the best of the pictures, with the exception of a remarkable sixteenth-century triptych, one of the panels of which represents a man being flayed alive. There is a small room up stairs in which the original oak work and stamped leather hangings are preserved; besides these there is little of interest in the museum, and it is very badly kept. The woman in attendance appears with her hair in curl papers and seems to be very much annoyed if any one visits the museum, in spite of the fact that there is a fixed charge for admission. It is one of the unamiable characteristics of the Dutch, that there is hardly a single exhibition or state building in the country which is open to the public free of charge.

The existing Stadhuis was originally the official lodging of the deputies. It was built in 1613, on the site of the old St. Cecilien Klooster, some fragments of which can

still be seen at the back. The Stadhuis is a picturesque building, though its effect is much injured by the modern cast-iron glazing and the pantile roof. It is a noticeable feature in it that the front is not straight but set out on a very obtuse angle. The architects of Hoorn seem to have been rather fond of this refinement. There are one



THE HARBOUR GATE, HOORN.

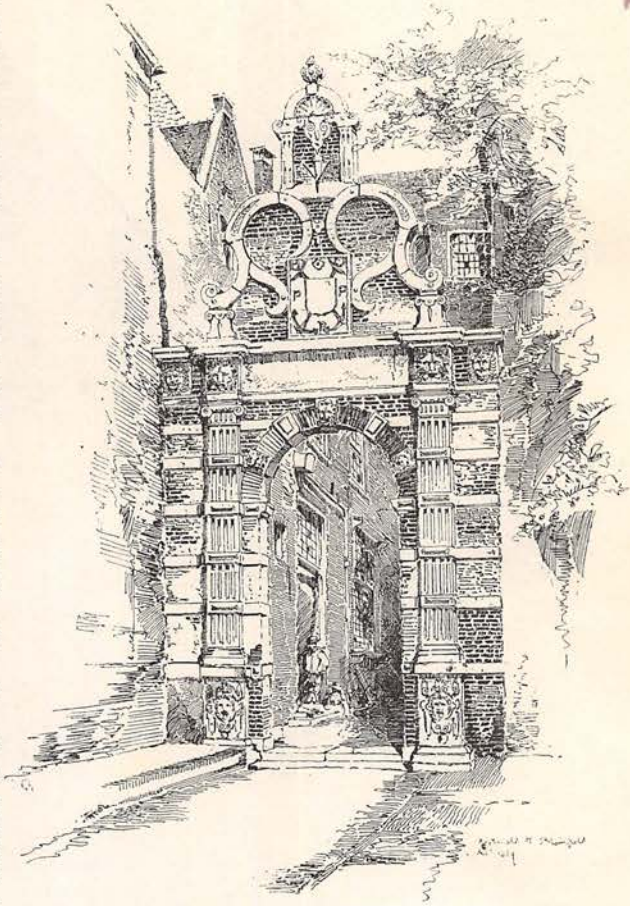
or two other instances in the town of this frank acceptance of the angle in a street façade, a difficulty which is usually smuggled out of sight by more or less ingenious "cooking." The St. Jan's Gasthuis (1553), now used as an armoury, is another example. It stands at an angle with the street, and the exigencies of the plan were followed with such logical completeness, that all the mouldings to the jambs are worked on the skew, so that if a person stands right in front of the house, the mouldings will be seen to work out very flat on one side, while on the other they are concealed behind the arris of the jamb. There is some beautiful cut brickwork on the front of this building, and elaborately carved angle stones to the three stages of the

gable. These and the almshouses are all that survive of the great public buildings of Hoorn of the seventeenth century, for the arsenal, the mint, and the East India houses, which stood in the north-west quarter of the town, were destroyed in the last century. There are three almshouses in Hoorn. The "T'weeshuys," close to the Doelen Hotel, is for orphans. It is an uninteresting building of the eighteenth century; but there are some remains of older work round the pretty gardens inside. It was here that Bossu was imprisoned in 1573. The other two almshouses are for old men and women. One is in the north-west angle of the square occupied by the modern Groote Kerk, on the site of one of the old religious houses. A passage close by with a picturesque stone entrance is still called "the cloisters." The other is near the station and occupies the site of St. Peter's Klooster, a house of Augustinian monks. The two sides date from 1607; the front was built in 1692. Over the entrance there is an obscure Latin inscription; on the inside are two charming little cloisters with barrel roofs painted green on carved wood brackets. These look out on to a characteristic Dutch garden. The paths are paved with red and yellow bricks in various patterns, and immediately opposite the entrance are two large flower pots with metal flowers painted green and red.

The Noord Kerk, or Vrouwen Kerk, is close to this almshouse. It is a plain brick church of the fifteenth century, and is only remarkable for the planning of the west end, which, as in the Gasthuis, is laid out on a cant, so that the south aisle is shorter than the north by one bay.

The only other old church in the town is the St. Antonis Kerk, close to the post-office. This was begun in 1493, but was a good deal added to in the seventeenth century. The beautiful little belfry was built in 1600; the west gable in 1616. There is nothing of interest inside except a clever newel staircase in oak, and a good heraldic window

(1620) on the south side in memory of the death of Heemskerck, who blew up his ship off Gibraltar in 1607 sooner than surrender to the Spaniards. The old Groote Kerk was burnt down on August 3, 1838. The present church was built on its site a few years ago from the designs of M. Muiskens of Amsterdam. An attempt, not entirely successful, has been made to follow the national style. The general outline is fair, but the details very bad. There are large finials stuck about the angles which are quite out of scale with the rest of the work; in the tower at the west end there are heavy stone balconies in front of solid brick walls, without any means of access; and the little carving there is, is beneath criticism. The interior is more satisfactory. The plan is T-shaped; the nave is almost square with shallow aisles about eight feet deep at the sides; above the piers to the gallery are marble columns supporting the roof, with brass capitals and bases. There is no east end; its place is occupied by a



A GATEWAY, HOORN.

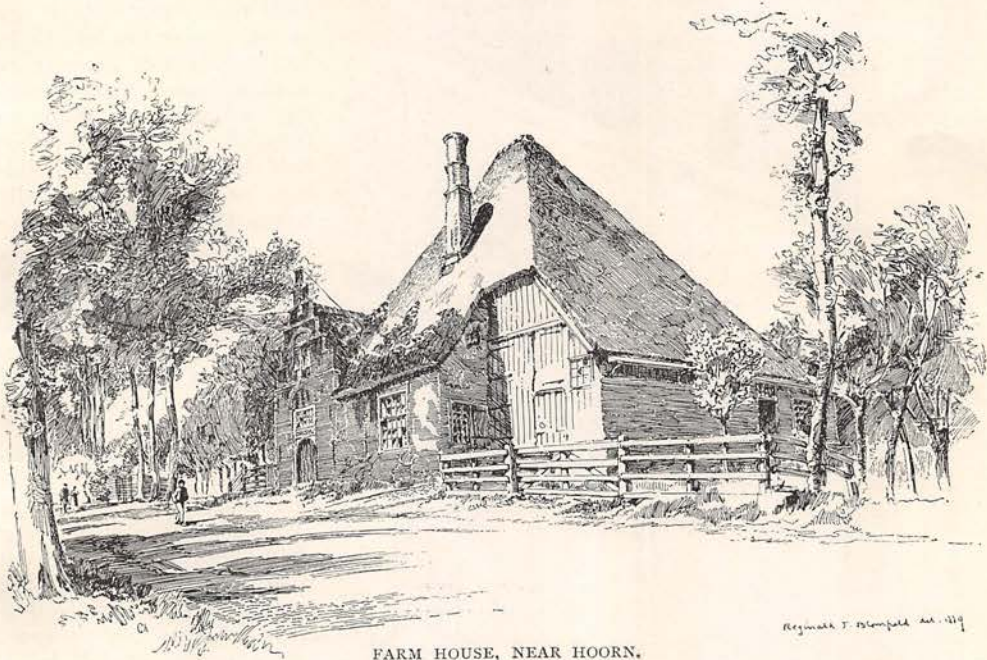
large organ set in a recess in the gallery, and in front on the ground floor there is the usual inclosure for the pulpit and reading desk. The galleries run all round the



ST. ANTONIS KERK, HOORN.

building. The ceiling is formed of great barrel vaults with smaller ones intersecting ; it is covered with match-boarding varnished to a very offensive yellow, which, with the knots of the deal, gives a curiously diseased look to the boarding. The best points of

the interior are its rather striking proportions, and the use made of brass as a colour material; but the general effect is that of a large concert room. The Roman Catholics have a big modern church at Hoorn designed by M. Bleys of Amsterdam. The outside is effective, but the interior is extraordinarily vulgar; the dome is supported by cast-iron shafts set against marble piers, and the brick vaulting under the galleries rests on iron ribs. The stained glass in both churches is as bad as any glass that was ever put up in England in the worst days of Pugin. Both these churches are on a considerable scale, and if, as is probably the case, they are fair specimens of average contemporary architecture in Holland, one is forced to the conclusion that this architecture is very much behindhand. Considering that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there were architects in Holland who were at least the equals of any men of their time, except perhaps some of the great Italians, modern Dutch architecture shows a lamentable falling off. Its best work is commonplace stuff. The Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, for instance, is the sort of Gothic that would have been produced at an

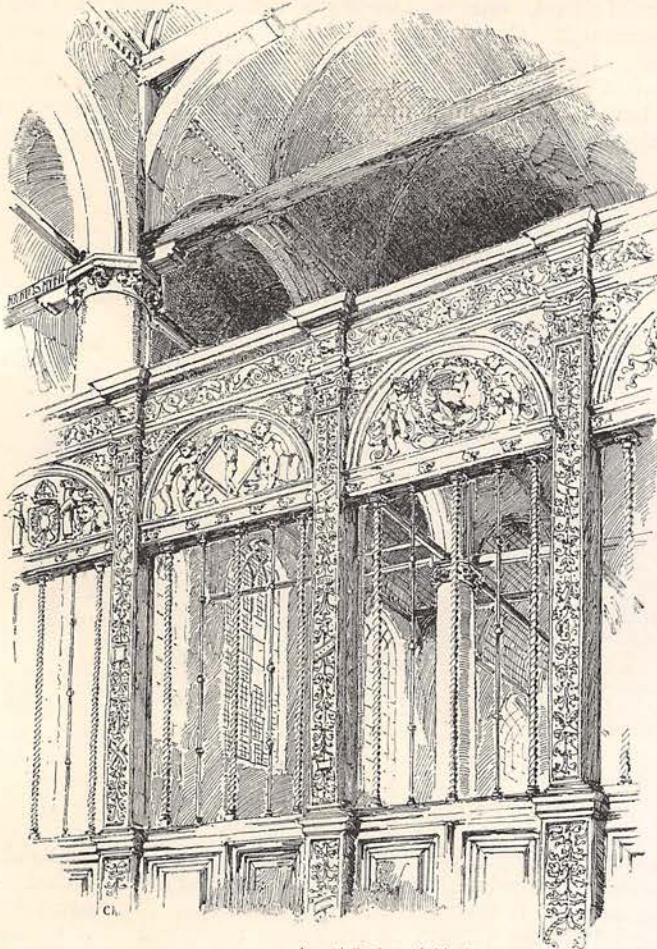


FARM HOUSE, NEAR HOORN.

open competition in the provinces in England a few years ago. It is inferior to the St. Pancras Hotel, and not to be compared with the late Mr. Street's new Law Courts. It shows little evidence of that delicate refinement, that powerful and all-constraining thought, which compels every intelligent person to recognize the hand of a master in architecture. Yet this building represents the high-water mark of modern Dutch architecture, for it is the work of M. Kuypers, the leading Dutch architect of the day, and it is not yet completed. As for their "restorations," they are very truly what Mr. Morris is fond of calling such work in England, "vulgarisation, falsification, and destruction." The town-hall and the weighing-house in the cheese market at Alkmaar are excellent instances of the extent to which it is possible to deprive a building of all historical significance by aggressive restoration. Mere conversion is another thing. There is many an old building which has suffered alterations repeatedly to suit the needs of successive generations, but somehow there is nothing that offends one here; at least these changes are building up true history, even if it is the history of bad taste. But what is offensive in restoration as practised in Holland and many other places, is its sham history, the hypocrisy of affecting to reproduce the old work with such fidelity that one has to look twice before one can find the incontestable marks of the beast.

Fortunately the Dutch move slowly, and Hoorn may yet enjoy some few years more of its old-world existence, for the people cling with singular tenacity to certain traditional ways of doing things. The curious waggon with its brass-tipped wooden horn

instead of a pole, which is used all over North Holland, has remained unchanged for the last two or three hundred years. On one of the houses at Hoorn there is a stone panel dated 1612, representing just such a waggon with five people, drawn by three horses abreast, one black, one brown, and one green with black spots. Perhaps the most remarkable instance of this persistent conservatism is the North Holland farm. In spite of its primitive character, the type has undergone no change or development for over 250 years. The road from Hoorn to Enkhuiizen passes a great number of these houses, some old and some new, but all built on exactly similar lines. The one



THE SCREEN, WESTER KERK, ENKHUIZEN.

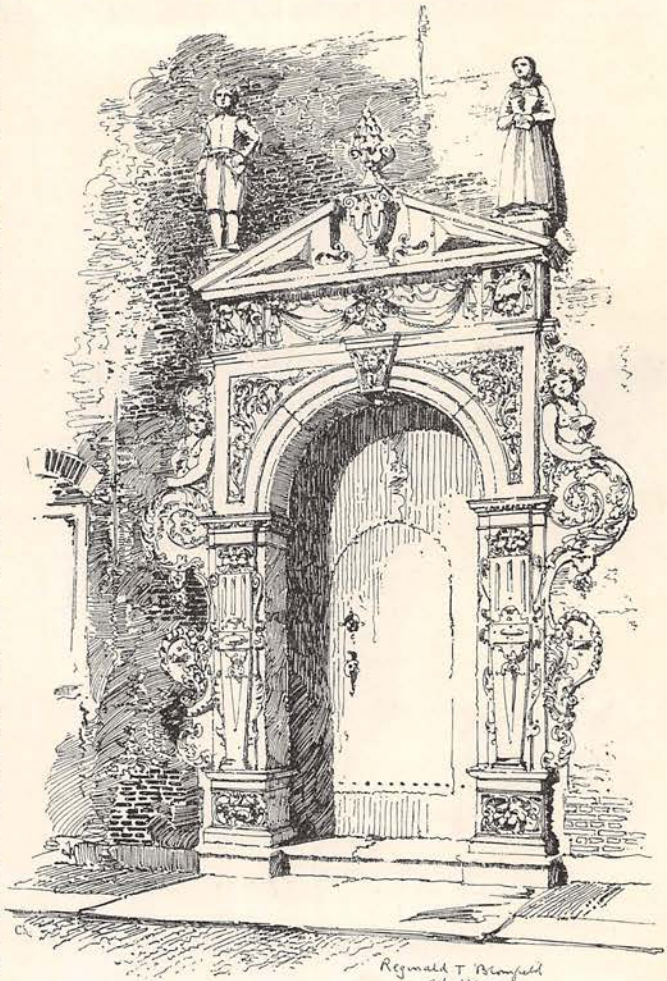
illustrated is an old one dated 1639, and it is an excellent instance of this peculiar type. The plan, roughly speaking, is a square of about fifty feet, and the outer walls are about nine or ten feet high. In the centre of this square a strong quadrangular staging of timber is built up from the ground for about half the height of the building, and this practically forms the whole construction of the house; the rafters start from the low outer wall, and resting about half way up their bearing against this staging, form a great pyramidal roof, covered with thatch, and very often with a stork's nest on the top, as big as a good-sized faggot. On one side the thatch is cut away to a line of varying shape, and the roof covered with pantiles. There is usually a gable projecting from one corner of the roof, and a couple of tall brick chimney stacks. This immense roof covers not only the dwelling rooms, but the farm buildings as well. The whole of the upper part of the roof and a considerable part of the floor is used as

a hayloft. The back door opens inwards into a broad passage paved with bricks, and to the right of this, and separated from it by a small brick drain, are stalls where the cows spend the winter. The stalls are paved with brick and kept with scrupulous cleanliness. Each stall has a little window, with its curtain. The sides of the drain are painted red with a yellow border along the top, and the bottom of the drain is sky-blue. At the end of this passage is the sitting-room, the walls panelled and painted red, and adorned with prints of the history of Joseph in tights and a tunic. A casement window faces the door, and an old glass cupboard painted red and green fills up one corner of the room. To the left of the door is the fireplace, lined with tiles for five or six feet from the floor, with a broad projecting chimney over, and then a door in the panelling to communicate with the two or three rooms which form the whole of the living space allowed to the family. Many of the farmers are wealthy in their way, but they seem quite content with the traditional discomforts of the old farm-house. Here too, if anywhere, the mania for colour runs riot: the trunks of the trees are painted red, blue,

green, yellow, and mud-colour, and the clinkers of the paths are usually coloured a brilliant blue. If one asks a Dutchman the reason for painting the trees, with some sort of vague idea that it is to keep the snails down, he will shrug his shoulders and say, "It is the custom of the country." There is one very charming feature about these farms, and that is the triple avenue of trees—ash, or lime, or willow—which usually surround the house in the very way they are shown in Hobbema's pictures. The avenues have a very excellent reason in the climate of the country. In winter they soften the bitterness of the keen north wind, and in the sultry summer days, the sun will come playing through the leaves, and will fleck the stems and the grass beneath with patterns of infinite loveliness, and the sombre waters of the dyke round the little plot of grass will answer to the magic of the sunbeam. A few of the houses have small gardens instead, some of which show traces of the old Dutch formal style, but most of them are laid out according to modern notions, which means on the continent a version of the *jardin à l'Anglaise* even more ridiculous than the original *jardin à l'Anglaise* itself.

The road from Hoorn enters Enkhuizen by a great stone gateway built in 1730. It is a heavy-looking building, but not without a certain dignity, due to its massive simplicity. M. Havard describes this gateway as separated from the town by grassy fields. Although this leads to some admirable reflections on the melancholy of decay, it is in point of fact inaccurate, for the houses begin almost immediately one has passed the gate. Enkhuizen is an older town than Hoorn. Its population in the sixteenth century is variously stated at 60,000 and 40,000. It now numbers about 5,000 inhabitants. The town seems to have shrunk into itself like a frozen plant.

All the outlying quarters have disappeared, and the place has dwindled down to one big street, with a few side lanes and squares on either side. It is certainly not an exciting place, unless it is during the *Kermesse*, when the very walls seem to tremble at the hideous din of fifty barrel organs all playing different tunes at once. The town is less interesting in every way than Hoorn. There are two big churches, one at the west end of the town, the other in the centre. The latter has some picturesque brick gables built against its sides, and a lofty tower at the west end, built of brick and stone, with an octagon belfry above it of wood and slates. The Wester Kerk is a mere wreck of what it was. Nearly all the tracery has disappeared, and it rather looks as if several side chapels had been cut away. The church consists of three long aisles, the bays of which are of curiously unequal widths. All the aisles are covered with barrel roofs of wood, dating from the end of the sixteenth century.



DOORWAY TO THE BURGHERS' ORPHANAGE, ENKHUIZEN.

These roofs are painted a shade of olive green, and for once the glaring whitewash of the walls goes with this green to form a very charming piece of colour. The entire floor of the church is paved with grave-stones—536 in all—some carved with elaborate coats of arms, some with initials and monograms, and some with simple marks. One has for its adornment a string of eight herrings on a stick. The most remarkable things in the church are the organ-case, dating from 1542, and the very elaborate screen at the west end of the chancel. This screen is carved in oak, with pilasters and frieze, and copper balusters in the openings which are said to have replaced the original silver shafts. There are two dates on the screen, 1542 and 1572. The finest work, as usual,

is the oldest, and it is of extraordinary delicacy and beauty. Some of the relief is rather high, as much as $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the ground in the figures, but in other parts the carving is just sketched out on the surface, and dies away almost imperceptibly on to the wood. All this part of the carving at once suggests Jan Terwen's work in the choir at Dordrecht. The panels on the west side are filled entirely with arabesques, designed with a fancy which evidently revelled in its own exuberance. The tympana of the panel arches on the west side are filled with some inferior figures of the evangelists, &c., which are probably very much later. The best of this work was done under Spanish influence. A complete change can be traced in Dutch wood-carving after the Spanish tyranny was over. The high relief, borrowed from a southern country, was abandoned, and if the work of the carver was less in the orthodox lines of the Renaissance, it became more playful, more pleasant to live with, more lovable.



WATER GATE, ENKHUIZEN.

The harbour-gate commands the entrance to the inner basin. It is inferior to the great gate at Hoorn, yet it stands finely above the sluice-gates. The gate-house is constructed of brick, with stone archways, one dated 1540, the other 1649. On the north side two old anchors are hung against the wall, with an inscription which commemorates some obscure treachery against the town. The roof of the belfry at the top is coloured a brilliant purple-blue. There is a *carrillon* in the belfry which plays at the quarter-hours, and sometimes one would think that everything slept in the town except these bells. The *carrillon* of the church begins, and then the bells of the harbour-gate answer with some sweet old melody such as Josquin des Près might have loved. They start merrily enough, but strange sad harmonies mingle with the music, as the undercurrent of abiding melancholy rises to the surface. The carol dies away, and the last note is left to some deep bass bell, as if the voice of Fate were insisting that the slumber of generations was not to be broken or the shadow of infinite *ennui* lifted from the dull old town.