known drawing seems to have served as a direct prototype for any of these cows.

Notes
1. Agnew's purchased the painting on 9 August 1919 and sold it to Gaston Neuman two years later (information provided by Alan Chong, letter in NGA curatorial file).
2. Steinmeyer's possible ownership is cited in the files at the RKD.
3. The picture was removed from Czechoslovakia in, or shortly before, 1938 by Frank C. Petschek.
4. An annotated catalogue shows that the picture was being offered for sale by Muller in 1922. This catalogue states that the picture was formerly in the possession of "W. M. Mensing," which was the previous name for Muller's company. The exhibition was held in a provisional pavilion, built on an old railway yard near the Vesterport.
5. Alan Chong, associate curator of paintings, Cleveland Museum of Art (letter of 2 June 1994 in NGA curatorial files) has confirmed that this exhibition was held in Dordrecht.

References
1975 Reiss. 206.
1987 Amsterdam: 294.
1988 Chong: 82, repro.

1940.2.1 (501)

The Maas at Dordrecht

c. 1650
Oil on canvas, 114.9 x 170.2 (45\(\frac{1}{4}\) x 67)
Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Inscriptions
On sideboard of ship in right foreground: A. Cuyp

Technical Notes: The original support is a single, moderate-weight, plain-weave fabric with threads of various thicknesses, which has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cupping along all edges indicates that the dimensions are unchanged.

The pale ground is thinly applied, and a darker imprimatura is used as a mid-tone in the foreground. Paint is applied in thin layers, at times blended wet into wet, at times scumbled wet on dry, with thin lines drawn fluidly in brush-applied paint. The x-radiograph shows no changes.

The painting is in good condition, particularly for a work of its size. Moderate abrasion to the thin upper paint layers is visible in dark passages of the boats, figures, and seascape. Discolored retouching is present throughout the sky and along the edges. The painting was lined in 1944 and cleaned in 1958.

Provenance: Johan van der Linden van Slingeland [1701-1782], Dordrecht, by 1752.1 (Sale, Dordrecht, 22 August 1785, no. 70); "Rens" or "Delfos."22 Oil on canvas, 1804 to 1814; Abraham Hume, Bart. [1749-1818], Wormaldy, Hertfordshire; by inheritance to his grandson, John Hume Cusack, Alford, M. P. [1812-1851], Ashridge Park, Hertfordshire; by inheritance to his son, John William Spencer, 2nd Earl Brownlow [1842-1867], Ashridge Park; by inheritance to his brother, Adelbert Wellington, 3rd Earl Brownlow, P. C., G. C. V. O. [1844-1921], Ashridge Park and London; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 4 May 1923, no. 75); (Duveen Brothers, New York and London); by exchange 1940 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.


In the mid-1830s, Gustav Waagen, director of the Royal Gallery at Berlin, made an extensive tour of British private collections, which, after the events surrounding the French Revolution, had become one of the greatest storehouses of Old Master paintings in the world. Cordially greeted everywhere because of his charm and expertise, Waagen had the rare privilege of experiencing firsthand many of the great examples of European painting that were not otherwise accessible to the public. With this knowledge in mind, Waagen took careful notes and in 1838 published an account of the works of art he had seen in English private collections.

He published a revised and better known edition, Treasures of Art in Great Britain, in three volumes from 1854 to 1857. One of the outstanding masterpieces he described was a painting in the collection
of Sir Abraham Hume, Aelbert Cuyp's *The Maas at Dordrecht.* He wrote:

The chief picture, however, of the whole collection is a view of the Maas, with the town of Dort, and numerous ships, by this master, in a moderately warm but extremely clear evening light. The delicacy of aerial gradation in a series of vessels seen one behind the other is not to be described, and, at the same time, all is executed with the greatest ease and freedom. This picture, 3 ft. 10 in. high, by 5 ft. 6½ in. wide, is a proof not only of the extraordinary talent of this master, but also of the astonishing height which the art of painting in general had attained in Holland in the seventeenth century.6

Waagen’s enthusiastic response to *The Maas at Dordrecht* was widely shared, and the painting was featured in a number of exhibitions of Dutch painting from the time it was first brought to England in 1804.7 The appeal, as Waagen suggests, has much to do with the extraordinary light effects that Cuyp achieves as the rays of the early morning sun stream across the landscape, creating horizontal shadows in the clouds and striking at full force the tower of the great church of Dordrecht and the sails of the ships.8 It has to do, as Waagen also indicates, with the massive scale of the work, which gives the scene a dominating presence, a presence enhanced by the sweep of the clouds and powerfully conceived composition.

Cuyp’s great fame as an artist comes primarily from his many representations of idyllic landscapes, populated by shepherds and cowherds and their respective charges (1937:1.59). The quiet, contented mood of these works is also reflected in a number of poetic river views (1986:70.1). Paintings such as this, however, which focus on the activity and drama of ships in port, are rare. More characteristic of Cuyp’s world are the atmospheric views of Dordrecht seen across the still and relatively empty expanse of water in the paintings in the Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood (fig. 1) and at Ascott.9

In all three of these paintings Cuyp portrayed Dordrecht as it is seen from Papendrecht, across the river Maas to the north. From this vantage point one is able to see an impressive panorama of the city, a vista accented by the distinctive port building, the city gate known as the Groothoofdspoort (the large building with a pointed spire), and the Groote Kerk, with its massive yet unfinished tower dominating the city. All three of these paintings may have been made from a drawing of the site that Cuyp made in the late 1640s (fig. 2): each painting, for example, contains two sailboats to the right of the Groothoofdspoort that are identical to those in the drawing.10

In the Washington painting the cityview acts as a backdrop to the scene on the water: the river is filled with innumerable ships, each crowded to capacity with human forms. While many of these are ordinary transport ships, a few yachts also can be seen, including one in the distance, displaying the Orange coat of arms and firing a salute. Throughout the painting one senses the drama and activity of an uncommon event, undoubtedly a specific one. This feeling is enhanced by Cuyp’s portrayal of two rowboats in the foreground carrying distinguished looking passengers. One boat, carrying a gentleman wearing a black suit and red sash, has clearly reached its destination, a large sailing ship in the right foreground, where an orange-sashed officer wearing a feathered hat and red jacket stands amidst a crowd of onlookers awaiting his guest (see frontispiece). As a drummer beats on his drum, a bugler in the second rowboat announces the impending arrival of other dignitaries.

Waagen seems not to have been particularly curious about the event being depicted, but others have been. In 1822 John Burnet identified the scene as “The Embarkation of the Prince of Orange.”11 This identification relates back to an eighteenth-century tradition in which the officer in the sailing ship was misidentified as Prince Maurits,12 who had died in 1625. Neither the costume nor the physiognomy of the officer, however, resembles either Frederik Hendrik or Willem II, Princes of Orange who might be associated with this scene. The only recorded references to visits to Dordrecht by Frederik Hendrik and his family were in 1638 when they accompanied Maria de Medici on 20 September during her exile from France, and in 1643 when the Prince of Orange and Amalia van Solms, accompanied by their son Willem II and his fourteen-year-old wife Mary anchored for the night at Zwijndrecht, on the opposite side of the river Merwede from the city of Dordrecht. Not only did these events involve personalities not present in this painting, but the style of the work is incompatible with that of Cuyp from the late 1630s and early 1640s.

Another interpretation of the scene was proposed in 1929, when the painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy, London. “The event represented is probably Charles II in the Dordrecht roads, May 26th, 1660, during his journey from Breda, where he had lived sometime, to The Hague and thence to England.”13 Although the association of the scene
Fig. 1. Aelbert Cuyp, View of Dordrecht, early 1650s, oil on canvas, London, Kenwood, Iveagh Bequest

Fig. 2. Aelbert Cuyp, Dordrecht, late 1640s, black chalk and gray wash, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet
Aelbert Cuyp, *The Maas at Dordrecht*, 1940.2.1
with Charles II’s visit to Dordrecht has been frequently repeated in the literature, a number of objections weigh against it. As with the theory of the Princes of Orange, one searches in vain for a figure that resembles the king of England. No English flags or other signs of English royalty are visible. Moreover, the elaborate account of Charles II’s trip published in 1660 makes it clear that the royal fleet sailed past Dordrecht and only anchored beyond the city at the river Lek, near the lands of one of the most important dignitaries of the city, Heer van Beverweert. To the king first heard the dramatic news that he had been restored to the crown, news that quickly changed his plans to spend the night, before proceeding to Delft. As the message also indicated that an English fleet was off the coast of Holland ready to bring the royal couple back to London, they embarked immediately.

Even though the specifics of Cuyp’s artistic evolution are difficult to determine due to the absence of dated works, stylistic considerations make it highly unlikely that he has represented Charles’ visit. Cuyp’s paintings from the 1660s are not executed with the same emphasis on the weight and density of materials and with such concern for the characteristics of texture. These qualities, which are reinforced here through the application of quite thick impasto, are far more characteristic of works from the late 1640s and early 1650s. Further indicating a date from this period is the style of the costumes, which is comparable to that seen in paintings from the late 1640s.

The event depicted in this painting appears to involve no royalty and probably for that reason has never been properly identified. Margarita Russell, however, has persuasively proposed that the scene depicts the assembling of the Dutch fleet at Dordrecht in July 1646. This remarkable event is extensively described in Balen’s chronicle of the city’s history. Balen writes that an enormous transport “fleet” was a disparate group of ships, consisting of warships but also a wide variety of utilitarian and transport boats. Among them were the kitchen boats used as ancillary “kitchen” and sleeping accommodations for the private servants and personnel of the princely household, sailing vessels called *Uytlegers* that were used for guard and pilot duties in the approaches to the entrances of the internal waterways, and *pleyten*, single-masted, wide-bodied ships that were commonly used as ferryboats. Balen concludes his account by noting that the entire fleet set sail on 12 July, some for Bergen op Zoom, and others for Sas van Gent. Prince Frederik Hendrik’s intent was almost certainly one last show of force against the southern Netherlands at the onset of negotiations for the truce, which would ultimately be signed at Münster in 1648. Nothing ever came of the plan, however, and so this event of such significance in the history of Dordrecht was of no consequence in the broader course of Dutch political history.

Balen’s description of the locations of the ships carrying the various regiments can be applied to the situation depicted in Cuyp’s painting. In the foreground left a warship flying the Dutch tricolored flag seems under sail in midstream. The large massing of ships beyond it may be those containing the Frisian and English troops that Balen describes as being anchored near the Groothoofdsport. Beyond these ships, to the right of the Groote Kerk, a large yacht fires a gun salute. This ship, which displays the Orange coat of arms, must be that of the lifeguards (Lijf-Scut-Bende) of Prince Frederik Hendrik that Balen indicates was anchored near the Blaupoort.

The focal point of Cuyp’s composition is not, however, an elaborate warship but the relatively simple *pleyt* in the right foreground. He painted it with great care. The ship is at anchor, with her bow in an easterly direction, not to the wind, but with the tidal current to the bow. It seems to be slack tide, about high water on the Maas, for the anchor cable hangs loosely and no one is busy with the halyards. The large and wide jib is lowered and the spritsail is in a half-lowered position. As is characteristic of these ships, the wooden hull is broader along the waterline than at the deck level. This profile kept the ship high in the water and allowed it to sail along the shallow inland waterways. One of the sideboards used to stabilize the craft when it was under sail is seen drawn up midway along its side.

Standing in the *pleyt* awaiting the arrival of the dignitaries in the rowboats is a portly officer who wears an orange sash under his brown cloak. Unfortunately his identity is unknown, but the distinctive
flags on the ship, that hanging from the stern with blue-white-blue bars and the smaller orange flag atop the mast, may well provide a clue. The smaller red flag atop the mast has also not been identified. In all likelihood the officials who are approaching the pleyt are coming to bid farewell just before the fleet’s departure. With the exception of the pleyt, all the ships have their sails fully raised. They would have waited for the ebb tide to help carry them along the inland waterways to Bergen op Zoom and Sas van Gent. To judge from the slack anchor line, the ripples of water against the bow of the pleyt, and the way it rests in the water, the ebb tide has just begun.

The probability is strong that these figures are representatives of Dordrecht because the standing young officer wears a red and white sash, which are the city’s colors. Even though he is given particular prominence in the painting, it seems unlikely that he was the most important emissary. His rowboat is quite undistinguished, particularly in comparison with the other transport boat carrying three officials and the bugler. The burgomaster of Dordrecht at that time was Cornelis van Beveren, a distinguished patriarch, who was also the head of a family who were frequent patrons of Aelbert Cuyp. Van Beveren is certainly not the relatively youthful officer standing in the small rowboat, for in 1646 he was fifty-six years old. Serving with Van Beveren on a council were three other officers of the “Gecommit-terde ten Beleyde van Stad” [administrative council], Jacob de Witt, Johann Dionijisz, and Cornelius van Someren. The standing figure is probably not one of these men either, not only because he is so young, but also because it is unlikely that one of the three would have been distinguished above the others.

The identity of the figure who is so clearly silhouetted against the shimmering water is of some interest because he may well have been the person who commissioned this large, complex painting. One possibility is that he was Matthijs Pompe, Vry-Heer van Slingeland. In 1646 he was twenty-five years old and already held the public office of shepen [bailiff, magistrate]. It seems quite probable that given his official position and family connections he could have been granted the honor of being the emissary sent by the city to present the burgomaster and other high-ranking city officials to an officer of the fleet as it was about to set sail. Pompe was married to a daughter of Cornelis van Beveren and was also the brother of Michiel Pompe van Meerder-voort, an important patron of Cuyp. Whether or not a relationship existed between Michiel Pompe, Vry-Heer van Slingeland, and Johan van der Linden van Slingeland, the eighteenth-century Dordrecht collector who is the first documentable owner of this work, is not known, but is certainly quite probable.

The Washington painting, however, should also be considered in relation to a painting at Waddesdon Manor, which may well have been executed as a companion piece (fig. 3). The two works, which are virtually identical in size and which apparently hung together in the Slingeland collection in 1752, depict a continuous panoramic sweep of this impressive assemblage of ships anchored off Dordrecht in 1646. Here a comparable scene takes place, with

Fig. 3. Aelbert Cuyp, View on the Maas near Dordrecht, probably late 1650s, oil on canvas, National Trust, Waddesdon Manor and Courtauld Institute of Art
distinguished individuals being transported to an awaiting sailing ship. It has been proposed that the rowboat contained Prince Frederik Hendrik inspecting the Dutch fleet, an uncertain but plausible identification. Frederik Hendrik may have been present at the “Groote Vergaderinge” in Dordrecht, for Balen mentions that his lifeguard was there. It seems, however, that he accompanied the troops by land rather than by water, at least as far as Breda.

While these paintings were almost surely commissioned works related to a specific event associated with Dordrecht, Cuyp’s masterful creations stemmed from a long-abiding interest in depicting scenes along the Maas and Merwede, rivers surrounding Dordrecht. In his Fishing Boat at Anchor, c. 1644, in the Getty Museum, for example, he depicts a panoramic, light-filled river view that focuses on a sailing boat with its jib lowered, very similar in character to the pleyt in the Washington painting. Also preceding the Washington painting is a painting in the Wallace Collection, which depicts a scene of Shipping on the Maas.

The description and dimensions seem to identify these paintings as Cuyp’s View on the Maas near Dordrecht at Waddesdon Manor (fig. 3) and The Maas at Dordrecht. As Oldenbarnevelt was executed in 1619 and Prince Mauritius had died in 1625, these identifications were clearly fanciful.

Notes

1. Hoet 1752, 2: 490. Van Slingeland’s inventory describes two paintings as: “Two pieces, being the view of the City of Dordrecht to the Huys Merwede with many yachts and ships, being a rendezvous there [of] Prince Mauritius of Orange in a ‘Chaloup’ with several other Princes of the city brought over to the yacht along which ‘Chaloup’ is another in which Oldenbarnevelt stands to see Prince Mauritius, from life, by Aelbert Cuyp. each h. 43 d. w. 64½ d.” “Twee stukken, zynde het Gezigt van de Stad Dordrecht tot het Huys Merwerde meete Jachten en Scheepen, zynde een Rendevous daar Prins Maurits van Orange in een Chaloup met enige andere Prince van de Stad na het jagen wert gevoert tegens over welke Chaloup een andere is waarmee Oldenbarnevelt overest staende op Princ Mauritius siet, na het Leven, door Albert Kuyp. ieder h. 43 d. br. 64 en een halfd.” The description and dimensions seem to identify these paintings as Cuyp’s View on the Maas near Dordrecht at Waddesdon Manor (fig. 3) and The Maas at Dordrecht. As Oldenbarnevelt was executed in 1619 and Prince Mauritius had died in 1625, these identifications were clearly fanciful.

2. Margin note in NGA copy of sale catalogue gives buyer as Delfos (who also bought several other paintings in the sale), but a note in a copy at the British Library gives the buyer as “Rens.” HôG also does not note which he mistakenly believed to be the Waddesdon Manor picture; it was removed when the painting was lined in 1854-1857. Waagen 1854-1857, 2: 316.


4. As Alan Chong has kindly noted, an 1824 index of the British Institution exhibitions mistakenly dates this exhibition to 1813.

5. Cited in Schneider 1930, no. 57. An undated Nottingham Castle label was formerly affixed to the back of the picture; it was removed when the painting was lined in 1944 (now in NGA curatorial files).


7. In addition to its popularity in exhibitions, a number of copies of the work were executed. They include a signed copy by Jacob van Strij (1736–1815), oil on wood, 59 x 74 cm.
with Rob Kattenburg, Aerdenhout, in 1981; a copy formerly in the collection of Matthew Anderson, exhibited in Leeds in 1868, no. 898; and a copy formerly owned by Guy Sebright, oil on canvas, 109 x 165 cm, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1907, no. 57.

8. Waagen mistakenly believed that the scene was illuminated by a setting sun.


10. This drawing was made after 1647, when modifications were made to buildings along the water’s edge. (An earlier drawing of the same site is in the De Boer collection, Amsterdam. See Reiss 1973, 117.) It is unlikely, however, that all three paintings were executed in the late 1640s. As is argued below, The Man at Dordrecht probably dates c. 1650, while the more delicately rendered views in Kenwood and at Ascott probably date in the mid-1650s.


12. See note 1.


14. See, for example, Berenson and Valentiner 1941, no. 209.

15. See, for example, Govaert Flinck’s The Amsterdam Civic Guard Celebrating the Signing of the Peace of Münster, 1648, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. C.1. See Moltke 1905, pl. 53.

16. Russell 1990, 31–82. Her article is the outgrowth of research she undertook at the National Gallery in 1981 and 1982. Her article also incorporated a number of observations provided by Commodore C. J. W. van Waning, who undertook an in-depth study of the painting in the fall of 1982. The text of his research, as well as navigational charts he provided, are in NGA curatorial files.


18. According to Professor Paul Hofsäser (letter, 6 August 1986, in NGA curatorial files), the intent of the expedition was to lay siege to Antwerp. Antwerp, however, was heavily defended and the campaign became bogged down by autumn.

19. All efforts to identify these flags have been unsuccessful, despite the kind assistance of both T. N. Schelhas, director of the Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, The Hague (letter, 5 March 1982, in NGA curatorial files), and H.C. ‘t Jong, archivist at the Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst, Dordrecht (letter, 10 March 1982, in NGA curatorial files). One possibility is that the flag is related to Colonel Varik, the only officer mentioned by Balen. Although the exact identity of Colonel Varik is not known, one form of the Varik family crest was a diagonal cross (color unknown) that is not unrelated in shape to the flag at the stern of the ship. See Anspach 1892, 68–69, 149. Commodore Van Waning (see note 16) believed that the small orange flag represented a “banner or regimental colour with its finely carved top and wooden bar along the topside of the flag.” He believed that the flag may well represent the regimental colors of Colonel Varik. Mr. Schelhaas, however, believes that the flag depicts a fleur-de-lis and thus may relate to the coat of arms of the Van Beveren family. Finally, Mr. H. C. ‘t Jong has suggested that the flag depicts a tower or castle on a red field, which would associate the ship with Middelburg.

20. Reiss 1975, no. 119 (HdG 1907–1927, 2: no.168); and no. 121 (HdG 1907–1927, 2: nos. 85 and 617); and no. 128 (HdG 1907–1927, 2: nos. 173 and 174).


22. See note 1. For an assessment of the relationship of this painting and that in the collection of the Duke of Sutherland (Reiss 1975, 142, no. 103), see Russell 1990, 34–35.


26. Reiss 1975, no. 93 (HdG 1907–1927, 2: 34 and 1676). (Reiss dates this work c. 1647.) The attribution of this work, however, has been called into question by Ingamells and Chong in Wallace Collection 1992, 4, 78, no. P138, where it is called a later work in the “Manner of Cuyp.”

References

1752: Hoet, 2: 490.

1753–1765: Descamps, 2 (1754); 80.

1822/1880: Burnet, part 2: 8, pl. 2, fig. 4 (etching, in reverse).

1824: Buchanan, 2: 192, no. 10.

1829–1842: Smith, 5 (1834); 311, no. 98.

1838: Waagen, 2: 206.

1854: Jervis, 2: 217, 326.

1854–1857: Waagen, 2 (1854); 316.

1884: Veth: 284, no. 70.

1891: Cundall: 96–97, 163.

1907–1927: HdG, 2 (1906); 15–16, no. 28.


1928: “America Lends”: 1, 12–14.


1929: Rutter: no. 380, 66, 64, repro.


1930: Schneider: no. 57, repro.


1941: Berenson and Valentiner: no. 209, repro.

1944: NGA: 51.

1949: Mellon: 97, repro.


1951: Reitlinger: 204.


1956: NGA: 35.

1966: Stechow: 110, fig. 237.


1975: Reiss: 143, no. 104, repro., 204, 212.


AELBERT CUYP