

The Brotherhood of the V Noble Lineages of Hoegaarden (1741/1908-1971/...)

After the marriage of Servatius Sweerts and Catharina Peeters in 1700 in the *Paradijshoeve* farmstead, a council was formed, the ***Sweertsraad***, consisting of five influential persons: Provost and priest Jan Vandeputte and his successor and nephew Henricus Peeters, Secretary/Clerk of the '*Vrijheid Hoegaarden*' Antonius Sweerts, Mayor Lambert de Pas and Servatius Sweerts himself.

After having destined their eldest son for the priesthood to succeed Henricus Peeters, the aforementioned couple chose spouses for the children with the utmost care. This is how 1 **Servatius Sweerts**, 2 **Hubertus Sweerts** and their brothers-in-law 3 **Carolus Van Nerum**, 4 **Henri Hoebanx** and 5 **Henri Struys** became the next generation of nobles to hold the reins of power.

In politics, they divided among themselves the seats for the aldermen, which were granted for life by the Prince-Bishop of Liège. The village council was manipulated in such a way that once again, a number of relatives by blood and marriage held seats. On the religious front, the office of parish priest was detached from the collegiate chapter of (but exceptionally resident) 12 canons, which itself depended on the Cathedral Chapter of Cologne. The economic wealth of the fertile Hesbaye region with its immense supply of suitable cereals and spring water was monopolised by the same families in their imposing quadrangle farmsteads with their own breweries. The status of and the location as an enclave of the Prince-Bishopric of Liège within the Duchy of Brabant made the ***Vrijheid Hoegaarden*** even wealthier.

Provost and priest Henricus Peeters endowed two scholarships for his two godchildren. In his last will of 1739, he provided that the scholarships should be granted to the children's children of his sister Catharina Peeters, wife of Servatius Sweerts, down to and including the fifth generation. Thereafter, the scholarships were to be granted to young men from Hoegaarden.

After the death of Provost and priest Henricus Peeters in 1741, the scholarships were administered by the ***Brotherhood of the V Noble Lineages of Hoegaarden (1741)***, which was founded for this purpose on 9 December 1741.

Afterwards, each of the five beneficiary families set up its own family guild between 1768 and 1780:

- 1 the *Zwarte Merel* (blackbird) (1768)
- 2 the *Groene Klaverblad* (green clover) (1776)
- 3 the *Gulden Lelie* (golden lily) (1778)
- 4 the *Zilveren Zwaard* (silver sword) (1772)
- 5 the *Zilveren Struisvogel* (silver ostrich) (1780)



Coat of arms of the scholarship (1741), copy of XVIII B (not. Sweerts); bunch of grapes = Peeters coat of arms

Between 1768 and 1780, the five family guilds from the 5 councils and the five family deans

were elevated to the rank of guild deans; the founding of the 5 guilds happened in a very unusual way, but the reason for that cannot be fathomed.

The Brotherhood Act prescribed that the first guild should be that of the Blackbird, once it '*came about*'. The guild was indeed the first to be founded in 1768, but the meaning of '*coming about*' is speculation. Probably a matter of sufficient descendants and age.

Next, every four years later, the second and third guilds were founded, which were the Silver Sword in 1772 and the Green Clover in 1776. The fourth and fifth guild would then be founded at intervals of two years afterwards, the Golden Lily in 1778 and the Silver Ostrich in 1780.

The significance of the intervals of 4-4-2-2 years escapes us, as does the hierarchy of the 5 guilds.

After being forced to operate underground during the interim period of French rule (approximately 1795-1815), the Brotherhood and guild activities resumed in the 19th century. This was so successful that the scholarships, despite the forfeiture by the former regime, were reinstated.

But times had changed: new values and ideas such as democracy with the associated political opposition between liberals and Catholics and the separation of church and state were emerging; the brewing industry faced competition from the sugar industry; technical progress and innovations were literally and figuratively a way into a wider world than previously (including the railways).

First there were the mergers between the Blackbird and the Green Clover into one Sweets Alliance and the Hoebancx-Struys Alliance, so that together with the Golden Lily, there were three guilds left. Afterwards, the political and economic divisions ensured that in the course of the second half of the 19th century, the Brotherhood and the guilds, except for the Golden Lily, ceased their activities. In 1908, the Van Nerum family also allowed its guild to become dormant, until it was re-founded in 1961, followed by the re-founding of the Brotherhood in 1971.

The Henri Peeters scholarships are still awarded, besides the more recently endowed Emile Peeters scholarship (1912) and the Henri-Joseph Rega (Outgaarden) scholarship of 1754.

Information: Secretariaat van de Commissie voor Studiebeurzenstichtingen, Gasthuisstraat 31 bus 4, 1000 Brussel, tel. 02-512.06.29).

The V Families of Hoegaarden V lineages, which all originated from the same SWEERTS-PEETERS ancestors

I Sweets x Sweets	A. Michiels x Sweets B. Lowet x Sweets C. Sweets x Schepens xx From Nerum
II. Sweets x From Osmael	A. Vandertaelen x Rondas xx Sweets B. Sweets x Nijs C. Dotremont x Sweets D. Sweets x From Osmael E. Deboes x Sweets
III. Van Nerum x Sweets	A. Van Nerum x Bueckens B. Van Nerum x Van Autgaerden C. Van Nerum x Lowet
IV. Hoebancx x Sweets	A. Lintermans x Hoebancx B. Hoebancx x Vandermolen C. Dock x Hoebancx
V. Struys x Sweets	A. Vandermolen x Struys B. Hendrickx x Struys

The Head Deans of the Brotherhood since its foundation in 1741

- 1 Carolus Van Nerum (1741-1757)
- 2 Henricus Struys (Hoeg./Hauthem 1757-1782).
- 3 Hubertus Sweerts (1782-1790)
- 4 Joannes Van Nerum (1790-1805)
- 5 Jacobus Philippus Van Nerum (1805-1824).
- 6 Henri Van Nerum (1824-1844).
- 7 Jean Henri Lintermans (1844-1850)
- 8 Norbert Lintermans (1850-ca. 1870)

In about 1870, the Brotherhood was dissolved and the life of the guild came to an end; only the Golden Lily continued to exist until 1908 and incorporated the Lintermans branch of the clan into its ranks, due to its maternal ancestry from the 'Lily house'; in 1961, the Lily Guild was re-established and the Brotherhood followed its example in 1971.

- 9 Charles Van Nerum (1971-1979)
- 10 Robert Van Nerum (1979-1991)
- 11 Marcel Joseph (1991-1999)
- 12 Georges Sweerts (1999-2010)
- 13 Emile Van Nerum (2010-2012)
- 14 Victor Claes (2012- 2018)
- 15 Willy Sweerts (2018-2021)
- 16 Jean Sweerts (2021-2023)

Head Honorary Deans of the Brotherhood since its foundation

- 1 Count Philippe van Meldert, 1742-1759
- 2 Count Jean van Meldert, 1759-1767
- 3 Count Joseph van Meldert, 1767-1795
- 4 Notary Cornelis a Speculo, 1805-1838
- 5 Jean Baptist Dumont, Mayor and Alderman of Hoegaarden, 1838-1848
- 6 Ridder Philippe Wouters d'Oplinter en Bouchout, 1848-1856
- 7 Count Anatole d'Aerschot-Schoonhove en Waanrode, 1856-1879
- 8 Leopold Lodewijckx, Mayor of Hoegaarden, 1879-1897
- 9 Joseph Putzeys, Manager of the Hoegaarden sugar refinery, 1897-1908
- 10 Honorary Ambassador Louis Borremans, 1972-1991
- 11 Honorary Ambassador Georges Puttevils, 1992-2003
- 12 Honorary Notary Baron Charles Roberti de Winghe, 2003-2006
- 13 Honorary Ambassador Paul A.C. Taverniers, 2006-2018
- 14 Honorary Notary Marc Honorez, 2018

Assisting Honorary Deans:

- 1 Baron Guillaume de Beeckman de Schore, Dean of the St.-Sebastiaansgilde van de Vrijheid Hoegaarden, 1742-?
- 2 Baron Ferdinand de Beeckman de Schore, Dean of the St.-Sebastiaansgilde van de Vrijheid Hoegaarden, ?-1795
- 3 Sieur Servais Coenegras, brewer of Hoegaarden, 1805-1847
- 4 Louis Goossens, Mayor of Tienen, 1848-1851
- 5 Notary Louis Alexander Putzeys, Mayor of Hoegaarden, 1856-1872
- 6 Apollinaire Van Goetsenhoven, gentleman farmer of 't Gaethof, 1872-1896
- 7 Notary Leonce Rosseeuw, 1890-1908

- 8 Dr. Jan Verbesselt, curator of the Museum of Art and History Brussels, 1961/1971-1991
- 9 Honorary Ambassador Georges Puttevils, 1991-1992
- 10 Notary Charles Roberti de Winghe, 1992-2003
- 11 Honorary Consul Paul A.C. Taverniers, 2003-2006
- 12 Honorary Senator Stef Goris, 2006-2018
- 13 Honorary Notary Marc Van Nerum, 2018-2023

The guardians of the Brotherhood

- 1. 1741 Z.E.H. Henricus Sweerts (Hoeg. 1708-1785), Provost and priest of Hoegaarden and Guardian of the Confrérie since its foundation in 1741; son of the marriage of Servaes Sweerts and Catharina Peeters; he laid the foundation stone of the new church in 1754; he was born in the '*Paradijshoeve*' farmstead on the corner of Houtmarkt/Walenstraat
- 2. 1785 Z.E.H. Joannes-Hubertus Sweerts (Hoeg. 1752-1805), son of Hubertus Sweerts and Barbara Van Osmael, Provost and priest of Hoegaarden and nephew of the above;
- 3. 1805 Z.E.H. Guillielmus Joseph Vandenput (Tienen 1769-Neerlinter 1852); according to oral tradition, in 1810 he resigned as priest of Hoegaarden because of a conflict with Mayor and doctor Henri Van Nerum; the fact of the matter is that he repeatedly refused to solemnly commemorate the holiday in honour of '*Emperor Napoleon*' in the church and propagate the '*Imperial catechism*'.
- 4. 1810 Z.E.H. Jacobus Sweerts (Hoeg. 1769-1841), son of brewer Servaes Sweerts and Anna Catharina Nijs; so he was a worthy descendant of the Sweerts dynasty in the 19th century; he joined the Capuchin order and made his profession in Ghent in 1791 or 1792; during the French rule, he had lived in hiding, and had been a curate in Brussels from 1806
- 5. 1841 Z.E.H. Charles Van Nerum, priest in Gottechain;
- 6. 1883 Z.E.H. Aloysius Redig (Antwerp 1842-Hoeg. 1897), priest of Hoegaarden
- 7. 1896 Z.E.H. Egide Van Gucht (Merchtem 1848-Hoeg. 1922), priest of Hoegaarden
- 8. 1961 Z.E.H. Jozef Vander Velpen (Hoegaarden 1905-Diest 1988), he held the first mass on the occasion of the re-founding of the 'Golden Lily' in 1961; he was made an honorary citizen of Hoegaarden in 1973
- 9. 1988 Z.E.H. Jan Vandervelpen (Waanrode 11.11.1925), Provost and priest of Hoegaarden 1975-2002

Since 1960 the Van Nerum family guild / and since 1971 the Brotherhood has published the quarterly magazine 'Familieschoon', which has published some 5,000 pages to date.