

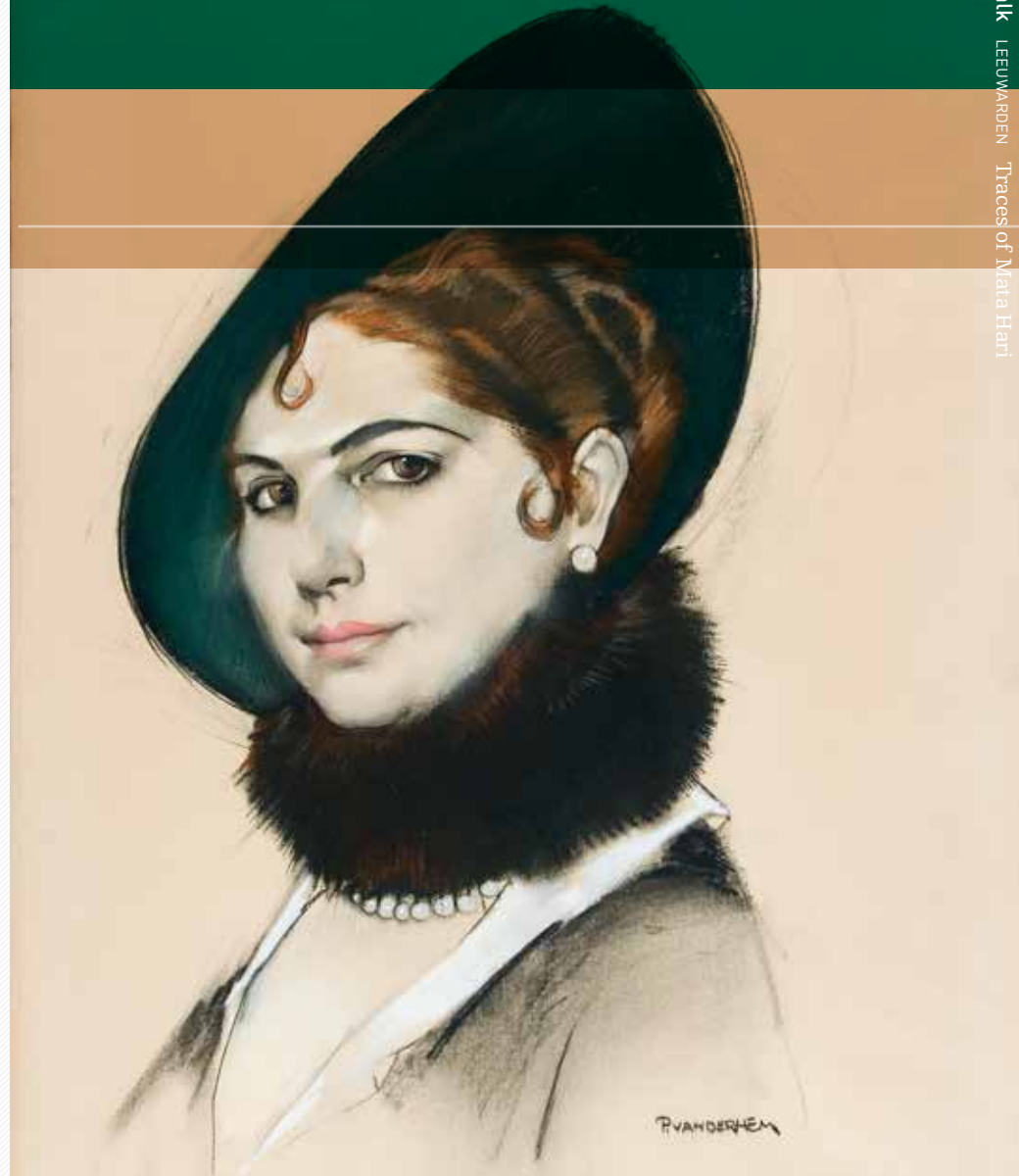
walking route

Traces of Mata Hari

- 1 Groeneweg 1,
Historisch Centrum
Leeuwarden HCL
- 2 Grote Kerkstraat 12,
Middelbare School voor
Meisjes (Grammar School for
Girls)
- 3 Grote Kerkstraat 212,
Zelle family residence
- 4 Bij de Put 13,
MacLeod family residence
- 5 Voorstreek 12, Mauritshuis
- 6 Kelders 33, birthplace
- 7 Korfmakerspijp,
Mata Hari statue
- 8 Sint Jacobsstraat 35,
De Jong dance school
- 9 Raadhuisplein 25, Hofschool
- 10 Nieuwestad 75, 'Huize Kwast'
(Kwast family residence)
- 11 Mata Hariplein
- 12 Willemskade 30,
Zelle family residence
- 13 Wilhelminaplein 92,
Fries Museum

Outside the Route

- A Spanjaardslaan,
Old Cemetery
(family tombstone)
- B Fahrenheitweg-
Johannes Brandsmaweg,
Margaretha Zelle Akwadukt



city walk

LEEUWARDEN

Traces of Mata Hari





city walk

LEEWARDEN

Traces of Mata Hari

INTRODUCTION

A girl from Leeuwarden

'My cradle was not in Java. On the seventh of August 1876, I was born in Leeuwarden. My father was a well-known Frisian merchant, my mother a very wealthy, beautiful woman. I have nothing but pleasant memories of my youth. (...) How often I have longed for those happy days. (...) I see them before me, my pretty Hungarian billy goats, with which I, a little girl, went out riding on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. That equipage is more dear to me than the most splendid equipages I later rode in through Paris, Madrid, Monte Carlo, Vienna, Petersburg and Berlin.

And our children's concerts (...) when my brother and I made music (...) I played the piano and he the violin. (...) Happy times! (...) And my little girlfriends (...) to them clings the memory of the finest time of my life.'

This is attributed to Mata Hari in the highly inventive biography which her father, Adam Zelle, had published – without her knowledge – in 1907 .



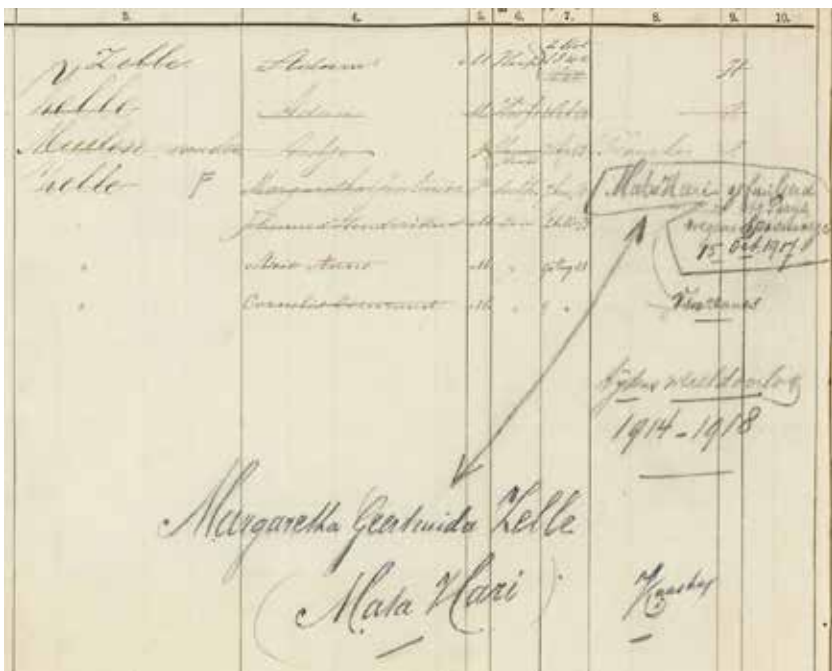
Photos of a young Margaretha Zelle.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

That happy youth in the Frisian capital refers to the first fifteen years in the life of Margaretha Geertruida Zelle, a youth that abruptly ended with the death of her mother in May 1891. Margreet was taken in by family elsewhere in the country and would never return to Leeuwarden. She would also never comment on the city of her birth again, either positively or negatively. By the time she became Mata Hari, thirteen years later, there was no trace left of the girl Margreet from Leeuwarden.

Yet there is still a great deal of Margreet in Mata Hari, just as there is much of Mata Hari to be found in the daughter of Adam 'the Baron' Zelle and Antje van der Meulen.

Though Leeuwarden no longer played a role in the turbulent life of Mata Hari, over the last century the existence of the world's most well-known spy has been a somewhat uneasy inheritance for the city.



The registration of the Zelle family in Leeuwarden's population register (with notes by the municipal official Kaastra).

On the one hand there is pride: Leeuwarden can lay claim to being the birthplace of the Netherlands' most famous Dutchwoman. On the other hand there is embarrassment: courtesan, nude dancer, convicted spy – not exactly admirable accomplishments.

This discussion between pride and shame flares up whenever the name Mata Hari is brought up in connection to something: a film, a book, a statue, the naming of a square, an exhibition or, for example, this booklet, marking the 100th anniversary of her death, for which a large exhibition will be launched in the Fries Museum.

According to a journalist from Leeuwarden, H.W. Keikes, Leeuwarden is 'The City of Mata Hari', whether we like it or not. Around 1975 he carried out an amusing experiment. He had friends and acquaintances from various countries send letters to his home address, but instead of the place name Leeuwarden, they addressed



The presentation of the statue of Mata Hari on the Korfmakerspijp in 1976. Second from the left is the sculptor Suze Boschma-Berkhout, to the right is Hennie Keikes and next to him is Sam Waagenaar.

it to The Town of MATA HARI, De Stad van MATA HARI, Die Stadt von MATA HARI, or Ville de MATA HARI. Postal workers everywhere were able to figure out that the letters should be sent to Leeuwarden, and they duly arrived in the Keikes family's mailbox. It was thus clear to Keikes, and he did not even live to see the Foundation set up to acquire the Mata Hari collection, which in 1996 would lead to a permanent exhibit dedicated to Leeuwarden's daughter in the Fries Museum. A few years later, she even had a square named after her, and on 18 December 2014 the Margaretha Zelle Akwadukt (aqueduct) was opened! At the end of the nineteenth century, none of the good citizens of Leeuwarden could have predicted that.



Postcard published by the VVV tourist office circa 1985.

Imagining Mata Hari

No one in the history of Leeuwarden has so often been the subject of books (fiction, non-fiction and even comic books), films, documentaries, TV series, musicals and dance performances as Greetje Zelle. It began right after her death. Well-known movie stars like Marlène Dietrich (1931), Greta Garbo - who in the same year portrayed her as a cold, calculating *femme fatale* -, Jeanne Moreau (1964) and Sylvia Kristel (1985) brought Leeuwarden's icon via the big screen to an audience of millions.

She figured in many novels at home and abroad. The crime writer Tomas Ross suggested in his *De tranen van Mata Hari* (2007) that she had had a relationship with Prince Hendrik, husband to Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. The bestselling Brazilian author Paulo Coelho reconstructed her life in *The Spy* (2016); the book was published in dozens of editions worldwide (including one in Frisian), all with the same book cover.

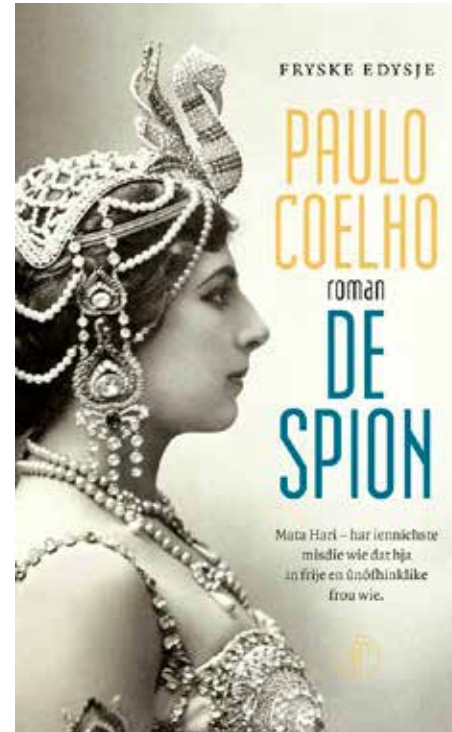
In her home province, Riets Gratama produced a major musical for the 1990 edition of the Frysk Festival, showcasing the young talents Janke Dekker (in the Dutch version) and Froukje Schaaf (in the Frisian version). Both versions were also nationally televised. The multi-talented Tet Rozendal toured the country from 2013 with her theatre show about Mata Hari; in 2017/2018 she performed it throughout Europe (including at the Musée Guimet in Paris).

Of course, the modern dancers cannot be left out: in 2016 the Nationale Ballet depicted her life in a successful, large-scale choreography by Ted Brandsen. An internet search for songs with Mata Hari in the title yields more than 30 hits.

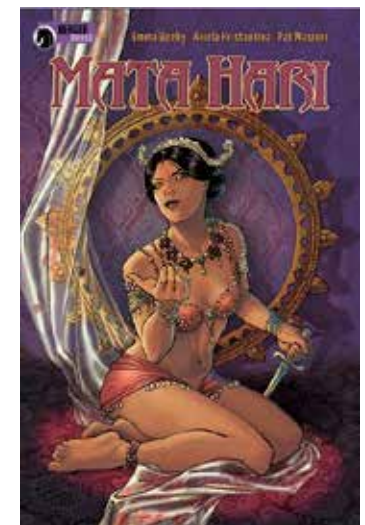


^ Poster for the film *Mata Hari* from 1931, with Greta Garbo in the leading role.

- > Poster for Tel Rozendal's theatre show *Mata Hari* in 2015. Tet (who until recently lived in Leeuwarden) still performs this show both in and outside the Netherlands.



- < Front cover of the Frisian edition of *The Spy* by Paulo Coelho.
- > Mata Hari is still a source of inspiration for many writers and artists, as can be seen in this comic book by Emma Beeby and Ariela Kristantina (to be brought out in 2018).





In 2008 Mata Hari also starred in a computer game, produced by Cranberry Production and DTP Entertainment.

Mata Hari is used worldwide for advertisements. There are various drinks, like this absinthe, T-shirts and model figures dedicated to her.



The Mata Hari praline from patisserie Le Bonbon in Gytsjerk. Other businesses in Leeuwarden and its surroundings as well use or have used the name Mata Hari. The flower shop Mata Hari Bloemen (Voorstreek 5) has existed under this name for many years. The Mata Hari restaurant, which stood at Weerd 7 in the seventies and eighties, has not yet been forgotten. A few years ago the International Mata Hari Society was set up. This Facebook page of the collector Jan Brugman, from Leeuwarden, has no commercial interest.

The Leeuwarden of Margaretha Geertruida Zelle

'Leeuwarden is a fine town.' This was according to dr. Philip Kooperberg, medical director of the Leeuwarder Stadsziekenhuis (city hospital). He would have known, because around 1885 he had all the city's facets examined with a fine-tooth comb, the result of which appeared in the book *Geneeskundige Plaatsbeschrijving van Leeuwarden (Medical Description of Leeuwarden)* in 1888. Fine, certainly, but the doctor also found many shortcomings and points of concern. The water, for example, '... of the canals and ditches is of the worst quality.' A large amount of dirt and trash was simply dumped into the canals, yielding, besides enormous pollution, a horrific stench.

PLATTEGROND

Van

LEEWARDEN.

(Ordnung)

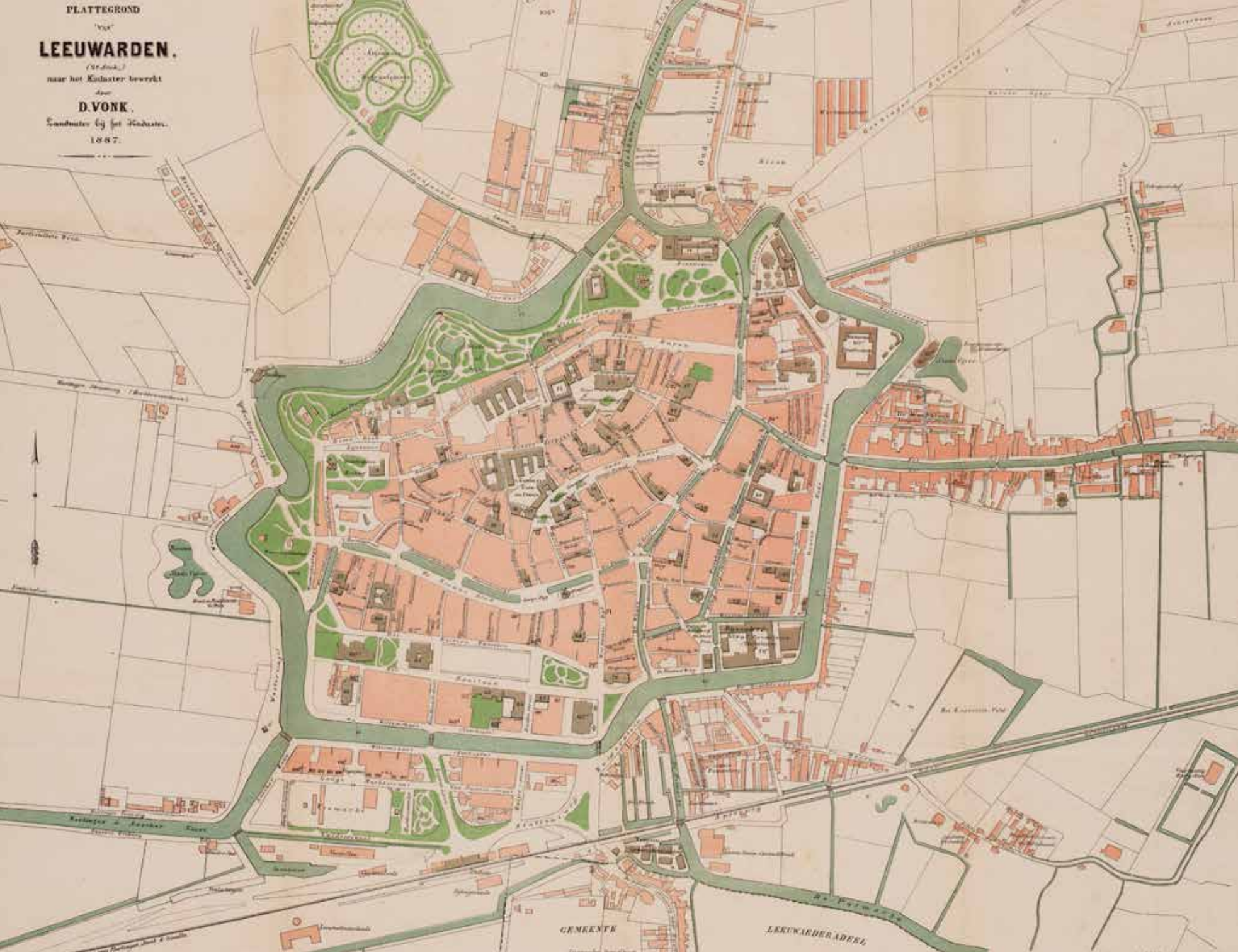
naar het Kadaster bewerkt

door

D. VONK.

Landmeter bij het Kadaster.

1887.



Naturally, this canal water could not be used as drinking water. The citizens of Leeuwarden got their water from two 'fresh water ponds', one on either side of the city. The quality of the water, however, especially during dry summers, often left much to be desired.

The houses of the more well-to-do and the middle class could in general stand Kooperbergs' test of criticism. Wide streets and spacious gardens provided enough light and air, although in warm summer weather the windows of the houses on the canals had to be closed due to the smell. It was a very different story for the workers' houses. In his opinion many of them should be condemned. The situation could be deplorable: countless numbers of large families lived in small, mouldy, damp little shacks in alleys sometimes not even two metres wide. Kooperberg stood '... amazed at so much misery ...'



View of the Zuiderplein, with the military parade. On 22 December 1888 a modern water supply system could finally be officially put into service. The construction of the water tower on the Zuiderplein, the breaking up of the streets in order to lay the pipes and the placing of a fountain on the Hofplein - all this could not have escaped Margaretha's notice. Coloured postcard, circa 1900.

In Kooperberg's eyes, the people of Leeuwarden were serene, patient and thoughtful, which gave them self-esteem and independence. They were, however, also stiff and obstinate. He was struck by the cleanliness and neatness with which the streets, doorsteps and homes were maintained, which in turn made him marvel at their lack of personal cleanliness: '... baths are used little, and the washing of the whole body is far from common.'

Notable was the large consumption of hard liquor. Per male resident above the age of sixteen, the annual sales volume of distilled beverages was more than 60 liters. Nationally, only Groningen and Rotterdam scored higher. Kooperberg did adjust Leeuwarden's rate



The filling of the Wortelhaven and the Eewal in 1884. An increasing stream of complaints led the municipality to fill a number of canals, many of which were of medieval origin. Margaretha witnessed the filling of the Eewal in 1884. To acquire the earth to fill it, the municipality had part of the northwestern bulwark dug up.

DRAWING ALBERT MARTIN, 1884.

somewhat by deducting the consumption of villagers at the weekly cattle market, but he still had serious concerns about the use of alcohol in Leeuwarden's sixty-three coffee houses and inns, plus the consumption of hard liquor in the *sociëteiten* (social clubs) and the homes of the middle class, where the liquor bottle made a regular appearance on the table. Kooperberg probably saw a correlation between the visits to the Friday market and the consumption of alcohol with the large number of prostitutes.

Over time, Leeuwarden began to fulfill a central function for the region. Regular barge services brought goods from far out in the countryside to be traded in the city's markets. The ships then took the goods they had purchased in the city back with them on their return trip. Leeuwarden was also a center for the emerging industry. In 1863 the railway to Harlingen was completed, to be followed later by railway links to Groningen and Zwolle and, in 1883, one could



The Kelders and surroundings in 1884, as seen from De Brol, with in the background the Bonifatius tower, still behind scaffolds. Margaretha, who lived close by, undoubtedly stood and watched the construction of the Bonifatius Church between 1882 and 1884.

reach Sneek by train as well. Already in 1871, on the corner of the Wortelhaven and the Eewal, the city had a post office, which also housed the telegraph service. In 1880 Leeuwarden, with 29.000 residents, stood in ninth place in the ranking of Dutch cities; this despite the agricultural crisis, which had particularly afflicted the northern Netherlands.

Kooperberg was certainly satisfied with the buildings in which education was given, even though lighting could be dodgy sometimes and ventilation was not of the same standard everywhere in the city, all of which often resulted in a musty atmosphere. This is hardly surprising, since some locales had to hold fifty or more children. Doctor Kooperberg was pleased with the rest, however: everything was '... improved and adapted in accordance with the present demands of hygiene.' The municipal council received a compliment, because it: '... has granted the funds and the means with praiseworthy diligence and liberality.' School attendance was required from the age of six. The four- to five-hour school day was not too long, and Kooperberg praised the youth fortunate that the schools in Leeuwarden did not give them any homework. He thought there was far too little free time spent playing outdoors, however. Many children, already at a young age, received extra lessons in '... various branches of knowledge and ability ...', such as music, drawing, handicrafts and religion. 'Many a young, frail little creature spends her hour at the piano, which would be better spent in the outside air,' grumbled Kooperberg.

There was often much to do in that outside air. There were concerts in the Prinsentuin park, the *schutterij* (local citizens' militia) regularly turned out for exercises on the Lange Pijp, attracting crowds of watchers, and there was the weekly market and the annual fair. On royal holidays there were harness races during the day and fireworks in the evening. The first sports clubs were set up, such as gymnastic associations and the 'velocipède-club', which gave demonstrations on the Wilhelminaplein. English lawn-tennis already had a few practitioners. The first football association, Frisia, was established in 1883 as a football and cricket club; it is still active today. As soon as there was ice on the ditches and canals everyone was out skating, and in the summer the game of *kaatsen* (Frisian handball), which Kooperberg considered "... an extremely healthy activity ...", was

popular. People also took walks, not only in the city but outside it as well. The 'singeltsje om' walk along tree-lined paths on the outer side of the city canals was extremely popular.

In this fine city, full of life, cares, bustle and development, E. Bloembergen, officer of the civil registry for the municipality of Leeuwarden, registered on 8 augustus 1876 the declaration of the birth "on the seventh day of this month at one o'clock in the afternoon of Margaretha Geertruida Zelle, daughter of ..."



Birth certificate of Margratha Geertruida Zelle, 7 August.

From Leeuwarden to the Dutch East Indies

Leeuwarden, seven August 1876. Adam Zelle and his wife Antje van der Meulen were delighted with the birth of their daughter, Margaretha Geertruida. Both her names were not used however: everyone called her Margreet or, even shorter, Griet.

Her father (Leeuwarden, 1840) was a well-known hats and caps merchant. His shop on De Kelders was called In de Klok (In the Clock). In some of the advertisements he placed in the local newspaper, the *Leeuwarder Courant*, mention is also made of a factory for hats and caps. He even had a branch on the Schapenplein in Sneek for a while. His business did well and he had, partly due to profitable securities speculation, a very respectable income. It was reason enough, in his eyes, to blatantly rub up against the city's highest circles.



View to the northeast, from the Nieuwe Toren. In the foreground is the Poststraat (leading to the Minnemastraat) with its De Nieuwe Doelen hotel, with the backs and tops of the buildings on the Kelders, including the birthplace of Margaretha Zelle.

PANORAMA PHOTO BY G.H. MATTHIJSSSEN, 1887

The Baron

Leeuwarden was a city concerned with status. In his *Gedenkschriften (Memoirs)*, Pieter Jelles Troelstra looks back on his youth in Leeuwarden and distinguishes four social classes: the leading circles, the upper middle class, the lower middle class and the wage earners. Climbing to a higher class was virtually impossible. Only a few individuals could make the step up and be accepted. The bankers Bloembergen, Gratama and Mispelblom-Beijer, for example, carried it off, although their influence was only as great as their wealth.

In his aspiration to be part of Leeuwarden's elite, Adam Zelle succeeded in becoming standard-bearer of the honorary guard during King Willem III's visit to the city in 1873. He proudly had himself immortalised, portrayed on a horse and carrying a banner, by the painter A. Martin. A short time later his name was listed in an advertisement for the establishment of a shooting association. That only occurred once, however; the name Zelle does not appear again. An attempt to be appointed, via the Catholic electoral association, to the municipal council failed as well: he received the least votes of all the candidates.



Adam Zelle as standard-bearer of the honorary guard during King Willem III's visit to Leeuwarden in 1873. Zelle got into a very heated dispute with Staas, the portraitist, who claimed that the expenses for the photo were never paid.

ROYAL HOUSE ARCHIVES

His clash with Leeuwarden's elite was severe when his application for membership to the Masonic lodge, De Friesche Trouw, did not make it through balloting a second time. "His inclusion would, with an eye to his slight intellectual development, by no means be an asset..." For a long time afterwards the board of the lodge was harassed with slanderous letters; although they were anonymous, it was obvious they came from Zelle. He considered the head of the lodge, notary Cornelis Wiersma (who lived at Eewal 50 until his death in 1880), his greatest enemy. In 1878 Zelle published a list of members in which he labelled the state of the lodge as pathetic, with no trust and no solidarity, claiming the members were deserting. His desire to become a member turned into aversion and suspicion. He accused members of the lodge of thwarting him in his bankruptcy and during his divorce making sure custody of his children was given to his wife. Even in 1896, he was complaining to the Minister van Justice, himself a Freemason, that the club of 'assassins' had taken his children from him.



Adam Zelle (seated, 3rd from the right) with other members of the honorary guard. FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

When Margaretha's schoolmates were later sought out to recall memories of her, some still spoke with disdain over '... that hats and caps salesman ...', whom one of the ladies flat out called a braggart. No, he never made it up a step higher on Leeuwarden's class ladder. Was his intellectual ability too slight? Was he looked down upon, that jumped-up shopkeeper, and is that why he was mockingly called "The Baron"?

That Zelle was easily insulted is apparent in a police report from 1886: 'Adam Zelle, 47 years old, merchant in petroleum, residing in the Grote Kerkstraat, complains of being insulted by his competitors Hijlkema and Rolf von den Baumen, residing, respectively, on the Grachtswal and the Tuinen, who have assaulted his good name by claiming to the grocer Buis, residing on the St. Jacobsstraat, that he (the complainant) sold Russian petroleum for American.'

Adam Zelle's world crashed when the court declared his bankruptcy on 21 February 1889. All of Leeuwarden would have known about it, and a few may have knowingly looked at each other: "Told you so!"



Advertisement for Adam Zelle's hats and caps shop.
 LEEUWARDER COURANT, 5 MAY 1871

After Margreet there were three boys, Johannes Henderikus and the twins Arie Anne and Cornelis Coenraad, born in the home above the shop. In January 1883 the family moved to one of the largest and oldest residences in the city. Margreet, as the only daughter, was very spoiled by her father. She wore eye-catchingly pretty and modern clothing, attended the Hofschool – where Leeuwarden's elite sent their children –, learned to play the piano and took dancing lessons. Certainly sensational in Leeuwarden at the time was the goat-drawn cart her father had bought for her. It must have been a striking spectacle: Margreet, often with one or two of her brothers, making a trip through the city in a cart pulled by two goats.

A youth in prosperity with a father who had delusions of grandeur, a proper education at the Hofschool and a year at the Middelbare School voor Meisjes (Grammar School for Girls), or MSM, and her confidence with etiquette undeniably laid the foundation for the role she would later play.

Undoubtedly, Leeuwarden's history as a capital city also figured in young Margreet's imaginary world. That past was explicitly and tangibly present within walking distance: the Stadhouderslijk Hof (Stadholders' Court) next to her primary school, hence the name Hofschool, and the Princessehof (Princess' Court) across from the MSM she later attended. The history of her family's manor-like house on the city's highest point spoke to her imagination as well. To this was added her father's preoccupation with nobility: he liked to assume the title of baron.



A drawing Margaretha made, as a young child, for her mother.
 The drawing was recently bought by the Fries Museum.

PHOTO LEEUWARDER COURANT

It is therefore not so strange that 'Griet from Liwwadden' later readily adorned herself with the title Lady MacLeod and had visiting cards made with a baron's crown above her name...

Towards the end of the 80s in the nineteenth century, Adam Zelle ran into financial problems. Speculations failed, he suffered losses and on 21 February 1889 the court declared him bankrupt. Zelle left his wife and children and went to Amsterdam. The large house was put up for sale and Antje and her four children had to move into an upstairs apartment. On 4 September 1890 the division of property followed, whereby custody of the children was given to their mother. There was never a full divorce: Antje passed away on 9 May 1891. Ten days later Adam Zelle placed a very remarkable obituary in the newspaper, in which he reported the death of his 'tenderly beloved' wife after a 'painful suffering since 21 February 1889'. The once-so-ideal family then fell completely apart.



Adam Zelle.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION



Obituary of Antje van der Meulen in the *Leeuwarder Courant* on 18 May 1891.

Margreet went to Leiden to train to be a kindergarten teacher. She did not train for long. The story goes that the school principal fell in love with her and the couple were caught in an indecent position, after which she was forced to leave. No evidence for this story has ever been found. Margreet then went to The Hague, where she moved in with an uncle. There, in March 1895, she responded to a matrimonial advertisement: '*Officer on furlough from the Indies seeks girl with a sweet disposition, with the intent to marry.*' That officer was Rudolph MacLeod, captain in the Royal Dutch East India Army, on leave in the Netherlands. On 7 March 1895 they met each other for the first time, and they became engaged only six days later. Margreet was 19 years old, her husband-to-be, usually called John, was 39. On 11 July 1895 they married in Amsterdam, after which the young couple went on honeymoon to Wiesbaden in Germany. They then moved in with a sister of MacLeod's in Amsterdam, where, on 30 January 1897, their first child, Norman John, was born. A few months later MacLeod's leave was over, and on 1 May 1897 the family moved to the Dutch East Indies. They arrived in Malang, on East Java, where MacLeod was stationed. Margreet enjoyed life in the East Indies. She was independent and enjoyed the receptions and parties and the attention she received as an attractive young woman. She delved into the local culture and learned the traditional dances. On May 2 1898 a second child, Jeanne Louise, usually called Non, was born.



Wedding picture of Margaretha Zelle and Rudolph MacLeod, 1895.
TRESOAR COLLECTION



^ Jeanne Louise (Non) MacLeod with her father, Rudolph.
FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION



^ Jeanne Louise (Non) MacLeod's rattle.
FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION



It was clear the marriage was not a success, although it is difficult to pinpoint the exact reason why. Margreet was known to be a flirtatious hedonist who spent too much money and had no interest in the straightjacket in which she was supposed to fit. MacLeod is portrayed as a gruff scoundrel who was irritated by his wife and sometimes treated her roughly. Most of the biographers who have dedicated themselves to the phenomenon that is Mata Hari, choose one side or the other; the truth must lie somewhere in the middle. The couple quarrelled more and more often. Everything disintegrated when their young son, Norman, died on 27 June 1899. He and his sister, Non, had been poisoned, and the doctor was only able to save the little girl. MacLeod blamed the death of the apple of his eye on his wife: she left the children alone too often. The couple carried on a few more years in East India but returned in March 1902 to the Netherlands. In August of that year Margreet filed for divorce. The court gave her custody of Non and MacLeod was required to pay alimony. It is unclear whether he actually fulfilled his legal obligation, but Margreet always complained that she had never received a penny from him. When she later moved to Paris she left Non with MacLeod, who never let her go again. Margreet saw her daughter only one more time after this, at the station in Arnhem in 1905.

Mata Hari

When the divorce was finalized Margreet was 26 years old, alone, without a home and without any money. She decided to try her luck in Paris, a city she had dreamed of for years. When she was later asked in an interview, 'Why Paris?', she responded: *'I don't know, I thought that all women who ran away from their husbands went to Paris.'* There she tried to support herself by working as a painter's model and a horse rider in a circus. She was unsuccessful, however, and after a short time she returned to the Netherlands, penniless. A year later she tried again, and this time it went well. The circus director, Molier, advised her to start dancing. She took dance lessons and made her debut as the Eastern dancer 'Lady MacLeod' in Madame Kiréevsky's salon. The public was impressed by this Eastern, erotically-tinted dancing. More

< Drawing of Mata Hari during a performance in 1905.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION



Mata Hari during a dance performance.
COLOURED PHOTO POSTCARD, JAN BRUGMAN COLLECTION

performances, in private salons, followed. Emile Guimet, a wealthy industrialist and the owner of a museum in Paris for Asian art, attended one of these shows. Enthusiastic, he invited her to perform in his museum, which had an ambiance that fit perfectly with her show. He was less pleased with the name Lady MacLeod, though, and together they came up with a new moniker for her: Mata Hari. It is Malaysian and means 'Eye of the day', i.e. the sun.

Margreet's first performance as the East Indian dancer 'Mata Hari' took place on 13 March 1905 in the Musée Guimet. It was the start of an illustrious career which would bring her great fame and take her to all the famous theatres of Europe. The public was delighted, and laudatory reviews appeared in the newspapers. Journalists jostled to write her stories. She had no problem with this, and let her fantasy run wild in her answers: she had learned to dance in the holy temples of Dutch India, where the *bayadères* danced before the altar of Shiva; her mother was an Eastern princess; her father was a Scottish nobleman. Everything was believed. The myth of Mata Hari was born. On 18 August 1905 she stood on the great stage of the Olympia music hall in Paris: she was a resounding success.



Mata Hari circa 1905.
COLOURED PHOTO POSTCARD
(COLOURED BY 'KLIMBIM')

Encouraged by the applause and the constant, admiring critical acclaim, she had her impresario, Gabriel Astruc, organise shows outside France. In January 1906 she went to Madrid, where she performed in the Central-Kursaal. A show in Monte Carlo's Opera followed, in the ballet 'The King of Lahore' by Jules Massenet. She was now the best-paid and most talked about dancer in Europe.

La dame

She danced and danced, and the successes piled up. Admirers stood in line, and she had one affair after another. She demanded a lot from herself. Too much, and after a while she could not keep up the enormous pace. She decided to ease up on the performances. On men, as well: one lover at a time and for a longer period.

In the summer of 1906 this was Alfred Kiepert, a wealthy landowner in Berlin and lieutenant in the Eleventh Hussar Regiment of Westphalia. She went with him to Berlin, and he rented an apartment for her near the Kurfürstendamm. She accompanied him when he had to go on military exercises with his regiment, and so was present at the army manouvres in Silesia. She did not perform in Berlin, but she did in Vienna, where from 15 December 1906 until 16 January 1907 she once again danced her 'Indian' act. The name Mata Hari meanwhile had become a well-known; a cigarette and a tea were named after her. Adam Zelle also tried to capitalise on his daughter's enormous popularity. He wrote a fictitious biography full of fabrications that to this day live a tenacious life. . .

After Vienna, Margreet travelled to Egypt and Italy. At the end of 1907 she was back in Paris. In 1908 and 1909 she performed new dances, namely in shows for charity. She no longer had to do it for the money.

In 1910 she was once again in Monte Carlo, where on 7 January the premiere of the play *Antar* took place, in which Mata Hari danced the ballet 'La Danse du Feu', set to the music of Rimsky-Korsakov.

From June 1910 until the end of 1911 it was quiet around Mata Hari. She lived in the Château de la Dorée near Tours. The castle was hired for her by the banker Rousseau, who also paid all the bills for her lavish lifestyle.



Mata Hari circa 1915.

PHOTO POSTCARD, FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

The highpoint of Mata Hari's artistic career as a dancer was in the 1911-1912 season. She performed in two ballets in La Scala in Milan, the Valhalla of music-loving Europe. There was no greater success imaginable.

In the fall of 1912 Margreet lived in a villa in Neuilly-sur-Seine, just outside Paris, where she performed a few times in the garden with the accompaniment of an orchestra conducted by Inayat Khan, the founder of the Sufi Order. In order to maintain her luxurious way of life, however, Margreet was forced to go back to work, because her once-wealthy lover Rousseau had gone bankrupt. She danced in an operette and in the new revue of the Folies-Bergère, this time not as Mata Hari but as a Spanish dancer.

In February 1914 Margreet was back with her old friend Kiepert in Berlin. In September she performed in the Metropol-Theater. Four weeks before her performance, World War I broke out. In her scrapbook she wrote in a clearly different, agitated hand: 'LA GUERRE, THÉÂTRE FERMÉ, PARTIE DE BERLIN'.

She succeeded in travelling via Frankfurt to the Netherlands. She stayed for a short time in the Victoria Hotel in Amsterdam, later establishing



Passport with Margaretha Zelle's particulars, 1915.

THE MINISTRE DE LA GUERRE COLLECTION

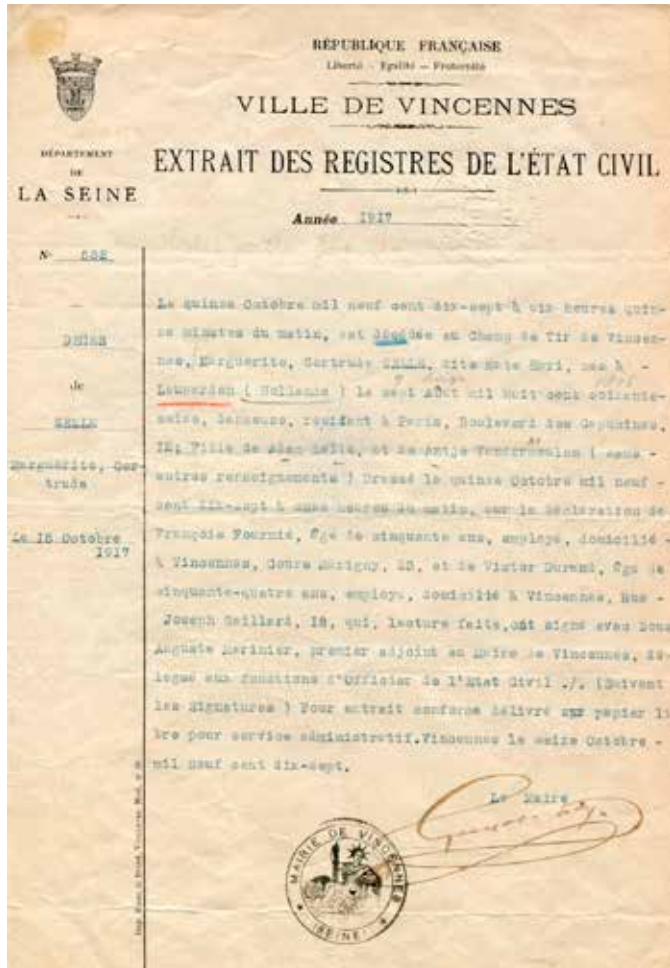
herself in The Hague, where she rented a house. She was supported by Baron Van der Capellen, a colonel with the hussars. She performed twice more in the Netherlands as a dancer, in Arnhem and The Hague. Both times it was a full house, but it was only a moderate success. In the meantime Margreet tried to make contact with her daughter, but MacLeod prevented it. In December 1915, despite the war situation, she was able to get back to Paris, where she picked up ten chests with her personal possessions. She travelled via England and Spain.

Spy

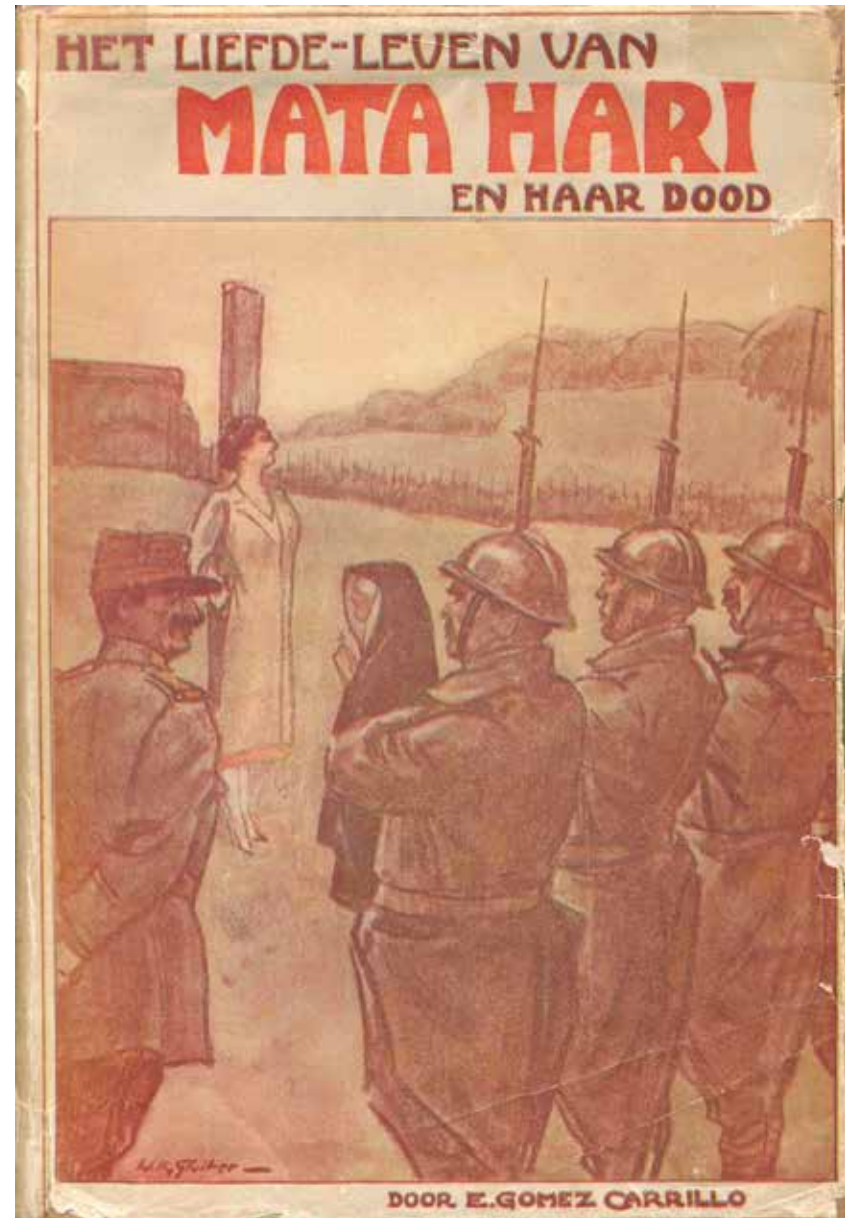
In the spring of 1916 Margreet must have come in contact with the German intelligence service. She remained a few days in Cologne and Frankfurt, where she received instructions in the use of invisible ink. She was given the codename H-21. The Germans held out the prospect of 20,000 marks as payment for her services.

On 16 July 1916, after a journey full of obstacles, she showed up once again in Paris. There she fell head over heels in love with the much younger, but not so wealthy, Vadime de Massloff, a captain in the First Russian Imperial Regiment for Special Services. De Massloff was stationed in Vittel, outside the freely accessible military zone. In order to obtain a furlough pass, Margreet had to go to the Military Bureau for Foreigners. By chance, she met Georges Ladoux there, a captain in the Deuxième Bureau, the French intelligence service. While in conversation, Ladoux asked her to work as a spy for France. About two weeks later she accepted the proposal to spy in Brussels for the French. On 6 November 1916 she left France and went to Spain in order to board a ship for the Netherlands. When she landed in Falmouth for a stopover, Margreet was taken off board: Scotland Yard thought she was the German spy Clara Benedix. Sir Basil Thomson realized the mistake during interrogation, but he still suspected her of 'unneutral activities'. Margreet was imprudent enough to tell him about her order from Captain Ladoux. When Thomson telegraphed France to inquire, however, Ladoux answered that he knew nothing about it. Ladoux asked Thomson to send her back to Spain. On 11 December 1916 she was once again in Madrid, where she remained for three weeks. At that time she was in contact with Hauptmann Arnold von Kalle, the militaire attaché to the German Embassy.

Margreet waited for instructions from Paris, but in their absence decided on her own to go to the French capital. On 2 January 1917 she left Madrid. In Paris she looked up Ladoux, but he denied the agreements made earlier. On 13 February 1917 she was arrested in her room in the Elysées Palace Hôtel.



Shortly after the execution of Margaretha Zelle in 1917, the Mayor of Vincennes drew up a death certificate and sent a copy, as notification, to her place of birth. On the front and back of the document are stamps from various authorities.



Mata Hari's execution, as portrayed on the cover of a romanticised biography from 1930.

Margreet was detained in the Saint-Lazare prison. In the next four months she was interrogated fourteen times. Her lawyer, Maître Clunet, was only present at Margreet's first and last interrogation; the other twelve times Mata Hari sat alone across from Captain Pierre Bouchardon, her interrogator. The last time was on 21 June 1917. On 24 and 25 July her trial took place behind closed doors, before the French court-martial. A seven-member jury had to determine, based on Bouchardon's report, whether she was guilty of pro-German espionage activities. The final verdict was unanimous: guilty! Mata Hari was given the death penalty, a sentence that was confirmed on appeal. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs made attempts to get her a pardon, but to no avail.

It was cold on the morning of Monday, 15 October 1917. The 'eye of the day' began to shine over Vincennes, a small town southeast of Paris, at eleven minutes past six. At the local shooting range, a firing squad prepared itself and unlocked its guns. Four minutes later a salvo broke the morning quiet. Margaretha Geertruida Zelle was dead, but the myth surrounding Mata Hari was about to truly begin. A myth that had surrounded her during her lifetime, and which from now on would only increase even more profoundly.

THE WALK

1 Groeneweg 1 Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden (HCL)

The walk begins at the Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden at the edge of the Prinsentuin park. Various documents from and about Margaretha Zelle and her relatives are preserved in the HCL. She is also represented in the Portrait Gallery of Leeuwarden . The painting 'De Vaandeldrager' ('The Standard-Bearer') from 1873 shows Adam Zelle with the Stadstusschenschool (City Intermediate School) in the background. The former school building is currently part of the HCL. The Prinsentuin was a favourite place to go walking, where concerts were given regularly. Margreet undoubtedly spent hours walking and playing here in the Prinsentuin.



Adam Zelle as standard-bearer of the honorary guard during King Willem III's visit to Leeuwarden in 1873.

PAINTING BY ALBERT MARTIN, FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

Letters

Documents pertaining to Mata Hari are also stored in Tresoar (Boterhoek 1). In 2014 two bundles of letters and several photos of Margaretha Zelle, owned by the MacLeod family, were bestowed on this institute. In 2016 the letters and photos were used in the publication *Denk niet dat ik slecht ben* (*Don't think that I'm bad*).



The packet of letters from and about Margaretha Zelle.
TRESOAR COLLECTION

2

Grote Kerkstraat 12 Middelbare School voor Meisjes (Grammar School for Girls)

The implementation of the Higher Education Act of 1863 resulted in the establishment of a separate grammar school for girls. Unlike the schools (HBS) organized by the central government in order to educate the elite, these grammar schools were run by the municipality. Leeuwarden took this task on in 1875. The city architect Thomas Romein was commissioned to expand the school in the Grote Kerkstraat and adapt it to modern requirements. He gave the building the Neoclassical exterior it still has today, although its interior has since been remodelled into a shop with apartments above it.



The Middelbare School voor Meisjes (Grammar School for Girls).
COLOURED POSTCARD, CIRCA 1900

M. Zelle							
Nederlandsch.	3	4	3	4	4	4	1 5
Fransch.	5	2	5	5	1	3	5 2 5
Duitsch.	5	4	5	5	3	3	3 2 4
Geschiedenis.	3	1	4	4	1	2	5 1 4
Aardrijkskunde.	4	2	3	4	2	3	3 2 4
Wiskunde.	4	1	4	5	1	5	4 3 4
Nat. historie.	4	3	4	2	2	3	3 2 4
Teekenen.				1	1	3	1 2 3
Handwerken.	2	1	3	1	1	1	3 2 3
Zang.	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Gymnastiek.	1	1	2	2	1	3	5 3 5
Aanteek. van orde.	16			11			14

Part of the report of Margaretha Zelle for the 1890-1891 school year. At that time, 5 was very good, 4 good, 3 satisfactory, 2 unsatisfactory and 1 poor. Margaretha had very good marks for French, but her conduct left something to be desired.

The school, run by the stern Miss Rebecca Plaat, had a good reputation. The young ladies not only received an education but also learned etiquette and how to dress appropriately. Margreet attended this school in the 1890-1891 academic year. She was a good student, but not an easy one. One of her exam score reports has been preserved. A notable dip in her grades made an expert wonder, 'Had she been ill?' It occurred in the same year as her parents' divorce and the move to the upstairs apartment on the corner of the Willemsskade and the Schoolstraat. In the margin of the report, next to her name, is written: 'Has possibly left.'

3 Grote Kerkstraat 212 Zelle family residence

For centuries the Grote Kerkstraat was a prominent residential street, where the nobility and the patriciate owned grand, comfortable houses. The large house, number 212, on the corner of the Grote Kerkstraat and the Beijerstraat, stands on the highest natural point in the city, the top of the northern Nijehove-*terp* (a man-made mound). The Zelle family lived here from 1884 to 1890. The first years here were likely the happiest in Mata Hari's life. The stately home was built in 1545. Although much has been rebuilt over the centuries, the original L-shaped *stins* (a stone manor particular to Friesland) is still easily recognizable. A high stair tower in the inner corner of the L was crowned by an onion-shaped spire. During a large restoration in 1975 it was replaced by an octagonal needle spire, like those seen on old maps. The house was privately occupied until 1975, the year in



An image of the Grim Reaper has been carved into the woodwork of the tower's stairwell. According to legend, it was put there by craftsmen who had been struck by Mata Hari's violent end.

TRESOAR COLLECTION

which it was remodelled in order to house the FLMD (Frisian Literary Museum and Documentation Centre). A small, permanent display about Mata Hari was set up. After the FLMD left in 2002, the house was once again privately owned.

The goat-drawn cart

Adam Zelle spoiled his daughter with beautiful clothes and jewelry. A police report from 1885 records: 'Lost by a daughter of Mr. A. Zelle, a golden necklace with ditto medallion'. The Zelle children caused a great sensation with their eccentric, little goat-drawn cart, in which they proudly rode through the center of town. It was most likely a gift for Margaretha's sixth birthday. The cart was stored in Lubberts' livery stable at the foot of the Pijlsteeg (on the corner of the A.S. Levissonstraat).

The Pijlsteeg turns into the Schoenmakersperk, where the Natuurmuseum is currently located. In Margreet's time, the Nieuwe Stads Weeshuis (New City Orphanage) was established in this building, housing around 200 (poor) orphans. She must have seen them while returning from a trip in her goat-drawn cart. The contrast between the two worlds could hardly have been greater.



'Greetje' in the goat-drawn cart. Her father, with a hat on, stands behind the goat. This photo was probably taken on the Westersingel, circa 1885.

4

Bij de Put 13 MacLeod family residence

Around 1860 the family of John Brienens MacLeod lived for a short time on this small square at number 13. Their 4-year-old son, Rudolph, would, 35 years later, become Margreet's husband in 1895. Very recently Jan Faber, a staff member of the Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden, discovered that Margaratha's husband, Rudolph MacLeod, had lived in Leeuwarden for some time as a small boy. On 1 May 1860 his father, John Brienens MacLeod, was stationed with the 8th Infantry Regiment in the Prince Frederik Barracks in Leeuwarden. The transfer was simultaneously a promotion to the rank of captain. John Brienens, his wife Dina Louise, Baroness Sweerts de Landas, their son Rudolph and daughter Louise Jeanne, moved into the house at Bij de Put 13. MacLeod was unlucky: less than a month and a half later the barracks were destroyed by an enormous fire. In 1862 the family temporarily left the city when the battalion MacLeod commanded was sent to 'camp'. The battalion returned to Leeuwarden in the same year, and the family found accommodation on the Zuidvliet. In May of 1864 the battalion was transferred to Assen, and the family left Leeuwarden permanently. Captain MacLeod died three years later in the Millingen army camp, at only 43 years of age.

5

Voorstreek 12 Mauritshuis

A number of Margaretha's ancestors lived and worked here. Her great-grandfather, Adam Zelle (1785-1862), is registered at this address in 1815 as 'mr. Schrijnwerker' (master cabinetmaker) and later as 'kastmaker' (cupboard maker). His son Gerrit continued the business here. His oldest son, Cornelis (1812-1880), took over his in-laws' business on the Kelders. Cornelis' son, Adam Zelle, was born in that building in 1840, probably a few months after the relocation. This, however, is not the family's 'ancestral home'. That would more likely be at Over de Kelders 28, on the corner of the Korfmakersstraat and across from Margaretha's birthplace. Her great-great-grandfather, Herman Otto Zelle (1744-1807), bought this house in 1793, although he had lived in it before this.

The family name, Zelle (also sometimes written Celle), is undoubtedly related to the city of the same name south of the Lüneburger Heath in northern Germany. Herman Otto, the first Zelle in Leeuwarden, was most likely born in Rheda, Westphalia. He ended up in the Frisian capital around 1770, like many Westphalian immigrants at the time. Almost all of them entered the textile industry. Herman Otto was listed as 'weaver' and later as '*bontreder*' (manufacturer of colorful textiles). In contrast to most Westphalians, the Zelles were Reformed.



A hat from the store owned by Cornelis Zelle (Margaretha's grandfather). On the inside of the hat is written 'Manufacture de Paris' and 'C. Zelle te Leeuwarden'.

6

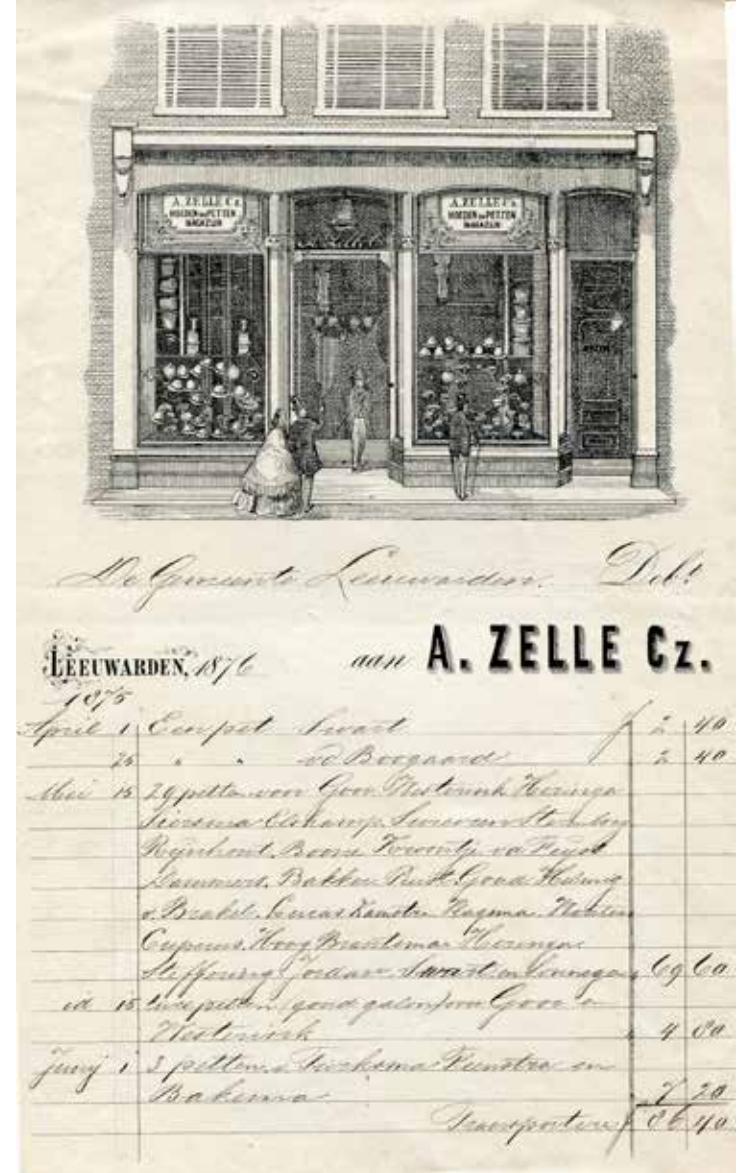
Kelders 33 birthplace

Margreet was born on 8 August 1876 in the house at Kelders 33. Her father, Adam Zelle, had his hat and caps shop here. At the time, the house was called In de Klok (In the Clock). In the pictures in the advertisements Zelle placed in the newspaper, one can see a clock on the transom window above the shop door. The building was probably constructed around 1850. Koenraad Hamstra, a 'merchant in Draperies and Fancy Goods', had bought the house circa 1820. He was one of Mata Hari's grandfathers. In 1850 there was a 'rebuilding', and the property on De Kelders was combined with a house behind it on the Poststraat. The town house with adjoining shop was now given largely the



- ^ De Kelders and Over de Kelders in 1871 with the birthplace of Mata Hari behind the trees.
- < Part of the blueprint for the renovation of the building on the Kelders, from 1938.

same exterior it has today: a shop on the ground floor with big shop windows, and a residence on the upper levels with an attic. The shape of the windows, the masonry and the stone piers are characteristic of the mid-19th century. Adam Zelle took the shop over from his father, Cornelis, in 1866. He immediately kicked things off with a large number of newspaper advertisements in which he recommended his business for caps for the 'HH. Officers of the Militias and Infantry, for Railway Officials, caps and hats for Liveries, Legal, Police, Water Management and all other kinds of Uniforms.' Orphanages and institutions could also come to him. In addition, there was a factory for hats and caps for which he regularly sought employees.



Receipt from Adam Zelle's hats and caps shop, with an image of the store on the Kelders, 1876.

After Zelle went bankrupt, the building was used as a shop/residence. The lower facade was modernised in 1938, and in 1960 the shop was combined with the shop to its left. The hairdresser and municipal councilor, Wyb Feddema, established a hair salon here in 1985. The salon was still there when, in the early evening of 17 October 2013, a fire broke out in the neighbouring building. An enormous blaze destroyed twelve buildings between the Kelders and the Poststraat, and sadly there was a fatality. News reports that Mata Hari's birthplace had also been destroyed were mistaken, however. The house was spared, but it did suffer smoke and water damage. The image in Adam Zelle's newspaper advertisements was the basis for the restoration of the shopfront.

Personnel

Personnel generally did not remain in employment for long. Adam was not an easy boss, and the often poor relationship between him and his wife would certainly not have helped the mood at home. The Zelle family kept, simultaneously, three live-in staff in their new house on de Grote Kerkstraat: two servants and a nanny. Sometimes there were also living-out servants. A few times Zelle had some serious problems with his personnel. A police report from 1874 records 'Mr. A. Zelle on the Kelders makes it known that a servant of his, Lambertus Lerk, stole a cap from him ca. 4 weeks ago, and is now on the run with approx. 20 á 300 gulden, which he had received for caps that had been delivered and sold.'



Antje van der Molen, one of the domestic servants who worked for the Zelle family in the Grote Kerkstraat.

7 Korfmakerspijp Mata Hari statue

On the Korfmakerspijp bridge, over the canal, stands a statue of Mata Hari made by Suze Berkhout-Boschma and placed here in 1976. The statue was unveiled on 13 March, the day on which Margreet had performed for the first time under the name Mata Hari, in Paris in 1905. The unveilers were Sam Waagenaar and Hennie Keikes, two biographers of Mata Hari. It took quite some doing, this publicly visible tribute to Leeuwarden's illustrious daughter. An attempt to erect some kind of memorial to Margreet in the city had been made before, but quiet opposition had succeeded in preventing it, the motive being that Leeuwarden had no reason to be proud of such a 'sinful' woman and that an 'undesirable mythologisation' had to be prevented. The story goes that it was namely Burgomaster Van der Meulen who objected, vetoing it personally. A salient detail is that Margreet and Van der Meulen were distantly related, something of



Yteke van der Vegt, educational employee of the HCL, relates Mata Hari's life by the statue on the Korfmakerspijp during a city walk in 2006. PHOTO BY AD FAHNER

which the burgomaster was certainly not proud. On the initiative of George Kooyman, the director of the VVV (tourist office), however, this small statue was erected in 1976. The municipality even made a financial contribution. By then, Burgomaster Van der Meulen was already long gone.

Vandals have repeatedly damaged the little statue. In 1989 it was even pulled off its plinth and thrown into the canal. Ben van der Geest, a sculptor from Leeuwarden, has restored the piece numerous times. Recently, the suggestion was made to move the statue to the Mata Hariplein. For many years, an American admirer has laid red roses by the statue on 7 August.

Alexander Cohen

In his autobiography *In opstand*, the author and journalist Alexander Cohen (Leeuwarden, 1864 – Toulon, 1961) vividly recounts his younger years in the city. Cohen's father ran a shop not far from Adam Zelle's business. Cohen remembers him well: 'Adam Zelle was a handsome, tall man with a carefully-maintained, shiny, black beard. I never saw him without his high



On the corner of the Minnemastraat, where the Maxx shop is now located, once stood *the* hotel in Leeuwarden, the genteel De Nieuwe Doelen. The hotel lay quite a way back from the street; surely Margreet played on the little square in front of the hotel.

COLOURED POSTCARD, CIRCA 1905.

hat on, and with his thumbs in the arm holes of his flowery, velvet vest. He stood like this, with one leg nonchalantly laid over the other, as a habit, leaning against the doorpost and watching the street.' He also remembers a general who stayed in the hotel: 'He wore an awe-inspiring uniform, a cocked hat with plumes, and he could hardly turn his head sideways, the collar of his tunic was so stiff with gold. Which is probably why he did not respond to the respectful military salute we all made him.' Cohen remembers the name of the general: MacLeod, an uncle of Margareet's future husband.

Neighbours

The shops established on the Kelders were mainly for the higher segment. The shopkeepers lived above them with their families and personnel. Once in a while part of the upper residence was hired out to others. A few of the residents and businesses around 1880 were: Voss, a merchant in textiles (nr. 17); the Suringar bookshop (nr. 19); Borgrink, a 'shopkeeper in hardware' (nr. 21); and Van Belkum, a 'book seller and organist' (nr. 25). Directly to the left of Zelle, at nr. 31, lived Berend de Vries, a 'merchant in draperies', with his family. To the right, at nr. 35, was the Stoffels cigar shop, which hired out part of the upper residence to the lawyer Baron van Panhuijs.

The largest and most successful shop in the neighbourhood was probably Titus Postma's bazaar. From 1881 the shop had an entrance on the Eewal as well as on the Voorstreek. Zelle also had competition. Further down on de Brol was the Koets hats and caps factory. On the Kelders directly across from Zelle was Thomas Postma's hats and caps shop.

Adam Zelle does not appear to have had many friends in his immediate neighbourhood. An exception might be Johannes Kauwling, a pharmacist at Groentemarkt 3. At Zelle's request he was a witness at the registration of little Margaretha's birth. The tie between Kauwling and Zelle most likely came about because they both had a conflict with Samuel Draisma van Valkenburg, a cod liver oil manufacturer and prominent Freemason.

8

Sint Jacobsstraat 35 De Jong dance school

At the end of the Sint Jacobsstraat, on the left-hand side, are two brick buildings which continue into a white building. Together they form part of the Town Hall complex.

The brick building in front of that of the Griffie (Registry) was formerly Sint Jacobsstraat 35 (it now has no number), where bandmaster Herman de Jong's dance school was established. He taught Margaretha and Leeuwarden's other children of the wealthy to dance in a hall here. She learned to dance polkas, mazurkas and waltzes. Fellow students remembered her as being a talented dancer. Margaretha eagerly looked forward to the annual children's ball and the splendid ball gown that she would wear. Her father's bankruptcy in 1889, however, threw a spanner in the works. She told someone later that she had been heartbroken.



- ^ Advertisements of the De Jong dance school in the *Leeuwarder Courant*.
- < Hermanus de Jong circa 1900.

The composer Richard Hageman was born in this building in 1881. He later emigrated to America, winning an Oscar in 1939 for the music he composed for the film *Stagecoach*. He may have known Margaretha when they were young. What ties them in any case, almost a century later, is that they both have an aqueduct named after them in the Haak (highway) around Leeuwarden.

9

Raadhuisplein 25 Hofschool

The primary school Margreet attended was on the Raadhuisplein. The school was built in 1876-1877 to the design of the city architect Thomas Romein. At the time it was called Gemeenteschool 3, but later it was given the name Hofschool (Court School). The school was attended by children from the higher classes, something Adam Zelle of course was well aware of when he registered his daughter there. The head of the school was Hielkje Buys. According to former students, she was 'an aristocratic little woman, who would not be mocked, but who nevertheless was beloved'. The results of the writing lessons at this school were notable. Lessons were also given in etiquette, music and French, among other subjects.



The Hofschool (the large building on the left, behind the lamppost) on the Raadhuisplein, circa 1900.

A private school association, the Leeuwarder Schoolvereniging, used the school from 1922. This helped the school keep its fairly elitist character. In 1968 the school association moved to a new building on the edge of the city; for many years afterward the Kunstencentrum Parnas (Arts Centre) was housed here. The building was recently bought by the Hotel-paleis Stadhouderslijk Hof.

The stairs and landings of the Town Hall were favourite play areas for children. Margreet may too have played jacks and jumped rope here. The 'Het Oranje Bierhuis' Cafe, the next-to-oldest café in the city, existed back then too. Margaretha must have sneaked a peek through its windows now and again.

10 Nieuwstad 75 'Huize Kwast' (Kwast family residence)

Margreet lists in the aforementioned fictitious biography the names of some of the girls with whom she had been friends during her youth in Leeuwarden. They were girls from the higher classes, and the chance that Margreet was truly friends with them is small. They may well have played together after school, but the city's upper few would never have accepted the daughter of a hats and caps seller into their



Henriëtte Kwast (-Repelius),
a childhood friend of Margaretha Zelle.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

circle. The biography also names Henriëtte Kwast, who truly was a friend of Margreet's. Henriëtte, whose original surname was Repelius, moved to Leeuwarden with her mother and stepfather in 1883. Her stepfather, Barend, was a musician who also taught music. It seems Margreet felt at home in the Kwast family, which, with a professional musician as the breadwinner, fell somewhat outside Leeuwarden's classes. Kwast founded the Leeuwarder Muziekschool and had many students, for whom he organized annual performances. Despite the influx of students and positive reviews in the newspaper, however, Kwast and his family moved to Arnhem in February 1890. This was just when the Zelle family was falling apart, and Margreet could certainly have used a friend. The two girls never saw each other again. Subsequently, the building has housed, among other things, a book shop and a grocery shop; for some time now it has held a restaurant. Countless alterations and renovations have wiped out any traces of the time in which Margreet regularly crossed its threshold.

'An orchid amongst the dandelions'

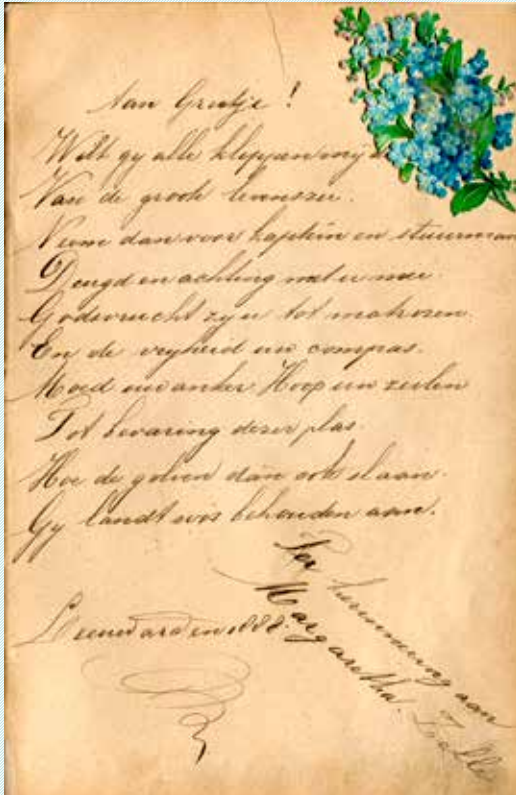
A number of former students of the Hofschool and the MSM later had more or less positive memories of Greetje. Journalist Hennie Keikes wrote them down. Ybeltje Hoogslag, the daughter of a grain trader (Oostergrachtswal 91) remembered: 'She wore a red velvet dress, something unheard of as a school dress, and she had combed her black hair into a high quiff.' ... 'As average-children we



Part of the 1890-1891 class picture
of the Middelbare Meisjes School.
'Greetje' Zelle is on the far right.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

already subconsciously felt that Margreet was on another level, of a different quality than we were.' Aukje Bakkers, the daughter of a goldsmith (Naauw 14) recalled: 'She wore a dress of yellow and red striped cotton, cut across the grain with the skirt full of frills, in which she continually made dance movements, which of course interested us greatly.'... 'No one would have added the diminutive 'tje' to her name - Margreetje or Greetje - because already as a child she had far too much personality for that.' Corrie Huber, the daughter of a member of the Second Chamber of Parliament (Willemskade 31) and the later husband of Burgomaster Van Beijma, reflects: 'She had a lovely figure.'



A poem by Margretha Zelle in Grietje de Hoo's autograph book, 1888. The first lines are: 'If you wish to avoid all the cliffs, in the great sea of life, take with you virtue and respect as your captain and steering officer.'

Grietje de Hoo, the daughter of a carriage builder (Baljeestraat 10, from 1886 at the beginning of the Schrans), deserves special mention. In 1888 Margaretha wrote in her classmate's autograph book. According to the family story, they were friends and kept in contact for a long time.

11 Mata Hariplein

The plan to name a street or square in Leeuwarden after Mata Hari had existed for a while, but nothing ever came of it until, in 2001, the street name committee took the plunge and decided to call this small, triangular square across from the theatre, the Mata Hariplein.



The presentation of the Mata Hariplein by alderman Bearn Bilker in 2001.

PHOTO BY DICK VAN DER HELJDE JR.

Alderman Bearn Bilker unveiled the street sign on 15 October, the anniversary of Mata Hari's death. "Leeuwarden's most famous daughter has finally been commemorated. That pleases me greatly!" he said just before the unveiling.

In 2016 the square was once again redesigned and given rainbow steps. Recently, a suggestion has been made to erect a new monument for Mata Hari here. A few years ago café Zelle stood on this square.

12 Willemskade 30 Zelle family residence

The Zelle family, consisting now only of Antje and her children since Adam had taken off, moved into the upstairs residence at number 30, on the corner of the Schoolstraat, in July 1889. A small plaque on the wall next to the door refers to this. It was a considerable step down from the house on the Grote Kerkstraat. The fractured family lived here until May 1891, when Margreet's mother Antje died of tuberculosis. The official date of their deregistration is 12 november 1891.



A plaque with information at Willemskade 30.

PHOTO BY HARRIE MUIS

Carradine's film plans

David Carradine and his daughter Calista on the little park in front of the Leeuwarden train station in 1975. Carradine was already a famous actor, namely for his role in the TV show *Kung Fu*. After reading an article in *LIFE* magazine, he became interested in Mata Hari and decided he wanted to make a movie about her. He booked a room at the Oranje Hotel and arranged for actors and a film crew. His daughter was to play the leading role. They filmed in, among other places, the Grote Kerkstraat and the Oranje Bierhuis cafe. Carradine wanted everyone to drink real port before the bar scene, and he himself was often stoned during filming. Shooting was therefore somewhat chaotic, and the film was never made. However hours of footage were shot.



David Carradine and his daughter Calista in the park in front of the train station in 1975. PHOTO FROM THE LEEUWARDER COURANT

13 Wilhelminaplein 92 Fries Museum (end of the walk)

The Fries Museum largely hems the eastern end of the Wilhelminaplein. Queen Maxima opened the new museum, designed by architect Hubert-Jan Henket, on 13 September 2013. This is where the internationally most important Mata Hari collection is curated. The museum also houses a permanent exhibit on her life, displaying photographs, letters and postcards, one of her dance costumes and her scrapbooks. In March of 2017 fourteen new objects and documents were acquired at an auction in Amsterdam.



One of Mata Hari's scrapbooks.
FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION



One of the objects bought by the Fries Museum in March 2017: a crown brooch that Mata Hari gave to a soldier shortly before her arrest. She asked him to give it to her daughter, Non. By the time the soldiers had finally tracked her down, she had already passed away. The brooch was given to Rudolph MacLeod, who gave it to his last wife.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

The museum was originally located in the Eysingahuis, on the corner of the Koningsstraat and the Turfmarkt. After a thorough renovation and modifications to the building, bought by the Friesch Genootschap, the museum opened its doors in 1881. Adam Zelle donated, as a bonus for the museum, the painting on which he, on horseback and carrying a banner, had been immortalized. It ended up in the depot, to remain until 1996 when it was exhibited in a special room, designed by the artists Tilly Buij and Gerard Groenewoud, dedicated to his daughter.

A journalist from *De Volkskrant* visited the Fries Museum in December 1996 and asked the designers of the room what their vision was: at most, they hope to be able to direct the eye of the viewer. But to where? To cherrywood showcases set 'on feminine legs'. To large canvases on the wall with portraits of Mata Hari, canvases that softly sway as you pass them, as her seven veils once did. 'That swaying has a feminine quality', says Groenewoud. In the middle of the room is a tête-à-tête showcase, inspired by the tête-à-tête seat of earlier times and by feminine curves. It is an intimate corner, separated by a canvas with the only almost-naked photo of Mata Hari that exists.



Amid great interest, the new Mata Hari room was opened in the Fries Museum at the end of 1996. Among those invited were the the Mata Hari researchers Sam Waagenaar and Julie Wheelwright.

PHOTO FROM THE LEEUWARDER COURANT/PAUL JANSSEN

'It is a cross between a boudoir and a museum', says Buij. In an ambience that is at the same time both sultry and sober, one can feel Mata Hari's spirit: her femininity, her beauty, how photogenic she was, how she led her life, how she continually slipped into different roles. 'What she did, she did well. Otherwise there would not have been so many people who believed in her' - until 1917 at least.



The most famous painting of Mata Hari was made in 1916 by Isaac Israëls (Collection Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo). The Fries Museum has a painted copy.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

Stichting Mata Hari (Mata Hari Foundation)

In 1973 already a collector from Zwijndrecht appointed himself conservator of the Mata Hari Museum, still to be built, but nothing came of his grand designs. Even greater plans were made after the municipality of Leeuwarden rejected the offer to take over the collections of Sam Wagenaar and Hennie Keikes in 1991. The Stichting Mata Hari was established, with the goal of keeping

this collection for Leeuwarden. It succeeded, but the plan to set up a separate Mata Hari Museum in the building at Eewal 56, the former location of the conservatory, could not be realised. After much consultation, the foundation decided the Fries Museum could conserve the estate.



Rings, jewels and other personal objects of Margaretha Zelle were put up for auction in March 2016 by distant relatives of Piet van der Hem. She had probably given the objects to Van der Hem in exchange for a loan.

PHOTO FROM AUCTION HOUSE DE ZWAAN IN AMSTERDAM

Piet van der Hem

Piet van der Hem (Wirdum 1885-Den Haag 1961), a celebrated painter, made a portrait of Mata Hari in Paris. They became friends and, according to the rumours, even had an affair. From 1896-1903 Piet lived at various addresses in Huizum and Leeuwarden (including at Verkorteweg 20), where he, an orphan, had been placed with a family. He attended the RHBS in Leeuwarden and left for Amsterdam in 1903. The painter visited Leeuwarden regularly. During the war, he lived with the Buisman family (at Willemskade 7) for a long time. Mrs. Buisman had been a classmate of Margreet. The most famous painting of Mata Hari was made by Isaac Israëls in 1916 and currently hangs in the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo .



The painter Piet van der Hem.



Presentation of the painting of Queen Juliana by Piet van der Hem in the council chamber of Leeuwarden's City Hall on 2 February 1950. To the left is Van der Hem and to the right Burgomaster Van der Meulen (who was also distantly related to Margaretha Zelle).



Portrait of Mata Hari, drawn in 1941 by Piet van der Hem.

FRIES MUSEUM COLLECTION

OUTSIDE THE ROUTE

A Spanjaardslaan

Oude begraafplaats (Old Cemetery) (family tombstone)

On 9 May 1891 Antje van der Meulen, Margaretha's mother, passed away. Four days after her death, Antje van der Meulen's mortal remains were buried in the Algemene Begraafplaats (General Cemetery, currently the Oude Begraafplaats) on the Spanjaardslaan in Leeuwarden, Section I, Row 22, Grave 22: a grave owned by Adam Zelle. He had her name placed on the tombstone as Anna van

AANGIFTE VAN EEN LIJK.

Op losden den *11 Mei* 1891, hebben

Naam van den eersten getuige *Rens Okel*
 oud *37* jaren, van beroep —
 Graad van vermaagschap —

255. *en*

Naam van den tweeden getuige *Johan David Okel*
 oud *63* jaren, van beroep *aanwreker*
 Graad van vermaagschap —

beiden alhier woonachtig, aangifte gedaan, dat op den *9 Mei* 1891
 des *avonds* ten *elf* ure, alhier is overleden:

Antje van der Meulen

oud *49* jaren
 beroep *Zonder*

geboren te *Fransker* Provincie *boven* den *21 April 1842*
 woonachtig te *K. Stadsgraven* Lot *FF* No. *30* Straat *Millemakade 42*
 Van Vrouw van (a) *Adam Zelle*
 Wd.wa. *Wd.wa. van (b)*

Gezinsleden Dochter van *Johannes Hendrickus van der Meulen*
 van beroep *ouderling* woonachtig *en van*
Geulge Faber van beroep *Zonder* *Echtedien.*
 woonachtig te (c) *Fransker*

Aard der Nalandschap (d) *roerend*

Opgen van 66a der overleedene (e) *de vader*

Meninge *af*

Nagelaten kinderen (f) *4 minderj.*

Maakt *op*

Minder *af*

Op *af*

Op *af*

Oorspronk *186*

Middelrijke oorzaak van den dood of eerste ziekte } *Phthisis tuberculosa*
 Oorzakelijke laatste

Antje van der Meulen's death certificate. >

der Meulen, although she is officially listed in the civil registry as Antje. The tombstone is still present. There is something remarkable about it. Next to Anna van der Meulen's name on the tombstone are two other names: Cornelis Zelle and Margaretha Hamstra, Adam Zelle's parents. When his father, Cornelis, died on 25 May 1880, Adam Zelle bought the grave in the first section of the cemetery.

The cemetery, in use since 1833, had five sections. Leeuwarden's elite (the nobility, the patriciaat and other prominent townsmen) were laid to rest in Section I. The lower the distinction, the lower the section: the poor were buried for free in the fifth section, almost always collectively and anonymously in mostly unmarked graves. Thus Adam Zelle had bought for his father a peaceful rest among the city's upper-ten.



Antje van der Meulen's tombstone in the Algemene Begraafplaats on the Spanjaardslaan.

His mother, Margaretha Hamstra, had already died on 19 January 1868 and been buried in an unmarked grave, bought by her father, in Section IV, Row 38, Nummer 25, where other family members had already been laid to rest. After the death of his father, Adam had his mother's name added to the tombstone, thereby fictitiously giving her a place of honor. She was never actually reburied; the graves administration shows that there are only two people buried in the grave in the first section: Cornelis and Antje.

B Fahrentheitsweg-Johannes Brandsmaweg Margaretha Zelle Akwadukt

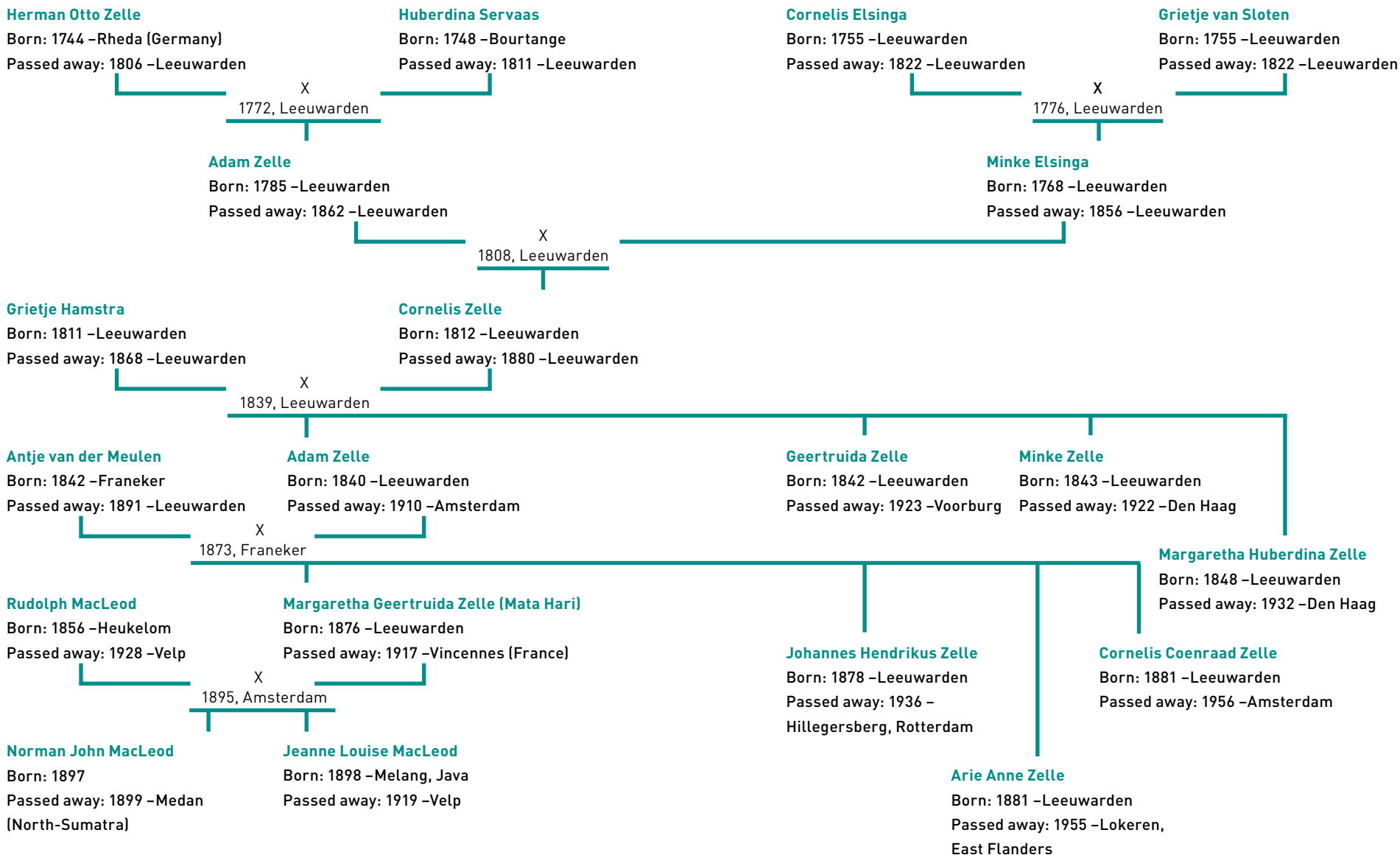
In 2015 Margreet was once again commemorated: the aqueduct above the western inbound and outbound roads under the Van Harinxma canal was named after her. The artists Frank Havermans and Karin van Pinxteren have endowed it with a special work of art. The work is called H21, after the code name given to her by the Germans, and is made of ceramic tiles which portray the name Mata Hari in Morse code.



The opening of the Margaretha Zelle Aqueduct in 2014.

PHOTO BY HOGE NOORDEN/JAAP SCHAAP

GENEALOGICAL SCHEDULE



colophon

Stadswandeling Leeuwarden. Sporen van Mata Hari is the 27th publication in a series of city walks, bicycle tours and monument descriptions published by the Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden (and its partners).

Previous publications in English:

- Oldehove, Leaning Tower of Leeuwarden
- Highlights of Leeuwarden (City Walk)
- Traces of Alma Tadema in Dronrijp and Leeuwarden

Vorherige Publikationen auf Deutsch:

- Eine Stadtführung entlang Hohepunkte der monumentalen Innenstadt

Publications précédentes en français:

- Les points forts de Leeuwarden

publication

Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden in association with the Fries Museum.

This booklet was published on the occasion of the exhibition 'Mata Hari, the Myth and the Girl' in the Fries Museum (14 October 2017-2 April 2018). This publication was made possible in part by the Lionsclub Leowardia and the Municipality of Leeuwarden's Department of Economy and Tourism (English edition).

design

BW H ontwerpers

editors

Nykle Dijkstra, Geart de Vries and Klaas Zandberg

text

Gerik Koopmans and Leendert Plaisier

visuals

Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden

(unless otherwise stated)

cover image

Front cover: Mata Hari during a performance in 1906. An unknown man from Leeuwarden bought this photo postcard in Paris. He found it important that his former fellow citizen be well documented and sent the photo to Leeuwarden's Municipal Archives (later the HCL). This version has been digitally coloured by Olga Shirnina, alias Klimbim.

Back cover: Portrait of Mata Hari, drawn in 1914 by Piet van der Hem. Fries Museum collection.

translation

Anja de Bert

printer

Rekladruk

with thanks to

Hans Groeneweg, Jaap de Groot, Marga ten Hoeve and Yves Rocourt

September 2017



HISTORISCH CENTRUM | LEEUWARDEN

www.historischcentrumleeuwarden.nl



