

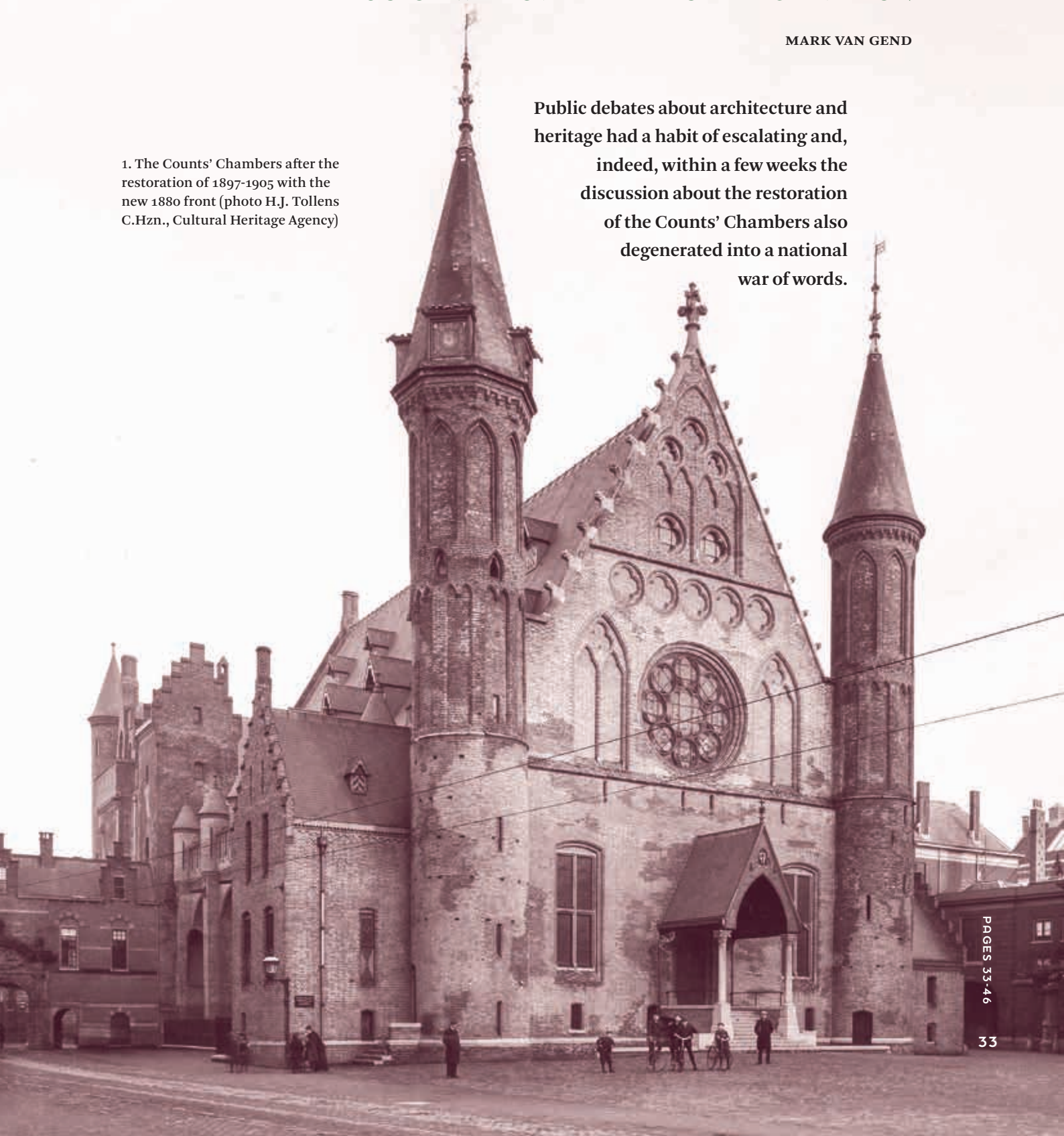
REBELLION IN THE ARCHITECTURAL WORLD

THE RESTORATION OF THE GRAFELIJKE ZALEN AND THE TUG-OF-WAR OVER HERITAGE PRESERVATION

MARK VAN GEND

1. The Counts' Chambers after the restoration of 1897-1905 with the new 1880 front (photo H.J. Tollens C.Hzn., Cultural Heritage Agency)

Public debates about architecture and heritage had a habit of escalating and, indeed, within a few weeks the discussion about the restoration of the Counts' Chambers also degenerated into a national war of words.



CUYPERS' THRONE

The current appearance of the Counts' Chambers (Grafelijke Zalen, 1897-1905) is due in large part to the extensive restoration carried out in around 1900.¹ Since then the complex has featured on well over a hundred occasions as the decor for the ceremony of Prinsjesdag, with traditionally a lot of attention focused on the monarch who, at the invitation of the States-General and seated on an actual throne, proceeds to read out the government's plans for the year ahead. The interior of the Knights' Hall (Ridderzaal) and the ambience of the complex as a whole came about under the aegis of an official restoration committee whose members included the architect Pierre Cuypers (1827-1921). There was a long-standing impression that Cuypers' influence in the final quarter of the nineteenth century was so great that everyone then must have followed his lead and ideas. We now know that this presumed leadership role was not quite as absolute as it seemed; Cuypers appears to have had considerably more political influence than ideological allies.² Public debates about architecture and heritage had a habit of escalating and, indeed, within a few weeks the discussion about the restoration of the Counts' Chambers also degenerated into a national war of words.³

To better understand the restoration of the Counts' Chambers and to bring the role and influence of Cuypers into sharper focus, it is worth consulting contemporary sources in order to reconstruct and interpret the course of events. This restoration project in the heart of the Binnenhof is a prime example of a case in which the ideological battle over restoration ethics and the exercise of political influence converged under high pressure. Closer examination provides new clues to the actual state of relations – political, social, bureaucratic and among architects – at the end of the nineteenth century, and to how the restoration of the Counts' Chambers escalated the debate on heritage preservation.

THE COSTS AND THE VALUES

At the back of the *Bouwkundig Weekblad* (Architecture Weekly) of 16 November 1895 there was a brief article about the state budget for 1896, which had recently been presented to the Lower House.⁴ The report dealt with just one item, entailing an unexceptional amount of one thousand guilders. This was to be used to fund an inquiry into a possible restoration and repurposing of the Counts' Chambers. In the preceding years various groups and individuals had repeatedly urged the restoration and repurposing of the Knights' Hall (Ridderzaal), most recently a committee established for this very purpose by Vereniging Die Haghe, whose membership included public servants and politi-

cians.⁵ The over eight hundred members of the architectural association Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst ('de Maatschappij' for short), chiefly architects and art historians, read in their journal that the proposed inquiry had 'occasioned an exchange of views' among the elected representatives. Various members of parliament were especially concerned about the financial consequences of the inquiry, and that concern had everything to do with the individual who had proposed this item.⁶

What surprised people was that the proposition came from the Ministry of the Interior, whereas, as a 'National Building', the Counts' Chambers was the responsibility of the Ministry of Water, Trade & Industry (Waterstaat for short). For its part, the Ministry of the Interior was responsible for 'monuments of history and art'. However, there was no legally based definition or registration of such monuments, not even in the case of buildings owned by the State. Nor was it clear what that responsibility entailed. From the fact that the budget item for developing a restoration plan emanated from the Ministry of the Interior, parliamentarians inferred that it had already been decided – without consulting the Ministry of Waterstaat – that the Counts' Chambers should be treated as a 'monument'. And although heritage preservation was still in its infancy in the Netherlands at that time, the politicians were aware that there was a big difference in costs between the practical renovation of a functional government building and a restoration of the same building as a historical monument of national significance.⁷

Contemporary readers might naturally assume that the Maatschappij would heartily endorse a proposal for the restoration of the Counts' Chambers. Yet even before the publication of the report in *Bouwkundig Weekblad* internal alarm bells must have been sounding, for the board had held a special meeting and the very next issue of the journal opened with the text of a letter they had sent to the House of Representatives.⁸ The (almost entire) board felt that there was a serious risk that if the restoration planning were to be carried out by the Department of Arts and Sciences at the Ministry of the Interior, its implementation would also end up being carried out by this department and 'in light of the history of the Dept. A. & S. in the past 15 years it is already easy to deduce by whom and in what manner those restoration works will be carried out'.⁹

That 'whom' in the letter was not referred to by name, but it would have been clear to readers that it alluded to the head of the Arts and Sciences department, Victor de Stuers (1843-1916), and to his chief adviser, the architect Pierre Cuypers. Regarding the desirability of responsibility for a restoration of the Counts' Chambers residing with this duo, the writers did not mince

their words: 'The Board feels that the time has come to inform Your Esteemed Assembly with utmost gravity, that with respect to the restoration of historical monuments, in this instance the Counts' Chambers, there is an urgent need to adopt a different course from the one hitherto followed by the Dept. A. & S. The principle nowadays rightly honoured elsewhere: *only preserve the existing and in so doing not make any completely new costly additions*, has been lost sight of in several restoration works carried out under the leadership of the Dept. A. & S.; new costly structures, in themselves sometimes meritorious, have been added ... In this way historic monuments and buildings have been rebuilt rather than restored and the character was for the most part lost.'¹⁰

The Maatschappij board then directed the attention of the parliamentarians back to the issue of the possible restoration of the Counts' Chambers: 'there is every reason to suspect that this will proceed in the manner referred to above and will be pursued in the spirit already embarked upon with the placing of an entirely *new*, historically highly dubious porch with steps in front of the entrance to the Knights' Hall, and in the spirit of the fountain that now needlessly disfigures the Binnenhof'.¹¹ Both the new entrance to the Counts' Chambers of 1880 and the neo-Gothic fountain installed five years later emanated from the drawing board of Pierre Cuypers (fig. 1).¹² Whether these explicit references to the members' own place of work were really needed in order to capture their attention is open to doubt, since over the past two decades De Stuers and Cuypers had themselves managed to build a controversial reputation among a considerable number of parliamentarians.¹³

DELFT

The year 1864 marked the beginning of a different line of thinking on the treatment of historically valuable buildings in the Netherlands. In Delft, the Royal Academy became the Polytechnic School, with the German architect Eugen Gugel (1832-1905) as its first Professor of Architecture. Thanks to Gugel and to the handbook he wrote and illustrated – *Geschiedenis van de Bouwstijlen in de Hoofdtijdperken der Architectuur* (History of Building Styles in the Principal Architectural Eras, 1869) – the majority of Dutch architecture students have since a more relativist approach to architectural history instilled in them. In Gugel's book, instead of a single European culture that had evolved in a linear fashion, there were many different European, North African and Asian cultures with a wide variety of building styles, regional differences and mutual influences.¹⁴ Seen from this perspective, historical buildings were not merely the expression of the stylistic ideal of the original designers, but also objects that

had been passed down from generation to generation, each of which had added their own, historically equally valuable elements.

Around the beginning of the 1880s, the first generation of Polytechnic School students started to make a career for themselves and to occupy prominent positions in the Dutch architectural world. In the process they also secured commissions for the restoration of historic monuments. However, with their relatively nuanced view of architectural history, in which there was scope for the preservation of different chronological layers, they ran up against the ideological brick wall erected by De Stuers and Cuypers, who rigidly applied the dogma of 'stylistic purity': each historical building style had an ideal form that contemporary architects had endeavoured to materialize but, owing to the limited technical possibilities of their day, they were not always entirely successful. Based on his interpretation of the theories of the French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879), Cuypers believed that the task of modern restoration architects was not to restore what had once existed, but to employ more advanced techniques to perfect the building in line with that ideal form. To be sure of making the right decisions they should not confine themselves to looking for concrete traces of earlier construction and other historical information, rather they needed to have a highly developed understanding of the building style in question. The Delft-trained architects could submit as many such restoration plans based on extensive building history research as they liked, but if Cuypers for instance detected that the roof structure of a gothic church was not sufficiently pointed and therefore did not satisfy the 'verticality' of the gothic ideal, the plan would be negatively assessed.

By 1895 the Maatschappij board had had enough and they let the national elected representatives know in no uncertain terms what in their view the problem – and the solution – was: 'to escape the future consequences of this wholly incorrect standpoint regarding the maintenance of historical monuments and to break with a way of working that is the inevitable result of the prevailing exclusive and one-sided leadership and point of view in the Dept. A. & S. – it is necessary that the maintenance and preservation of the historic monuments and buildings should from now on be entrusted to several people who act by common accord, that is to say to a government-appointed Committee that does not consist solely of individuals of the same views and insights.'¹⁵

WIDER PROTEST

At the end of 1895 the Maatschappij board was made up of the chairman Constantijn Muysken (1843-1922), vice-chairman J.R. de Kruyff (1844-1923), secretary

C.T.J. Louis Rieber (1848-1907) and members V.G.A. Bosch (1854-1911), Eduard Cuypers (1859-1927), Henri Evers (1855-1929), D.E.C. Knuttel (1857-1926), C.H. Peters (1847-1932) and I.H.J. van Lunteren (1843-1921).¹⁶ Of these nine, five (Muysken, De Kruyff, Bosch, Knuttel and Rieber) had studied under Gugel in Delft. Although Evers had studied at the art academies of The Hague and Antwerp, his views were so much in accord with those of Gugel that he eventually succeeded him as professor in Delft in 1902. Eduard Cuypers was Pierre Cuypers' nephew and had trained

2. The 29 signatories to the 'letter of adhesion' (*Bouwkundig Weekblad* 1895)

H. P. BERLAGE, Architect, *Amsterdam*.
 A. C. BLEYS, Bouwmeester, *Amsterdam*.
 Dr. A. BREDIUS, Directeur van het Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, 's-Gravenhage.
 F. J. BREMMER, Architect, 's-Gravenhage.
 A. DIRKZWAGER, Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 A. R. FREEM, Architect, *Arnhem*.
 A. N. GODEFROY, Architect, *Amsterdam*.
 C. N. VAN GOOR, Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 CORN. HOFSTEDE DE GROOT, Onderdirecteur van het Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, 's-Gravenhage.
 P. W. HOOYKAAS Jr., Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 G. P. KITS VAN HEIJNINGEN, 's-Gravenhage.
 JACOB F. KLINKHAMER, Architect-Ingenieur, *Amsterdam*.
 B. TH. KRAAYVANGER, Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 J. F. METZELAAR, Oud-Ingenieur-Architect voor de gevangnissen en rechtsgebouwen, 's-Gravenhage.
 W. C. METZELAAR, Ingenieur-Architect voor de gevangnissen en rechtsgebouwen, 's-Gravenhage.
 A. W. MEIJNEKEN, Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 W. MOLENBROEK, Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 F. J. NIEUWENHUIS, Architect, Directeur der Gemeentewerken, *Utrecht*.
 A. NOLEN, Architect, Directeur van de Academie voor Beeldende Kunsten en Technische Wetenschappen, *Rotterdam*.
 F. K. OSINGA, Lid van den Gemeenteraad, *Arnhem*.
 G. PERSIJN, Architect, *Arnhem*.
 C. B. POSTHUMUS MEIJES, Architect, *Amsterdam*.
 H. A. REUS, Architect, *Dordrecht*.
 A. SALM G.BZN., Architect, *Amsterdam*.
 JAN SPRINGER, Architect, *Amsterdam*.
 J. P. STOK WZN., Architect, *Rotterdam*.
 J. W. C. TELLEGEN, Civiel Ingenieur, Directeur der Gemeentewerken, *Arnhem*.
 Dr. P. TEMPLEMAN VAN DER HOEVEN, Lid van den Gemeenteraad, *Utrecht*.
 J. VERHEUL DZN., Architect *Rotterdam*.

in his architectural practice. But he had independently evolved into one of the chief exponents of the eclectic style so abhorred by his uncle. That the letter to the House of Representatives was not an exclusively 'Delftian complaint', but the expression of a more broad-based dissatisfaction, became apparent a week after the letter's publication, when *Bouwkundig Weekblad* published a 'declaration of support' signed by 29 architects and art historians, including several big names (fig. 2).¹⁷

The Maatschappij's lobbying seems to have been effective: following a negative recommendation to the House of Representatives from the budget committee, the Minister of the Interior, Samuel van Houten, was forced to back down. Although convinced that the Counts' Chambers ought to fall within the remit of his department of Arts and Sciences, he conceded that it would have been more seemly to have first discussed this with Waterstaat. The Members gave him the opportunity to still do so by voting down the budget request by 48 to 46 votes on 13 December 1895.¹⁸ Minister Philippe Willem van der Sleijden of Waterstaat was ready for him and made it clear from the outset that Waterstaat saw no reason to cede responsibility for this National Building to another ministry. He was, however, in favour of restoration: 'The Minister intends to seek advice on the Government Architect's proposals on that matter from other experts, outside his department.'¹⁹

Since 1883, the National Buildings department within the Waterstaat ministry had employed two government architects, covering different areas of the country. The government architect for North and East Netherlands was C.H. Peters, who via De Steurs had also been engaged for most of the projects in The Hague.²⁰ This situation came to an end in 1892 when Daniël Knuttel was appointed government architect for West and South Netherlands. Since Peters' appointment in May 1894, both had been members of the Maatschappij board. However, Peters did not belong to the cohort of Delft-trained architects; he had trained with and initially worked for Pierre Cuypers. He was also on the committee of the Vereniging Die Haghe, which had argued in favour of shifting responsibility for the Counts' Chambers to the Ministry of the Interior. The Maatschappij board's critical missive on the proposed restoration inquiry concluded with an unequivocal postscript: 'Mr C.H. Peters, member of the board, declares that he is unable to reconcile himself with the content and tenor of this address.'²¹ On 23 December 1895 Peters resigned from the board.²² It seems obvious that these events were directly related, but *Bouwkundig Weekblad* and the minutes of the Maatschappij general members meetings described it merely as an unfortunate coincidence and Peters remained an ordinary member of the Maatschappij.²³

CUYPERS' REACTION

Unlike Peters, Pierre Cuypers did resign – publicly – and that was unquestionably in relation to the Counts' Chambers dispute. An account of the short and acrimonious process that preceded this appeared in *Architectura*, the journal of the architectural society Genootschap Architectura et Amicitia (AetA for short). More or less coincidentally with the rise of Delft-trained architects within the Maatschappij, AetA became increasingly dominated by architects who had trained with Cuypers.²⁴ Following *Bouwkundig Weekblad's* publication of the letter to the House of Representatives, *Architectura* printed an editorial response: 'For the past several years the Board of this Maatschij. has been waging a fierce campaign against everything that originates in this A&S department, a campaign that in our opinion has taken on far too personal a character for us to be able to agree with.'²⁵ De Stuers and Cuypers' dominance in heritage preservation was not denied, rather presented as a blessing; if Waterstaat were in charge of the restoration of the Counts' Chambers, it would be carried out by 'totally unqualified' individuals.²⁶ According to the Aeta editors, gothic expert Cuypers was obviously the right person for the job. They observed that although the signatories to the 'letter of adhesion' included a number of respected names ('that we had rather not seen there'), none of them could boast as much experience with the restoration of thirteenth-century heritage buildings as Cuypers.²⁷

When the budget request was voted down, representing a rare defeat for De Stuers and Cuypers, the latter opted to counterattack. He allowed the strongly worded letter in which he resigned his membership of the Maatschappij to be published in *Architectura*.²⁸ He reproached the board with envy and animosity towards De Stuers and himself. The board, he contended, had placed them 'in a hateful light' by virtue of 'false representations' and had tried to undermine them.²⁹ Cuypers praised De Stuers to the skies, but he offered no substantive counterarguments. He did though refer to a 'counter letter' sent to the House of Representatives 'by some 350 men of standing (including) over 50 architects'.³⁰ There is no doubt that many people regarded the Maatschappij board's critical outpouring – probably largely as distinct from the actual content – as inappropriate. The Maatschappij's membership had been declining for some time with some twenty cancellations per year, but between December 1895 and January 1896, 212 of the 848 members ended their membership.³¹ The editors of *Architectura* declared the Maatschappij terminally ill, but that turned out to be a little premature; there must also have been considerable sympathy for the attack on De Stuers and Cuypers among Dutch architects and art historians,

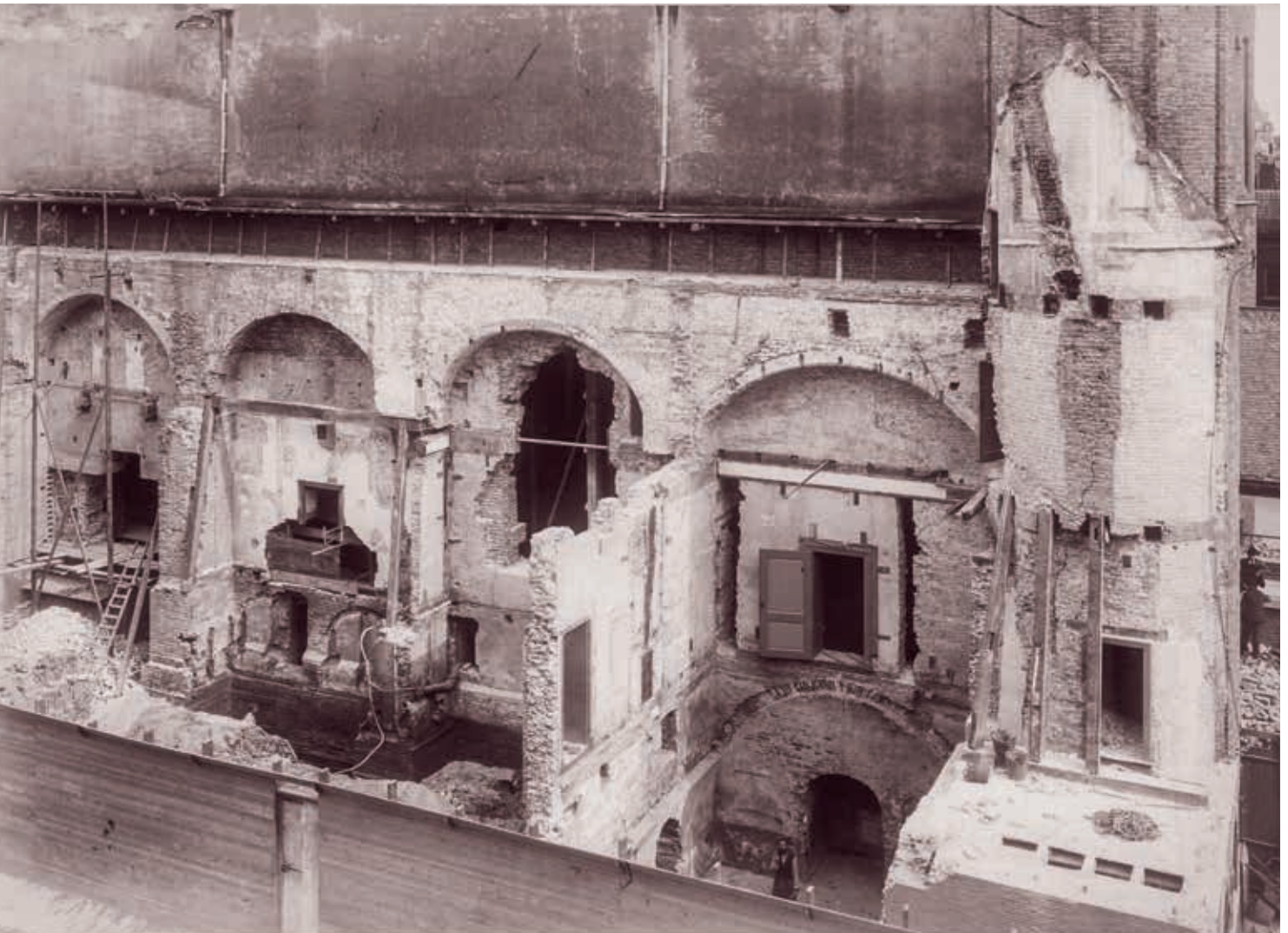
because in May 1896 membership of the Maatschappij rose again with 46 new enrolments.

The Minister of the Interior refused to accept that his department of Arts and Sciences had been sidelined. After more than nine months without any overtures towards compromise, the Waterstaat minister decided to go it alone in setting up a restoration committee. In September 1896 he appointed four committee members: Constantijn Muysken (chairman), Daniël Knuttel (secretary), C. H. Peters and F.J. Nieuwenhuis (1848-1919). Interior Affairs was requested to appoint a fifth member, but the minister ignored the invitation.³² The impasse continued to frustrate everyone for more than a year, until the national election of 1897, which produced a new Minister of the Interior who informed the equally new Minister of Waterstaat that he was prepared to accept the already established restoration committee and to nominate a member.³³ That new member was... Pierre Cuypers.

'THE STONES SPEAK'

Peters' role in the restoration committee is interesting. He sat on it in his capacity as government architect and so he once again found himself in a consultative body containing members of a board from which he had resigned. However, this did not mean that he took Cuypers' side within the committee. Since his move to Waterstaat as government architect – in addition to his work as an architect and outside the immediate sphere of influence of De Stuers and Cuypers – he had independently developed into an architectural historian who enjoyed the respect of both ideological camps.³⁴ Moreover, his role on the committee did not involve organizing practical restoration activities – that was the task of Knuttel, whose district included the Binnenhof. Peters, along with Nieuwenhuis, was responsible for the extensive building history research that preceded the planning stage.³⁵

Just how congenial the restoration committee meetings were – with all the former (?) adversaries around one table – there is no way of telling; none of those involved has ever said anything about it and the committee's own official reports are, even by nineteenth-century standards, exceedingly neutral. In 1907 those reports were published in a luxuriously bound and richly illustrated compilation.³⁶ In the reports it is invariably 'the committee' that makes decisions and carries out works. From the rare comment about the course adopted it can, however, be inferred that the influence of Cuypers, with his idealized view of restoration, was limited: 'The committee has in its work always endeavoured to bear in mind that it had been called upon to restore and had to subordinate personal taste and ideas to what the building taught it. It had allowed "the stones to speak".'³⁷



3. The northern exterior wall of the Knights' Hall during building history research (photo Vinkenbos and Dewald, Cultural Heritage Agency)

Peters and Nieuwenhuis had not proceeded on the basis of their general architectural-historical knowledge – or on an acquired ‘feeling for’ certain styles – but on the basis of their own research into the Counts’ Chambers. Those involved in the project explicitly refrained from adopting any overarching restoration idea; rather than immediately labelling the entire complex as ‘gothic’ and then restoring everything in that style – with a few invented additions if need be – a separate investigation was carried out on each section after which a restoration plan was drawn up.³⁸ Every time a section of the Counts’ Chambers was cleared of its multitude archival filing cabinets, Peters and Nieuwenhuis had the rooms thoroughly dismantled in search of possible construction traces (fig. 3). This yielded so much information about the building history that an interesting problem arose: ‘On the other hand, they were repeatedly confronted with the problem of remains from different construction periods being found all mixed in together, so that a decision

had to be made about which period to restore, and it was not always easy to find a solution that satisfied all members of the committee. However, a decision by majority vote was very rarely needed; as a rule consensus was eventually achieved.³⁹

Unfortunately they wisely refrained from mentioning which issues were voted on, but it nevertheless shows that the committee functioned democratically and unanimity was not required in making decisions. That does not seem to have worked to Cuypers’ advantage. He already had three committee members opposed to him (Muysken, Nieuwenhuis and Knuttel) and although Peters held him in great esteem personally, he too appears to have pursued a more nuanced, ‘Delftian’ approach when it came to architectural-historical perspectives.⁴⁰ In the past Cuypers had shown himself capable, even without broad support but with the help of De Stuers’ political influence, of steering discussions in the direction he wanted from behind the scenes. But during this period the duo’s political

credit no longer seemed to be sufficient; there was broad frustration with the prolonged obstruction of the restoration committee and that came on top of the already substantial number of clashes between the Department of Arts and Sciences and the House of Representatives in the previous two decades.⁴¹ In 1901 De Stuers resigned from the civil service to take up a seat in the House of Representatives, which further diminished Cuyppers' opportunities to exert pressure.

RESTORE AND RECONSTRUCT

It was not until 1898 that the House of Representatives actually allocated money to the project and that restoration work could commence. A good example of the committee's approach is the realization of a plan for the Lairese Room, which dated from the fourteenth century but owed its name to the painter who had decorated the room during a large-scale renovation in 1688 (figs. 4 and 5).⁴² 'As far as the Lairese Room was



4. The northeast corner of the De Lairesezaal during building history research (photo Vinkenbos and Dewald, Cultural Heritage Agency)



5. The northwest corner of the De Lairessezaal after the restoration (photo J.G. Kramer, Cultural Heritage Agency)

concerned, the committee initially believed that sufficient information should be obtained in order to enable the oldest condition to be restored; it soon transpired however that the elements discovered derived from different construction periods and were contradictory, so that in the end, in combination with other considerations, the Lairesse Room was restored to the state in which it was found.⁴³ Throughout the project the aim was to leave all construction traces in the masonry exposed to view where possible. However, all the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ‘annexes’ along the long elevations of the Knights’ Hall and in the northeast corner of the complex were resolutely demolished (figs. 6 and 7).

The necessity of replacing the roof of the Knights’ Hall was probably beyond dispute for all involved. In 1861 Cuypers had been one of the most outspoken opponents of the replacement of the existing timber roof with a neo-Gothic, cast-iron fantasy design by W.N. Rose (1801-1877) (fig. 8).⁴⁴ Based on the meticulous measurements taken at the time, a fairly exact reconstruction was now possible. Thanks to Cuypers, even the discarded carved corbel stones, which he had purchased four decades earlier for the Rijksmuseum

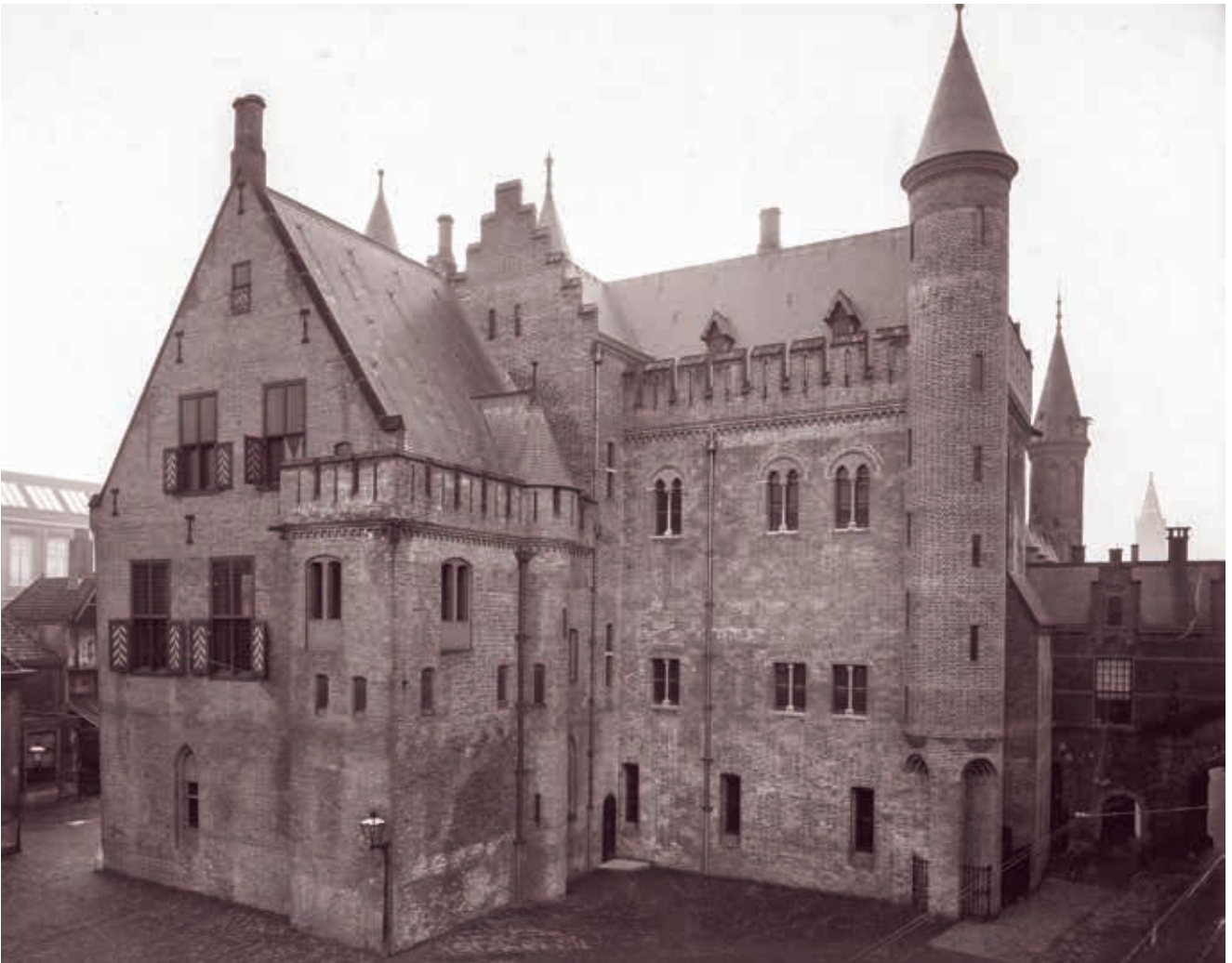
collection, could be reinstated (fig. 9).⁴⁵ But for the rest his influence appears to have been limited here as well. A lot of restoration to the original style did take place, but it was always based on specific evidence regarding the original situation. When it was decided to reinstate the vanished windows and no information about the original tracery could be found, instead of calling for new designs, they opted to copy similar windows that still existed in the complex. And when there were no on-site examples of elements designated for reconstruction, they copied contemporary examples from elsewhere, such as from the town hall in Haarlem.⁴⁶

The decor and furnishings of the Knights’ Hall, designed entirely by Cuypers – chiefly for the Opening of Parliament (Prinsjesdag) in September 1904 at the express request of both houses of the States-General – were in fact not part of the actual restoration (fig. 10). In the committee’s report this was implicitly described as a creative addition – in other words, not based on (architectural) architectural-historical research – that was necessary for the Counts’ Chambers’ universally approved new function.⁴⁷ For the same reason, although with professional reluctance, the committee



6. The northeast corner of the complex before the restoration (photo J.G. Kramer, Cultural Heritage Agency)

7. The northeast corner of the complex after the restoration (photo H.J. Tollens C.Hzn., Cultural Heritage Agency)





8. The Knights' Hall in use as archive room, with the cast iron roof from 1861 (Cultural Heritage Agency)

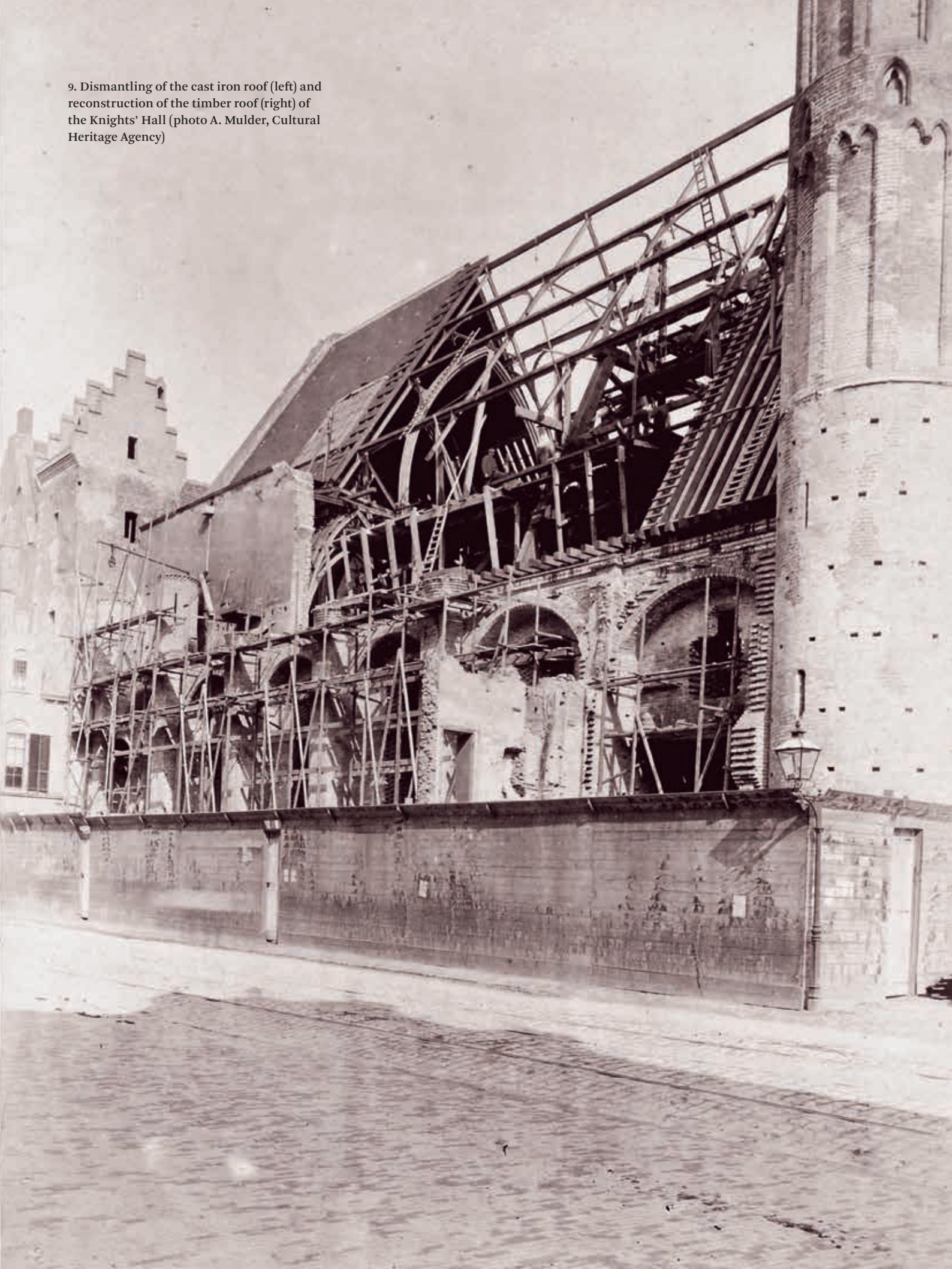
permitted a heating system and electric light to be installed in the complex, and with that in 1905 the restoration project was complete.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

Cuyper's influence on the ideological course pursued by the committee for the restoration of the Counts' Chambers appears to have been limited. The project was a prominent part of his impressive body of work, but it actually testifies to a broader and different significance for the development of heritage preservation in

the Netherlands. By current standards the restoration committee's approach was rather romanticizing and entailed the overly rigorous removal of elements. Nevertheless, the restoration represented a significant break with the line previously dictated by the Department of Arts & Sciences because in this case architectural-historical research was the point of departure and decisions were based on how it had *actually* been rather than how it *should* have been, with some room for multiple chronological layers. Moreover, it was a highly prestigious national project whereby the new

9. Dismantling of the cast iron roof (left) and reconstruction of the timber roof (right) of the Knights' Hall (photo A. Mulder, Cultural Heritage Agency)





10. Interior of the Knights' Hall after the restoration with reconstructed timber roof, 1905
(Cultural Heritage Agency)

approach had received explicit national political approval and the results were admired.⁴⁹ The termination of De Stuers' civil service career, partly as a result of this project – after all his pioneering work for Dutch heritage preservation – was another important step in the continuing evolution of this new approach; De Stuers, as a member of the House of Representatives, and Cuypers, as the most important ministerial adviser, continued to exert considerable influence, but

there was now room for different opinions about restoration ethics.⁵⁰ The restoration of the Counts' Chambers between 1897 and 1905, and the heated discussions that preceded it, can be seen as the beginning of a long and difficult process that eventually culminated in 1917 with the formulation of principles for a more objective foundation of heritage preservation by the Netherlands Archeological Institute (Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond) established in 1899.⁵¹

NOTES

- 1 See also the article by Paula van der Heiden and Hein Hundertmark in this thematic issue.
- 2 A. van der Woud, *Sterrenstof. Honderd jaar mythologie in de Nederlandse architectuur*, Rotterdam 2008, 7-8, 39-43, 52. For Cuypers' influence on the design of government buildings, see the article by Ester Vink in this thematic issue.
- 3 For a general overview of the main debates during this period in the Netherlands, see A. van der Woud, *Waarheid en karakter. Het debat over de bouwkunst 1840-1900*, Rotterdam 1997.
- 4 'Berichten', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 46, 297-298.
- 5 D. Smit, *Het belang van het Binnenhof*, Amsterdam 2015, 174-176. That committee's appeal for the restoration and repurposing of the Knights' Hall was made in October 1895. Its members included the government architect, C.H. Peters. The committee argued that as a heritage building, the Knights' Hall should fall within the remit of the Ministry of the Interior (Binnenlandse Zaken), with a corresponding annual maintenance budget. 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 47, 301-302.
- 6 In an 1890 report by the government architect C.H. Peters the total costs of restoration had been calculated at 192,000 guilders, to be divided over an estimated three project years. 'The accuracy of this estimate was ... called into question; it was also noted that this only related to the restoration of the [Knights' Hall], but that once that had been agreed to, further restorations to the Binnenhof would no doubt arise.'; 'Berichten' 1895 (note 4), 298.
- 7 They had gained some experience with the extensive rebuilding and restoration of the northwest section of the Binnenhof carried out by the architect F.J. Nieuwenhuis in 1879-1880; see Smit 2015 (note 5), 161-169.
- 8 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 47, 299-300. The special board meeting at which the letter was composed took place on 31 October. The letter was not signed by all board members.
- 9 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij' 1895 (note 8), 299.
- 10 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij' 1895 (note 8), 299. By way of example they mentioned two restoration projects: the Sint Servaas church (1879-1902) in Maastricht, where a new tower was added, and the cloister walk on Utrecht's Dom Square (1879-1895), which acquired a new gateway, both designed by Cuypers.
- 11 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij' 1895 (note 8), 299.
- 12 For a more detailed consideration of the front elevation of the Counts' Chambers, see the article by Paula van der Heiden and Hein Hundertmark in this thematic issue.
- 13 Smit 2015 (note 5), 155-158, 165-169, 173.
- 14 E. Gugel, *Geschiedenis van de bouwstijlen in de hoofdtijdperken der architectuur*, Arnhem 1869. In 1886 and 1903 the second and third editions appeared, both with additional text and illustrations. For the fourth edition in 1919 the text was radically revised by J.H.W. Leliman.
- 15 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij' 1895 (note 8), 300.
- 16 Officially the board had a tenth member, elected in May 1895, but this man, L.C. Hezenmans (1841-1909), a friend of Pierre Cuypers, resigned in December of that year without having attended a single board meeting; 'Jaarverslag 1895-1896', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 16 (1896) 22, 134.
- 17 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij' 1895 (note 8), 48, 305.
- 18 'Berichten', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 50, 321-322.
- 19 'De Grafelijke Zalen' *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 51, 325.
- 20 For an overview of the career of C.H. Peters, see P.T.E.E. Rosenberg, 'Peters, een gewetensvol historicus', in: C.J. van der Peet and G. Steenmeijer (eds.), *De rijksbouwmeesters. Twee eeuwen architectuur van de Rijksgebouwendienst en zijn voorlopers*, Rotterdam 1995, 267-299.
- 21 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij' 1895 (note 8), 300.
- 22 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 52, 329.
- 23 For Peters' final protest and the dismissive reaction of Muysken and Rieber, see 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 15 (1895) 51, 323-324. The annual report (see note 16) published five months later, did however refer to the Counts' Chambers dispute in relation to Peters' resignation.
- 24 J. Schilt and J. van der Werf, *Genootschap Architectura et Amicitia 1855-1990*, Rotterdam 1992, 70-78.
- 25 'Adressen aan de Tweede Kamer', *Architectura* 3 (1895) 48, 208 and 'Adressen aan de Tweede Kamer (continuation)', *Architectura* 3 (1895) 49, 211.
- 26 Although this was primarily a rejection of the idea of allowing Waterstaat to establish a restoration committee made up of external experts, it would have been read with furrowed brows by the government architects employed in that ministry (Knuttel and Peters).
- 27 '1028e gewone vergadering van 4 december 1895', *Architectura* 3 (1895) 49, 209-211. The A et A board also wrote a letter to the House of Representatives in which the establishment of a restoration committee was supported provided that its members were chosen by De Stuers and directly supervised by him.
- 28 P.J.H. Cuypers, 'Aan het bestuur der Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst alhier', *Architectura* 3 (1895) 52, 222.
- 29 Cuypers 1895 (note 28).
- 30 Cuypers 1895 (note 28). The 'counter letter' was not published, but De Stuers' archive contains a copy; National Archives (NA), 2.21.355, Work archive of V.E.L. de Stuers, inv. no. 1781. For the reaction of the Maatschappij board to Cuypers' reproaches, see 'Mededeelingen betreffende de Maatschappij', *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 16 (1896) 2, 7-8.
- 31 'Jaarverslag 1895-1896' 1896 (note 16).
- 32 Commissie van Advies, *Beschrijving van de Grafelijke Zalen op het Binnenhof te 's-Gravenhage*, 's-Gravenhage 1907, 7.
- 33 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 7. The Minister of the Interior was Hendrik Goeman Borgesius (1847-1917), the Minister of Water, Trade and Industry, the engineer Cornelis Lely (1854-1929).
- 34 Rosenberg 1995 (note 20), 269.
- 35 NA, 2.04.13, Archief van het Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken: Afdeling Kunsten en Wetenschappen, inv. no. 951: *Rapport van de Commissie van Advies inzake de Grafelijke Zalen*.
- 36 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32).

- On the title page, a note in large capital type makes it clear that this publication by the Maatschappij had been commissioned by the Waterstaat minister.
- 37 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 7.
- 38 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 140.
- 39 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 121.
- 40 C.H. Peters, *De Groote Zaal op het Binnen-Hofte 's-Gravenhage*, 's-Gravenhage 1905.
- 41 P.T.E.E. Rosenberg, 'De Stuers, spin in het web', in Van der Peet and Steenmeijer 1995 (note 20), 197-213, esp. 210.
- See also De Stuers' notes on the regular official consultations between the ministries of Internal Affairs and Waterstaat; NA, 2.21.355 De Stuers, inv. no. 1785.
- 42 Bureau voor Bouwhistorisch Onderzoek, *De Lairessezaal. Binnenhof 8-14 's-Gravenhage. Historisch onderzoek*, 's-Gravenhage, January 2011.
- 43 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 134.
- 44 W.F. Denslagen, *Omstreden herstel. Kritiek op het restaureren van monumenten*, The Hague 1987, 160-166.
- 45 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 131.
- 46 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 131.
- 47 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 199-200.
- 48 Commissie van Advies 1907 (note 32), 200.
- 49 Smit 2015 (note 5), 179-181.
- 50 With regard to the end of De Stuers' civil service career, see Rosenberg 1995 (note 41), 210.
- 51 J. Kalf and the Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond, *Grondbeginselen en voorschriften voor het behoud, de herstelling en de uitbreiding van oude bouwwerken*, Leiden 1917.

M.B. VAN GEND MA studied Architectural History and Heritage Preservation at the University of Utrecht. He is a freelance researcher and adviser in the field of architectural history and heritage policy and is currently researching the life and work of the architect F.J. Nieuwenhuis.

REBELLION IN THE ARCHITECTURAL WORLD

THE RESTORATION OF THE GRAFELIJKE ZALEN AND THE TUG-OF-WAR OVER HERITAGE PRESERVATION

MARK VAN GEND

In late 1895, in response to an ostensibly innocuous budget debate in the Lower House, a public war of words erupted over the prospective restoration and conversion of the Grafelijke Zalen (Counts' Chambers) in the Binnenhof. Its desirability was not in dispute. However, in a matter of weeks, the discussion about which course to pursue and who should assume responsibility for the project escalated into a full-scale duel. On one side of the debate stood the Ministry of the Interior, led by the chief civil servant of the Department of Arts and Sciences (Kunsten en Wetenschappen or k&w), Victor de Stuers, and the architect Pierre Cuypers. Opposing them were the Ministry of Water, Trade and Industry (Waterstaat, for short) and the Society for the Advancement of Architecture (Maatschappij tot Bevordering der Bouwkunst). After De Stuers and Cuypers had implicitly claimed the project for the Ministry of the Interior, the Society registered a highly critical protest: it demanded that the Lower House leave responsibility for this 'national treasure' with the Ministry of Water, Trade & Industry and break with the fifteen-year-long approach to restorations dictated by k&w. The 'stylistic purity' demanded by De Stuers and Cuypers, based on their rather linear view of architectural history, left little scope for the Society's somewhat more relativist approach, which combined resto-

ration of a building's artistic and historical values with the possibility of preserving multiple chronological layers. In the past De Stuers and Cuypers had nearly always managed, with the help of a few political intrigues, to impose their architectural vision, but on this occasion they were blocked by the Lower House. The Minister of Water, Trade & Industry set up a four-member restoration commission – his own government architects, D.E.C. Knuttel and C.H. Peters, plus C. Muyskens and F.J. Nieuwenhuis from the Society – and invited his colleague from the Ministry of the Interior to appoint a fifth member. It was not until eighteen months later that Cuypers was duly appointed to the position and the restoration commission could set to work. The normally assertive Cuypers appears to have exerted very little influence over the course pursued by the commission. Instead of his highly developed appreciation for the gothic style, it was the concrete building history research of Peters and Nieuwenhuis that underpinned the commission's choices. De Stuers and Cuypers continued to wield influence, but their near total dominance of government policy was a thing of the past and after the completion of the restoration in 1905 there was gradually more scope for other views on heritage restoration ethics.