

A Watermill in Gelderland

Depicted by Jan Hulswit in 1809

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In his day, the Amsterdam artist and art dealer Jan Hulswit (1766–1822) was highly regarded as a draftsman and painter of landscapes and city views: he was well represented in private collections and his best works fetched high prices at auctions.¹ Hulswit's oeuvre and that of some of his friends and colleagues reflect the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, during the Napoleonic occupation and the change from republic to monarchy. Their work is still tied to the tradition set by the great landscape artists of the Golden Age, such as Anthonie van Borssom (1631–1677), Jacob van Ruisdael (1628/29–1682), and Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709); at the same time it is influenced by the French Rococo and Neo-classical movements and signals the first developments toward what is called the Romantic era in Dutch art history. This period of political and artistic transition in The Netherlands has long been neglected but has begun to receive attention during the last two decades.² Hulswit is one of the main exponents of the decisive change of taste from the idealized, classical landscapes made popular by eighteenth-century artists such as Jan van Huysum (1682–1749) and Isaac de Moucheron (1667–1744) to a realistic depiction of (mainly Dutch) landscapes, based on direct observation of nature.³

Although few of Hulswit's paintings are known today, his drawings abound. Some two

hundred sheets have found their way into print rooms in the Netherlands,⁴ but relatively few into museums abroad.⁵ Recently the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, acquired two drawings by the artist, one by promised gift, the other by purchase.⁶ The latter is the point of departure for this short note. The drawing, formerly in the Unicorno Collection in The Hague, represents a seemingly simple barn (Fig. 1).⁷ Closer inspection, however, reveals that the building is a watermill, as is clear from the wooden channel on raised posts that runs alongside the structure, carrying the water to the top of the wheel. On the right, invisible beyond the sluice gate, was the pond that served as a reservoir. The same building, viewed from a little to the left and showing more of the surroundings, is in the Teylers Museum, Haarlem (Fig. 2).⁸ Since Hulswit is known to have made drawings of similar watermills, two of them in the village of Renkum in the province of Gelderland,⁹ it can be reasonably supposed that the mill depicted in the New York and Haarlem sheets was also located in that area. The central region of this province, called the Veluwe, a lateral moraine formed during the glacial period, was particularly well suited for water-powered mills: there was an abundance of natural springs and creeks and the differences in altitude of the elevated sand grounds allowed watercourses to be dug to divert the water to mills on lower levels.

During the summer, Hulswit and fellow artists such as Gerrit Lamberts (1776–1850), Daniël Kerkhoff (1766–1821), Pieter George Westenberg (1791–1873), and Egbert van Driest (1745–1818) used to leave Amsterdam and travel east, attracted by the scenery and picturesque sites in areas such as the Gooi, the Veluwe, the Achterhoek, the Hondsrug in Drenthe, and the Beek-Ubbergen area near Nijmegen.¹⁰ Gelderland offered ideal opportunities because it was relatively close to Amsterdam and had the most varied landscapes and primeval forests. Villages such as Renkum and Heesum, located on the southwest slopes of the Veluwe to the west of Arnhem, overlooking the Rhine, were particularly attractive sites for draftsmen, judging by the number of surviving drawings made there.¹¹ One example by Hulswit is dated 1815, but he probably went there more than once.¹² To the east of Renkum and Heesum, closer to Arnhem, is the village of Oosterbeek, situated along a creek that was called the Gietenbeek and the Mariëndaalse beek (or Slijpbeek), and farther downstream was known as the Klingelbeek. It is here that Hulswit made a drawing, now in the De Grez collection, *Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels* (Fig. 3),¹³ of what seems to be the same watermill as that depicted in the Morgan and Teyler sheets. The mill, with its characteristic type of hipped roof (Dut. *wolfsdak*), and the surrounding landscape were sketched from the right, and the location is identified by the inscription, *Klinkebeek*, at top right. Hulswit's peer and close friend Kerkhoff,¹⁴ with whom he may have traveled on this particular journey, depicted the site from the same vantage point in two drawings of near identical composition, one in monochrome and the other in watercolor. The colored drawing, in the Gemeentemuseum, Arnhem (Fig. 4),¹⁵ is inscribed on the verso, *Aan de Klingelbeek in Gelderland*; a similar inscription, *Aan de Klingelbeek bij Aarnhem*, appears on the monochrome version, which is in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam.¹⁶ These inscriptions confirm the location. Hulswit's main pupil, Westenberg, also recorded the site, but his drawing (also in the

Gemeentemuseum, Arnhem),¹⁷ which shows the mill viewed from the same angle as in the Teyler sheet (i.e., from the southeast), was probably made a few years later, judging by changes to the roof, now half tiled and half thatched.

There were actually several watermills, including five paper mills, situated along the creek near Oosterbeek.¹⁸ The building represented in these four drawings could be the "Klingelbeekse molen," a paper mill located on the lower part of the creek.¹⁹ There are two arguments, however, against such an identification. First, the mill as depicted does not have shutters in the roof or in the upper parts of the walls, as was typical of paper mills. Such shutters allowed air to circulate in order to dry the damp sheets of paper hanging on ropes in the attic.²⁰ Second, the related drawings by Kerkhoff and Westenberg are described as representing the flourmill "De Hes" (or "in de Hes") in a popular booklet with drawings of sites in this area in the nineteenth century; they are likewise classified by the *Topografische Atlas Gelderland* in the Gemeentemuseum, Arnhem.²¹ This flourmill, which was first documented in the fifteenth century, was run by miller Jan Gerritsen until 1816, then continued by his son and grandson Egbert Jan until the latter's death in 1874. By that time it had been transformed into an inn (the Herberg Den Hes) and in 1918 was turned into a dyeing mill. The mill pond, which served as a water reservoir, was filled up in 1940. Although unrecognizable, parts of the flourmill still exist today, incorporated into the lower part of a house situated along the Hesweg in the community of Klingelbeek on the border of Oosterbeek (municipality of Renkum) and Arnhem.²²

The drawings under discussion were made when the building was still a working flourmill. Kerkhoff not only signed and annotated his two drawings but also dated them, one of them [**the watercolor version?**] very precisely, *12 november 1809*. This may not necessarily be the date of the visit, but probably the day he finished and signed his drawing. This was obviously not done on the spot, for the trees are still in foliage and



Figure 1
JAN HULSWIT
Study of a Watermill
New York, Pierpont
Morgan Library



Figure 2
JAN HULSWIT
House with a
Watermill
Haarlem, Teylers
Museum

Figure 3

JAN HULSWIT

Landscape with a
Watermill between
Trees

*Brussels, Koninklijke
Musea voor Schone
Kunsten*



Figure 4

DANIËL
KERKHOFF

A Watermill on the
Klingelbeek

*Gemeentemuseum,
Arnhem*





Figure 5

JAN HULSWIT

Wooded Landscape
with Watermills in
Gelderland

The Netherlands,
Private Collection

the scene is bathed in summer sunshine. The drawing must have been made in the studio, where it was fully worked out and finished in watercolor, obviously intended for sale. The date is therefore only a *terminus ante quem*, and the trip could have taken place in previous months or even earlier. That Hulswit and Kerkhoff made their joint trip to Gelderland in 1809 can, however, be established from two other black chalk drawings by Hulswit that he probably executed during the same trip to Gelderland: both have similar annotations on the recto, one inscribed in Oosterbeek and the other in Utrecht.²³ The latter sketch, drawn from life near the city walls of Utrecht, half way between Amsterdam and Oosterbeek, is also dated 1809.

Unlike Kerkhoff's finished watercolor of "De Hes" intended for the market, Hulswit's three drawings—the rough sketch in black chalk of the

entire site (Fig. 3) and his two detailed studies in black chalk and pen and ink of the flourmill itself (Figs. 1 and 2)—served quite a different purpose. They were drawn on the spot for future reference rather than as independent works for sale. Once back in his Amsterdam studio, Hulswit combined the three drawings—and probably others that have since disappeared—to compose a large painting, now in a Dutch private collection (Fig. 5).²⁴ This imposing landscape contains three watermills and other rural buildings, with a cow standing in the mill pond, four sheep on its bank, and figures in the middle ground. In the far distance a watermill is set against the slopes of the Veluwe across a sunlit cornfield. On the extreme right of the picture is the corner of a dilapidated watermill, which serves as a *repoussoir*. Nestled among tall trees on the left is the watermill (Fig. 6) that had been sketched by

Figure 6

JAN HULSWIT

Detail of Fig. 5

*The Netherlands,
Private Collection*



Hulswit *in situ*: it is seen from the same angle as in the Morgan sheet, with the same typical roof and dormer window, an open door to the left of the waterwheel, and open shutters to the right, all nearly identical to his drawings, as well as those by Kerckhoff and Westenberg. Unlike the drawing in Brussels (Fig. 3), which is probably an accurate record of the site, the painting is not. Here the artist rearranged the pictorial elements to create an attractive, balanced composition, adding a dramatic patch of sunlight from the otherwise cloudy sky in the middle ground, thereby evoking the romantic atmosphere of the [verdant/picturesque?] Veluwe scenery of Oosterbeek.

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NOTES

1. For the artist's biography, see the contemporary work by Roeland van Eijnden and Adriaan van der Willigen, *Geschiedenis der Vaderlandsche schilderkunst, sedert de helft der XVIII eeuw*, vol. 3 (Haarlem, 1820), pp. 120–23, and vol. 4 (Amsterdam, 1842), pp. 14–15. See also the lengthy obituary notice by Jeronimo de Vries in the *Almanak voor het Schoone en Goede*, 1825, pp. 160–74. Hulswit's reputation as an artist is confirmed by the fact that Louis Napoleon, King of Holland, acquired two of his paintings for the Royal Museum (now Rijksmuseum) in 1808 (inv. nos. A SK-A-1050 and SK-A-1051; see Albert J. Elen, "Twee schilderijen van Jan Hulswit voor het Koninklijk Museum," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum*, 53, forthcoming, 2005). For Hulswit's drawings, see Albert J. Elen, "'Met einigen Verandering naar 't Leeven': Compositionele herhaling met variaties in het tekenkunstig oeuvre van Jan Hulswit (1766–1822)," *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 4, 1985 [*Achttiende-eeuwse kunst in de Nederlanden* (Delft, 1987)], pp. 241–67. Surprisingly, there is no biography of Hulswit in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. by Jane Turner, 34 vols., London and New York, 1996 (he is only referred to as a pupil of Pieter Barbiers [1717–1780] in the Barbiers family entry). The author is preparing a *catalogue raisonné* of Hulswit's paintings and drawings.
2. See especially the following exhibition catalogues: Louis van Tilborgh and Guido Jansen, *Op zoek naar de Gouden Eeuw: Nederlandse schilderkunst, 1800–1950*, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum, 1986; Frans Grijzenhout and Carel van Tuyll van Serooskerken, *Edele eenvoud: Neo-Classicisme in Nederland, 1765–1800*, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum and Teylers Museum, 1989; J. W. Niemeijer, with the assistance of R. J. A. te Rijdt, *Hollandse aquarellen uit de 18de eeuw*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 1990; *Nederlandse tekeningen uit de negentiende eeuw 1 / Nineteenth-Century Dutch Drawings*, 2 vols., Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, 1994–95; Wiepke Loos et al., *On Country Roads and Fields: The Depiction of the 18th- and 19th-Century Landscape*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 1997–98; and Ronald de Leeuw et al., *Meesters van de Romantiek: Nederlandse kunstenaars, 1800–1850*, Rotterdam, Kunsthall, and Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 2005–6.
3. See Michiel C. Plomp, *Hartstochtelijk verzameld: 18de-eeuwse Hollandse verzamelaars van tekeningen en hun collecties*, Paris and Bussum, 2001, pp. 280–82.
4. The main holdings of drawings by Hulswit are in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (38), the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam (34), the Amsterdams Historisch Museum (25), the Teylers Museum, Haarlem (23), the Gemeente Archief, Amsterdam (17), and the Prentenkabinet der Universiteit, Leiden (15).

5. Outside of the Netherlands, there are two important holdings of Hulswit's drawings that are of Dutch origin: the print room of the *Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, Brussels (20 sheets; based on the collection of Jean de Grez from Breda), and the *Fondation Custodia* in Paris (6 drawings; based on the collection of Frits Lugt from Maartensdijk). Lesser numbers of drawings by Hulswit are in the print rooms in Berlin (10), Darmstadt (4), Dresden (3), and Bremen (2). The *Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts*, Paris, has four.
6. The first drawing is a promised gift of the Library's former director Charles Ryskamp: *View of a Lean-To and a Privy behind a Bridgeman's or Lockmaster's Cottage* (pen and brown ink and watercolor, over black chalk; 184 x 142 mm; see Jane Shoaf Turner, *Dutch Drawings in the Pierpont Morgan Library: Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, 2 vols., forthcoming, New York, 2006, no. 446, repr.). The latter was purchased in May 2005 from the Unicorn Collection in The Hague (see sale, Amsterdam, Sotheby's, 19 May 2004, lot 268 [unsold] and 2 November 2004, lot 233 [unsold], both times as "attributed to Jan Hulswit").
7. Inv. no. 2005.189. Pen and brown ink, gray wash, over traces of black chalk; 182 x 237 mm; see Shoaf Turner (forthcoming, 2006), fig. 115.
8. Inv. no. Y 24 (referred to in the 1864 inventory as "*Woning met watermolen in Gelderland*"). Black chalk, brush and black and gray ink; 177 x 273 mm; see Leslie A. Schwartz, *The Dutch Drawings in the Teyler Museum, IV: Artists Born between 1740 and 1800*, Haarlem and elsewhere, 2004, no. 184, repr. Schwartz noted the similarities with the Unicorn (now Morgan) sheet and suggested that both studies may have been made in Gelderland.
9. *Watermill on the Edge of a Wood*, in the *Prentenkabinet der Universiteit, Leiden* (inv. no. AW 2672; black chalk, with watercolor and bodycolor; 136 x 189 mm, signed and inscribed on the verso, in brown ink, *te Renkum bij Wageningen / J. Hulswit*; see Jaap Bolten, ed. *Oude tekeningen van het Prentenkabinet der Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden / Dessins anciens du Cabinet des Dessins et des Estampes de l'Université de Leyde*, exh. cat., The Hague, Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst, 1985, no. 45, repr. [entry by the present writer]), and *Watermill between Trees*, in the *Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam* (inv. no. MB 1307; brush and gray ink; 195 x 290 mm; inscribed **[where? in what medium?]**, *te Renkum*). Another drawing of a double-watermill by Hulswit in the *Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen* (inv. no. MB 1289; black chalk, pen and brown ink, with watercolor washes; 153 x 203 mm) may also have been made in this area (though it is neither signed nor inscribed).
10. See J. W. Niemeijer, "De betekenis van Drenthe voor de vernieuwing van de landschaps-schilderkunst omstreeks 1800," *Nieuwe Drentse Volksalmanak*, 94, 1977, pp. 69–97; Bert Gerlagh and Eveline Koolhaas-Grosfeld, *Egbert van Driest (1745–1818)*, Zwolle, 1995; and P.C. van der Coelen et al., '*Heerlijke natuurtooneelen*': *Romantische landschapschilders in Beek en Ubbergen, 1810–1860*, exh. cat., Nijmegen, Museum Het Valkhof, 2000–2001.
11. Besides those drawings cited in note 9, see Hulswit's *Landscape near Heesum*, in the *Museum Boijmans van Beuningen* (inv. no. MB 1311; black chalk; 170 x 217 mm; inscribed **[where? in what medium?]**, *Hilsum*); and his *View of the Village of Heesum*, from the collection of Victor de Stuers (pen and black ink, with gray wash; 293 x 448 mm; see D. Hannema, *Oude tekeningen uit de verzameling Victor de Stuers*, exh. cat., Almelo, Kunstkring de Waag, 1961, no. 86, repr.); and Daniël Kerkhoff's signed and dated *Hilly Landscape with a View of Heesum* of 1830, in the *Teylers Museum* (inv. no. Y 4; pen and brown ink, with gray wash; 232 x 307 mm; inscribed on the verso, in pencil, *te Hilsum in Gelderland*; see Schwartz 2004, no. 223, repr.), which is a repetition of an earlier drawing by Kerkhoff, dated 1812, in the collection of Christiaan P. van Eeghen, The Hague.
12. *Watermill and Barn between Trees*, in the *Prentenkabinet der Universiteit, Leiden* (inv. no. 69/208; pen and black ink, with gray wash; 190 x 221 mm; inscribed at lower right, **[in what?]**, 1815). This drawing is nearly identical to another drawing by Hulswit in the same technique, in the *Amsterdams Historisch Museum* (inv. no. A-10560; 188 x 221 mm; inscribed **[where? in what medium?]**, *te Renkum bij Wageningen*). Hulswit must have been to Gelderland or Overijssel before 1813 because a painting by him was included in the exhibition (*Salon*) of living Dutch artists held in Amsterdam in 1813, as no. 60: "*Een boschachtig Landschap, met eene Watermolen*" (A wooded landscape, with a watermill), which is not necessarily the painting discussed later in this article.
13. Inv. no. 1730. Black chalk; 204 x 300 mm.
14. Hulswit and Kerkhoff were both from Amsterdam, both born in the same year (1766), and both students of Pieter Pietersz. Barbiers (1749–1842).
15. Inv. no. GM 8624. Pen and brown ink, with watercolor washes; 306 x 256 mm.
16. *A Watermill on the Klingelbeek* (inv. no. RP-T-1921-147; black chalk, pen and brown ink, with brown and gray wash; 272 x 214 mm). Another drawing by Kerkhoff, depicting another watermill in Oosterbeek, but different to the one described here, is in the *Album Amicorum* of Hendrick van Cranenburgh (1754–1832),

- fol. 44 recto, signed, dated, and inscribed, *te Oosterbeek in Gelderland / D: Kerkhoff. 1813 – uit vriendschap*, in the Instituut Collectie Nederland (inv. no. R 5543, on permanent loan to the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam).
17. *A Watermill* (inv. no. GM 8623; black chalk, with gray wash; 317 x 224 mm).
 18. See Henk Voorn, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse papierindustrie, III: De papiermolens in de provincie Gelderland, alsmede in Overijssel en Limburg*, Haarlem, 1985, p. 193.
 19. The manufacture of handmade paper died out in Oosterbeek and most of the Veluwe by the mid-nineteenth century, when the Industrial Revolution pushed aside the old craft industry with the development of mechanized mass-production of paper using wood pulp instead of rags (see Voorn 1985, pp. 273–74).
 20. These shutters can be seen in a large drawing of the paper mill (a watermill) at nearby Beekhuizen, which Kerkhoff made in 1813 (see sale, Dordrecht, Mak, 7 December 2005, lot 265, repr.).
 21. H. Romers, *Oosterbeek, Doorwerth, Heesum en Renkum in de negentiende eeuw*, Alphen aan de Rijn, 1991, pp. 34–38, figs. 31–36. The watermill “De Hes” is also supposed to be the subject of a colored drawing of much later date by the artist Cornelis Steffelaar (1797–1861), formerly in the collection of Hans van Leeuwen, which is inscribed at lower right, in brown ink, *aan de Klingelbeek* (see Romers 1991, fig. 33, and sale, Amsterdam, Christie’s, 10 November 1999, lot 239, repr. in color). Although the mill building is very similar to that in Kerkhoff’s drawing, viewed from the same angle, the water course and the wheel are placed farther to the right (midway along the side of the structure), which may be due to later changes. Romers also illustrated a drawing by C. H. van Amerom (1804–1879) and one by M. Vos dated 1859, both described as the watermill “De Hes” (Romers 1991, figs. 34 and 35). They show the building seen from the right with the reservoir, which is not depicted in the drawings by Hulswit and Kerkhoff.
 22. This information, compiled by A.S. Stempher of the Gelders Archief in Arnhem, is available on the internet (http://www.hoogstede.nl/wijkinfo/foto_oud/klingelbeekseweg/molen_de_hes.htm).
 23. *Landscape at Duno (“Duinoog”) near Oosterbeek*, in the De Grez collection, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels (inv. no. 1716; black chalk; 133 x 233 mm; inscribed at upper right, in **[what medium? Saying what?]**), and the *View of the City Walls of Utrecht near the Rampart Sterrenburg*, in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam (inv. no. RP-T-1889-A-2008; black chalk; 276 x 388 mm; monogrammed and dated at lower left, **[in what?]**, *I.H. 1809*, and inscribed at upper right, **[in what?]**, *bij Stolsteeg Poort* [the Tolsteegpoort is near to this site, but not depicted]). Dates and annotations on the recto of drawings are extremely rare in Hulswit’s oeuvre.
 24. Oil on canvas; 77.6 x 103.3 cm; see Rotterdam and Amsterdam 2005–6, no 38, repr. in color. This painting is probably identical with one that appeared as lot 51 in the sale of Hulswit’s own collection in Amsterdam on 28 October 1822: “*Een Landschap, met hoog geboonte; breed en meesterlijk gepenseeld*” (described as oil on canvas, 70 x 100 cm). It was also probably the same painting that was sold half a year later, again in Amsterdam, on 22 May 1823, lot 65: “*Een Geldersch landschap, met hoog geboonte en boerenwoningen, van een beek doorsneden; meesterlijk voorgesteld door door J. Hulswit* (oil on canvas, 77 x 100 cm). Both times the painting was bought by one of Hulswit’s pupils, the Amsterdam artist and art dealer Albertus Brondgeest (1786–1849), for 69 and 51 guilders respectively.