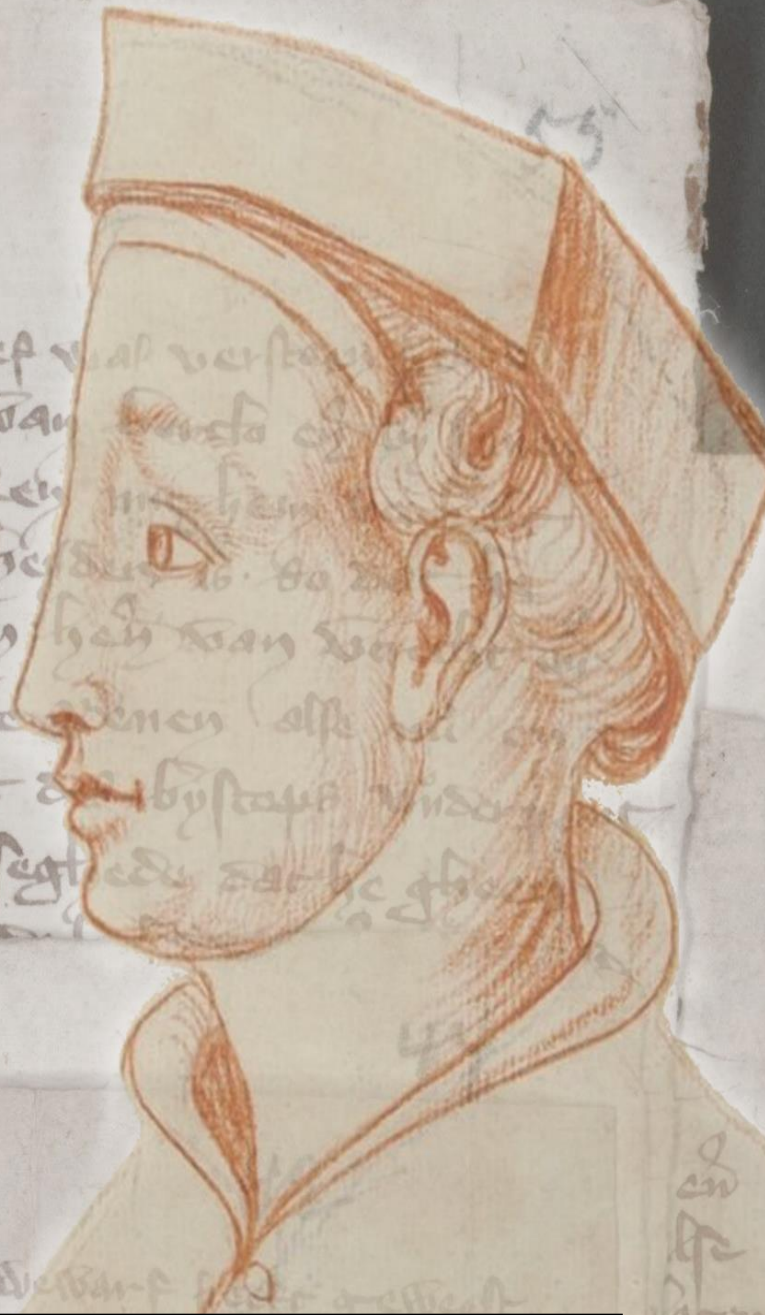


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“To a dear and merciful woman”. Exploring the letter collection of Mechtild of Guelders, duchess-pretender of Guelders, 1365-1380

Master’s thesis Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Roos in’t Velt (4467809)

Supervisor: Marco Mostert

Second reader: Anna Adamska

Utrecht University, 6 September 2022

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Front pictures taken from: Arnhem, Gelders Archief (GldA) 0001.2.07.3.4.564;  
Arras, Bibliothèque municipale, 0944.2 (0266), fol. 41r.

## Preface

Before you lies the Master's Thesis “‘To a dear and merciful woman’”. Exploring the letter collection of Mechtild of Guelders, duchess-pretender of Guelders, 1365-1380’, which is based on research I have conducted on this topic between February 2021 and August 2022: firstly, as part of my student-assistant job for Johan Oosterman between February and May 2021, and secondly as part of my RMA Master's Thesis under Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska between February and August 2022.

During the writing of this thesis, I've spoken to and visited many people that were familiar with 1370s Guelders and its inhabitants. One of these was Maria van Winter, whom I visited in June 2022. Any time I'd recognized a name from the epistolary network in one of the many sourcebooks she kept, she would ask if I had found ‘one of my little friends’. She could not have said it in a better way. After working for almost a year and a half with these sources, these people, though we are centuries apart, indeed feel like ‘little friends’ to me. Even still, I regularly spot them in the here and now: during the last few months, I've visited Huissen and Linn, former residences of Mechtild, and saw references to people that were part of the letter network during my summer vacation in Germany and Luxemburg.

Before we start, I would like to thank Johan Oosterman for introducing me to the topic of Mechtild and her letter collection – I would not have written this thesis if it weren't for you. To Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, thank you for your supervision as well as your enthusiasm, kindness and patience; besides, the both of you know so many different publications that have helped me forward in the process. To Jos Benders and Fred van Kan, thank you for taking the time to correspond with me, as well as deciphering and explaining some parts of the letter collection I would not have managed on my own. To Jeroen Benders and Hennie Verhoef, thank you for helping me forward through your articles, transcriptions

and books. To Emile Smit and Maria van Winter, thank you for your interest in this project as well as for allowing me to browse through your respective personal libraries for a day - both of your collections are impressive and I could find quite a lot of my 'little friends' in your books!

And, last but not least, I would like to thank all my family and friends which I've bothered during the last few months with stories about long-forgotten nobles from the late fourteenth century. To my sister Jasmijn, thank you for tagging along during our visit to Linn at 30 degrees Celsius. It was certainly worth the visit.

It's done... *For now.*

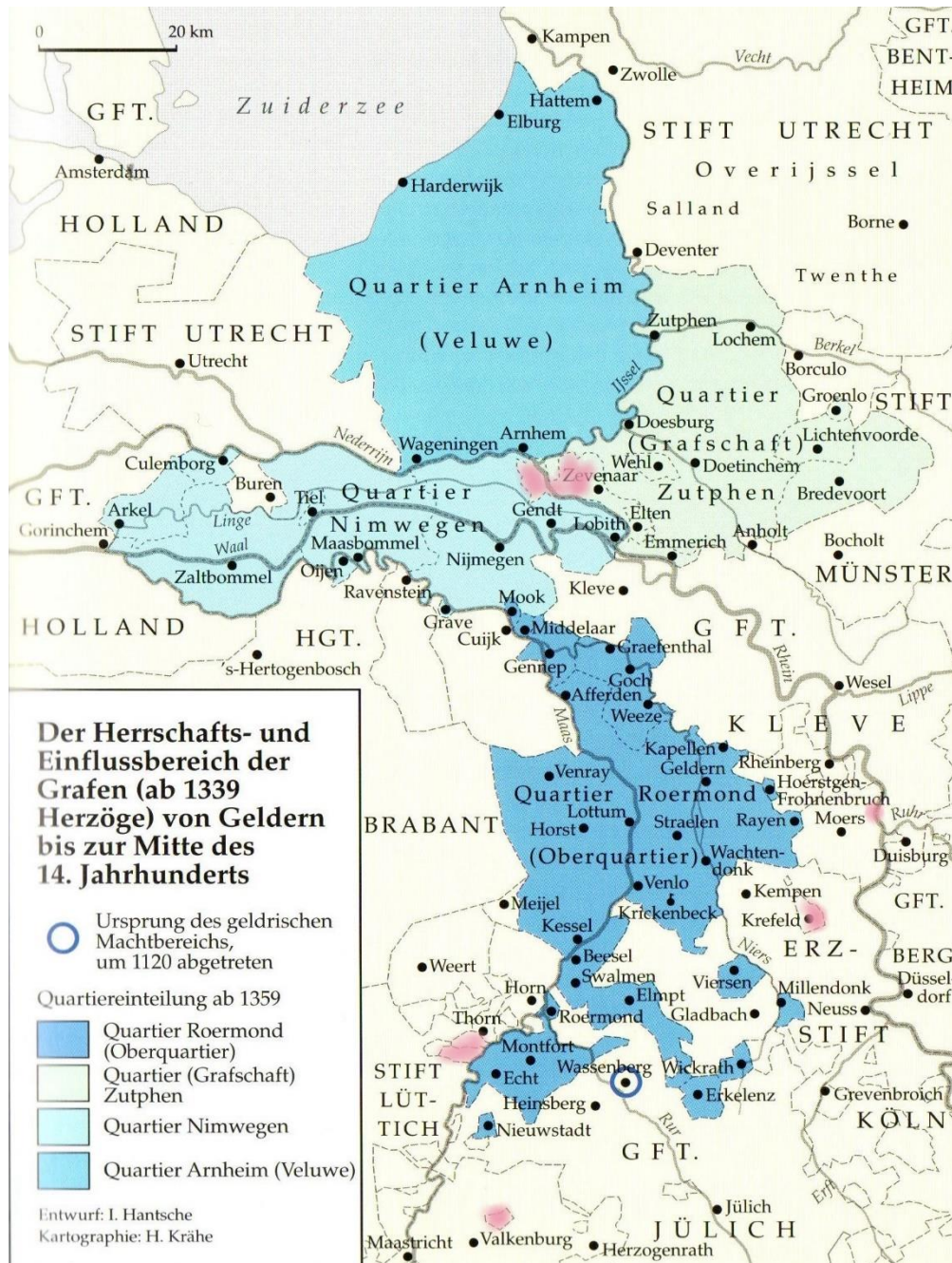
Roos in't Velt

1 September 2022

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**Figure 1.** The duchy of Guelders in the middle of the fourteenth century. Territories that belonged to Mechtild of Guelders (Huissen, Linn, Orsoy, Schinnen and Maaseik) are marked in red. Map taken from: Irmgard Hantsche, *Geldern-Atlas* (2003, design by Harald Krähe).



**Figure 2.** Portrait of Mechtild of Guelders in the *Receuil d'Arras* manuscript (ca. 1570), one of the only extant historical portraits depicting Mechtild. Taken from: Arras, Bibliothèque municipale, 0944.2 (0266), fol. 41r.



## 1. Introduction

In January 1377, Willem of Wosic, steward to duchess-pretender Mechtild of Guelders, was in serious financial trouble. Willem was temporarily freed from his captivity by an enemy lord, and quickly needed money to bail himself out; otherwise, he would be imprisoned again.<sup>1</sup> This was not the only concern of Willem at the time. As he had borrowed money against high interest from the Lombards at Den Bosch, he had to pawn several of his belongings such as his silverware and the horses of both him and his brother.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the troubled Willem resorted to Mechtild for help: he sent her a letter presenting his predicament as well as the question of whether she could lend him any money.

Willem was not the only one who suffered from this particular financial misery. Two family members of Willem, Jan of Dorenchem and Jan of Wosic, also sent a letter to Mechtild in which they told the noblewoman how they were fed up with acting as surety for Willem's debt to the Lombards of Den Bosch.<sup>3</sup> In this letter, they urged Mechtild to talk to Willem about their situation, as Willem did not respond to the messages of both Jans, making the two men in their own words 'completely distraught'.<sup>4</sup> In the letter, the two men expressed the hope that Mechtild, as Willem's superior, would be able to urge him to pay off his debt to them.

Thanks to these two letters, it can be said that Mechtild of Guelders (ca. 1324-1384) was considered to be in a position of power. Besides, it can also be said that through her

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<sup>1</sup> '... ende weet, lieue vrouwe, dat ic te weder tot Werdenburg [Waardenburg, a castle in the Utrecht Hill Ridge] in gevengnissen heb geweest alsoe dat sy my dach gaeuen tent onser vrouwen dach toe ende dan vermoede ic my wail gaen weder te sitten ...', Arnhem, Gelders Archief (GldA) 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3). The letter itself is undated but makes mention of the marriage between William of Jülich and Catharina of Bavaria ('om hilic van hollant ende van gulic') which is concluded in early 1377.

<sup>2</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3).

<sup>3</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1). It is unknown whether Jan of Wosic was the brother to whom Willem pawned the horse; another brother of Willem, named Peter, is mentioned in GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2); it is also unknown when the letter by Jan of Dorenchem and Jan of Wosic was written; the likelihood is that it was written in the same period as the letter sent by Willem.

<sup>4</sup> '...ende lieue vrouwe, wat wj Willem aenroepen of scriuen, hi en wil niet horen ende wordt ons sekerloes, truweloes ende eerloes...', GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1).

correspondence Mechtild was in contact with many different people. Both letters are part of a collection of letters aimed at, sent by, and related to Mechtild of Guelders; all of these letters were written between circa 1367 and 1380. Most of them stem from the First War of the Guelderian Succession (1372-1379), during which Mechtild was one of the two pretenders for the ducal throne of Guelders; it can therefore be said that she held a key position in this conflict. In all, 184 original letters from Mechtild's archives are preserved; all these letters can nowadays be found in the archives of the Duchy of Guelders, which are part of the collection of the Gelders Archief at Arnhem.

When looking at these letters, one can obtain a clear image of the different roles Mechtild played in her life. This image can be considered against the background of scholarly statements that the writers and receivers of medieval and early modern letters generally can be viewed as 'multi-dimensional individuals', as their careers traversed multiple spheres of life, such as the court, the battlefield, and the political arena.<sup>5</sup> The letter collection of Mechtild of Guelders can be seen as an early example of this phenomenon. They paint a multifaceted picture of Mechtild: across the letters, she is viewed as a trustworthy ally, an influential figurehead in politics and warfare, but also as a dear friend and a caring aunt.

This collection of 184 letters has been described before as 'unique' and as 'a small treasure' regarding its large scope as well as being an early testimony to epistolary correspondence in the vernacular languages from the Low Countries and the Rhineland.<sup>6</sup> The letters are evidence of the use of vernacular languages in the late fourteenth century, but also of politics, and they show how people in this period lived, thought, and acted in their day-to-

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<sup>5</sup> Paula Findlen, 'With a Letter in Hand: Writing, Communication, and Representation in Renaissance Italy', in *The Renaissance of Letters. Knowledge and Community in Italy, 1300–1650*, ed. by Paula Findlen and Suzanne Sutherland (London: Routledge, 2019), p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Petrus Johannes Meij and Toon A.H. Jenniskens, *Het archief van de graven en hertogen van Gelre, graven van Zutphen. Samenstelling en inventarisatie door drs. P.J. Meij. Met lijst van toegangen door drs. A.H. Jenniskens, Gelderse Inventarissen-Reeks ii*, (Arnhem: Rijksarchief in Gelderland, 1977), p. 51; Brigitte Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung der Mechtild von Geldern (um 1320-1384)', in *Mittelalter an Rhein und Maas. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Niederrheins*, ed. by Uwe Ludwig and Tomas Schilp (Münster; New York; München; Berlin: Waxmann, 2004), p. 115.

day lives. Another interesting element is that the collection shows examples of personal and intimate communication between women, as it contains letters sent to Mechtild by some of her female relatives, wives of allies, and other noblewomen.<sup>7</sup>

Also of interest is that the identity of many people that sent, received, or were mentioned in the letters can be traced. A large number of them belonged to the higher strata of fourteenth-century society, with dukes, counts, knights, *ministeriales* and clergymen present among them. Therefore, their names can often be found in other contemporary sources as well, such as narrative sources and charters, but also in more mundane archival documents.<sup>8</sup> Many detailed archival sources relate to the day-to-day life at the court of both Mechtild and that of her third husband, John II of Blois (ca. 1342-1381); these documents still exist, as their respective personal archives have been largely preserved.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the letter collection's potential for academics, it has rarely received attention from scholars. Mikel Kors has stated that research on Middle Dutch epistolary correspondence has been rare in general; the letter collection of Mechtild is no exception.<sup>10</sup> An effort to discuss the letter collection in its entirety, alongside an analysis of the topics and people encountered in it, has yet to be made. Therefore, this thesis will paint a general, broad overview of the letter collection to lay the groundwork for further research. This will be done through two different analyses: an analysis of the different topics presented in the letters and another of the network of people represented in the letter collection as it developed with time.

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<sup>7</sup> Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, p. 51; GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362.

<sup>8</sup> The study by Johanna Maria van Winter on nobles and *ministeriales* in the duchy of Guelders, for instance, is a key publication for retrieving the identities of letter writers and people mentioned in the letters; however, its scope is limited to the duchy of Guelders. For further information, refer to Johanna Maria van Winter, *Ministerialiteit en ridderschap in Gelre en Zutphen* (Arnhem: S. Gouda Quint – D. Brouwer en Zoon, 1962).

<sup>9</sup> The archives of Mechtild in the Gelders Archief (GldA 0001.2.07) contain a wide collection of sources besides the letters, such as charters and accounts. The archive of the counts of Blois can be found in Den Haag, Nationaal Archief (NL-HaNA, Blois, Graven van, 3.19.10). Transcriptions of the Schoonhoven court accounts under the rule of John II of Blois have been made by Hennie Verhoef and can be accessed through [www.hogenda.nl](http://www.hogenda.nl).

<sup>10</sup> Mikel Kors, 'Een gesprek met afwezigen. Een eerste verkenning en inventarisatie van de Middelnederlandse privé-brief', *Queeste*, 4.1 (1997), 127-128, 141.

However, as most of the letters had not yet been transcribed and interpreted, this had to be done before the analysis and any further research could be carried out.<sup>11</sup>

### **1.1. Theoretical framework: extant research on, and related to, Mechtild of Guelders**

As has been said above, the life of Mechtild of Guelders has been but little researched; however, she is nevertheless often mentioned in studies on the broader history of Guelders, especially during the First War of the Guelderian Succession. There are mainly three types of literary sources that are used in the historiography concerning Mechtild of Guelders. Firstly, there are historiographical sources on the broader developments within Guelders in the late fourteenth century; these sources focus mainly on political and military developments in the duchy. The First War of the Guelderian Succession plays a key role in these sources. As this conflict also plays an important role in the letter collection, understanding the First War of the Guelderian Succession is essential for understanding the letters. Secondly, there are sources for the material culture surrounding Mechtild, telling us about objects she owned or might have owned. Thirdly, some sources reflect upon the letter collection itself: either on the entire collection or singular examples. Each of these types of sources will be discussed below, alongside the main publications that have made use of them.

#### ***1.1.1. Historical sources and modern literature on late fourteenth-century Guelders***

Accounts on the topic of the First War of the Guelderian Succession can be found in chronicles and histories starting from the late Middle Ages. Later, early modern and modern historians sometimes supplied additional information to the narrative based on archival documents they had access to. One of the earliest reports of the war was created by French

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<sup>11</sup> In all, 26 letters have been transcribed and published before. Refer to paragraph 1.1.3. for further information on the matter.

chronicler Jean Froissart (1337-1405); in his chronicle, he briefly approaches the war from the point of view of his compatriot John II of Blois.<sup>12</sup> The earliest chroniclers to describe the conflict in greater detail are Johannes de Beke (*Chronographia Johannis de Beka*, 1393) and Willem of Berchen (*Compendium Chronicarum Gelriae*, 1473).<sup>13</sup> Another important early source is the anonymous fifteenth-century Chronicle of Tiel (*Chronicon Tielense*), which mostly focuses on events that happened in the vicinity of Tiel and on events that affected the broader duchy of Guelders.<sup>14</sup>

In these early accounts, the agency of Mechtild in the war is secondary to that of her male allies. Jean Froissart describes the two main combatants in the conflict to be the dukes of Jülich and Blois, the respective husbands of Mary and Mechtild. In addition to this, Johannes De Beke claims that two of Mechtild's major allies, Reinold of Brederode and Arnold of Horne, were responsible for marrying Mechtild off to John II of Blois.<sup>15</sup>

According to Jos Benders, the most detailed account of the war can be found in the nineteenth-century reference work on the history of Guelders by Isaak Anne Nijhoff.<sup>16</sup> Nijhoff used the aforementioned medieval chronicles, as well as Joannes Isacius Pontanus' *Historiae Gelricae* (1639) as the main sources for his report on the First War of the Guelderian

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<sup>12</sup> Aart Noordzij, 'Personen, grenzen en politieke eenheden in de veertiende eeuw. Het hertogdom Gelre en de geschiedenis van internationale betrekkingen', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 127.4 (2014), 588-589; Jean Froissart, *Chronicles Book III*, London, British Library, ms. Royal 14 D 5, ed. by Godfried Croenen, fol. 293v-294v, *The Online Froissart* (2013), <[https://www.dhi.ac.uk/onlinefroissart/browsey.jsp?pb0=LR5\\_293v&img0=&div0=ms.f.transc.LR5&panes=1&GlobalMode=edition&img0=&disp0=pb&GlobalWord=0&GlobalShf=&pb0=LR5\\_294r](https://www.dhi.ac.uk/onlinefroissart/browsey.jsp?pb0=LR5_293v&img0=&div0=ms.f.transc.LR5&panes=1&GlobalMode=edition&img0=&disp0=pb&GlobalWord=0&GlobalShf=&pb0=LR5_294r)> [accessed 19 June 2022].

<sup>13</sup> De Beke's original Latin chronicle spanned a period from the Roman era until 1346; later *addenda* expanded the chronicle to events up to the year 1393, and until 1395 in the Middle Dutch version.

<sup>14</sup> It can be argued that Van Berchen used the *Chronicon Tielense* as one of his main sources, as several passages from his work correspond to passages from said chronicle.

<sup>15</sup> Noordzij, 'Personen', 588; '... *ende* [Arnold of Horne] *maecte mitten here van Ghenp een hylic, als dattie grave Johan van Bloys nam te wive dese voerseide vrouwe van Ghelrelant ...*', Johannes de Beke, *Croniken van den Stichte van Utrecht ende van Hollant*, ed. by H.J. Bruch, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën 180 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), pp. 219-220, r. 32-34.

<sup>16</sup> Jos Benders, 'Venlo in de Gelderse successiestrijd gedurende de jaren 1371-1375', *Publications de la Société Historique et Archéologique dans le Limbourg*, 143 (2007), pp. 67-68; Isaak Anne Nijhoff., *Gedenkwaardigheden uit de geschiedenis van Gelderland. Derde deel. Willem en Reinald IV. Hertogen van Gelre uit het huis van Gulik* (Arnhem: Nijhoff, 1839), pp. iii-xliii.

Succession, alongside information gleaned from the charters he had collected. Benders claims that Nijhoff's account of the war is rather dated; however, extra information on the conflict could be added 'through looking at first-hand sources, such as accounts, letters, and charters'.<sup>17</sup>

Another weak point in Nijhoff's narrative is his exclusive focus on those parts of Guelders that form part of the modern-day Netherlands. Since he focuses mostly on events within the borders of the contemporary Dutch province of Gelderland, the story of the war in what is now part of Germany is left underexposed. For instance, the area around the now-German town of Geldern (which gave its name to the duchy), was also a part of the duchy; and Mechtild also personally owned territories (such as Linn and Orsoy) that are nowadays part of Germany. As these territories returned to the rule of Cleves after Mechtild's passing, their brief period under the rule of the lady of Guelders is rarely mentioned in the sources.

A comprehensive modern account of the First War of the Guelderian Succession that also incorporates the role of the now-German territories in the war can be found in the narrative about the late medieval Duchy of Guelders by Matthias Böck, published in 2013. In this study, Böck incorporates all extant Dutch-language historiographical sources and literature; besides, he also includes sources originally written in German, such as the work of Theodor Lacomblet on the charters from the late medieval Lower Rhine region and its history, published in 1840-1858.<sup>18</sup> It can therefore be said that the study of Böck offers the most comprehensive narrative of the war. Another, more concise overview of the war was written by Aart Noordzij in 2014; he approaches the war by looking at its broader political developments instead of focusing on the minor events discussed by Nijhoff or Böck.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Benders, 'Venlo', 68.

<sup>18</sup> Matthias Böck, *Herzöge und Konflikt. Das spätmittelalterliche Herzogtum Geldern im Spannungsfeld von Dynastie, ständischen Kräften und territorialer Konkurrenz (1339-1543)* (Geldern: Verlag des Historischen Vereins für Geldern und Umgegend e.V., 2013), pp. 8-18.

<sup>19</sup> Noordzij, 'Personen', 586-588.

These general narratives mostly focus on the war's major events. Events that did not affect the outcome of the war tend to go unnoticed in some cases; yet, some of these 'minor' events are vital for understanding certain letters. This gap can be filled by looking at accounts focussing on local history. For instance, the sieges of castles Puttenstein (1375) and Linn (1377), which are explicitly mentioned in several letters, are discussed at length in articles by Christian Fehrmann and Jakob Schaap and by Max Barkhausen, respectively.<sup>20</sup> Descriptions of certain Guelders towns and regions during the 1370s can be found in accounts dedicated to regional history.<sup>21</sup> For example, Jos Benders has written on the towns of Venlo, Zaltbommel and Erkelenz during the 1370s.<sup>22</sup>

Something similar can be said about the allies of Mechtild. Since several of these allies could be found within the highest strata of the nobility, extensive genealogical research on some of their families exists. For instance, A study of the Brederode family was conducted by Jan Verhoog, while a study on the Herlaar family was carried out in a similar vein by Alois van Doornmalen.<sup>23</sup> Hennie Verhoef has reconstructed the life of John II of Blois by transcribing the extant financial records from the Schoonhoven court.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Christian Fehrmann and Jakob Schaap, 'De conflicten tussen de stad Kampen en de Gelderse heren van Putten', *Kamper Almanak*, 1966-1967 (1966), 268-312; Max Barkhausen, 'Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist. Ein Beitrag zur niederrheinischen Territorialgeschichte im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert', in *Aus Territorial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte. Ausgewählte Aufsätze von Max Barkhausen*, ed. by Max Barkhausen (Krefeld: Schmidt, 1963), pp. 34-55.

<sup>21</sup> For instance, the role of Rijnwaarden is discussed by Antoon van Dalen in Antoon G. van Dalen, *Rondom het tolhuys aan Rijn en Waal. Uit de geschiedenis van Lobith, Tolkamer, Spijk, Herwen en Aerdt* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1972); that of Gennep by Theodorus Driessen and Rien van den Brand in Theodorus W.J. Driessen and Rien P.J. van den Brand, *1000 jaar Gennep* (Nijmegen: Historie, 1977); and that of Montfoort in by Marius Pieter van der Linden in Marius P. van der Linden, *De burggraven van Montfoort in de geschiedenis van het sticht Utrecht en het graafschap Holland (+- 1260-1490)* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1957).

<sup>22</sup> Benders, 'Venlo', 67-79; Jos Benders, 'De muntslag van Mechteld van Gelre', *Jaarboek voor Munt en Penningkunde*, 106 (2019), 55-77; Jos Benders, 'Die Erkelenzer Münzen in ihrem historischen Kontext (1371 – ca. 1383)', *Heimatkalender des Kreises Heinsberg*, 2022 (2021), 148-153.

<sup>23</sup> Jan Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem. De heeren van Brederode in de middeleeuwen. Geschiedenis van een ridderslacht 1203-1473* (Bergen N.H.: De Koogh, 1997); Alois van Doornmalen, *De Herlaars in het Midden-Nederlands rivierengebied (ca. 1075-ca. 1400)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2019).

<sup>24</sup> Hennie Verhoef, *De graven van Blois. Heren van Schoonhoven en Gouda* (Schoonhoven; Historische Uitgaven Schoonhoven, 2016), pp. 7-9.

The life of Mechtild herself is another topic that often gets less attention in historical accounts. As history tends to be written from the perspective of the victors, the focus in historical studies tends to be on the victors of the war, the party of Jülich in this case. Therefore, Mechtild and her allies rarely get in-depth treatments in these studies. A specific, albeit short, report on the war from the viewpoint of Mechtild has been written by Aleid van de Bunt in 1967.<sup>25</sup> However, Van de Bunt's account does not focus on the big political events in Mechtild's life.

### ***1.1.2. Studies on material objects owned or issued by Mechtild***

Similar to the letter collection, material objects that once belonged to Mechtild have received some scholarly attention as well. One of these objects is a highly ornamented jewellery box that belonged to her. This box, which she probably received as a marriage gift from John II of Cleves, her second husband, has been discussed by Otto Teich-Balgheim in 1938 and has been mentioned by Johan Oosterman in 2018.<sup>26</sup>

Coins and impressions of seals issued by Mechtild have also been discussed in sigillographic and numismatic studies. A seal showing the only contemporary depiction of Mechtild has received its fair share of scholarly attention. This particular seal was discussed in both German- and Dutch-language sigillographic studies by Van Schilfgaarde and Stieldorf; it was also mentioned in biographical surveys of Mechtild's life, such as those by Van de Bunt and Sternberg.<sup>27</sup> Jos Benders has written several articles on the topic of

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<sup>25</sup> Aleid W. van de Bunt, 'Mechteld, hertogin van Gelre', *Gelders Oudheidkundig Contactbericht*, 33 (1967), 1-6.

<sup>26</sup> Otto Teich-Balgheim, 'Ein Gotisches Wappenkästchen des Düsseldorfer Kunstmuseums', *Westdeutsches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte: Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch*, 10 (1938), 228-231; Johan Oosterman, *Ik, Maria van Gelre. De hertogin en haar uitzonderlijke gebedenboek (1380-1429)* (Nijmegen; Zwolle: Museum het Valkhof; Waanders, 2018), pp. 83, 243. The jewellery box was mentioned in the context of an exhibition in Museum Valkhof Nijmegen, where it was on display.

<sup>27</sup> Antonie Paul van Schilfgaarde, *Zegels en genealogische gegevens van de graven en hertogen van Gelre, graven van Zutphen* (Arnhem: Gouda Quint - Brouwer en Zoon, 1967), pp. 43-46, seals 73-78; Andrea Stieldorf, *Rheinische Frauensiegel: zur rechtlichen und sozialen Stellung weltlicher Frauen im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*



numismatics in the era: his article on Zaltbommel focuses entirely on the minting of coins during Mechtild's reign in the town.<sup>28</sup>

There are also several other objects thought to have been owned by Mechtild. One of them is the so-called Den Haag song manuscript (*Haags Liederenhandschrift*), a manuscript with vernacular songs from the late fourteenth century; Greet Jungman has presented the theory that this manuscript is related to Mechtild's correspondence with Margareta of the Mark.<sup>29</sup> This theory is also supported by Frits van Oostrom.<sup>30</sup>

### ***1.1.3. Research on the letter collection***

Only a small percentage of the 184 extant letters has been edited and published so far. In 1899, when Mechtild's archives were still residing in the Düsseldorf archive, Georg Steinhausen selected and compiled 17 of the letters in his *Deutsche Privatbriefe des Mittelalters* ('German-Language Private Letters of the Middle Ages'); he deemed his selection of letters in this publication to be interesting because of their 'political, literary, or private nature'.<sup>31</sup> In 1929, Bernhard Vollmer published a short article on the correspondence between women in Mechtild's letter collection.<sup>32</sup> Two translated letters were published in this article; both these letters had been edited by Steinhausen before.<sup>33</sup> In 1973, five different

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(Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), pp. 463-466; Van de Bunt, 'Mechteld', 3; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 110-112.

<sup>28</sup> Benders, 'De muntslag', 55-77.

<sup>29</sup> Greet Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederenhandschrift een Gelders poëzie-album?', *Millennium*, 4 (1990), 107-120.

<sup>30</sup> Frits van Oostrom, *Het woord van eer. Literatuur aan het Hollandse hof omstreeks 1400* (Amsterdam: Ooievaar, 1987), pp. 133-134.

<sup>31</sup> Georg Steinhausen, *Privatbriefe des Mittelalters. Erste Band. Fürsten und Magnaten, Edle und Ritter* (Berlin: R. Gaertners Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1899), pp. v; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 116; Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, pp. 51. Back in 1899, all the letters that nowadays can be found in Mechtild's archives at the Gelders Archief, were kept at Düsseldorf.

<sup>32</sup> Bernhard Vollmer, 'Frauenbriefe des 14. Jahrhunderts an eine niederrheinische Fürstin', *Düsseldorfer Almanach* (1929), 56-61.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 58-61; Steinhausen, *Privatbriefe*, pp. 6-9. See also Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 116, note 63.

letters from Mechtild's archives were edited and published by Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers as part of a collaborative effort by amateur historians.<sup>34</sup>

Most research on the letter collection has been conducted by Brigitte Sternberg. In 2004, she discussed the letter collection in an article in which she also presented an edition and (partial) transcription of two letters.<sup>35</sup> In this article, she claimed to have transcribed all the letters and proposed an integral edition and translation of the whole body of letters; besides, Sternberg also discussed the letter collection in a publication released in 2006.<sup>36</sup> However, Sternberg's ambitions regarding the letter collection remain unfulfilled to this day.<sup>37</sup>

Sometimes, letters from the collection have not been fully edited, but have received mentions, or partial mentions, instead. Jos Benders cites several otherwise unpublished letters and indicates their content in his articles on Venlo, Zaltbommel, and Erkelenz during the First War of the Guelderian Succession.<sup>38</sup> The two letters that Steven of Lynden wrote as Mechtild's official appear as 'unpublished sources' in Jan Kuys' study on officials who served the medieval duchy of Guelders.<sup>39</sup> Another letter that has received scholarly attention in this way is one of the letters by Margaretha of the Mark to Mechtild. In this letter, Margaretha mentions three songs that she had composed as a New Year's present to Mechtild; Van Oostrom and Jungman relate this to the aforementioned The Hague song manuscript.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> J. Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and W.M. Elbers, 'Mechteld. Hertogin-pretendente van Gelre', *Gelders Oudheidkundig Contactbericht*, 57 (1973), 2.

<sup>35</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 107-123.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117, note 65; Brigitte Sternberg, 'Mechtild von Geldern (um 1323-1384)', in *Van der Masen tot op den Rijn. Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der mittelalterlichen volkssprachlichen Literatur im Raum von Rhein und Maas*, ed. by Helmut Tervooren (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2006), pp. 262-264.

<sup>37</sup> Jos Benders claims to have received all of Sternberg's transcriptions of the letters, as he had used these for his aforementioned three articles; however, he no longer has access to most of the Sternberg transcriptions as of 2022.

<sup>38</sup> In his 2007 article, Benders refers to and summarises letters from reference number GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3, 4, 6, 8 and 10), as well as publishing and explaining GldA 0001.2.7.3.4.563 (11); while in his 2019 article, he refers to GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2); and in his 2021 article, he refers to GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5) alongside a photographic reproduction of this letter. Refer to Benders, 'Venlo', 67-72; Benders, 'De muntslag', 62-63; Benders, 'Die Erkelenzer Münzen', pp. 148, 153.

<sup>39</sup> Jan Kuys, 'De ambtman in het kwartier van Nijmegen (ca. 1250-1543)' (published dissertation, Catholic University of Nijmegen, 1987), p. 332.

<sup>40</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5) '...oych sendde ic[h dir] dry leydergin de hain ich nüwe gemacht de saltü in den büechgelgin schryven...'; Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederhandschrift', 116-119; Van Oostrom, *Het woord*, pp.

## 1.2. The private letters in the archives of Mechtild of Guelders

As has been mentioned before, 184 private letters can be found in the archives of Mechtild of Guelders. The letter collection has a long and convoluted history of its own, which will be explained below, together with the current state of the ducal archives at Arnhem and the placement of the letters in it. These archives, and even some of the reference numbers that hold letters, also contain documents that are not related to private epistolary correspondence. Therefore it is helpful to say a few words about the archives and their organisation.

### *1.2.1. The archives of Mechtild of Guelders as part of the Guelders ducal archives: from Huissen by way of Düsseldorf to Arnhem (1384-2020)*

As a countess and a duchess-pretender to a duchy where the written word was a broadly used instrument of administration and government, Mechtild of Guelders had to issue and keep large amounts of documents. She had a personal archive, in which documents relating to her rule were kept. This archive was kept at Huissen, a territory that was an exclusive right of the widows of the duke of Cleves: Mechtild got control over it from 1368 onwards. Once the war was over, she would also spend her final years at her Huissen residence. After Mechtild died in 1384, Huissen and its surrounding area returned to the rule of Cleves.<sup>41</sup> All of Mechtild's belongings, including her archives, were moved to Cleves. The archives would stay there during the following centuries.<sup>42</sup>

In the sixteenth century, the duchy of Cleves merged with the duchies of Jülich and Berg to form the United Duchies of Jülich-Cleves-Berg. Because of this, the archives of Cleves, including Mechtild's archives, were moved to the archive of Düsseldorf, the

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133-134. This letter is also briefly mentioned in Gerard Nijsten, 'Van dichters en sprekers. Het literaire leven aan het hof van de hertogen van Gelre (± 1370 - ± 1470)', *Literatuur*, 3 (1986), 293.

<sup>41</sup> Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, p. 49. The authors claim this already happened by 1371.

<sup>42</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 115.

residential seat of the dukes of Berg and later that of the United Duchies as well.<sup>43</sup> Around 1800, Mechtild's archives were split. A part of it, consisting exclusively of charters, was moved to an archive in Munich; the letter collection, however, was to remain in its entirety at Düsseldorf.<sup>44</sup> Croenen states that throughout the centuries Mechtild's archives were 'treated with care', considering the good state of preservation of the majority of the documents.<sup>45</sup>

Also around 1800, the Gelders Archief at Arnhem started re-gathering the Guelders ducal archives under the supervision of its first director, Isaak Anne Nijhoff. Nijhoff later on also edited several charters from the ducal archive, including some that nowadays form part of Mechtild's archives.<sup>46</sup> From 1900 onwards, the action of collecting ducal documents at Arnhem gained steam, as archives abroad became aware of ducal documents from Guelders that had ended up in their collections.<sup>47</sup> Documents from foreign archives, such as those of Munich, Brussels, and Düsseldorf, would regularly arrive in Arnhem over the following decades.<sup>48</sup>

In 1941, the records connected to Mechtild that were kept at Düsseldorf, including all the letters, moved from Germany to the Gelders Archief at Arnhem. There, Martens van Sevenhoven started working on a descriptive inventory of Mechtild's archives, which he finished in 1943. However, in September 1944, Van Sevenhoven's work was destroyed in a fire caused by the fierce battles between British and German forces then taking place.<sup>49</sup> The

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<sup>43</sup> Godfried Croenen, *De oorkonden van de familie Berthout 1212-1425*, ed. by Godfried Croenen (Brussels: Koninklijke Commissie voor Geschiedenis, 2006), p. lxii; Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, p. 45.

<sup>44</sup> Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, pp. 45-46, 49.

<sup>45</sup> Croenen, *De oorkonden*, p. lxii; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 115-116.

<sup>46</sup> Several charters that nowadays belong to Mechtild's archives, GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.548 (charter 53, pp. 67-72) and GldA 0001.2.08.3.1.697-700 (charters 54, 57, 58, 62, pp. 72-75, 77-79) for instance, can be found in Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*. This proves that several components of Mechtild's archives were already in the Arnhem archive when it was in the care of Nijhoff.

<sup>47</sup> Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, p. 45.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 49.

original documents from the ducal archive, on the other hand, survived the war, as they were kept in a bank vault elsewhere in Arnhem.<sup>50</sup>

The destruction of the Gelders Archief's archival office at the end of the Second World War caused a significant delay in the broader completion and the inventorying of the Guelders ducal archives, and, as a consequence, that of Mechtild's archives as well. Besides this, due to growth in the purchase and accretion of ducal documents over the years, the task of describing all amassed documents grew more difficult. The documents from Munich, for instance, arrived in Arnhem in 1949.<sup>51</sup> In the end, it took almost two centuries for the Gelders Archief to gather and reorganise the entire ducal archives of Guelders: this gargantuan task was finished by Fred van Kan, the archive's general manager, in 2020 only.<sup>52</sup>

In that same year, a new and final version of the list of the charters from Mechtild's archives was completed by Marinus Flokstra.<sup>53</sup> However, this list of summaries focuses solely on the charters, as did Van Sevenhoven's destroyed precursor; other types of records from Mechtild's archives are not taken into account.<sup>54</sup> A similar reference work for the private letters within Mechtild's archives does not exist as yet.<sup>55</sup>

### ***1.2.2. The place of the letter collection within the archive of Mechtild of Guelders at the Gelders Archief***

The archives of Mechtild of Guelders at the Gelders Archief (GldA 0001.2.4) consist of 318 different reference numbers (GldA 0001.2.4.362-678) and contains a large array of different

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<sup>50</sup> Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>52</sup> Rudolf Bosch, 'Interview met Fred van Kan', *Vereniging Gelre*, 2020 <<https://vereniginggelre.nl/interview-met-fred-van-kan/>> [accessed 15 April 2022].

<sup>53</sup> Marinus Flokstra, 'Regestenlijst van het archief van hertogin Mechteld', *Gelders Archief* (2020) <[M. Flokstra, Regestenlijst van het archief van hertogin Mechteld, 2020. digitaal bestand](https://www.geldersarchief.nl/regestenlijst-van-het-archief-van-hertogin-mechteld)<br /><i>N.B. </i>Behoort bij par. 2.07. ([geldersarchief.nl](https://www.geldersarchief.nl))> [accessed 15 April 2022].

<sup>54</sup> Meij and Jenniskens, *Het archief*, p. 5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 117.

archival documents.<sup>56</sup> In the archives, several types of archival documents can be found: it consists of charters, letters, financial accounts, and other records.

In all, 37 of these reference numbers contain private letters; 184 private letters can be found in the archive in total. Some of the reference numbers contain a single letter and some of them contain several letters, ranging from two up to twenty-nine pieces per reference number. According to Fred van Kan, the letters are organised in the way they had been organised at Düsseldorf.<sup>57</sup> The organisation of the letters in Düsseldorf was in turn based on the way the documents were organised at Cleves; the way of organising them there was probably based on the order in which they were kept at Huissen.<sup>58</sup> Letters that had existed as a singular unit before, were kept as a singular unit in the new arrangement of the ducal archives; letters that existed in a unit consisting of several letters were also kept together as in their earlier unit.<sup>59</sup>

Because it is assumed that the letters have been kept in the same units, and because they had probably been organised in the same way as they originally did in the Middle Ages, the Gelders Archief had to organise and describe these units based on their similarities within the unit. There are several letter units made up of letters with the same sender, for instance, letters by Margareta of the Mark (GldA 362), Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger (GldA 562), and Reinold of Brederode (GldA 563), all form single writer-based units. In some of these units, letters that were not meant for Mechtild can be found as well: in the units of both Wachtendonk the Younger and Brederode, a single letter from their correspondence with other allies can be found. Besides, letters by these senders sometimes also appear in other

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<sup>56</sup> Several charters concerning Mechtild (GldA 2.06.4.2.353-357) can be found in the archives of Eduard of Guelders; a receipt sent by her (GldA 0001.4.1.1.1.15.2879) can be found in the archives of Hendrik of Steenberghe. Besides, archival documents related to Mechtild exist in external archives; these are not taken into account here. For more on this matter, refer to paragraph 1.2.3, note 69.

<sup>57</sup> Roos in't Velt, Interview with Fred van Kan (Microsoft Teams, March 30, 2022).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

units. To give an example, one letter by Margareta of the Mark can be found within GldA 363, a reference number with fourteen letters sent by six different women, while the six other letters by her are found in GldA 362, a reference number containing only these six letters sent by Margareta.<sup>60</sup>

Other reference numbers in Mechtild's archives are miscellanies of letters sent by several different people. The archivists at the Gelders Archief have chosen to categorise these reference numbers according to a higher description level. For instance, GldA 363 is described by the Gelders Archief to contain letters all containing 'personal matters', written by women; GldA 564 contains 'letters written by allies and counsellors on the topic of the war', and GldA 660 contains 'letters asking Mechtild for (financial) favours'.<sup>61</sup> Sometimes, single letters within certain reference numbers do not correspond to their broader topic: GldA 363, for instance, contains letters on the topic of the First War of the Guelderian Succession, while some of the letters in GldA 564 are not necessarily written on the topic of the war: several of these letters are cancellations of meetings with Mechtild, or, in one case, an account about a transaction concerning horses.

### ***1.2.3. Private correspondence within the archive of Mechtild of Guelders: Its scope and focus***

In this thesis, only 'closed letters' of a private nature are taken into account. Charters and 'open letters', writings that were aimed at an unknown audience, are left out of this survey. In one reference number containing otherwise private letters (GldA 541), one 'open letter' by Mary of Guelders can be found, regarding the deployment of knight Heinrich of Strünkede.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The sole Margareta letter in GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 is GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9).

<sup>61</sup> Isaak Anne Nijhoff and others, '0001 Graven en hertogen van Gelre, graven van Zutphen', *Gelders Archief* <<https://www.geldersarchief.nl/archieven/middeleeuwen/hertogelijk-archief>> [accessed 16 April 2022].

<sup>62</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (11).

This ‘open letter’ is, despite being part of a reference number containing private correspondence, not part of the ‘letter collection’.

According to Mikel Kors, ‘private correspondence’ is correspondence of a strictly private nature, one in which the official tasks of both sender and receiver are not taken into account.<sup>63</sup> Even though letters that fit with Kors’s description appear in Mechtild’s archives (especially those from female senders), the majority of the letters are related to Mechtild’s official function as a political and military figurehead. Thus, the letters that will be discussed in this essay can better be described as ‘closed letters’, as Sternberg calls them: letters that were folded and sealed when they were sent.<sup>64</sup> Because of this, ‘closed letters’ are the counterpart of the aforementioned ‘open letters’, which often had seals hanging from them.

Although most letters from the collection have Mechtild as its receiver (172 total), this is not the case for all letters.<sup>65</sup> On rare occasions letters that were issued by Mechtild herself were kept: this is the case for four different letters. Closed letters that were neither addressed to nor issued by Mechtild are also included in this study; this is the case for 8 letters in total.

Most of these ‘non-Mechtild letters’ can be found in the reference numbers that consist of letters written by one person; for instance, the reference numbers related to Reinold of Brederode, Heinrich of Strünkede, and the Van Lienden brothers all contain one letter that is not related to their communication with Mechtild, but rather to that with allies of their own.<sup>66</sup> Other letters, such as the one by Johan Alferdsz. and Heyn Middelbergh to Hendrik Stapelryeme, were sent and received by people who do not feature elsewhere in the network; however, this letter is still related to Mechtild and the toll she levied at Huissen.<sup>67</sup> The ‘non-

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<sup>63</sup> Kors, ‘Een gesprek’, 129.

<sup>64</sup> Sternberg, ‘Die Briefsammlung’, pp. 119-120.

<sup>65</sup> All these letters are aimed solely at Mechtild, except for two letters that are addressed to both Mechtild and John II of Blois at the same time (GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3,7)); These two letters are also taken into account here.

<sup>66</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7) contains a letter from Heinrich von Strünkede to Macharius of Strünkede and Johan of Hillen; GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13) contains a letter by several knights to Reinold of Brederode; and GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (16) contains a letter by John of Lynden to Willem van der Horst.

<sup>67</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1).



Mechtild letters' are still witnesses of medieval private letter communication and, as Fred van Kan suggested, have probably been part of Mechtild's archives since its inception.<sup>68</sup>

Only letters that can be found within Mechtild's archives in the Gelders Archief will be discussed in this thesis. Documents related to Mechtild and her reign can be found in other archives, and some of these were even issued by Mechtild herself; however, many of these external Mechtild-related documents can be categorised as charters.<sup>69</sup> This does not mean that no more closed letters from Mechtild's network have once existed – or indeed might still exist. In the case of two private letters that are nowadays part of Mechtild's archives, it is uncertain whether they have been originally kept in her archives.<sup>70</sup> Two different private correspondence letters related to Mechtild's brief rule in Zutphen can be found at the Erfgoedcentrum Zutphen.<sup>71</sup> Sternberg made mention of a reference number containing letters addressed to Mechtild by Mary of Jülich that was kept at Düsseldorf, but which seems to have been lost during World War II.<sup>72</sup> Besides, considering most of these letters were ephemeral, a large part of the letters may have been discarded after Mechtild received them. It is hard to estimate how much is lost, and, as a consequence, how large the letter collection might have been once.

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<sup>68</sup> Roos in't Velt, Interview with Fred van Kan (Microsoft Teams, March 30, 2022).

<sup>69</sup> For instance, charters issued by and related to Mechtild can be found at Streekarchivariaat Noordwest-Veluwe (Elburg), Regionaal Archief Rivierenland (Tiel), Brabants Historisch Informatie Centrum (Den Bosch), and Het Utrechts Archief (Utrecht). Besides, circa twenty additional charters can be found in the collection of Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rhineland Department (Duisburg), which nowadays houses the remaining archives from the aforementioned Düsseldorf archive.

<sup>70</sup> These two letters are a letter by Rutger of Tule to Willem of Gelre (GldA 0001.2.07.4.675) and a letter by Giselbrecht of Stralen to Willem of Stralen (GldA 0001.2.07.4.676). Due to their uncertain origins – both letters are listed among the 'documents probably belonging to [Mechtild's] archive' by the Gelders Archief – these two letters are not included in this study.

<sup>71</sup> Tine Doornink-Hoogenraad and W. Zondervan, *Het oud-archief van de gemeente Zutphen. Derde stuk. Regestenlijst van brieven. Index. Deel 1* (Zutphen: Gemeentearchief Zutphen; De Walburg Pers, 1981), p. 12; Zutphen, Erfgoedcentrum Zutphen (NL-ZuRAZ), Oud Archief Zutphen (OAZ), 0001, inv.nr. 151. In this reference number, a letter by the Zutphen town council addressed to Mechtild can be found, as well as a letter by William, duke of Jülich to the Zutphen town council on the topic of John of Blois.

<sup>72</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 117, note 67.

### **1.3. The structure of the thesis**

This thesis consists of four chapters. The first two chapters look at the broader context of the letter collection, its history, and the political and military context in which the letters were written. In the two following chapters, the letter collection will be analysed both regarding its contents and the people mentioned in the letters.

In the first chapter, a biography of Mechtild is presented, which encompasses her life before, during, and after the First War of the Guelderian Succession. There will also be a focus on the war in itself: its causes and the major events that took place during the war will be highlighted, as will certain events that are relevant to certain letters. In the second chapter, the focus will be on broader developments in late medieval pragmatic literacy and epistolary culture, and how these developments are visible within Mechtild's letter collection.

After these two contextualising chapters, two chapters which analyse the letter collection itself will follow. In the third chapter, the various topics discussed in the letters will be analysed. The letters are sorted into five different categories: personal matters, politics, warfare, financial matters, and law. Afterwards, each category will be discussed and illustrated with examples taken from the letters. In the fourth chapter, a network analysis of the people represented in the letters will be presented. This will be done through a chronological lens: the period in which the letters were written is split into four separate 'eras', which are based on the information presented in the first chapter. In each of these eras, certain people with whom Mechtild maintained epistolary connections will be discussed, alongside other people occurring within the broader correspondence. These connections can be linked with Mechtild to discover smaller sub-networks within the broader network.

#### 1.4. A brief note on names

As this thesis is written in English, names of occupations, territories and people had to be translated from (Middle) Dutch and Rhinelandic dialects to English. In the case of officials' functions, these are translated by an English-language counterpart: e.g. *ambtman* is 'official', *rentmeester* is 'steward' and *schepene* is 'alderman'. More ambiguous terms are translated according to the context the word is used in. For instance, the word *knape* can mean either 'non-knighted nobleman' or 'servant' depending on the context.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, the word *vriend* can mean 'friend' when used in an amical context, and 'ally', 'advisor' or 'deputy' when used in a political context.<sup>74</sup>

The names of territories, towns, and people have been translated into English whenever an English-language name for these exists; otherwise, the original name are kept. Similarly, the infix 'van' in names is translated with 'of'; other infixes, such as 'van de(r)' (meaning 'of the') or 'tot' (meaning 'at') are harder to translate into English and are therefore kept as in the original language.

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<sup>73</sup> Johanna Maria van Winter, 'De Gelderse ridderschap', in *Gelre – Geldern - Gelderland. Geschiedenis en cultuur van het hertogdom Gelre*, ed. by Johannes Stinner and others (Geldern: Verlag des Historischen Vereins für Geldern und Umgebend, 2001), p. 287; Jacob Verdam, *Middelnederlandsch handwoordenboek* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1932), p. 297.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 751.

## **2. Mechtild of Guelders, her life and the First War of the Guelderian Succession**

### **2.1. Duke Reinold II of Guelders (1295-1343) and his offspring**

Duke Reinold II of Guelders (1295-1343) had at least six children (see Figure 1). Through his first marriage with Sophia Berthout of Mechelen (died 1329), he had four daughters: Margareta, Mechtild, Mary, and Elisabeth. The eldest three were married off to noblemen, while the youngest daughter, Elisabeth, became the abbess of Gravendaal monastery. Reinold remarried Eleanor of England (1318-1355) in 1331. She bore him two sons, Reinold and Eduard, who would become his eventual heirs.<sup>75</sup>

Reinold II's second-eldest daughter Mechtild ended up having an unsuccessful matrimonial life. Her first two marriages, to Godfrey of Loon-Heinsberg (ca. 1320-1342) in 1336 and John II of Cleves (ca. 1292/93-1368) in 1348 ended when these husbands died at an early age; neither marriage produced children. In comparison, Mechtild's younger sister Mary fared much better in her marriage: she produced at least three children in her marriage to duke William II of Jülich.

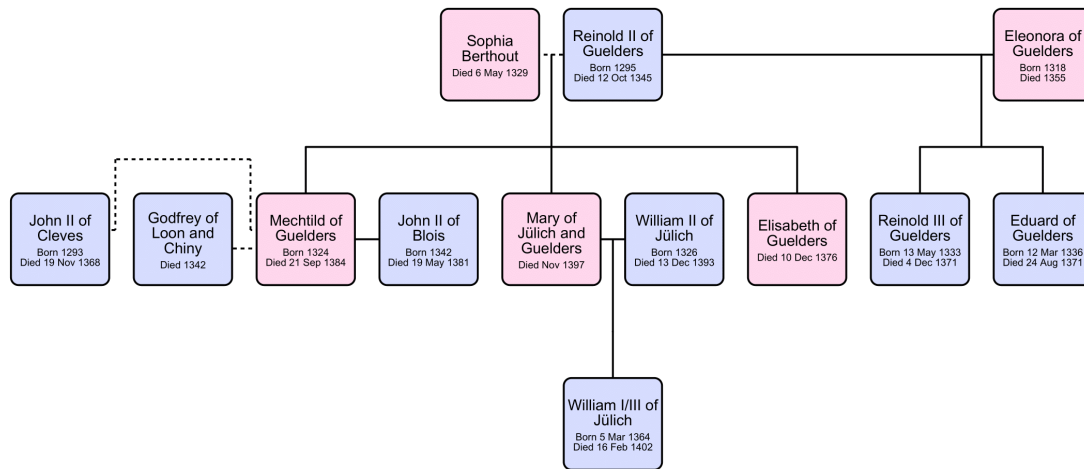
Yet Mechtild ended neither of her first two marriages empty-handed. From both husbands, she received territorial properties as a dower. Through Godfrey of Loon-Heinsberg, Mechtild inherited territories around Maaseik (nowadays in Belgium) as well as a house in Schinnen; through John of Cleves, she inherited the territories Huissen (nowadays in the Netherlands), Linn, and Orsoy (nowadays in Germany).<sup>76</sup> Mechtild was not a stranger to landownership, as she also had inherited the 'Land of Mechelen' (Land van Mechelen,

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<sup>75</sup> Wybe Jappe Alberts, *Van heerlijkheid tot landsheerlijkheid* (Assen; Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1978), pp. 79-80.

<sup>76</sup> Meij and Jenneskens, *Het archief*, p. 50; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 108.

nowadays part of the Belgian Campine to the north-east of Antwerp) through her mother Sophia of Berthout and Mechelen.<sup>77</sup>



**Figure 3.** *Simplified genealogy of Reinold II of Guelders and his children. Only the people relevant to the thesis are displayed here.*<sup>78</sup>

## 2.2. What went before: The Guelders Fratricidal War and the subsequent rule of Eduard I and Reinold III of Guelders (1343-1371)

Reinold II's death in 1343 would harbinge the beginning of a tumultuous and violent period in Guelders, lasting several decades. When his sons Eduard and Reinold III became of age in 1350, both laid claim on Guelders' vacant ducal throne. This struggle resulted in the Guelders Fratricidal War (1350-1361). In this conflict, the Guelders nobility split into two warring parties that both were named after a prominent noble family: the Heekeren party, which supported Reinold, and the Bronkhorst party, which supported Eduard. The conflict ended when the victorious Eduard became the new duke in 1361. Reinold would spend the next ten years of his

<sup>77</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 108; Croenen 2006, p. lvi. The Land of Mechelen was inherited at first by Mechtild's elder sister Margareta (who died in 1344); Mechtild received the territory after Margareta's death.

<sup>78</sup> For instance, Reinold II had another daughter named Margareta (ca. 1320-1344), yet she died before the time frame the letters were written; besides, both Reinold III and Eduard are known to have had illegitimate children (see note 82).

life in captivity.

Edward ruled as duke of Guelders for a decade, but his reign came to a dramatic end. During the Battle of Baesweiler on 22 August 1371, Eduard fought alongside duke Wenceslas I of Brabant against duke William II of Jülich. This would prove to be Eduard's final battle, as he was mortally wounded on the battlefield.<sup>79</sup> Wenceslas survived, but he was captured by the Jülich forces alongside many of his bannermen and knights.<sup>80</sup> After Eduard's death, Reinold succeeded his brother as the next duke of Guelders. His reign would be very short: Reinold died on 4 December 1371, presumably of health-related complications due to his decade-long confinement.<sup>81</sup> Since both brothers died without (legitimate) children, the only remaining heirs of Reinold II were now their half-sisters Mechtild and Mary.<sup>82</sup>

### **2.3. A new succession issue, a new civil war (December 1371 – February 1372)**

After the deaths of Eduard and Reinold, Guelders' ducal throne became vacant once again. It seemed that Mechtild was the most qualified to be the next duchess, considering that she was the eldest sibling. From 1295 onwards, a decree issued by the Holy Roman Emperor had made it possible for Guelders' dukes to pass on the ducal title to their daughters if there were no available sons or otherwise eligible male blood relatives.<sup>83</sup> However, since Mary had a seven-year-old son, there was also an argument to be made that this son should be the next duke. Despite being underage at the time, this William of Jülich and Guelders (1364-1402) was the

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<sup>79</sup> Barkhausen, 'Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist', p. 44.

<sup>80</sup> For the repercussions of the Battle of Baesweiler on Wenceslas and his men, see Jim van der Meulen, 'Landowners, rulers and fighters. Knightly life in Brabant, ca. 1330 - ca. 1400' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2013), pp. 73-79.

<sup>81</sup> Wybe Jappe Alberts, *De staten van Gelre en Zutphen tot 1459* (Groningen; Jakarta: Wolters, 1950), p. 79.

<sup>82</sup> Both Eduard and Reinold III had illegitimate children (see note 78). Reinold III had one, John of Hattem (died after 1422), lord of Hattem from 1371 onwards and ally of Mechtild; while Eduard had at least three, of which only Johan, a Boetselaar priest, is known by name. Refer to Van Schilfgaarde 1967, p. 115.

<sup>83</sup> View Isaak Anne Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden uit de geschiedenis van Gelderland. Eerste deel. De toestand van Gelderland in de eerste helft der veertiende eeuw* (Arnhem: Nijhoff, 1830), pp. liii-liv for the original context in which this privilege was granted; view Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. iv-v for how this was applied in the case of the 1371 succession issue.

closest living male blood relative to the late duke of Guelders.

Mary and Mechtild had staked their respective claims already by mid-December 1371. By this point, both sisters had reached out to the Guelders town councils through open letters on the question of whose claim they would support. The town councils made different decisions: some towns supported Mechtild, such as Arnhem and Wageningen; some supported Jülich, such as Geldern and Nijmegen; while other towns preferred to wait for the decisions of the other towns before making their mind up, such as Roermond and Venlo.<sup>84</sup>

Besides the towns, the nobility of Guelders took sides in the conflict as well. As in the Fratricidal War, the nobility split once again into the two aforementioned Heekeren and Bronkhorst factions. This time, the Heekeren party, under the leadership of Wouter of Voorst and Keppel, would fight for the claims of Mechtild; the Bronkhorst party would fight for the claims of Jülich under the leadership of the lords of Bronkhorst.<sup>85</sup>

Besides the Heekeren party, Mechtild had several powerful non-Guelders allies on her side during the early stages of the war, who were able to provide her with large financial funds.<sup>86</sup> Bishop Arnold of Horne of Utrecht and Reinold of Brederode, a member of one of Holland's most prominent noble families, were Mechtild's main allies during the war. Mechtild had also formed alliances with the duchies of Cleves, the Mark, and Brabant.<sup>87</sup> In the latter case, she maintained a special bond with Johanna of Brabant, the wife of duke Wenceslas I of Brabant. In early 1372, Johanna officially entered a five-year-long alliance with Mechtild, because William of Jülich had captured her husband at Baesweiler.<sup>88</sup> Apart from this alliance, the two

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<sup>84</sup> Jappe Alberts, *De staten*, p. 81; Benders, 'Venlo', pp. 68; GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (1, 9, 10). According to the information in GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6), Nijmegen only made its decision to support Jülich around February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1372.

<sup>85</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>86</sup> Jappe Alberts, *Van heerlijkheid*, pp. 88-89; Wybe Jappe Alberts, *Geschiedenis van Gelderland van de vroegste tijden tot het einde der middeleeuwen* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1966), p. 79.

<sup>87</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 206.

<sup>88</sup> Jappe Alberts, *De staten*, p. 81; GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.555-558. For a transcription of GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.555, see Theodor Joseph Lacomblet, *Urkundenbuch für die Geschichte des Niederrheins oder des Erzstifts Cöln, der Fürstenthümer Jülich und Berg, Geldern, Meurs, Kleve und Mark, und der Reichsstifte Elten, Essen und Werden. Dritter Band. Von dem Jahr 1301 bis 1400 einschliesslich*. (Düsseldorf: Schaub, 1853), pp. 631-632.

noblewomen would also regularly correspond and meet with each other.<sup>89</sup>

Perhaps the most important new ally in Mechtild's battle for the ducal throne would be her husband-to-be, the French nobleman John II of Blois (ca. 1342-1381). John was count of Blois and Dunois as well as lord of several territories across France, Holland, and Zeeland; he spent most of his days in the Low Countries. Since his domains made up almost a third of the surface of Holland and Zeeland, he was deemed to be the most important nobleman in the county of Holland, coming right after duke Albrecht of Bavaria.<sup>90</sup> Despite his political prominence, it seems that John preferred the luxurious life as a Schoonhoven courtier over life in council chambers and on battlefields.<sup>91</sup> John left the task of warfare mostly to his counsellor and most prominent ally, Jan of Langerak.<sup>92</sup>

The union between Mechtild and John of Blois was purely grounded in politics and ambitions for the ducal throne. Their wedding would be celebrated several times, so there could be no dispute about it having taken place. The idea behind the marriage seems to have come mainly from Mechtild's allies Reinold of Brederode and Arnold of Horne, yet others claim that Mechtild herself was the main supporter of the marriage.<sup>93</sup> Mechtild now had another powerful and wealthy ally on her side to strengthen her legitimacy as a pretender, due to her new husband having large territories under his control as well as close ties with other authoritative aristocrats, such as Albrecht of Bavaria.<sup>94</sup>

John showed great interest in being a duke as well. According to the financial accounts of his court at Schoonhoven, it is clear that he was rather occupied with the idea of being the

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<sup>89</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 206; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 122. First-hand evidence for this can be found in the eleven letters from Johanna in Mechtild's archives; see GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553.

<sup>90</sup> Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 35; Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 278.

<sup>91</sup> Verhoef, *De graven*, pp. 28-29; Van Dalen, *Rondom het tolhuys*, p. 59.

<sup>92</sup> B. de Keijzer, 'Van Langerak (uit Teylingen)', *Hogenda* (2020), <[https://www.hogenda.nl/wp-content/plugins/hogenda-search/download\\_attachment.php?id=11863&type=genealogy](https://www.hogenda.nl/wp-content/plugins/hogenda-search/download_attachment.php?id=11863&type=genealogy)> [accessed 7 June 2022], p. 18.

<sup>93</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 208-209; Böck mentions that Willem van Berchem originally traced the idea of the marriage to Brederode and Horne, while Jean Froissart, on the other hand, claimed that Friedrich III of Saarwerden was the main initiator of the marriage.

<sup>94</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 208-209.



next duke of Guelders, as he ordered many luxury goods befitting the lifestyle of a duke soon after being married.<sup>95</sup> On 14 February 1372, Mechtild and John officially tied the knot.<sup>96</sup>

Several feasts were held afterwards in honour of the couple: in Arnhem at the end of February, in Schoonhoven during Pentecost, and at Rozendaal at an unknown time.<sup>97</sup>

#### **2.4. A successful start: early Heekeren victories (early-mid 1372)**

For the newlyweds, the war started with major successes. John II of Blois undertook an effective military campaign on the Veluwe from February 1372 onwards, alongside allies such as Arnold of Horne and count Engelbert III of the Mark. Their army laid siege to and captured several Bronkhorst-allied holdouts, such as Grunsvoort Castle in February 1372; this castle would become a residence of the Heekeren-aligned knight Steven of Lynden.<sup>98</sup> John II and his men were able to capture several more Veluwe castles; the Veluwe was under Mechtild's total control by the early summer.<sup>99</sup>

Towns were also put under siege. The Heekeren took hold of Zaltbommel in March 1372, the toll house at Lobith in June 1372, and they took Tiel in July 1372.<sup>100</sup> Other Jülich-aligned towns, such as Venlo and Geldern, were put under siege: Geldern was unsuccessfully besieged by John II of Blois for sixteen weeks.<sup>101</sup> Venlo was taken over by the Heekeren at the end of 1372.<sup>102</sup> However, some Heekeren-controlled towns fell to the Bronkhorst side. After

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<sup>95</sup> Verhoef, *De graven*, pp. 24, 152-153.

<sup>96</sup> The exact moment at which the marriage of Mechtild and John took place is unsure. According to Van Schilfgaarde, Benders and Böck, it took place on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1372 (Van Schilfgaarde, *Zegels*, p. 99; Benders, 'De muntslag', 58; Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 208), while Verhoef mentions that a feast in honour of the marriage was held in Schoonhoven around Pentecost 1372 (ca. May 16<sup>th</sup>) which he based on a mention in the Schoonhoven accounts (Verhoef, *De graven*, pp. 150-151).

<sup>97</sup> Verhoef, *De graven*, pp. 150-151; Van Dalen, *Rondom het tolhuys*, p. 59.

<sup>98</sup> Van de Bunt, 'Mechteld', 4; Pieter Nicolaas van Doorninck, *De tocht van Jan van Blois om Gelre (1371-1372). Naar het oorspronkelijke handschrift* (Haarlem: Van Brederode, 1898), p. 28.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40; Benders, 'De muntslag', 58; Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 209; Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 42.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42; Benders, 'De muntslag', 58; Emile Smit, 'De veldtocht van Jan van Blois (1372)', *Mededelingen van de Historische Kring Huissen*, 23 (1998), pp. 83-84.

<sup>101</sup> This siege of Geldern is mentioned in several sources, such as Barkhausen, 'Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist', pp. 44-45 and Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 211. The specific dates for the siege remain unclear.

<sup>102</sup> Benders, 'Venlo', 69-70.

being captured by Bronkhorst party members Gijsbrecht of Borculo and Peter of Steenberg, Arnhem became a Bronkhorst-aligned town from June 1372 onwards, and it would remain a Bronkhorst town for the duration of the war.<sup>103</sup> The capture of Arnhem was a great loss to the Heekerens, as Arnhem was seen as a major Heekeren bulwark.<sup>104</sup>

Despite these early victories, it would not take long until the tides would turn for the Heekerens. The first tipping point was Emperor Charles IV enfeoffing Guelders to the young William of Jülich. From April to June 1372, negotiations were held in Aachen between the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV and duke William II of Jülich; many other high-ranking aristocrats were also present.<sup>105</sup> The emperor's original plan was to condemn William II of Jülich and his duchy after the events of Baesweiler; however, the meeting would take a different turn.<sup>106</sup> It was decided by decree on 25 June that William II of Jülich would release duke Wenceslas of Brabant, who was the emperor's brother, provided the emperor would grant the younger William of Jülich the ducal throne of Guelders in return.<sup>107</sup>

With the emperor's support now on the side of Jülich, it seemed that Mechtild's legitimacy as a pretender was seriously diminished. John of Blois still tried to prevent this agreement from taking effect by travelling to the emperor at Aachen alongside Arnold of Horne, Adolf III of Cleves, and several other allies on 27 June 1372, but this effort was in vain.<sup>108</sup> This would mark the end of John's involvement with the war in Guelders; from this point onwards, he retreated to his residences across France and the Low Countries.<sup>109</sup> He left his role as the main political and military leader of the Heekerens to Reinold of Brederode, mainly because of the latter's qualities as a well-regarded war commander.<sup>110</sup> Sternberg

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<sup>103</sup> Benders, 'Venlo', 71; Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xv; Noordzij, 'Personen', pp. 587-588; Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 211.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>105</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 212; Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xv; Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 42.

<sup>106</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 278.

<sup>107</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 212-215.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 214-215; Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>109</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 215; Verhoef, *De graven*, p. 153.

<sup>110</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 278.

concluded that ‘the marriage [between Mechtild and John] technically only lasted several months’.<sup>111</sup>

## **2.5. First attempts at peace: the treaties of Straelen and Zaltbommel (1372-1377)**

With Reinold of Brederode now at the Heekeren helm, the war in Guelders continued. Tiel, Zutphen, and Doesburg were recaptured by William of Jülich in the beginning of September.<sup>112</sup> Many Bronkhorst allies were killed and captured at the Battle of Heerwaarden on 9 October 1372, where the Heekeren emerged victorious.<sup>113</sup> Around the same time, early peace attempts were considered. John II of Blois and William II of Jülich met at Heusden to discuss the probability of peace in the presence of duke Albrecht of Bavaria on 7 September; however, these negotiations ended prematurely due to the aforementioned capture of Tiel.<sup>114</sup>

In February 1373, another peace conference between the two parties was held at Geertruidenberg.<sup>115</sup> Despite these early peace negotiations, the war continued throughout 1373 and 1374. Towns and nobles across the duchy often changed factions, with or without the use of force.<sup>116</sup> In early 1374, plans were made for the two warring parties to meet for negotiations at Kessel. This meeting took place on 28 March of that year.<sup>117</sup> The talks at Kessel eventually led to another meeting between the two parties at Straelen. Here, a treaty was signed on 28 April 1374.

It was decided in the Treaty of Straelen that Guelders would be split into two parts. The Rhine and Waal rivers would serve as natural borders for the two territories. The lands and the

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<sup>111</sup> Sternberg, ‘Die Briefsammlung’, p. 114.

<sup>112</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xvii-xviii; *De Tielse kroniek*, ed. and transl. by Jan Kuys and others (Amsterdam: Verloren, 1983), pp. 124-125, §604-607.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125, §608; Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 43.

<sup>114</sup> Verhoef, *De graven*, p. 152; Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 43.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>116</sup> Noordzij, ‘Personen’, p. 587.

<sup>117</sup> Benders, ‘Venlo’, 74; Flokstra, ‘Regestenlijst’, pp. 55-56. Compare with the open letters in GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.542.

towns on the right of the Rhine and north of the Waal were to belong to Mechtild, while the lands on the left of the Rhine and Waal, as well as the fortress of Geldern, were to belong to Jülich.<sup>118</sup> It was also decided that the territories that belonged to Mechtild would befall Jülich after Mechtild's passing unless she would give birth to an heir.<sup>119</sup> According to Benders, the negotiations at Straelen mark 'the beginning of the end' of the war: in the following years, there were fewer violent skirmishes across Guelders than in the years before.<sup>120</sup>

It is said that, after Straelen, Mechtild's claims to the throne were 'tolerated rather than accepted' by the Guelders nobility, leading sometimes to a forceful rejection of Mechtild's rule.<sup>121</sup> In Zutphen, Mechtild's rule was only accepted on the condition that the town returned under Jülich's rule once the young William of Jülich was deemed an adult, while Mechtild's rule was enforced in Harderwijk through the use of violence.<sup>122</sup> In the northern part of the duchy, violence would still break out regularly, due to some towns and nobles being reluctant to accept John and Mechtild as their new rulers.<sup>123</sup> Another peace treaty was signed at Zaltbommel by both parties on 6 January 1377, as a means to counter the social and economic damage that was related to the fighting in the north.<sup>124</sup> This treaty did not work out as expected, however: the unrest in the north would continue until 1379 when Mechtild and John officially admitted their defeat.<sup>125</sup>

## **2.6. The end of the war: dwindling fates and the battle at Hönnepel (1377-1379)**

The post-Straelen era of the war yielded minor Heekeren victories. Gijsbrecht of Borculo, the

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<sup>118</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 219-220; Benders, 'De muntslag', 58; Noordzij, 'Personen', p. 587.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 587.

<sup>120</sup> Benders, 'De muntslag', 58.

<sup>121</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 223.

<sup>122</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxvi; Noordzij, 'Personen', p. 587.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 587; Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 220-221; Benders, 'De muntslag', 58; Aart Noordzij, 'De landvrede van 1377. De betekenis van grenzen binnen een Gelders verbond', *Gelderland grensland. 2000 jaar verdeeld en verbonden*, ed. by Dolly Verhoeven and others (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2016), p. 44.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45; Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xxix, 28-45.

<sup>125</sup> Noordzij, 'De landvrede', p. 44.

son of the lord of Bronkhorst, was captured around May 1376 after losing a battle to Reinold of Brederode's forces.<sup>126</sup> Gijsbrecht eventually regained his freedom by November of that year, while also reconciling and allying himself with Mechtild and John per decree; several other Bronkhorst-allied nobles and knights who were also present at this gathering followed.<sup>127</sup> The events from November 1376 are described to be 'one of the last beautiful moments' in Mechtild's life by some scholars, as from that moment onwards Mechtild and the Heekerens had to face many setbacks.<sup>128</sup>

In April 1377, the younger William of Jülich was declared to be of age, and marriage agreements were signed between him and Catharina of Bavaria, the daughter of Albrecht of Bavaria and at one time Eduard of Guelders' potential bride. Emperor Charles IV once again pledged the duchy of Guelders to William; besides, the dukes of Cleves, Berg, and Brabant, all former allies of Mechtild, entered into treaties with the now adult William of Jülich at the beginning of 1377.<sup>129</sup> Throughout the year, Guelders towns that used to be on Mechtild's side, such as Zutphen, started to support William's claim as well; however, some towns, such as Tiel and Zaltbommel, kept supporting Mechtild until the end of the war.<sup>130</sup>

In this pivotal year, Mechtild did not only have to deal with adversity across Guelders. Linn, a possession of Mechtild that had been under the control of her official Heinrich of Strünkede since 1368, faced troubles as well. In August 1377, count Adolf III of Cleves had joined an existing *Landfriedesbund* ('regional peace agreement') between several political entities from the Rhineland. The members of this *Landfriedesbund*, including the archbishopric of Cologne, the duchies of Jülich and Brabant, and the towns of Aachen and Cologne, agreed to repress threats to the peace with force; they had laid siege to castles of smaller Rhineland

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<sup>126</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 279.

<sup>127</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxviii-xxix. The original decree is nowadays kept at the Gelders Archief (GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.616).

<sup>128</sup> Van de Bunt, 'Mechteld', 5-6.

<sup>129</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 227-230.

<sup>130</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi.

lords they saw as a threat in the previous years.<sup>131</sup> In August 1377, they besieged Heinrich of Strünkede at Linn.

The reason why Linn was attacked varies from account to account. Barkhausen mentions that Linn ‘had devolved into a robber’s nest’ under Strünkede, the final straw being Strünkede attacking merchants from Cleves and Cologne on the river Rhine.<sup>132</sup> Besides, count Adolf III of Cleves was bent on owning the domain of Linn ever since it had become a possession of Mechtild.<sup>133</sup> Barthelmeß, on the other hand, gives Von Strünkede’s unpaid debts to certain *Landesfriedebund* entities as a potential cause.<sup>134</sup> Mechtild may have had a hand in this: in a letter, she mentions how Von Strünkede had to suffer ‘great misfortune’ because she was not able to pay back her debt to him.<sup>135</sup> Several letters concerning the siege can be found in the letter collection: in letters dating from August 1377, Strünkede persuades Mechtild to come to Linn regarding the *Landfriedesbund*’s threat.<sup>136</sup>

The siege would eventually be unsuccessful and the castle remained in the possession of Strünkede and, therefore, of Mechtild. It would however not take long until Mechtild gave up the territory. In the end, Mechtild resorted to pledging Linn and Orsoy in 1378, probably due to her lingering financial problems. By charter, she renounced the possession of the territory to both Heinrich of Strünkede, for 6000 golden shields (in a charter dated 1 March 1378), and then to Friedrich of Saarwerden for 45.000 golden shields (in a different charter dated 18 April 1378).<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Barkhausen, ‘Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist’, p. 47.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47; Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 233.

<sup>133</sup> Barkhausen, ‘Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist’, p. 47.

<sup>134</sup> Sybille Barthelmeß, Die adelige Familie von Strünkede - Eine Familie von Raubrittern?, *Herne von damals bis heute* (2020), <https://herne-damals-heute.de/digitalisate/die-adelige-familie-von-struenkede-eine-familie-von-raubrittern/> [accessed 28 April 2022], p. 35.

<sup>135</sup> ‘Wij laten u ... weten dat her Heinric van Strunckede ons gecroent heeft ende gemaent dat ghi hem dat gelt, dat hi ons tot Coelne verleyde, noch niet betaelt en hebt daer groet schaede op gheet...’, GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1).

<sup>136</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1, 5, 9, 10).

<sup>137</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaaardigheden III*, p. xlii; Barkhausen, ‘Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist’, p. 48; Lacomblet 1853, pp. 713-714; charters 810 and 811. Barkhausen states that the involvement of Von Saarwerden in this exchange cannot be explained.

As time went on, the war in Guelders had become highly expensive to both parties, mainly due to the high cost of the military campaigns and sieges.<sup>138</sup> Despite Mechtild and John II of Blois starting the war financially well-off, in the end, they had to resort to selling off property and borrowing money both from allies and Lombards, in the latter case often against high interest.<sup>139</sup> Mechtild had already sold off several towns and belongings: at some point, she had sold off the Land of Mechelen to Adolf III of Cleves as a way to gain money for warfare.<sup>140</sup>

Mechtild also sold off some of her territories to Arnold of Horne in late 1372, and after the Treaty of Straelen, she sold off her newly-gained possessions Elburg, Harderwijk, and Hattem to the bishop in late 1375.<sup>141</sup> A transaction in which Mechtild sold a large number of her possessions to Reinold of Brederode in May 1377 had similar financial motivations.<sup>142</sup> Due to a chronic lack of funds, Mechtild was at times unable to provide manpower on the battlefield: Reinold of Brederode, for instance, was largely unable to fight during 1377 and 1378 due to Mechtild's lack of money.<sup>143</sup>

In these final years of the war, Mechtild's remaining allies were often not better off. Arnold of Horne was also caught in a precarious financial situation, as his involvement in warfare, not only concerning Guelders but also in the Utrecht-Holland war between 1373 and 1375, had been rather costly to the bishopric.<sup>144</sup> This did not stop Arnold from feuding with local lords: for instance, he had a conflict with his Bronkhorst-supporting vassal Herbern of Putten, lord of Puttenstein starting from 1372; this culminated in the castle being besieged and

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<sup>138</sup> Böck mentions that the Jülich ducal couple suffered from a lack of funds as well; from August 1372 onwards they had to sell off multiple properties. See Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 209-210.

<sup>139</sup> Verhoef, *De graven*, p. 29, 152.

<sup>140</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 112. In the source, no explicit date or year are mentioned.

<sup>141</sup> For the 1372 transaction, see: Benders, 'De muntslag', 59; for the 1375 transaction, see: Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 223.

<sup>142</sup> Benders, 59; Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 232.

<sup>143</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, pp. 280-281.

<sup>144</sup> Tine Jonker-Klijn and Richard Roks, *De bisschoppen van Utrecht van 690 tot 1581* (Utrecht: De Plantage, 2008), p. 149; a detailed report of this war can be found in Ronald P. de Graaf, *Oorlog om Holland, 1000-1375* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), pp. 141-149.

destroyed between June and August 1375.<sup>145</sup> Arnold of Horne eventually left his Utrecht office in 1378 when he became bishop of Liège, only returning to Utrecht on rare occasions.<sup>146</sup> It seems that John II of Blois also distanced himself from ambitions for the Guelders ducal throne in early 1377; after the marriage and coronation of William of Jülich, he started calling himself ‘count of Blois and Schoonhoven’ again.<sup>147</sup>



**Figure 4.** *The siege of Gennep castle in October-November 1378, as depicted by J.W. Heyting (1941).*<sup>148</sup>

Reinold of Brederode remained faithful to Mechtild even after she proved unable to pay his military expenses, provided that he received funds again. However, his castle at Gennep was under siege by William II of Jülich and his son from 19 October 1378; it was captured by the Bronkhorst party three weeks later (Figure 4).<sup>149</sup> This did not mean that the war was over.

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<sup>145</sup> Fehrmann and Schaap, ‘De conflicten’, 273-277, 281-283; Berend Dubbe, ‘De val van het slot Puttenstein in 1375. Enige vondsten’, *Antiek*, 24.9 (1989), 553.

<sup>146</sup> Jonker-Klijn and Roks, *De bisschoppen*, p. 150.

<sup>147</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. 47.

<sup>148</sup> Picture taken from Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 280.

<sup>149</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 280; Benders, ‘De muntslag’, 58; *De Tielse kroniek*, p. 128, §626.



One of the final Heekeren holdouts, the Tiel toll house, was captured by the young William of Jülich on 23 February 1379; this would officially usher in an era of peace in Guelders.<sup>150</sup> Mechtild and John would officially admit their defeat after they lost the battle of Hönnepel one month later; according to Aart Noordzij, ‘only a few towns, castles and villages’ were still supporting them at this point.<sup>151</sup> Mechtild distanced herself from her claims to the throne and retreated to her Huissen residence, where she spent the final years of her life until she died in 1384.

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<sup>150</sup> *De Tielse kroniek.*, p. 128, §627; Jappe Alberts, *Geschiedenis van Gelderland*, p. 80; Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxxix.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-72; Noordzij, ‘Personen’, p. 588; Benders, ‘De muntslag’, 58.

### 3. Pragmatic literacy in thirteenth-century Guelders

According to Michael Clanchy, a Europe-wide process of *Verschriftlichung* occurred throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with transactions that were previously memorised ever more being written down.<sup>152</sup> This can be related to the growth of the bureaucracy, in both noble and municipal spheres around the same time.<sup>153</sup> Both nobles and towns had private chanceries to produce documents. Because of this, so-called 'literacy for practical purposes', or 'pragmatic literacy' was on the rise during these two centuries, as was literacy among the laity.<sup>154</sup>

The writing of letters increased similarly in the wake of this broader development, albeit slightly later. From the 1300s onwards, medieval Europe experienced a 'dramatic increase' in letter writing, according to a widespread scholarly opinion.<sup>155</sup> The transition from hide-based *vellum* to paper made from rags as the main material for writing letters started in the thirteenth century, gradually making it easier to produce letters in large quantities.<sup>156</sup> As commercial networks grew, letters were able to travel along established trade routes, making it easier for letters to travel faster and more securely to their receivers. And with ever more people becoming literate, particularly in the vernacular languages, the letter was becoming a major instrument for the exchange of information: a tool to communicate ideas as quickly as possible.

These developments in literacy and correspondence also can be observed in the fourteenth-century duchy of Guelders. According to Greet Jungman, fourteenth-century Guelders had a strongly developed written culture, especially regarding the broader Nether

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<sup>152</sup> Jeroen Benders, *Bestuurscultuur en schriftcultuur. Een analyse van de bestuurlijke verschriftelijking in Deventer tot het eind van de 15e eeuw* (Kampen: IJsselacademie, 2004), p. 27.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>155</sup> Findlen, 'With a Letter', pp. 21.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

Rhine area: scribes employed by the duchy under duke Reinold II produced both administrative documents and illuminated manuscripts in large quantities.<sup>157</sup> Mechtild, who was Reinold's daughter, must therefore have been familiar with literacy, both in the forms of reading and writing, from a young age.<sup>158</sup> However, it is not quite clear whether Mechtild possessed active practical literacy skills herself. An indication that Mechtild possessed literate skills is found in a letter by Margareta of the Mark. Margareta mentions three songs she had written herself, encouraging her aunt to 'write [these songs] in a booklet', implying Mechtild owned a booklet in which she wrote down poems and songs, or had these written down for her.<sup>159</sup>

It can be argued, however, that Mechtild did not write her letters herself, but commissioned scribes to do the work instead. This is testified by the two letters Mechtild sent to her councillors Arnold of Keppel and Gerard of Hackfort (Figure 5 and 6). These two letters convey largely the same message and are sent on the same date; however, the handwriting in the two letters is significantly different.<sup>160</sup> This suggests that Mechtild employed at least two scribes, as Sternberg argues; these scribes were simultaneously employed by Mechtild as messengers delivering her letters.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederhandschrift', 114.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>159</sup> '*... oych sendde ich dir dry leydergin de hain ich nüwe gemacht de saltü in den büechgelgin schryven...*', GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5). For a further exploration of this particular letter, see Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederhandschrift', 118-120; Sternberg, 'Mechtild', p. 264.

<sup>160</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583. Only four out of the 184 letters in the collection were issued by Mechtild herself.

<sup>161</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 119.

A . . . . .

70

Heoghe van gelre. Swinne  
van zloys en van zuphen

Wij bidden u heren. Deur goede vrient, dat ghi daer toe behulpeheit en vriederlic sijt. hi woude van  
werst op en lieue en getruweheit niet, dat hi al en megeten pondage te middage sijn wille, en  
vriende, daer en dat hermeur is, tusse ons en ons wille, en daer ons hermeur en noue  
en vrient, ons noue van schep en ande ons vrient sijn saken gelijc dat hi woude woude  
germeur sullen en dat ghi saken vinnet mede want op den woude dat, want hi vriederlic  
woude, wille en vrient van hermeur daer hi behulpeheit sijn, for si mit u. geset eer lode  
des godsdrages en ons vriederlic dach maent.

43

Heoghe van gelre. Swinne  
van zloys en van zuphen

Wij bidden u heren goede vrient, dat ghi daer toe helpt en raedt, dat woude van vrient sijn  
en megeten vriederlic te middage te vrient en ghi mit hem, want hi daer ons dach halde  
saken en ons vriederlic vrient. Daer ons hermeur van vrient ons noue van schep  
en ande ons vrient wille saken alse te vrient van ons saken tusse ons en ons vrient  
vrient, en daer inne wille woude alse hi vriederlic vriederlic des en wille mit woude van  
vriederlic vrient woude van vrient en vriederlic daer hi hebben saken. For si mit u. geset eer lode des  
godsdrages en ons vriederlic dach maent.

**Figure 5 and 6.** Letters issued by Mechtild of Guelders to Arnold of Keppel (above) and Gerrit of Hackfort (below) which contain almost the same message. Notice the differences in handwriting.<sup>162</sup>

Even in the late medieval period, it was common practice that letters were dictated by their author and were written down by a scribe or secretary; autograph letters tended to be

<sup>162</sup> Images taken from GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1,2).

very rare.<sup>163</sup> Mechtild was not the only person within her network to rely upon the help of scribes. This is also the case for the letters from the collection sent by allies such as Reinold of Brederode and Steven of Lynden.<sup>164</sup> In these cases, multiple letters issued by these two correspondents exist. They can be viewed alongside each other, showing different handwriting styles despite being issued by the same person. It can therefore be said that the use of different scribes in letter writing was a not uncommon practice in Mechtild's network.

However, oral communication still had a function alongside written communication; it was sometimes deemed more important than the written word. As Constable puts it, a medieval messenger was not only expected to deliver a physical letter, but could also act as an 'envoy or an ambassador' of its sender, orally transmitting information that was deemed to be too secret, too dangerous, or too detailed to put in writing.<sup>165</sup> Therefore, messengers at the Guelders court were expected to take an oath of secrecy once they had assumed office.<sup>166</sup> Besides, the more esteemed the recipient was, the higher-ranking the messenger needed to be who delivered the letter, reflecting the recipient's or the message's importance.<sup>167</sup>

A group of messengers that was held in the highest regard were personal chaplains. Since chaplains were employed as personal religious confessors by nobles, they were familiar with their patrons on a deeply personal and intimate level, being privy to all sorts of inside information. Therefore, they were perfectly suited for transporting their patrons' most private messages. Mechtild employed at least two academically trained chaplains, Mauritius van Arde

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<sup>163</sup> Giles Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections, Typologie des Sources du Moyen-Âge Occidental. Fasc. 17* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 1976), pp. 42-44.

<sup>164</sup> For the case of Reinold of Brederode, compare the handwriting in the different letters from GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563. For instance, letters 14 and 15 from this reference number have a distinct, more loosely-written handwriting style compared to letters 1 and 2, which are both written by a different hand. For the case of Steven of Lynden, compare the handwriting in GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561, letters 7 and 10.

<sup>165</sup> Constable, *Letters*, pp. 53-55.

<sup>166</sup> Ronald Wientjes, 'De hertog van Gelre, zijn raad en beambten circa 1350', *Gelre – Geldern - Gelderland. Geschiedenis en cultuur van het hertogdom Gelre*, ed. by Johannes Stinner and others (Geldern: Verlag des Historischen Vereins für Geldern und Umgebend, 2001), p. 166.

<sup>167</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 119.

and Heinric van den Bossche.<sup>168</sup> Considering that both chaplains were held in high regard, they are often mentioned by name in the letters (this is especially the case with Van den Bossche), while lowlier messengers tend to be mentioned anonymously.<sup>169</sup> The status of chaplains is confirmed by the chaplains of those who sent Mechtild letters, such as Robijn, the chaplain of Gravendaal Abbey, who is mentioned by name in a letter by Elisabeth of Guelders. In one letter, Elisabeth mentions an exchange of letters between their respective chaplains concerning the sisters' whereabouts.<sup>170</sup>

The role of messengers is reflected in the letter collection. In some cases, as Sternberg pointed out, a letter was written to accompany a messenger, who would orally transmit information to the receiver of the letter.<sup>171</sup> For instance, in a letter from Heinrich of Strünkede, this knight wrote that 'Müys', the messenger of this letter, would tell Mechtild about Heinrich's further whereabouts, and advised Mechtild to 'believe [Müys' word] like it was his own'.<sup>172</sup> This form of communication by messengers was a two-way affair: Jan of Langerak mentions in a letter to Mechtild that she should send out Heinric van den Bossche to him, to 'discuss several affairs he cannot write about [to Mechtild]'.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119, note 79.

<sup>169</sup> Van den Bossche is mentioned in six different letters. Consult Appendix 1.

<sup>170</sup> '... wij bidden u dat ghi heren Heinric uwen cappellaen ons seinden wilt, als her Robijn ons cappelaen van u schide ...' GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (1).

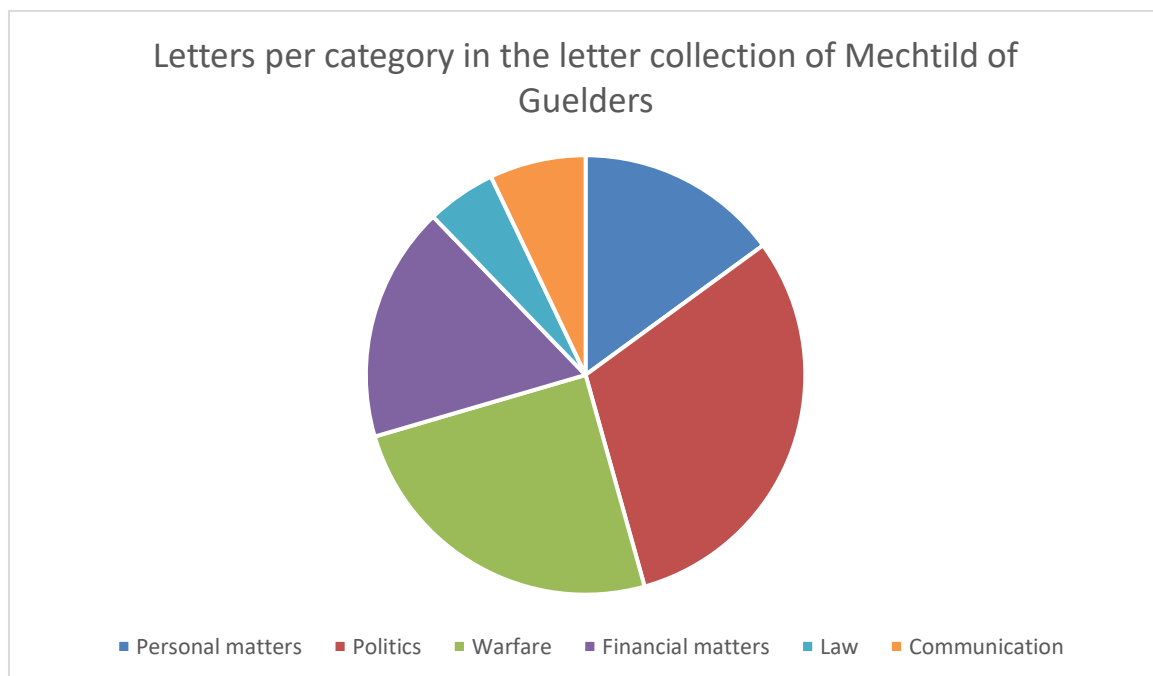
<sup>171</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 119.

<sup>172</sup> '...wat v Müys, myn knecht, brenget dijs breyues seget van myner wegen des wilt em gelouen gelych my seluen' GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (8).

<sup>173</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (27). '...ofs v. ghenüecht wilt heren heinric uwen capelaen bi mi seinden om met hem te spreken van alrehande saken die ic v. niet ghescriuen en can'.

## 4. Letter topics

As has been said before, a wide range of topics is discussed in the letters from Mechtild's archives. Sometimes, the letters show similarities based on the discussed topics; this allows letters with corresponding topics to be grouped into broader 'covering categories'. The use of these categories is an artificial method of dividing the letters, but it can be used to structure the letter collection; the Gelders Archief has done something similar in inventorying the archive of Mechtild generally.<sup>174</sup> In this chapter, each of these categories will be highlighted and discussed. Several categories also have subcategories, consisting of topics that fit within a broader covering category, yet have unique recurring features that are testified to in multiple letters. Each of these (sub-) categories is illustrated by noteworthy examples that appear in the letters themselves.



**Figure 7.** Overview of the letter categories and how often these appear in the collection.

<sup>174</sup> The archive itself (GldA 0001.2.07) is structured in three broad sub-archives: one archive on familial relations, one on her domains in the land of Mechelen, and one on Mechtild as a duchess-pretender during the First War of the Guelderian Succession. The latter archive is the largest, and all documents are categorised in several sub-categories: politics, warfare, administration and justice, feudal issues, and financial management. Consult Isaak Anne Nijhoff and others, '0001 Graven en hertogen van Gelre, graven van Zutphen', *Gelders Archief* <<https://www.geldersarchief.nl/archieven/middeleeuwen/hertogelijk-archief>> [accessed 16 April 2022].

As is shown in Figure 7, letters on politics and warfare dominate the collection, with more than half of the letters discussing these topics. However, a caveat is in order. The topics are not mutually exclusive, and in certain instances, they may show some overlap. A single letter can discuss several different topics. In letters that can otherwise be classified as having, for instance, personal or financial matters as their main topic, political and military topics regularly appear as well. This is especially the case once Mechtild has become involved in the First War of the Guelderian Succession.

An example of this can be found in a letter by Johanna of Brabant from July 1372. The letter starts with the Brabant duchess responding to a letter from Mechtild, telling her about her conditions, as is common in letters on personal matters. However, in the following sentence, Johanna shows delight in having learnt that the Heekeren army has captured Tiel.<sup>175</sup> Another example of a political event concerns the arrival and festive inauguration of William of Jülich in Zutphen in May 1378. This event is discussed briefly on two different occasions; both Dirk of Appelteren and Willem of Wosic make mention of it in letters that are otherwise concerned with other matters.<sup>176</sup> It was probably a priority for both men to report this to Mechtild, considering that Zutphen had sided with Mechtild before.<sup>177</sup>

#### 4.1. Personal matters

This category includes letters that conform to Mikel Kors' definition of medieval 'private correspondence', which he defines as 'letters that focus on the sender's or receiver's personal life, and not (necessarily) on their professions'.<sup>178</sup> A substantial number of letters fall into this

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<sup>175</sup> '...Ende sijn seer blide dat uwe lude de stat van Tiele gewonnen hebben...', GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (9).

<sup>176</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (14), GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1).

<sup>177</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxxvii.

<sup>178</sup> Mikel Kors, 'Epistolaire aspecten van de geestelijke brief (ca. 1350-1550)', in *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Middelnederlands geestelijk proza*, ed. by Th. Mertens and others (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1993), p. 55; Kors, 'Een gesprek', 129.



category, especially those from female senders. The Gelders Archief describes reference numbers 362 and 363, which are sent by women, as containing letters ‘regarding personal matters’.<sup>179</sup>

A mention of the personal well-being of the sender, and a related question on the well-being of the receiver, is an often-used *introduction* in letters: the letters from Mechtild’s letter collection show this pattern regularly. Such matters also introduce letters that focus on political or military content later on; however, in the case of the letters sent by women, the topic of the addressee’s well-being often makes up the entire letter. In some letters, the senders describe their well-being as well; such cases are often related to illness. Margareta of the Mark mentions that ‘[she] had been ill, but recuperated once again through God’s mercy’, while Johanna of Gennepe, the wife of Reinold of Brederode, tells Mechtild that she was unable to visit her the day before, as she had been ill the three previous days.<sup>180</sup>

The seven letters by Margareta of the Mark, all written in the period 1367-1371, can be considered to be the ‘most personal’ among the letters. From them, one can deduce that Margareta and Mechtild had had a ‘mutually close and intimate bond’, with Margareta being one of the grandchildren of John of Cleves’ brother.<sup>181</sup> Scholars argue that this degree of loving intimacy between Mechtild and her cousin by marriage may have originated in Mechtild’s marriage to John of Cleves having remained childless.<sup>182</sup>

The close personal bond between Margareta and Mechtild can be ascertained through these letters. In one of them, Margareta tells her aunt ‘that I must call you a thief because you

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<sup>179</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 and 363. The only letter from these two reference numbers that do not fit within Kors’ definition is the letter by Hadewijch of IJzendoorn (GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (10)) that deals with legal questions; further discussion on this letter can be found in the ‘legal matters’ section.

<sup>180</sup> ‘... Vort wizzint, liebe Mone, daz ich inwenich krank bin gewesen, und nü von Godes gnadin redelichin starg widdir bin wordin ...’, GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (3) in the case of Margareta of the Mark; ‘... nu heb ic, lieue vrouwe, drie daghe also recht syc geheweest [...] soe dat yc lieue vrouw niet ghecomen en conde ...’ GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (3) in the case of Johanna of Gennepe.

<sup>181</sup> Jungman, ‘Het Haags Liederhandschrift’, 118.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118-120.

have stolen my heart'.<sup>183</sup> This love between aunt and niece went beyond just kind words: the letters also mention the two women exchanging personal gifts with each other.<sup>184</sup> In the letters, Margareta describes these gifts in detail. In a letter presumably sent in January 1367, Margareta mentions the New Years' presents she sent to her aunt: a 'little golden ring' in white and red, with the latter colour representing 'the suffering heart' of Margareta, 'since she missed [Mechtild] so dearly', alongside three songs that Margareta had composed herself, 'that Mechtild could write down in her booklet'.<sup>185</sup>

#### **4.1.1. Cancellations and apologies**

As we have seen, Mechtild often hosted gatherings or met up in other ways with advisors, allies, or friends.<sup>186</sup> However, sometimes people were unable to attend such gatherings. To excuse themselves, letters were sent to notify Mechtild of their absence. Various reasons for absence are given. These motivations have often little or no connection to the professional lives of the sender; therefore, these letters can be viewed as a sub-category to the personal letters. They recur throughout the collection to form a category of their own; in total, eighteen different letters contain apologies.

Sometimes, the absence of the sender had to do with the orders of their superiors. Gijsbrecht of Hardenbroek, marshal to Arnold van Horne, had to assist the bishop of Utrecht during the siege of Puttenstein in 1375, while Jan of Langerak, the second-in-command to John of Blois, had to assist the latter in a border dispute with Wenceslas of Brabant, rendering

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<sup>183</sup> '... *Wisset, leve moyne, daz ich vch vür eynen deyf scheylden moys, sint ir mir min hartze gestoyllen hait...*', GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (4).

<sup>184</sup> Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederhandschrift', 118-119.

<sup>185</sup> '... *oych so sendde ich dir eyn gülden rynghelgin zo eyne nūwen iaere ... oych is dat rynghelgin wyes inde royte, inde dat royde bedüdet dat min hertze lydet noyt, dat ich dinre also langhe daruen moys ... oych sendde ich dir dry leydergin de hain ich nūwe gemacht de saltü in den büechgelgin schryven ...*', GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5). A further discussion of this particular letter can be found in Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederhandschrift', 117-118; and Sternberg, 'Mechtild', p. 264.

<sup>186</sup> For a further explanation of the Middle Dutch word 'vriend', refer to paragraph 1.5.

both men unable to visit Mechtild.<sup>187</sup> In a different letter, by Elisabeth of Langerak, wife to Jan of Langerak, Elisabeth mentions that she was unable to visit Mechtild for a similar reason as her husband in the aforementioned letter; she had to accompany John II of Blois to a meeting with Albrecht of Bavaria in The Hague.<sup>188</sup> She probably went to The Hague alongside her (unmentioned) husband, as that was his task as John II of Blois' second-in-command; yet it is noticeable that his wife went along.

Another reason for absence had to do with different kinds of interference. In several letters, Johanna of Brabant makes mention of insurrections in Brabant towns, letting Mechtild know on several occasions that she prefers to postpone gatherings with her because of this.<sup>189</sup> On two different occasions, letters from others admit to not being able to attend a meeting with Mechtild because all their horses were being in use at the time, thereby incidentally showing the importance of the horse as the main means of transport in the world of medieval nobles.<sup>190</sup>

In other cases, the reason for not being able to attend a meeting lay outside the correspondents' power. Illness could be a reason, as in the case of Johanna of Gennepe mentioned above. Sometimes, the journey towards Mechtild's residence was deemed to be too dangerous. The town council of Harderwijk thought traversing the Veluwe to meet Mechtild in January 1371 too hazardous a task to undertake.<sup>191</sup> Arnold of Wachtendonck the Younger mentions that he was unable to visit Mechtild at Huissen in January of an unknown year since he deemed the river Rhine untraversable due to the winter weather.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (11, 24).

<sup>188</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7). John of Langerak is not mentioned in this letter; however, there is a high chance he had to consort John II of Blois as well as one of his main counsellors.

<sup>189</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10, 11). According to Verhoog, 'armed actions and raids' took place across Brabant between 1372 and 1374; however, it is unsure whether Johanna refers to these particular insurrections. See also Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 279.

<sup>190</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (29); GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (6); Cynthia Jenéy, 'Horses and Equitation', in *Handbook of Medieval Culture. Volume 1*, ed. by Albrecht Classen (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), pp. 674-676.

<sup>191</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (8); Benders, 'Venlo', 69.

<sup>192</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (5).

Despite cancellations or postponements, Mechtild was treated with respect by her correspondents. Johanna of Brabant suggested a postponement of their meetings on several occasions. A group of Zutphen-based merchants and aldermen may well have been the correspondents with the most patience in the collection. In their letter, the group has Mechtild know that she can meet up with them and the Zutphen alderman Gerard of Drinen, ‘once [Mechtild] does not want to wait any longer’, after their promised meeting has been postponed on several occasions.<sup>193</sup>

## **4.2. Political matters**

As has become clear by now, Mechtild held significant political power in Guelders and her own domains, especially after 1372. It is therefore not surprising that circa three-quarters of the total collection consists of letters with a political theme. Political gatherings, both major and minor ones, are discussed, as well as political developments that took place outside council chambers. Besides, an (open) letter could also function as a political instrument itself.<sup>194</sup>

### **4.2.1. Political gatherings**

Medieval politics were often conducted at large gatherings of political actors. Some of the gatherings that are mentioned in the letters had a major influence on the political landscape, with some meetings also being recorded in historical accounts. The most poignant example is the letter sent by Mary of Brabant about a servant telling her the result of the negotiations which had taken place at Aachen from April to June of 1372 between the Holy Roman

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<sup>193</sup> ‘... *wanneer Ghijs nyet langer wachten en willen, wij en willen u al doen wes wij u gelaiiet hebt ...*’, GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2).

<sup>194</sup> A collection of interrelated city council letters from 1371-1372 will be discussed in section 4.2.2 below.

Emperor Charles IV and duke William II of Jülich.<sup>195</sup> The Heekeren capture of Gijsbrecht of Borculo in November 1376 and the reconciliation that took place subsequently is yet another example of a well-documented political event that also gets mentioned in several letters.<sup>196</sup> According to these letters, the reconciliation did not bring about the intended results, with Johan van Heeckeren van der Eze mentioning how Borculo still caused inconvenience to the Heekerens even after this.<sup>197</sup> A gathering of the Heekeren and Bronkhorst parties at Kessel is briefly mentioned in a letter by Willem of Wosic; it is, however, unclear whether this particular gathering was the same as the documented gathering at Kessel in 1374.<sup>198</sup>

Besides these documented political meetings, many political and military gatherings mentioned in the letters were never documented otherwise at all. For instance, letters by allies often make mention of recurring gatherings between Mechtild, her allies, and advisors at Rhenen, a town under the authority of the bishop of Utrecht.<sup>199</sup> Mechtild was able to host gatherings at Rhenen regularly due to her being a close personal ally of bishop Arnold of Horne. Yet despite their ubiquity in Mechtild's letter collection, dates for these Rhenen gatherings, as indeed for the gatherings generally organised by Mechtild, were never recorded.

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<sup>195</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6); Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 122-123.

<sup>196</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1, 16, 21). The Gelders Archief also owns a charter documenting this event, GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.616; this charter can also be found in Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, charter 29, pp. 22-26.

<sup>197</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (16).

<sup>198</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5). ('... *en hedde gedaen dat Ic enen dach tot kessel opt der maesen moest hauden tegen mijn vrouwe van gelren uwe Suster op sente Martins dach translatio ...* '); however, this letter is dated at Translatio Martini (July 4th), while the documented negotiations at Kessel took place in late March 1374. Further information on the Kessel negotiations can be found in: Benders, 'Venlo', 74; Flokstra, 'Regestenlijst', p. 55-56; GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.542.

<sup>199</sup> In total, sixteen different letters from the collection make mention of Rhenen; see Appendix 3. The corresponding dates vary, showing that gatherings must have occurred regularly.

#### 4.2.2. *Town council letters (1371-1372)*

Some of the most poignant examples of politically motivated letters in Mechtild's archive are the answers sent by the aldermen and councils of several large Guelders towns from late 1371 and early 1372. Once Reinold III of Guelders had died in December 1371 and both Mechtild and Mary laid claim to the ducal throne, both sisters reached out to Guelders' towns and town councils to get their support; they did this through the use of open letters.<sup>200</sup> As a response to Mechtild's open letters, several towns responded by sending letters in reply stating their decision about whom they were supporting. Eight of these town council letters can be found in the letter collection.

According to these letters, it seemed that each town council approached the question of succession in a different way. Zutphen chose to support Mechtild; Erkelenz chose to support Mary since the open letter of Mary had arrived earlier than Mechtild's; while Nieuwstadt, Roermond, and Venlo wanted to wait for the decision of the other towns before they would make their own.<sup>201</sup>

The case of Nijmegen is the most remarkable. Nijmegen would only decide officially to support Jülich after a visit and a plea from William II of Jülich himself.<sup>202</sup> In a letter dated around 14 February 1372, the town council of Nijmegen tells Mechtild about this visit, in which the duke of Jülich proposed a convincing gender-based argument in favour of his son as the next duke: 'the duke of Guelders had always been born male, and it has never happened before that the duchy of Guelders belonged to someone born female'.<sup>203</sup> After the council and

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<sup>200</sup> Benders, 'Venlo', 68-69; Benders, 'Die Erkelenzer Münzen', 148.

<sup>201</sup> All these letters can be found within the reference number GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615. Letter 2 is the response from Zutphen, 5 that of Erkelenz, 9 that of Nieuwstadt, 1 and 7 those of Roermond and 10 that of Venlo.

<sup>202</sup> Benders, 'Venlo', 68.

<sup>203</sup> '...*Dat sijn soen Ioncher Willem voerscreuen, dat naeste lijf weer van menliker gheboorte des hertoeghrijcs van Ghelren, ende oec voertijts nye vernomen en is, dat thertoechrijc van Gulicen ye ghequam aen wijflike gheboorte ...*', GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6).

aldermen of Nijmegen discussed this matter, Nijmegen proclaimed to support Jülich; yet they still sent a letter to Mechtild telling her about this occurrence.

### 4.3. Warfare

It can be said that medieval politics were practised both in council chambers and on the battlefield, and Mechtild was expected to be active in both once war broke out. There is thus a clear overlap between the topics of politics and warfare-themed letters, especially from 1372 onwards. As the Heekeren-backed pretender in the war for the ducal throne of Guelders, and thus one of the pivotal figures among the Heekerens, Mechtild was held in high regard.

Mechtild was not relegated to a role on the sidelines while her men did all the fighting. Although she is never explicitly mentioned as taking part in warfare herself, her influence in this area is still noticeable. As we have seen, Mechtild had a large supply of commanders, knights, and soldiers at her command. As the *de facto* leader of these men, it was of the utmost importance that the duchess-pretender was aware of developments on the battlefield, and the letters testify to this.

Several letters by Reinold of Brederode, Mechtild's principal military commander from mid-1372 until the end of the war, can be viewed as reports of these frontline developments. In them, Brederode briefly describes the military situation, alongside suggestions for action Mechtild should undertake in reaction to particular events.<sup>204</sup> For instance, in one of his letters, Brederode reports that Arnold of Heumen, an ally to both Jülich and Bronkhorst, was advancing from Arnhem towards Huissen with his army.<sup>205</sup> Brederode

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<sup>204</sup> For instance, GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2,5).

<sup>205</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2).

estimated that Heumen would be at Huissen in a few days; in the letter, he asks Mechtild to call for backup forces ‘to prevent this from happening’.<sup>206</sup>

Brederode describes a similar situation in another letter, albeit with more detailed advice than in the previous letter. After being informed about an enemy attack, he advises the duchess-pretender immediately to summon the two allied lords Gijsbrecht of Vianen and Wouter of IJzendoorn to the battlefield.<sup>207</sup> Brederode is not the only ally to send Mechtild these reports from the front. A similar letter, for instance, was written by Willem of Wosic and Tengnagel of Rozande, in which they presented Mechtild with a highly-detailed description of the arrival of Bronkhorst forces in the Nederbetuwe.<sup>208</sup>

In the letters related to warfare, Mechtild is often persuaded to take authoritative decisions to alter a military situation. In several cases, she is asked to send reinforcements, while in other cases she is persuaded to put an end to the violence. An example of this can be found in two different letters that both relate to the siege of Puttenstein. While its besieger Arnold of Horne sent a letter hoping for his ally Mechtild to support him at Puttenstein, the local nobleman John of Hattem sent a letter hoping Mechtild to talk Arnold out of besieging Puttenstein, describing how monks from a local monastery suffered greatly because of the siege.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> ‘... ende of daer yemant op jagen op uut lopen woude die neder te trecken. Waerom lieue vrou ghi dit wilt doen verhuieden ...’, GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2).

<sup>207</sup> ‘... wilt weten dat ons verboet is dat ons onse vyande eynteliken süeken willen [...] so wilt den here van Vyanen [...] becoren ende bidden dat si sonder vertrec bi ons comen [...] so wilt her Wouter van Ysendeeren scriuen ende becoren dat hi sonder vertrec bi ons ynt velt come ...’, GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2).

<sup>208</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23).

<sup>209</sup> The letter by Arnold of Horne is GldA 2.07.3.3.559 (1); the letter by John of Hattem is GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7).



### 4.3.1. Sieges

Sieges of castles and towns alike formed an integral part of medieval warfare. Reports of sieges therefore regularly appear in the letters. Some of these deal with otherwise documented sieges, such as those of Puttenstein (May-August 1375) and Linn (August 1377).<sup>210</sup> However, otherwise undocumented sieges appear in the letters as well, such as a capture of Bronkhorst and the subsequent Heekeren re-capture of a castle at Staverden, as well as Gijsbrecht of Vianen's otherwise nondescript castle being put under siege.<sup>211</sup> Another interesting yet otherwise non-documented case is the capture of an anonymous noblewoman by one 'Otto, the bastard of Doornik' and the subsequent siege of Grunsvoort Castle where the woman was kept: the case is documented in two different letters.<sup>212</sup>

Besides castles, towns were also besieged. On the night of 1 April 1372, the Bronkhorst-allied knight Peter of Steenberg had unexpectedly taken over Harderwijk, soon after the town sided with Mechtild and John of Blois; the town council sent two different letters to the couple in which they explained what had happened that fateful night.<sup>213</sup> Another Heekeren-aligned town that was besieged during the war was Wageningen. In a letter from circa 1372, the council and aldermen describe the dire situation in their war-torn town in great detail to Mechtild: the moat has fallen dry, and townspeople flee the town daily because of

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<sup>210</sup> Letters GldA 2.07.3.3.559 (1), GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (24), and GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7) mention the siege of Puttenstein, while letters GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1, 5, 9, 10) refer to the siege of Linn and the run-up to this.

<sup>211</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (4) mentions the events at Staverden; '*...want sommige lude op mi ghegadert hadden mij mijnre slote een af te climmen...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (15).

<sup>212</sup> The skirmishes at Brienon are described in GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (3, 12). See also Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 118, note 70.

<sup>213</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3, 4); Benders, 'Venlo', 69. It is interesting to note that the first letter is aimed at both Mechtild and John, while the second is addressed to John alone; this was probably done because of his task as the Heekeren's main military commander at this stage of the war.

poverty.<sup>214</sup> Through the letter, they hope to gain support from the duchess-pretender in this situation.

Perhaps the most poignant example showing the brutal nature of siege warfare and its effect on the people who waged it can be found in a letter from a group of companions (*'dye ghemenen gezellen'*) defending a tower at Heteren in 1376.<sup>215</sup> They describe how they have almost run out of provisions. The companions claim to 'have nothing to eat [and drink] until the next day, besides beer and bread'; they are unable to exit the tower to seek new supplies due to the siege.<sup>216</sup> They are unsure whether and how long they will be able to keep their hold on the tower. Their letter can be seen as a cry of distress towards Mechtild, hoping that quick relief from her side will allow them to continue the tower's defence.

It was not only Mechtild's allies who wrote about the horrors of the war. An example of this can also be found in a letter sent by Walraven of Oye, a Bronkhorst-allied knight and official of the Land of Duffelt.<sup>217</sup> In his letter, Oye complains about two knights in the service of Mechtild, Evert of Ulft and Reinold of Rees, who wreaked havoc on the town of Elst as well as on Oye's kin living in Elst.<sup>218</sup> Based on this letter it can be said that Mechtild was the highest-ranked official Oye had access to, even if she was his enemy. Considering she was the *de facto* commander of Ulft and Rees, Walraven of Oye sent a letter to Mechtild in an attempt to bring a halt to the destruction caused by her men.

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<sup>214</sup> '*... dat ons onse water uyt onser Graften ontvallen is .... ende ons onse volc een groet doel uyt der Stat van Ermoden uit varen is ende noch alle daghe doet ...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.568 (1). The letter itself is undated, yet it is estimated by the archive to be written in or around 1372.

<sup>215</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.577 (1).

<sup>216</sup> '*... wy en hebben nyet tegen mergen teten dan byer ende broet, ende wy en dorren nyet vanden toerne gaen dat wy yet mogen halen of crygen ...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.577 (1).

<sup>217</sup> Walraven of Oye is mentioned as a Bronkhorst-allied knight in Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. vi-vii; Rees and Ulft are both mentioned as being allied to Mechtild in Van Winter, *Ministerialiteit*, tab. A III as well as in Ludolf A.F.H. van Heekeren, 'Het geslacht Ulft', *Heraldieke bibliotheek. Tijdschrift voor geslacht- en wapenkunde*, 5.10 (1883), 37-38.

<sup>218</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (17).

#### 4.4. Financial matters

This category is made up of letters that relate to financial topics, such as money, trade, and work, as well as to problems that could arise because of matters of this kind. Most of these letters are considered by the Gelders Archief to be part of the documents related to the financial management of Mechtild's territories; however, some of them can also be found under unrelated reference numbers.<sup>219</sup>

##### 4.4.1. Accounts, trade of goods and trade of people

Several letters resemble financial accounts, containing lists of expenses and costs incurred. In the Gelders Archief, most of the reference numbers containing these letters can be found between accounts and *optekeningen* ('reports'); they can in some cases be considered as 'hybrids' between the aforementioned document types and letters. This is especially clear in the case of letters sent by stewards or other overseers employed by Mechtild in territories that were under her control, such as Willem of Wosic and chaplain Rombout van der Voort. These two men were respectively overseers in the town of Zaltbommel and the Land of Mechelen. As overseers especially dealing with financial matters, they were tasked with notifying Mechtild of all expenses made in the territories, especially since she was unable to be present in these territories at all times.<sup>220</sup>

Yet these financial texts by Van der Voort and Wosic are first and foremost letters since they contain the characteristic elements of letters, such as a *salutatio* at the beginning

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<sup>219</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4. contains documents regarding financial management under Mechtild's rule; reference numbers 647, 648, 649, 651, 656, 657, 658, 659 and 660 all contain letters and are part of this category.

<sup>220</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535. Letters 2 and 3 from this reference number are clear examples of 'account letters' sent by Rombout van der Voort; for an 'account letter' sent by Willem of Wosic, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1).

and a *conclusio* at the end.<sup>221</sup> Despite both men being principally employed as accountants, they tended to add personal elements to their letters. Wosic, for instance, intersperses his accounts with stories about the travels he undertook. In one of the letters, he mentions a visit to John of Blois and his staff at Schoonhoven as well as a visit to his brother Peter of Wosic at Den Bosch; in another, he mentions having left goods for Mechtild at his mother's place at Nijmegen.<sup>222</sup>

It was not only extensive financial accounts that were sent to Mechtild through letters. Sometimes a letter was sent to let her know about the occurrence of simpler, often singular transactions. For instance, two different letters tell Mechtild about horses being sold, while in a third a sender complains about promised horses that had not yet arrived at his place.<sup>223</sup> As the messages about horse transactions take up the entire letter in all three cases, they once again underline the importance of this animal in medieval society.

Sometimes, it was not the trade in goods and animals that was recorded in letters, but the skills and occupations of people. A letter written by Arnold of Horne makes mention of the servant Jan der Backer, who had previously served the bishop of Utrecht and was now in the service of Mechtild. The letter served as an introduction of Der Backer to Mechtild's court.<sup>224</sup> In a letter by one Jan de Wit, the writer persuades the duchess-pretender to find employment for his son.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Kors, 'Een gesprek', 130. In the case of Wosic, a receipt issued by him is preserved as well (GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.653) besides the letters; no other texts issued by Van der Voort exist except for the aforementioned letters.

<sup>222</sup> For the first example, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2) as well as Benders, 'De muntslag', 63; for the second, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5).

<sup>223</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (5, 7), GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (3).

<sup>224</sup> GldA 2.07.3.3.559 (2).

<sup>225</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (1). The occupation and further identity of Jan de Wit remain unknown.

#### 4.4.2. *Tolls and trade hindrances*

In medieval trade, rivers were of the utmost importance, since they offered a way of transporting large bulks of cargo. In Guelders this was no different, as the Rijn, Waal and IJssel rivers, three rivers that served as important medieval trade routes in the Low Countries, interconnected within the duchy.<sup>226</sup> It is not surprising that information about tolls being levied in Guelders is known from the high Middle Ages onwards.<sup>227</sup> According to scholars, the medieval Guelders tolls formed a ‘fragmented network of tolls, which were levied independently of each other’ by local authorities.<sup>228</sup>

An overview of these late fourteenth-century tolls can be found in a letter by Mechtild’s scribe Theodoricus, who makes mention of several tolls that were levied by powerful nobles across Guelders, at Zutphen, Arnhem, Nijmegen, IJsseloord (close to Arnhem), Tiel, and Zaltbommel, as well as upstream in the Rhineland, at Cologne and Düsseldorf.<sup>229</sup> These tolls formed a hindrance for passing merchants, as they were expected to pay fees at every toll house.

The toll house at Lobith was perhaps the most significant and lucrative tollhouse in the entire duchy of Guelders, as it was located at the place where the Rhine splits into Waal and Nether Rhine.<sup>230</sup> Mechtild possessed the Lobith toll from the middle of 1372 onwards.<sup>231</sup> Besides this, she was also able to levy tolls in Huissen, Zaltbommel, and Linn, due to her strong influence in these places.<sup>232</sup> Mechtild’s tolls are the main point of discussion in a letter by two men, possibly merchants, named Johan Alferdsz. and Heyn Middelbergh to their

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<sup>226</sup> Job Weststrate, ‘In het kielzog van moderne markten. Handel en scheepvaart op de Rijn, Waal en IJssel, c. 1360-1560’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2007), pp. 23, 53.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-56.

<sup>229</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1).

<sup>230</sup> Weststrate, ‘In het kielzog’, pp. 53, 57.

<sup>231</sup> Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 42; Smit, ‘De veldtocht’, 83-84.

<sup>232</sup> Weststrate does not mention the Linn toll in his report of Guelders toll houses due to it being a *de facto* possession of Cleves. However, the Linn toll is also mentioned (‘... *um provande dye tot Linne is comen* ...’) in the aforementioned letter by Theodoricus.

steward Hendrik Stapelryeme at Huissen. In the letter, the two men ask Stapelryeme about the whereabouts of the toll money they paid at Lobith as well as at Huissen. In both cases, the money ended up in Mechtild's pockets – a point the two men underline.<sup>233</sup>

Not only tolls could form a hindrance to tradesmen. In a letter sent by Herman of Keppel and Gerrit of Dolre, these two men describe how they were at the helm of a ship filled with rye in a nondescript town harbour (presumably Rhenen?) that they were unable to traverse. On two separate occasions, the men sent a letter to Mechtild about this problem, explaining the current situation as well as their concern that their cargo might be stolen.<sup>234</sup>

#### **4.4.3. Housekeeping and groundskeeping**

As Mechtild had to oversee several territories and residences, she was unable to keep track of all of them at the same time. The officials, stewards, and overseers she employed were not only tasked with calculating revenues and expenses, but also with housekeeping and groundskeeping. Frederick of Ambe, Mechtild's lockkeeper at Huissen, wrote several letters in times of Mechtild's absence, in which he mentioned important housekeeping-related topics that he needed to discuss with her. In one, he tells her about leaving the key to the castle with the mayor of Huissen, as he deemed this to be safer than keeping the key himself.<sup>235</sup> In another letter, he mentions Reinold of Brederode residing at the castle for a certain period. Since Brederode had close ties with Mechtild, this occurred more than once, and Brederode's stays at Huissen are mentioned in at least two different letters.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> '... doe wy lest tho Hüesen waren [...] doe lavede mir vrouwen van Gelren in hare hant vor dat gelt vander tolle also daer uns dye tolner van Lobede vor bezien hadde ...' GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1).

<sup>234</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (22, 25). Neither of these letters is explicitly dated; however, due to the letters having the same writers as well as a similarity in discussed topics, there is a high probability these letters were sent around the same time.

<sup>235</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (2).

<sup>236</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (3), GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (4). These letters are, however, not written at the same time.

Heinrich of Strünkede, Mechtild's official at Linn, wrote similar groundskeeping- and housekeeping-related letters to Mechtild. In one case, Strünkede had heard that Mary of Jülich had allowed one Johan van Hassche to fell trees in the area; in the letter, he asked Mechtild for a similar privilege, as the wood would come in handy for carpentry to strengthen the outer bailey of the castle at Linn.<sup>237</sup> This shows that Mechtild's overseers of her territories indeed held some local power, yet they still had to ask Mechtild for permission concerning bigger matters, as was the case with the lockkeeper at Huissen, Frederick of Ambe, as well.

Due to the lack of money during the war, however, housekeeping at Mechtild's residential places suffered. Mentions of unpaid wages and subsequently deferred maintenance are a common occurrence in housekeeping-themed letters as well. In a letter by Johannes Duchteric, Johan van den Broec, and Herman Houwer, three men employed as tower guards at Huissen, the trio mentions 'that out of poverty [they] are unable to guard the tower and had to leave it' due to their unpaid wages.<sup>238</sup> A similar message is sent by the Huissen gatekeeper Johan of Woudenberch, who complains about how he, too, was in dire need of his pay.<sup>239</sup> Both letters are dated by the Gelders Archief to be written around 1373, showing that Mechtild already suffered financial concerns during the early stages of the war.<sup>240</sup>

#### **4.4.4. Financial complaints**

The subordinates mentioned above were far from the only ones who had to suffer from Mechtild's inability to pay money. As the war went on, Mechtild and her allies became

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<sup>237</sup> '... so wilt weten dat myn vrouwe van Gulge Jo Jan van Hassche m<sup>c</sup> boyme heuet gegheuen in der littert den uwe mede is, warumme ich v bidde, leue genediche vrouwe, dat gij my oech erloven inder littert holt tho houwen weric ich es wal behove ther tymmeringe des huscs van verborgetes tho Lynne ...', GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2).

<sup>238</sup> '...want wijs van armoeden niet langher verhauden en connen ende moeten den toern van armoeden laten staen...' GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1).

<sup>239</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (2).

<sup>240</sup> According to Verhoef, both Mechtild and John were already in a financial slump by late 1372. See Verhoef, *De graven*, pp. 152.

heavily reliant on borrowed money, as late medieval warfare tended to be a costly business. The letters testify to Mechtild often borrowing money from her allies, leaving them subsequently in financial trouble.

One of the allies to fall victim to Mechtild's borrowing practices was Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger, a knight in her service. Almost half of his letters are supplications to Mechtild (and in one case, John of Blois) to pay his 'long-owed' money.<sup>241</sup> In one of the letters, Wachtendonk the Younger mentions that, at the time he sent the letter, he could no longer do without said money out of need.<sup>242</sup> Because of this, the knight threatens Mechtild that he will tell the allied nobles and towns about the duchess-pretender's mistreatment of him.<sup>243</sup> In another, possibly his second, letter, he threatens the same, but in a longer and wordier letter: a sign that the first letter probably did not have the result Wachtendonk the Younger had had in mind.<sup>244</sup>

Wachtendonk the Younger was far from the only ally to be subject to Mechtild not being able to pay money that was owed. Borrowed money that was not paid back is a recurring theme in the letters. In a letter sent by a furrier named Jan Walmaer, this man asks Mechtild whether she will send him the money and furs she promised him.<sup>245</sup> Walmaer's case is nowhere as dire as that of Wachtendonk the Younger, yet he still needed the money urgently to finish some unspecified business at the market of Antwerp.<sup>246</sup> In some cases, Mechtild nevertheless proved able to pay back her loans. In a letter she sent to her toll collector Robbiin Kaa, she asks him to pay back the money owed to Heinrich of Strünkede,

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<sup>241</sup> In GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562, a reference number containing ten letters by Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger, five letters (1-4 and 9) refer to Wachtendonk's financial troubles as caused by Mechtild (and John of Blois).

<sup>242</sup> '*...Ind wylt myr myn gelt betzalen, dat yr myr lange ztijt schuldich sijt gewest, des ich van verderflichen und eyrloisen noiden nyt langer entbeyren en kaen noch en mach...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (1).

<sup>243</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (1).

<sup>244</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (2).

<sup>245</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (8). Walmaer was presumably a furrier, according to a later added note on the letter. In the letter itself, however, he calls himself a *dienstknecht* ('servant') to Mechtild.

<sup>246</sup> '*... want ics nodeliken te doene hebbe overmit der Andworp marct ...*', GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (8).



and she also mentions that Strünkede had suffered a great deal of damage due to her negligence.<sup>247</sup>

It was not just Mechtild, however, who caused financial ruin by not paying back owed money. Sometimes her allies were negligent in the same way, and in some cases the victimised party would send a letter complaining to Mechtild about the situation, persuading her to take action. The aforementioned letter by Jan of Wosic and Jan of Dorenchem on how Willem of Wosic used their property to pay off the Lombards of Den Bosch is a clear example of this.<sup>248</sup>

Elisabeth of Guelders sent a similar letter to her sister about Reinold of Brederode. This nobleman, who had promised in several letters to pay her back the money she was owed, apparently ignored all messages Elisabeth sent him.<sup>249</sup> In both the case of Reinold and that of Jan of Wosic, it can be said that Mechtild was held responsible for the actions of her subordinates, as both correspondents hoped that she would be able to solve their problems since both Wosic and Brederode did not respond to the complaints of their respective kin.

#### **4.5. Legal matters**

As a landowner as well as a duchess-pretender, Mechtild was expected to keep her subordinates satisfied – within the boundaries of the extant laws, of course. For this reason, legal matters are sometimes discussed in the letters. Letters within this category make only rarely an appearance in the collection; however, they are no less worthy of discussion for all that.

Letters on the topic of inheritance appear twice. One of them is a letter sent by the noblewoman Hadewijch of IJzendoorn, in which Hadewijch urges Mechtild to accept her

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<sup>247</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1).

<sup>248</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1). See also the Introduction, p. 9.

<sup>249</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (8).

other children to inherit Natewisch, if her eldest son, who had received the fief from Guelders, were to die. The problem here was that her younger children were fathered by another man.<sup>250</sup>

A similar letter was sent by Hendrik Maaszoon, who served Mechtild at Harderwijk as a sheriff: he was unrightfully treated concerning the inheritance of his recently deceased father-in-law and urges Mechtild to approach this case using the (apparently more acceptable) Zutphen law instead.<sup>251</sup>

Letters about crime, or about officials being confronted with crimes, are rare. They nevertheless show that Mechtild was no stranger to such matters. In one letter, Arnold of Herlaar, Mechtild's official in the Bommeler- and Tielerwaard, mentions the capture and subsequent trial of one Rutger of Zandwijk, who engaged in all kinds of criminal behaviour and expected Mechtild to assist him during his trial.<sup>252</sup> In a different letter, written by Steven of Lynden, the successor of Arnold of Herlaar as Mechtild's official of the Bommeler- and Tielerwaard, he mentions that a case of manslaughter had taken place in the town of Heerewaarden.<sup>253</sup> Similarly to Arnold of Herlaar's case, Steven of Lynden asks Mechtild for advice in this criminal procedure.

In their respective letters, both Herlaar and Lynden explicitly mention that their jurisdiction of the Bommeler- and Tielerwaard is above all Mechtild's territory. Both men refer to the area as 'your [Mechtild's] territory and my [the respective official's] jurisdiction'; Van Lynden even adds that he had received his office from Mechtild. As these officials were ruling in place of Mechtild, both men expect and therefore explicitly ask Mechtild to take part in the legal procedure.<sup>254</sup> In the letter, Lynden also asks if the procedure will be in line with

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<sup>250</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (10). See also note 179.

<sup>251</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9).

<sup>252</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (20).

<sup>253</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (10). Steven of Lynden was official in the Bommeler- and Tielerwaard from ca. 1373 until 1379. For further reading, see Kuys, 'De ambtman', pp. 331-332, 349.

<sup>254</sup> '*...dat in uen lande is ende in mine ampt dat ghi mi bevoellen hebt ...*' in the letter of Steven of Lynden (GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (10)); '*... in uwen lande in minen ampte ...*', in the letter of Arnold of Herlaar (GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (20)).

local laws and treaties.<sup>255</sup> These treaties were composed by nobles from the highest societal strata; it is therefore not surprising that Lynden expected Mechtild to be aware of then-current legal agreements.

#### 4.6. Matters of communication

As has been stated in the previous chapter, letters could be part of a chain of letter-based communication. They could be used to introduce a letter-bearer, such as a messenger or a chaplain, who was expected to deliver the actual message of the sender; this practice has been discussed above. A letter could also be used to accompany a different, more important letter. In a letter from a group of knights to Reinold of Brederode, the knights mention a further ‘enclosed’ letter sent by Arnold of Horne to Wolter of Voorst tot Keppel, that was their incentive to write and meet with Reinold of Brederode. This letter was enclosed in the knights' letter.<sup>256</sup> In some cases, letters contained requests to forward a further letter to an addressee elsewhere. This was for instance the case in a letter by Mary of Brabant, who asked her sister-in-law to send a different letter to Zaltbommel.<sup>257</sup>

Another letter-based request is that of sealing letters: on four separate occasions, Mechtild is asked to seal another letter.<sup>258</sup> In the Middle Ages, seals were used as an instrument to authenticate a document and to give further legitimacy to the information presented in the said document.<sup>259</sup> Something similar can be said about the person who sealed

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<sup>255</sup> ‘... hoe ghi daer mede ghedaen wilt hebben wany binnen desen vrede ghesciet ic weer ghiit ghericht wilt hebben ...’, GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (10). Of note here is that the word ‘vrede’ can mean both ‘peace’ in Middle Dutch as well as ‘legal security within a certain area’. See Verdam, *Middelnederlandsch handwoordenboek*, pp. 748-749.

<sup>256</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13). The aforementioned letter by Arnold of Horne has insofar as known not been preserved.

<sup>257</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5).

<sup>258</sup> Four letters fall into this category: GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (5); GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (6); GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (13); GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10).

<sup>259</sup> Laura J. Whatley, ‘Introduction: Approaches to Medieval Seals and Sealing Practices’, in: *A Companion to Seals in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Laura J. Whatley (Brill: Leiden, 2019), p. 1.

the document: to show the importance of a document, it was significant that the sealer was someone who was held in high regard by people, more often than not because of their position.<sup>260</sup> Since several senders explicitly asked Mechtild to seal letters, it shows that Mechtild was viewed as a legitimate and esteemed ruler by some of her contemporaries, or at least by her allies.

The images depicted on the impressions of seals can tell us about the seal's issuer's sense of identity and how they wanted to present themselves to the outside world through the seal; this can also be said about seals issued by Mechtild.<sup>261</sup> Most seals issued by Mechtild depict a coat of arms: however, the depicted coat of arms changed over time. The earliest known seals issued by Mechtild, which were issued in the 1340s, only depict Mechtild's parental coats of arms, those of Guelders and Berthout.<sup>262</sup> Later seals depict her coats of arms alongside those of Mechtild's then-husbands: the coat-of-arms of Cleves in the case of John II of Cleves and those of Blois and Hainaut in the case of John II of Blois.<sup>263</sup>

The most distinctive as well as the most intricately detailed of these seals is the so-called 'falcon seal' (Figure 8).<sup>264</sup> It depicts a female figure, supposedly a depiction of Mechtild herself, holding a falcon in her right hand, flanked by two male figures bearing the coats of arms of Cleves and a combined coat of arms of Guelders and Berthout respectively.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4-5.

<sup>261</sup> Whatley, 'Introduction', p. 4; Van Schilfgaarde, *Zegels*, pp. pp. 43-46, seals 73-78; Stieldorf, *Rheinische Frauensiegel*, pp. 464-466.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 464. Extant examples of these early seals can be found attached to, among others, charters GldA 0001.2.07.1.2.385 (issued in 1347) and GldA 0001.2.07.2.1.454 (issued in 1345). The latter charter uses this 'parental' seal despite Mechtild being married to Godfrey of Loon-Heinsberg at the time.

<sup>263</sup> Stieldorf, *Rheinische Frauensiegel*, pp. 464-465. For instance, a combined coat of arms depicting the Guelders and Berthout coats of arms alongside that of Cleves can be found attached to two different charters from 1368 now kept at the Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen at Duisburg (Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland, AA 0053 (Kleve-Mark, Urkunden), Nr. 511 and 512). A seal combining the Guelders coat of arms with the Blois and Hainaut coat of arms can for instance be found on charters from respectively 1372 and 1374 (Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland, AA 0053 (Kleve-Mark, Urkunden), Nr. 556; Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland, AA 0021 (Jülich, Urkunden), Nr. 323).

<sup>264</sup> Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', p. 111.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112; Stieldorf, *Rheinische Frauensiegel*, p. 465; Van de Bunt, 'Mechtild', 3; Van Schilfgaarde, *Zegels*, p. 45, seal 76, note 3. Van Schilfgaarde is one of the few to explicitly describe the female figure as 'the duchess' [i.e. Mechtild].

The seal itself is attached to a charter issued in September 1371; therefore, the seal has often been associated with the power vacuum that emerged after the passing of Eduard of Guelders.<sup>266</sup> Sternberg states that Mechtild used the seal to present herself as a legitimate pretender for the ducal throne, despite Reinold III still being alive at the time.<sup>267</sup> Therefore, Sternberg deems the seal to be a 'propaganda tool', a way to underline Mechtild's legitimacy as the next duchess of Guelders.<sup>268</sup>



**Figure 8.** *The 'falcon seal' of Mechtild of Guelders (issued September 1371).*<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45, seal 76, note 7; Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland, AA 0053 (Kleve-Mark, Urkunden), Nr. 539. The seal is attached to an agreement between Mechtild and John of Hattem, which was issued '*des heylygehn cruus dach exultatio*' (the Feast of the Cross, [14 September]).

<sup>267</sup> Stieldorf, *Rheinische Frauensiegel*, pp. 464-465; Sternberg, 'Die Briefsammlung', pp. 111-112.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>269</sup> Image taken from Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland, AA 0053 (Kleve-Mark, Urkunden), Nr. 539.

## 5. A chronological overview of the letter network

According to Aart Noordzij, interpersonal relations during the First War of the Guelderian Succession tended to be complex: he describes this as ‘a labyrinth of changing friendships, promises, agreements and contracts between individual rulers, nobles, *ministeriales*, helpers, feudal lords and feudal men’.<sup>270</sup> Allegiances between individuals shifted over time during the war. For instance, bishop Arnold of Horne had been pivotal in coaxing John II of Blois into marrying Mechtild in 1372; besides, the two men were the main commanders of the Veluwe and Geldern campaigns of early 1372.<sup>271</sup> However, John II of Blois eventually assisted Albrecht of Bavaria, John’s superior in Holland, and count Adolf III of Cleves during a campaign against Arnold of Horne in 1374.<sup>272</sup>

These fluctuating interpersonal relations can also be testified by looking at the 184 letters from the letter collection in chronological order. As has been stated in the introductory chapter, the identities of many people connected to Mechtild's network can be traced, yet this is not always the case. It is sometimes difficult to pinpoint people mentioned in certain letters due to their private and personal nature. In some cases, the letters contain ambiguous descriptions of people such as 'the man that you know well' or '[a messenger] who is especially a friend of yours', making it clear to the contemporary receiver who is meant here, but not to the modern scholar.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Noordzij, ‘Personen’, p. 591.

<sup>271</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xi, xiv.

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxv; Ben Olde Meierink and others, *Kastelen en ridderhofsteden* (Utrecht: Matrijs, 1995), p. 201; De Graaf 2004, p. 144.

<sup>273</sup> ‘... als vanden man die ghi wail wit dien ghi ons ghebeden hadt te spreken [...] hi seinde dair enen van sinen gesinde die uwe sonderlinge vriend is ...’, GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4).

## 5.1. Dating the letters in Mechtild's letter collection

Similarly, there are also several caveats when calculating the dates on which letters were written or sent. As has been stated before, the largest amount of letters is undated and cannot be dated otherwise. It is only possible to date a letter accurately by two different means. The first possibility arises if a letter explicitly refers to a date and a year.<sup>274</sup> Years are, however, only mentioned in letters on rare occasions, as it was customary merely to mention the specific day on which a letter was written or sent.

In the absence of years, it is also difficult to determine letter dates with absolute accuracy due to the late medieval convention of noting dates through the use of the liturgical calendar and nearby religious feast days.<sup>275</sup> It was customary to date a letter as being written or sent on a weekday before, on, or after a feast day].<sup>276</sup> Which saints were venerated varied by area: besides saints that were celebrated throughout all Christendom, the veneration of 'local' saints, most often martyrs, was often only practised in dioceses in the closest vicinity of the saint's veneration site(s).<sup>277</sup> This gives at least some idea of the date – but the problem of lacking mentions of the year cannot be solved easily, although sometimes it can be done.<sup>278</sup>

For instance, a letter by Heinrich of Strünkede is dated as '*gegeuen des donredages vor Victoris*', ('Given [to the messenger] on the Thursday before Saint Victor's Day [October 10<sup>th</sup>]', meaning that the letter was written on a Thursday one or more days before or on October 9<sup>th</sup>).<sup>279</sup> If one may assume that this letter must have been written between the years 1369 and 1377, the years during which Strünkede was employed by Mechtild in October, this

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<sup>274</sup> Egied I. Strubbe and Léon Voet, *De chronologie van de middeleeuwen en moderne tijden in de Nederlanden* (Antwerpen; Amsterdam: Standaard-Boekhandel, 1960), p. 84.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32-43.

<sup>276</sup> Before, on, or after a certain holiday.

<sup>277</sup> Strubbe and Voet, *De chronologie*, p. 44.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87-93.

<sup>279</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2). Victor of Xanten was a martyr and saint who was killed and later venerated at Xanten. Therefore, the celebration of his feast day was limited to the dioceses closest to Xanten: Cologne, Münster and Utrecht. See Strubbe and Voet 1960, *De chronologie*, pp. 188-189.

means it must be written on 9 October in any of these years except 1369 and 1375.<sup>280</sup> Johanna of Brabant is one of the few letter senders in the collection who mentions a ‘modern’ numerical calendar date instead of a religious holiday.<sup>281</sup>

The second method to date letters is based on mentions of dated or datable events that can be found in external sources. Letters that refer to documented events such as the siege of Puttenstein (June–August 1375) or the reconciliation with Gijsbrecht of Borculo (November 1376), make it possible to date these letters accurately.<sup>282</sup> Letters can also be dated through the use of corresponding data from other extant sources. Jos Benders was able to date one of the letters through the use of financial records from John II of Blois' residence at Schoonhoven, as both sources mention John's steward Jan Tolnaer having to travel to Utrecht at the beginning of November; only the Schoonhoven record mentions that this happened in 1375.<sup>283</sup>

If it is impossible to give an accurate date, the letters often have other indications that can at least serve as *termini post quem* or *ante quem*. Weddings and deaths can serve this role, as events that are often well documented and have a deep impact on the later lives of people in the correspondents' networks.<sup>284</sup> The letters sent by Elisabeth of Guelders are a clear example of this. They have, with two exceptions, no explicit date, yet have a clear *terminus post quem* and *terminus ante quem*, which have been mentioned by Steinhausen.<sup>285</sup> Since Mechtild is addressed as ‘the countess of Blois’ in each of these letters, it can be inferred that the letters must have been written after Mechtild’s marriage to John of Blois, and therefore

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<sup>280</sup> Heinrich of Strünkede was employed by Mechtild no earlier than December 1368 and no later than March 1378. See §4.2.3 for further information on the matter. In the years 1369 and 1375, October 10<sup>th</sup> fell on a Wednesday, therefore making the timeframe between Thursday and Saint Victor’s Day rather large.

<sup>281</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553.

<sup>282</sup> This is, of course, only the case if the dates on the letters correspond (or are closed to) the date of the event. An example of a non-corresponding letter and event is the mention of a meeting at Kessel in GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5); more on this can be found in note 196.

<sup>283</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2); Benders, ‘De muntslag’, 61–62. Transcriptions of the Schoonhoven records exist, yet further exploration of the detailed Schoonhoven records was outside the scope of this research.

<sup>284</sup> Births, on the other hand, are sparsely documented considering the baptism of an infant was deemed more impactful than births.

<sup>285</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (1, 8, 11, 12, 13); Steinhausen, *Privatbriefe*, pp. 12–13. Only two letters sent by Elisabeth (8 and 11) are included in Steinhausen’s edition, the other three have been unreleased thus far. Consult also Appendix 1.



can be dated to February 1372 or later.<sup>286</sup> The five letters cannot be written later than December 1376, as Elisabeth passed away on 10 December 1376, according to the sources.<sup>287</sup>

These restraints limit the size of a sample pool containing dated or dateable letters. In total, 44 letters out of 184 can be dated to an exact year, a month, and a date. Similar to the historical summary in chapter one or the overview of the war as presented by Matthias Böck, the letters and the social networks they reflect can be categorised in a similar vein, as certain people only appear in certain periods of Mechtild's life.<sup>288</sup> The letters can be categorised in four rough chronological categories: firstly, the period before the First War of the Guelderian Succession (1367-1371); next, the early years of the war that yielded the most success to Mechtild (1372-1374); this is followed by the period between the Treaty of Straelen and the reconciliation of Gijbsbrecht of Bronkhorst (1374-1376); and finally the 'waning years', covering the final years of the war until Mechtild's death (1377-1384).

In each of these four periods, correspondents in the network who first made contact in that period will be highlighted, together with their continuation in later periods. Considering that many of the contacts within the network were maintained throughout the four periods or are mentioned in otherwise undatable letters, for the sake of clarity and brevity each highlighted contact and the history of the correspondents with Mechtild will only be mentioned once. Each correspondent's history within the network will be mentioned in the period the contacts with Mechtild first started. Therefore, letters and events after the earliest period that continue to be relevant to the contact will all be mentioned under the oldest period.

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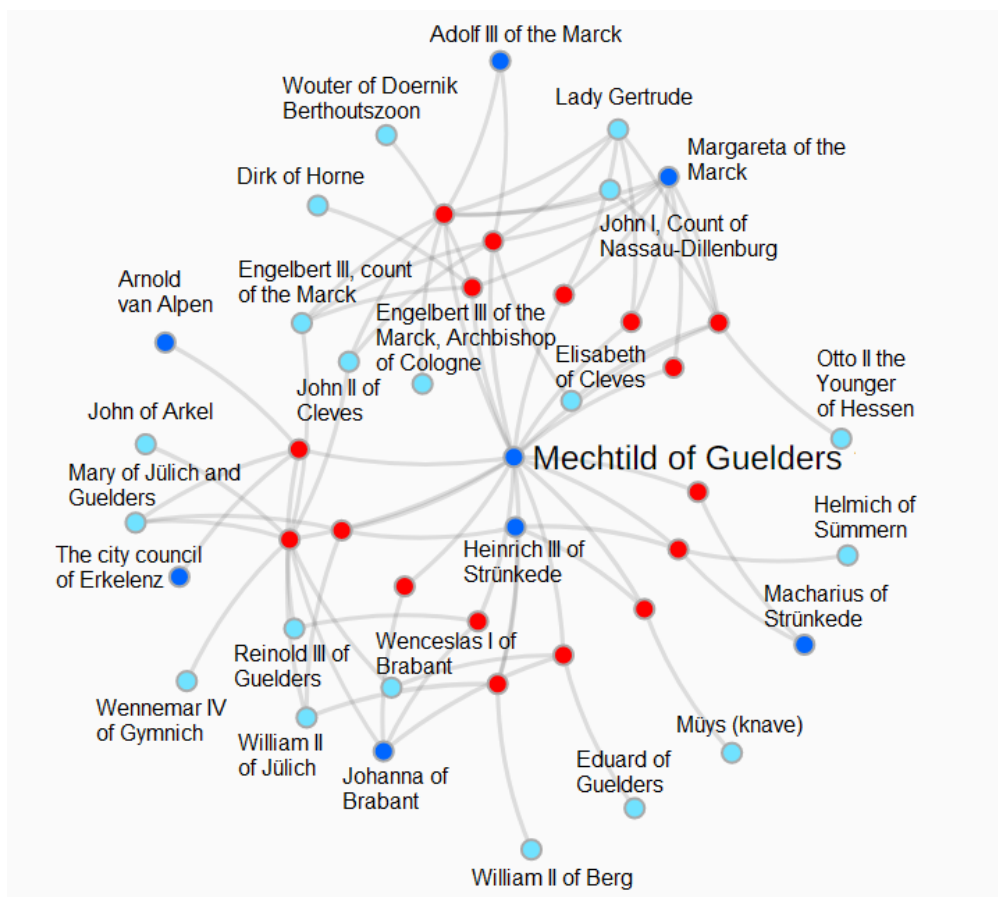
<sup>286</sup> In each of the letters GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (1, 8, 11, 12, 13), Mechtild is addressed on the back of the letters as the *'grevinne van Blois'* ('countess of Blois'); however, spelling variations occur regularly.

<sup>287</sup> *De Tielse kroniek*, p. 127, §618.

<sup>288</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 205-238. Böck uses William of Jülich's first enfeoffment by Charles IV (June 1372) as well as the treaties of Straelen (1374), Zutphen (1375) and Zaltbommel (1377) as *caesurae* in the conflict.

## 5.2. 1367-1371: The ‘pre-war period’

The earliest letters from the letter collection date from the mid-to-late 1360s. However, letters written in this period are relatively rare. There are only two correspondents who certainly corresponded with Mechtild in the pre-war years, Margareta of the Marck and Johanna of Brabant. Apart from them, several correspondents can be indicated whose otherwise undated letters could have been written from this earliest period onwards. In this paragraph, people from both these categories will be highlighted; their bonds with both Mechtild and the other correspondents in the letter network(s) will be discussed.



**Figure 9.** A visualisation of Mechtild’s letter network between 1367 and 1371. Dark blue dots symbolise letter senders, light blue dots symbolise people who only get mentioned, and red dots symbolise letters.

### 5.2.1. *Margareta of the Mark*

The only letter sender of whom the majority of their extant letters were certainly sent in the pre-war period is Margareta of the Mark, countess of the Mark and Nassau-Siegen (died 1409). She sent seven letters, which have been mentioned above, to Mechtild; they contain no explicit date; however, most of Margareta's letters could be dated to the period 1367-1371, with only one letter probably being written after 1371.<sup>289</sup>

Within the entire letter collection, the earliest letter that can be dated with certainty is found among the letters from Margareta. In this letter, Margareta mentions the death of her aunt's husband, margrave Otto II of Hessen (1322-1366), who had passed away in December 1366.<sup>290</sup> This letter must have been written in early 1367, as it touches upon New Year's Day celebrations and the exchange of presents related to this day; the practice of gift-giving on January 1<sup>st</sup> was common in aristocratic circles of the late fourteenth century.<sup>291</sup> Other letters can be dated in similar ways. In two different letters by Margareta, a reference is made to Mechtild's then-husband, John II of Cleves, who died in December 1368; it can henceforth be deduced that these two letters must have been written in either 1367 or 1368.<sup>292</sup>

Despite the emotional bond between the two women, there is no clear evidence of further correspondence between Mechtild and Margareta after 1371. It is therefore unclear how the bond between the two women developed once Mechtild became involved in the war in 1372. Only in what is perhaps her only post-1371 letter, Margareta explicitly addresses

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<sup>289</sup> Jungman, 'Het Haags Liederenhandschrift', p. 118; Steinhausen 1899, p. 12, note 6.

<sup>290</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5); Steinhausen, *Privatbriefe*, p. 4, note 3.

<sup>291</sup> '... oych so sendde ich dir eyn gülden rynghelgin zo eyne nüwen iaere ...', GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5). It was common practice throughout medieval western Europe that New Year's Day celebrations took place on 1 January, regardless of the date the calendar changed, which could differ depending on the locations and times; this was derived from ancient Roman practices. (Strubbe and Voet, *De chronologie*, pp. 51; Brigitte Buettner, 'Past Presents. New Year's Gifts at the Valois Courts, ca. 1400', *The Art Bulletin*, 83.4 (2001), 598-600). The related exchange of gifts on this particular day was a 'Christianised' Roman pagan practice as well and was kept in place throughout the Middle Ages. See also Buettner 2001, 600.

<sup>292</sup> In two different letters, GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2,6), Margareta makes mention of John II of Cleves as being her uncle ('*min(en) oyme(n)*'). See also Steinhausen, *Privatbriefe*, p. 7, note 4; p. 8, note 3.

Mechtild as 'the duchess of Guelders', a sign Margareta supported Mechtild's claim to the throne, although the content of the letter deals with personal matters and mentions several non-political acquaintances of theirs in Cleves.<sup>293</sup> Engelbert III of the Mark, the duke of the Mark and Margareta's brother, became one of Mechtild's earliest and longest-lasting allies in the conflict. Engelbert sided with Mechtild from late 1371 until 1377 when he signed a treaty with the then-adult William of Jülich.<sup>294</sup>

As Margareta was both related to the house of the Mark and was the consort of the count of Dillenburg, her letters often mention people and places from the Rhineland and areas east of the Rhine that rarely get a mention in other letters. For instance, on two separate occasions she mentions the exploits of her two brothers Engelbert III of the Mark, count of the Mark, and Adolf III of the Mark, then-archbishop of Cologne and later count of Cleves.<sup>295</sup> In one of these two letters, Margareta mentions her brothers visiting Heidelberg, which is the southernmost place mentioned in all of the letters.<sup>296</sup>

Another person who is often mentioned in the letters of Margareta is a certain 'lady Gertrude' ('*vrouwen Gertrut*'). The identity of this woman is unclear; however, the letters show that she was part of Mechtild's inner circle.<sup>297</sup> Reading the letters, it seems as if Margareta herself had an emotionally close bond with Gertrude. In five out of her seven letters, she explicitly asks Mechtild about the whereabouts of Gertrude, even exchanging New Year's presents with Gertrude.<sup>298</sup> It was not only Margareta who was familiar with this woman, as she is also briefly mentioned in a letter by one of the Lynden brothers.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> 'An eine edel, hogenborn frauwe, miner herzelieben, gnedign frauwe, der Herzoginnen zü Gelre', GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9 verso); Steinhausen, *Privatbriefe*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>294</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, pp. 205-206, 229.

<sup>295</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2,6).

<sup>296</sup> '... want min broder Ayelf wyllen hait zo Heydelberch zo ryden dysen vastaiuent mit minen broder deyne greven ...'. GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6).

<sup>297</sup> Vollmer 1929, 58.

<sup>298</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2,4,5,6); GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9).

<sup>299</sup> '...so solde uen brief weder nae u met nemen van vrouwe Gertrut', GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (6). The exact sender of the letter is not known; however, due to this letter appearing in the reference number containing letters

### 5.2.2. *Johanna of Brabant*

Another 'early' correspondent of Mechtild was Johanna, duchess of Brabant (1322-1406). Eleven letters sent by Johanna have been preserved. Most of them were written during the war; however, two of these letters predate this period.<sup>300</sup> Both these letters hint at the existence of a close alliance between Guelders and Brabant at the time, complemented by similar alliances with other Rhineland area duchies such as Cleves and the Mark.

The earliest of the two oldest letters presumably dates from April 1367. Here, Johanna mentions a gathering between the ducal couples of Brabant and Jülich at 's-Hertogenrade.<sup>301</sup> The Brabant duchess, who seemingly was rather close to the ducal house of Guelders, hoped that Mechtild and Edward of Guelders, as well as his advisors, would join this gathering, 'as [Johanna] would not attend the gathering herself if [Edward and Mechtild] were not present'.<sup>302</sup> Besides, Johanna also wished to have 'our other allies of Cleves [and those] of the Mark' at the gathering, which shows that these four ducal houses already had close connections in the years leading up to the war.<sup>303</sup>

The other pre-war letter from Johanna was written in December 1371, not long after the death of duke Reinold III, an event that was only a rumour at that point.<sup>304</sup> In the letter, Johanna asked Mechtild to write to her whether the rumour of Reinold's passing was true or not; she also stated to support Mechtild no matter what the truth happened to be.<sup>305</sup> Johanna

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sent by the Lynden brothers, it can be said that this sender might have been one of the three Lynden brothers as well.

<sup>300</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553. Consult Appendix 1 for the approximate corresponding dates.

<sup>301</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5); a transcription of this letter can be found in Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers 1973, pp. 5. Due to the letter being written on '*desen goensdach 21sten dach in aprille*' ('this Wednesday, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April') as well as multiple mentions to a living duke of Guelders, it can be stated that this letter was written in 1367.

<sup>302</sup> '*...want wij sonder hem [Eduard] ende u [Mechtild] niet dedingen noch soenen en selen*', GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5).

<sup>303</sup> '*... dat wij sonder onsen neue, u ende onsen anderen medeverbonden van Cleve, vander Marke ... niet dedingen noch soenen en selen ...*', GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5).

<sup>304</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (2); Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 206; Steinhausen 1899, p. 11.

<sup>305</sup> '*... Ende wert, lieve nichte, dat wij u in enigen saken helpen vorderen of lief doin moichten, dair sijn wij seker al bereet toe na al onser macht...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (2)

eventually kept her promise: in January 1372, she signed a charter in which she allied herself with Mechtild in the war against Jülich for the coming five years.<sup>306</sup>

Contrary to Margareta of the Mark, with whom the correspondence became uncertain once Mechtild became involved in the First War of the Guelderian Succession, Mechtild and Johanna remained close, especially in the first five years of the war. The remaining nine letters sent by Johanna can be placed in this particular timeframe, as they were all written between 1372 and 1373.<sup>307</sup> Still, similar to the case of the house of the Mark and the other Rhineland powers, in 1377, once the five years of the alliance between Johanna and Mechtild were over and the young William of Jülich was deemed to be of age, Brabant entered several treaties with Jülich.<sup>308</sup> Böck mentions that Johanna signed these treaties alongside her husband Wenceslas, thereby seemingly ending an alliance with Mechtild that had lasted for a decade or perhaps even longer.<sup>309</sup>

### 5.2.3. *The Strünkede brothers*

Some letters cannot be exactly dated. However, several of them may have been written in the pre-war period nevertheless. This is for instance the case with letters written by Heinrich of Strünkede, Mechtild's official in Linn. As Mechtild only received the domain of Linn with the passing of John II of Cleves in December 1368, Heinrich of Strünkede only received his office from her at the very end of 1368.<sup>310</sup> Therefore, the letters he sent have a *terminus post quem* of December 1368 and a *terminus ante quem* of March 1378, when Mechtild sold off her Linn domains to Heinrich of Strünkede.<sup>311</sup> The same chronology applies to the single

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<sup>306</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 206; Jappe Alberts, *De staten*, p. 81; GldA 2.07.3.3.555-558.

<sup>307</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553.

<sup>308</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 229.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>310</sup> Barkhausen, 'Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist', pp. 43-44.

<sup>311</sup> Lacomblet, *Urkundenbuch*, pp. 713-714.

undated letter sent by Heinrich's brother Macharius of Strünkede, who sometimes replaced Heinrich in his duties as a deputy.<sup>312</sup>

In total, eleven letters by Heinrich and one by Macharius of Strünkede are preserved.<sup>313</sup> None of them contain an explicit date, yet four of Heinrich of Strünkede's letters refer to the siege of Linn in August 1377, making these the only letters sent by Heinrich that can be dated with some precision.<sup>314</sup> There is also one other letter in which Heinrich of Strünkede is mentioned: Mechtild's letter to her tax collector Robbiin Kaa, in which she announces to pay back her debts to Heinrich; this letter was certainly written in 1373 or later, as Mechtild refers to herself in the letter as 'countess of Blois' and 'duchess of Guelders'.<sup>315</sup>

This deployment of Strünkede was a politically motivated move. According to Max Barkhausen, by replacing the previous official with Strünkede, a loyal ally of hers, Mechtild secured Linn as her very own dominion, as several other regional powers such as Adolf III of Cleves and Frederick III of Saarwerden, the Bishop of Cologne, also seemed interested in possessing Linn.<sup>316</sup>

### **5.3. 1372-1374: The beginning of the war until the Treaty of Straelen**

It is a clear indication that a letter is written in 1372 or later whenever Mechtild is referred to both as 'countess of Blois' and as 'duchess of Guelders'. However, this is not always the case. Some correspondents refer to Mechtild as the 'lady of Cleves' or do not refer to Mechtild as

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<sup>312</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (8). In GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (12), Heinrich of Strünkede makes mention of his brother being his deputy in Linn while Heinrich himself undertook a journey to Prussia.

<sup>313</sup> The letters in reference number GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 were all written by Heinrich of Strünkede, while GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (8) was sent by and GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7) was received by Macharius of Strünkede, with the latter letter sent by Arnold of Wachtendonk.

<sup>314</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1, 5, 9, 10).

<sup>315</sup> '... *De hertoghinne van Gelre .. Greuinne van Blois ende van Zutphen ...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1).

<sup>316</sup> Barkhausen, 'Wie Linn Kölnisch geworden ist', pp. 43-44.

'lady of Blois', even after the pivotal year 1372.<sup>317</sup> Since most letters address Mechtild by the two titles of countess of Blois and duchess of Guelders, it can therefore be stated that most of the letters were written between 1372 and 1379.

In the first two years of the war, Mechtild had a significant number of allies supporting her claims to the throne. There were, as has been mentioned before, her main allies Reinold of Brederode, Arnold of Horne, and John II of Blois, besides the Heekeren party. In this early stage of the war, Mechtild received the support of the duchies of Brabant, the Mark, and Cleves as well as that of several towns throughout the duchy. The loyalty of the towns, however, tended to be inconstant, as the towns' allegiances often altered due to their being captured and re-captured by opposing armies.<sup>318</sup> Yet, it was not only her allies who corresponded with Mechtild during the war: the letter by Bronkhorst-aligned knight Walraven of Oye, mentioned in the previous chapter, testifies to this.<sup>319</sup>

During the war, Mechtild also communicated with people who had connections to her territories in Linn and Mechelen. However, most of the people she liaised with in these areas tended to send letters that were financial in nature rather than letters with different themes, while letters that did not come from Mechtild's domains usually had political or military themes. This is not surprising, as Mechtild's officials were also responsible for the upkeep of their respective territories.

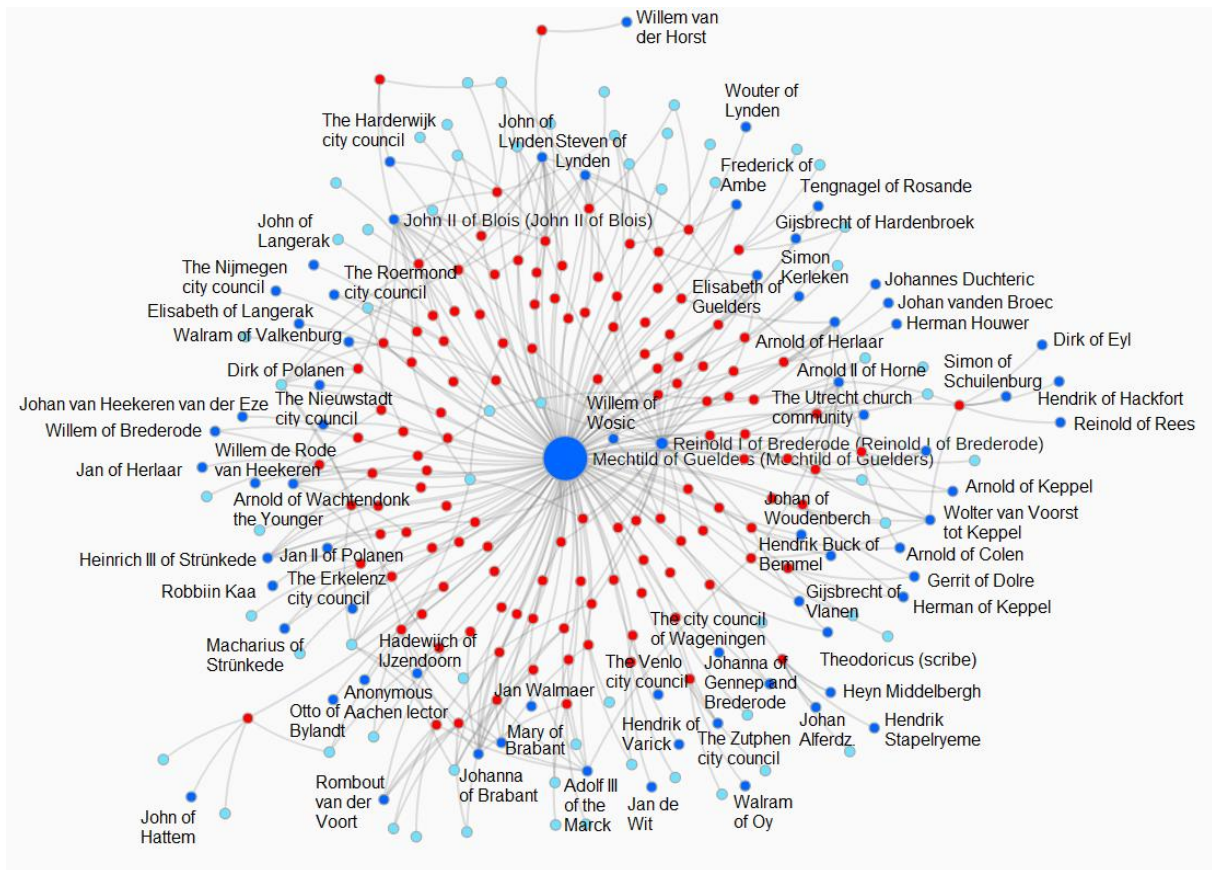
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<sup>317</sup> For instance, Mechtild is regularly addressed as 'the countess of Cleves' in several letters by Johanna of Brabant. This continues even after Mechtild's marriage to John of Blois: Mechtild is addressed in this fashion in letters GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (1, 6, 8, 9), which were all written in 1372 or 1373.

<sup>318</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xiv-xxi.

<sup>319</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (17).





**Figure 10.** A visualisation of Mechtild's social network around 1372-1374. For clarity, only the names of the senders and receivers of letters are displayed here.

### 5.3.1. The 'Main Trio': Arnold of Horne, Reinold of Brederode and John II of Blois

As has been said, Arnold of Horne and Reinold of Brederode were Mechtild's most important allies during the war. The reasons why these two powerful men joined Mechtild's side differed. Due to his marriage with Johanna of Gennepe, Reinold was also count of Gennepe, a county between the spheres of influence of Guelders and Jülich; besides, he was also a descendant of Reinold I of Gelre (died 1326) through his mother.<sup>320</sup> Arnold of Horne's move to the party of Mechtild, on the other hand, had been motivated by personal gain, as of the two parties the Heekeren party was politically the most favourable option to Arnold.<sup>321</sup>

<sup>320</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 278.

<sup>321</sup> Jonker-Klijn and Rok, *De bisschoppen*, p. 148.

The importance of both men can be confirmed by the network visualisation presented in Figure 10. Either ally had connections with people within their own network as well; it can even be said that Reinold of Brederode had his own (sub-) network within Mechtild's network. In Figure 10, he is placed next to Mechtild thanks to the many connections he maintained with people throughout his wider network.<sup>322</sup> A similar statement, albeit on a smaller scale, can be made about Arnold of Horne and John II of Blois. The latter joined the two commanders in February 1372 through his marriage with Mechtild, even becoming the head of all Heekeren military operations until the middle of that year. Therefore, all three men maintained their own contacts within Mechtild's network.

Of all people in the network, Reinold of Brederode was the most prominent ally Mechtild's side. Twenty letters from his correspondence still exist; he is also mentioned most in letters by others in the network.<sup>323</sup> He also had many connections with other people corresponding with Mechtild. For instance, he was the father-in-law as well as a close friend to John of Lynden, another important member of the Heekeren party, and he was the main military commander of Mechtild's armies from mid-1372 onwards.<sup>324</sup> Moreover, Reinold of Brederode had been on close terms with John II of Blois and his Schoonhoven court since at least the 1350s.<sup>325</sup> A letter addressed to Reinold by a group of knights, Reinold of Rees and Simon of Schuilenburg among them, shows that these knights served both him and Mechtild at the same time; this is confirmed by the fact that the two mentioned knights are also

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<sup>322</sup> Willem of Wosic is also placed next to Mechtild in Figure 10, despite having a less important position compared to Reinold of Brederode. Wosic had to travel around a lot as Mechtild's steward in Zaltbommel, and in this way came into contact with many people that were present in the network.

<sup>323</sup> Out of these twenty letters, 18 letters are sent by Reinold of Brederode, while 2 letters were addressed to him. In total, Reinold of Brederode is mentioned in 19 different letters. In these letters, he is rarely mentioned by his full name but rather by his title Lord of Gennep ('*die here van gen[e]p*') or, in cases where kinship ties are closer, '*neve van Gennep*'.

<sup>324</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. vii, note 2; Driessen and Van den Brand, *1000 jaar Gennep*, p. 61.

<sup>325</sup> Frits van Oostrom, *Nobel streven. Het onwaarschijnlijke maar waargebeurde verhaal van ridder Jan van Brederode* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2017), pp. 43-44.

mentioned in archival documents as serving Mechtild.<sup>326</sup> It seems that the Brederode family as a whole had a connection with Mechtild as well, as letters sent by both Reinold of Brederode's wife, Johanna of Gennepe, and his brother Willem of Brederode can also be found in Mechtild's letter collection.<sup>327</sup>

Arnold of Horne has a similarly large presence in the network. Although only three letters sent by the bishop can be found, he receives most mentions in the letters after Reinold of Brederode.<sup>328</sup> By joining the Heeckeren party, he also brought several of his pre-existing allies along. The towns Utrecht and Rhenen, for instance, were now on Mechtild's side too.<sup>329</sup> Rhenen would become an important residence for Mechtild, as she often met up there with her allies and advisors, according to the letters.<sup>330</sup>

*Ministeriales* and church officials in service of Arnold were now allied to Mechtild as well.<sup>331</sup> In the letter network, several correspondents were tied to Arnold of Horne: examples are the church community (*ecclesia*) of Utrecht and Arnold's marshal, Gijsbrecht of Hardenbroek. One letter each is preserved by these senders, and in both letters, their senders report about the whereabouts of Arnold of Horne rather than about their own.<sup>332</sup>

Something similar can be said about John II of Blois' underlings. With Mechtild's marriage to the count of Blois, she made connections with the Schoonhoven court's entourage as well. This was also the case for Mechtild's subordinates. In a letter by William of Wosic,

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<sup>326</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13). Simon of Schuilenburg is mentioned as a vassal to Mechtild in a 1372 charter (GldA 0001.2.07.3.6.626); he was a vassal to John II of Blois as well, according to a different charter from the same year: Schuilenburg received Praest as a fief from John (Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland, AA 0053, Nr. 547). A receipt sent by both Simon of Schuilenburg and Reinold of Rees to Mechtild and John II of Blois (GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.633) also exists.

<sup>327</sup> For the letters by Johanna, see GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (2,3); for the letter by William, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (28). William also gets mentioned in GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (29).

<sup>328</sup> GldA 2.07.3.3.559 (1,2,3) are sent by Arnold of Horne, while he is mentioned in 15 different letters in total. For instance, William II of Jülich is mentioned in 14 different letters; Adolf III of Cleves in 13. For the specific letters, refer to Appendix 2.

<sup>329</sup> Jonker-Klijn and Roks, *De bisschoppen*, p. 148.

<sup>330</sup> In total, 16 letters make mention of Rhenen, with GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (4) being the only letter sent from there. For the specific letters, refer to Appendix 3.

<sup>331</sup> Jonker-Klijn and Roks, *De bisschoppen*, p. 148.

<sup>332</sup> GldA 2.07.3.3.559 (4) in the case of the Utrecht church community; GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (24) in the case of Gijsbrecht of Hardenbroek.

the Zaltbommel steward mentions a stay at Schoonhoven in which he learned about the whereabouts of certain Schoonhoven entourage members.<sup>333</sup> He mentions three different members of the Schoonhoven court: Jan Breyen, a squire who served as John's steward and delegate; Jan Tolnaer, the main steward of the Schoonhoven court ('*rentmeester-generaal*') and personal chaplain to John of Blois; and Jan of Langerak, John of Blois' second-in-command.<sup>334</sup> Each of these men is often mentioned in letters related to the Schoonhoven court; Jan of Langerak even sent three letters preserved in the letter collection, and one letter is addressed to him.<sup>335</sup>

This is not surprising, considering that Jan of Langerak fulfilled an important role at the Schoonhoven court. As John of Blois' second-in-command, he was expected to assist his lord in military as well as in political affairs.<sup>336</sup> He therefore also maintained a correspondence with his lord's wife Mechtild. In all of Langerak's preserved letters, his role as a subordinate of John II of Blois shines through. For instance, in one letter he mentions how he is expected to act alongside John in a dispute with Wenceslas of Brabant and therefore has to cancel his meeting with Mechtild.<sup>337</sup> It seems as if Mechtild was also on good terms with Jan's wife Elisabeth of Langerak. A letter sent by Elisabeth mentioning a possible visit between the two women can also be found in the letter collection.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2).

<sup>334</sup> '*... dat Ic en Sondage was tot Schoenhaeve dan my here Johan die tollener seynde dit hj tot Utrecht riden soud bj Johan Breyde [...] soe docht uwen vrienden wail guet dat ghi heren Johan van Langrak waut spreken ...*' GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2). For more information on Jan Breyen, see: Verhoef, *De graven*, p. 114; on Jan Tolnaer, see: *Ibid.*, p. 22, 201. Jan Tolnaer was John II of Blois' main steward from 1363 until 1380.

<sup>335</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (3, 11, 27) were all sent by John of Langerak, while GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (6) was addressed to John of Langerak. Due to the fact the handwriting of this particular letter is hard to decipher, the identity of the sender is unknown.

<sup>336</sup> De Keijzer, 'Van Langerak', p. 18; Verhoef, *De graven*, p. 21.

<sup>337</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (11).

<sup>338</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7).

### 5.3.2. *Heekeren allies*

During the war, Mechtild's claims to the throne were supported by the Heekeren party. Heekeren-allied noble families were found throughout Guelders, but they were especially numerous in the Betuwe area.<sup>339</sup> According to Isaak Anne Nijhoff, the most important members of the Heekeren party were Wolter van Voorst tot Keppel, who served as a figurehead of the Heekeren party; John and Steven of Lynden, brothers and the lords of Lynden (Lienden) and Hemmen respectively; Arnold and Gerard of Herlaar, cousins and the lords of Ammersoyen and Poederoyen respectively; and members of the noble families of Arkel, Keppel and Varick.<sup>340</sup>

Of these Heekeren allies, the Lynden brothers John, Steven, and Wouter of Lynden have most letters preserved. John and Steven were military commanders as well as local feudal lords, while their younger brother Wouter was a member of the Teutonic Order.<sup>341</sup> These three men were subordinates of Mechtild, and especially of John II of Blois, noticeably during John of Blois' military campaigns in early 1372. John of Lynden (1315-1381), the nominal lord of Lynden and the eldest of the three brothers, was perhaps the most important of the three: most preserved Lynden letters were sent by him.<sup>342</sup>

Steven of Lynden, the younger brother of John of Lynden, also held an important position. During John of Blois' Veluwe campaign, he commanded 25 *glaviën* (units of fourteen soldiers each) in John's army; after the successful capture of Grunsfoort castle during this campaign, Steven was subsequently enfeoffed with Grunsfoort.<sup>343</sup> According to one of the

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<sup>339</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. vii.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, p. vii. Nijhoff also mentions the Herwijnen family, yet references to them are nowhere to be found within the letter collection.

<sup>341</sup> Petrus J. Blok and Philip C. Molhuijsen, *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek. Deel 7* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1927), p. 786. Wolter is rarely mentioned in (genealogical) sources due to not having children, as he was a member of the Teutonic Order.

<sup>342</sup> In all, 10 letters from reference number GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 were sent by John of Lynden and 7 were sent by Steven of Lynden (one of these was co-sent with Wolter). The first two letters, however, were co-sent by both John and Steven, with the latter of the two also being co-sent with Wolter. See also Appendix 1.

<sup>343</sup> Cees Burgsteyn, 'Het slot Grunsfoort te Renkum', *Schoutambt & Heerlijkheid*, 3 (1988), 45-46.

letters, both Steven and John of Lynden were also present during John of Blois' failed 1372 siege of Geldern.<sup>344</sup> After John of Blois' withdrawal, Steven remained a valuable ally to the ducal couple, serving Mechtild as her official in the Overbetuwe and the Tieler- and Bommelerwaard from 1373 until circa 1379.<sup>345</sup>

The Lynden brothers also had ties with other noble families in the area, such as the Brienens family. The bond between the two families can be viewed as rather strong, as both John and Steven wrote Mechtild about a single incident related to the Brienens family, in which the Lynden family turned up to help their Brienens kin during a siege.<sup>346</sup> However, the exact kinship ties between the Lynden and Brienens family remain unclear.

Similar to the Lynden family, members of the Herlaars family were confidants to Guelders' dukes since the Guelders Ruling Conflict of the 1350s; besides, the family had been part of John of Blois' inner circle since the late 1350s as well.<sup>347</sup> In the first conflict, the Herlaars had supported the Bronckhorst party; they joined the Heekeren party during the First War of the Guelderian Succession due to their close ties with John II of Blois.<sup>348</sup>

Mechtild's correspondence with the Herlaars family is preserved fragmentarily, especially compared to the correspondence with the Lynden brothers. No preserved letters are sent by Gerard of Herlaars or mention him, but two letters sent by Arnold of Herlaars have been preserved.<sup>349</sup> They concern his role as Mechtild's official in the Overbetuwe, the Tieler-, and Bommelerwaard between 1372 and 1373: he was the predecessor of Steven of Lynden in this office.<sup>350</sup> A letter by Jan of Herlaars, Lord of Ameide and brother of Arnold of Herlaars, is also

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<sup>344</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (1). The presence of the Lynden brothers in Geldern is not mentioned in the historiographical sources. See note 101.

<sup>345</sup> Kuys, 'De ambtman', pp. 331-332, 349.

<sup>346</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (3, 12).

<sup>347</sup> Van der Linden, *De burggraven*, p. 36; Van Doornmalen, *De Herlaars*, pp. 140-142; 150-151.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>349</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (13, 20).

<sup>350</sup> Kuys, 'De ambtman', pp. 331-332, 349.

preserved: this is a short cancellation letter in which Jan explains his absence to Mechtild because both his horses had been in use.<sup>351</sup>

Wolter van Voorst tot Keppel, the figurehead of the Heekeren party during the war, also rarely makes an appearance in the preserved letters. Only one short letter from his correspondence with Mechtild is preserved, in which he tells about the arrival of his messenger Egbert.<sup>352</sup> On the other hand, Wolter is mentioned six times in other letters, often within the context of gatherings on the battlefield.<sup>353</sup> The letters testify to Van der Voorst tot Keppel's leading position within the Heekeren party.

Members of the Keppel, Varick and Arkel families are also present in the letter collection. Mechtild corresponded with at least three members of the Keppel family. Apart from Wolter van Voorst tot Keppel, she also corresponded with Herman and Arnold of Keppel; a few letters sent by, and aimed at both these men still exist.<sup>354</sup> Two different members of the Varick family appear in the letter collection: one letter, sent by Hendrik of Varick, still exists, while a letter by Mary of Brabant mentions her meeting with knight Goossen of Varick at Zaltbommel.<sup>355</sup> Concerning the Arkel family, one sent letter still exists, as well as a mention of another letter. One letter by Otto, lord of Arkel, is preserved; he is also mentioned alongside his son John V of Arkel and their personal priest Coenraet in a letter by William of Wosic from 1377.<sup>356</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (29).

<sup>352</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (26).

<sup>353</sup> The specific letters in which Van Voorst tot Keppel is mentioned can be found in Appendix 2.

<sup>354</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (26) was sent by Wolter van Voorst tot Keppel; GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (22, 25) were sent by Herman of Keppel; GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1) was sent by Arnold of Keppel; GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1) was sent by Mechtild and received by Arnold of Keppel.

<sup>355</sup> For the letter by Hendrik of Varick, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (4); for the letter by Mary of Brabant, see: '... *want wi ghisteren dair [in Zaltbommel] af mit Goswiin van Vauderic [...] spraken ...*' GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5).

<sup>356</sup> For the letter by Otto of Arkel, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (7); for the letter by Willem of Wosic, see GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3).

### 5.3.3. *The Brabant correspondents*

As has been mentioned before, Mechtild maintained a correspondence with Johanna of Brabant. In a similar vein, Mechtild also corresponded around this time with Mary of Brabant, Johanna's sister and the widow of the late Reinold III of Guelders. Four letters from this correspondence, all written in 1372 or later, can be found in the collection.<sup>357</sup> This shows that the bond between Mechtild and the house of Brabant went further than just her connection with Johanna.<sup>358</sup> Mary had ties with the Heekeren party, as she was the widow to the late Reinold III of Guelders, the Heekeren-backed pretender during the Guelders Ruling Conflict.

Besides these two sisters, Mechtild had even more correspondents in Brabant through her domains in the Land of Mechelen. Mechtild's main correspondent here was her chaplain and steward Rombout van der Voort, of whom five letters are preserved.<sup>359</sup> The letters sent by Rombout often make mention of local political powers, such as count Guy of Flanders and Adolf III of Cleves, but he also liaised with locals through his work as a steward. For example, one 'Wynant', a Lombard based at Mechelen, is mentioned on two different occasions; he is mentioned alongside Van der Voort's debts to him.<sup>360</sup>

Another correspondent of Mechtild's in this area was Jan Walmaer, a servant and possible furrier on Mechtild's side, as he makes mention of the market of Antwerp in his preserved letter.<sup>361</sup> Willem of Wosic, Mechtild's steward in Zaltbommel, also makes mentions of his trips to Brabant in his letters, as they testify to him moving around regularly due to his work as Mechtild's steward: one of his letters was written in Den Bosch, a place that is often mentioned in his letters.<sup>362</sup> In addition, Wosic also had another reason to visit this town

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<sup>357</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4, 5, 6, 14).

<sup>358</sup> Four letters of this correspondence are still preserved: GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4, 5, 6, 14).

<sup>359</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535-536.

<sup>360</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1, 2).

<sup>361</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (8). See also note 245.

<sup>362</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2, 3); GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1) also mentions Wosic having debts to Lombards in Den Bosch.



regularly, as his brother Peter was a member of the Illustrious Brotherhood of Our Blessed Lady at Den Bosch.<sup>363</sup> In one of his letters, William explicitly mentions a visit to Peter at this confraternity.<sup>364</sup>

#### **5.3.4. The 'German' correspondents**

Many correspondents in the network hailed from areas that nowadays are part of Germany. Examples are Mechtild's domain at Linn, territories that used to be part of the duchy of Guelders as a whole, and different territories east of Guelders' borders. Within Linn and the 'German' parts of Guelders, Mechtild communicated, among others, with the already mentioned Strünkede brothers, with whom Mechtild corresponded from the start of their employment in 1368 at the earliest until 1378 at the latest. Another knight from this area with whom she wrote was Arnold III of Wachtendonk the Younger, Lord of Wachtendonk and Dyck: nine letters sent by him are preserved.<sup>365</sup> Arnold of Wachtendonk was presumably on familiar terms with the Strünkede brothers as well, as he calls Macharius of Strünkede his 'dear friend' in one of his letters.<sup>366</sup>

Mechtild also had contacts with several political authorities from the Rhineland. This may have come about through her marriage to John of Cleves. Before the war, she seemed to be on good terms with most of these men, even having entered into alliances with some of them; however, as time went on, Mechtild became caught in several political and financial conflicts with these rulers. For instance, in the only letter by Friedrich III of Saarwerden in the

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<sup>363</sup> Peter of Wosic is mentioned as a member of the Illustrious Brotherhood in an account of the Illustrious Brotherhood datig from 1362/3 ('... *Item de prima missa fratris Petri de Woestic* ...', W.F.H. Oldewelt, *Rekeningen van de Illustere Lieve Vrouwe Broederschap (1330-1375)* (Den Bosch: Provinciaal Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Noord-Brabant, 1925), p. 86). Since the place and fraternity correspond to what is said in the letter, it can be said that there is indeed a reference here to the brother of William of Wosic.

<sup>364</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2).

<sup>365</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562. One of these letters (3) is aimed at John II of Blois, while another one is aimed at Macharius of Strünkede and Jan of Hillen.

<sup>366</sup> '... *An Macharis van Strunckede ende Johan van Hillen miren lyeue vrunde* ...' GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7, verso).

collection, this archbishop of Cologne asks Mechtild to set their differences aside by letting some of their allies meet with each other.<sup>367</sup> This undated letter may be a reference to the siege of Linn, where Cologne was also among the belligerents.

### ***5.3.5. Letters sent by town councils***

In some cases, groups of people also sent letters to Mechtild. Aldermen and town councils appear most often as a letter-sending ‘group’. As has been mentioned before, in late 1371 and early 1372 several town councils responded to Mechtild to announce their position on the issue of the succession.<sup>368</sup> Most of these responding towns, such as Roermond, Erkelenz, Nijmegen, and Nieuwstadt, did in the end decline to support Mechtild in her ducal claims; hence, no further correspondence exists between Mechtild and these towns.<sup>369</sup> The towns of Zutphen and Harderwijk, on the other hand, regularly corresponded with Mechtild, and their correspondence extended even beyond this period.<sup>370</sup> Both towns changed allegiances on several occasions over the course of the war; they were lost by the Heekerens relatively early on, yet both briefly returned under Mechtild’s rule between 1374 and 1377.

In early April 1372, Harderwijk was besieged and captured by a member of the Bronkhorst party, Peter of Steenberg. Hoping for support, the Heekeren-aligned town council reached out to the Guelders ducal couple in at least two letters. The town council used two different addressees: one of the letters was addressed to ‘the Guelders ducal couple’, the other to John II of Blois alone, considering John II of Blois still to be the main military commander of the Heekerens at this point.<sup>371</sup> The council of Harderwijk was not the only

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<sup>367</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.560 (1).

<sup>368</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615. For further information, view 4.2.2.

<sup>369</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11).

<sup>370</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3, 4, 8) and GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (4) were sent by the Harderwijk aldermen and/or town council; GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (2), GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.623 (1) and GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2) were all sent by (members of) the Zutphen aldermen and/or town council.

<sup>371</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3, 4).

town council reaching out to the Guelders ducal couple during a siege, as an undated letter by the Wageningen town council informed Mechtild on the topic of an otherwise undocumented attack on their town.<sup>372</sup>

After the Treaty of Straelen in 1374, the area across the Rhine returned to the rule of Mechtild. In some cases, this rule did not last long, as Mechtild had already pledged towns such as Elburg, Harderwijk, and Hattem to Arnold of Horne at the end of 1375.<sup>373</sup> It seemed that Zutphen, which returned to the rule of Mechtild in early 1375, was among Mechtild's most important post-Straelen possessions. A significant number of letters from Zutphen were written in these two years, during which the Hanseatic town was under the *de facto* rule of Mechtild. In one of these letters, five merchants and aldermen mention a postponed meeting between Mechtild and the Zutphen alderman Gerard Alfardsz. of Drinen.<sup>374</sup> In the letter, the five merchants propose to postpone the meeting with the alderman until a moment of Mechtild's choice, showing that the Zutphen townsfolk still treated Mechtild with respect even though they first and foremost supported Jülich, even during Mechtild's short rule.<sup>375</sup>

In return, Mechtild provided the people and institutions of Zutphen with support as well. For instance, in one letter from the Zutphen chapter, the canons approach Mechtild with a request to put an end to 'the violence and injustice' caused by Berend of Dorenweerd.<sup>376</sup> Berend of Dorenweerd, Lord of Doorwerth, was a vassal and ally of Mechtild, while the Zutphen church chapter was led by Hendrik of Steenbergen, a prominent member of the Bronkhorst party, for the duration of the war.<sup>377</sup> This conflict finished once Mechtild ruled in

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<sup>372</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.568 (1).

<sup>373</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xxvii-xxviii; Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 223.

<sup>374</sup> This letter has been shortly touched upon in section 4.1.1. More on Gerard Alfardsz. of Drinen can be found in Koenraad O. Meinsma, *De zwarte dood. 1347-1352* (Zutphen: W.J. Thieme & Cie, 1924), p. 331.

<sup>375</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2).

<sup>376</sup> '... weten ons heer Dorenwert [sic] groet ghewelde ende onrecht doet also wi iu aleeer gheclaghet hebben so bid wi der Gaets wille dat ghi behulpelic wilt weset daer to also ...', GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.2.584 (1).

<sup>377</sup> For more on Berend of Doornweerde, see Jansen 2015, pp. 21; Noordzij, 'Personen', pp. 590. For more on Hendrik of Steenbergen, see Jan Kuys, 'Hendrik van Steenbergen', *Biografisch Woordenboek Gelderland* (1998), <[http://www.biografischwoordenboekgelderland.nl/bio/1\\_Hendrik\\_van\\_Steenbergen](http://www.biografischwoordenboekgelderland.nl/bio/1_Hendrik_van_Steenbergen)> [accessed 7 June 2022]. Steenbergen was provost of Zutphen between 1369 and 1385. He was also a brother to Peter of

the dispute between the Zutphen chapter and Berend of Dorenweerd in July 1376, as the chapter had requested in its letter.<sup>378</sup>

#### **5.4. 1374-1377: From the Treaty of Straelen until William of Jülich's coming-of-age**

With the Treaty of Straelen, Mechtild gained control over Guelders' territories across the Rhine, which meant that towns including Harderwijk and Zutphen now fell under her rule. She confirmed the rights of Harderwijk by the end of 1374, and she confirmed the rights and charters of Zutphen per decree when she was inaugurated there in February 1375.<sup>379</sup> However, Mechtild's rule in these territories turned out to be symbolic rather than legitimate.<sup>380</sup> Besides, Mechtild acknowledged in the aforementioned Zutphen decree that the townspeople, council, and aldermen of Zutphen would end their support of Mechtild in 1377 once William of Jülich was deemed to be of age.<sup>381</sup>

Correspondence between Mechtild and people hailing from the north-western part of Guelders was on the rise in this period. For instance, Simon Kerleken, a parish priest based in Nunspeet, describes himself to be 'her priest' ('*[u]w pape*') in a letter to Mechtild, showing that he was not only connected to the area around Nunspeet in north-western Guelders but Mechtild as well.<sup>382</sup>

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Steenbergen, a prominent knight on the Bronkhorst side; however, it seemed as if Hendrik did not involve himself in political and/or military situations between 1373 and 1377, according to Kuys.

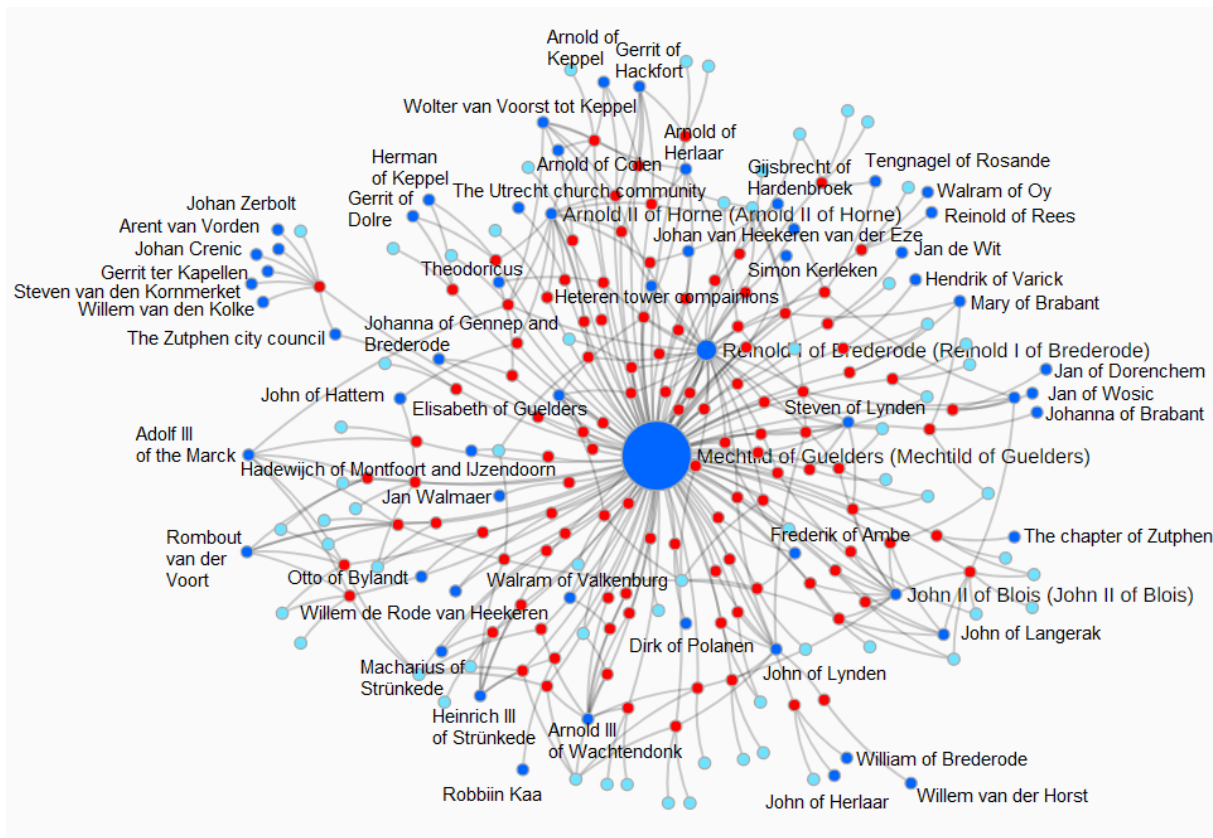
<sup>378</sup> Henk Jansen, *De Zuidzoom in de middeleeuwen II. Renkum - Harten - Heelsum - Doorwerth - Wolfheze – Oosterbeek. De familie van Dorenweerd 1250 – 1425 en het vroege Rosande 1300 – 1550* (Oss: Jansen, 2015), p. 21; GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.2.584-585.

<sup>379</sup> For the case of Harderwijk, see: Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 221; Benders, 'De muntslag', 59. For the case of Zutphen, see Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxvi, and charters 24-27, pp. 20-22.

<sup>380</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 223.

<sup>381</sup> Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxvi.

<sup>382</sup> 'Symon Kerlekein, cureyt tot Nunspeet, [*u*]w pape', GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3).



**Figure 11.** *Visualisation of Mechtild's letter network between 1374 and 1377.*

#### 5.4.1. *The Puttenstein siege*

Another event that left its mark on the letters from this period is the Siege of Puttenstein (May-August 1375). This conflict had its roots in Arnold of Horne's tendency to feud with local lords during his rule as Bishop of Utrecht. From 1372 until 1375, Arnold was caught in a conflict with the Bronkhorst-supporting Herbern of Putten, lord of the castle Puttenstein and vassal of the bishopric.<sup>383</sup> The conflict culminated in Puttenstein being besieged and destroyed by Arnold of Horne and the townspeople of Kampen, from June to August 1375.<sup>384</sup>

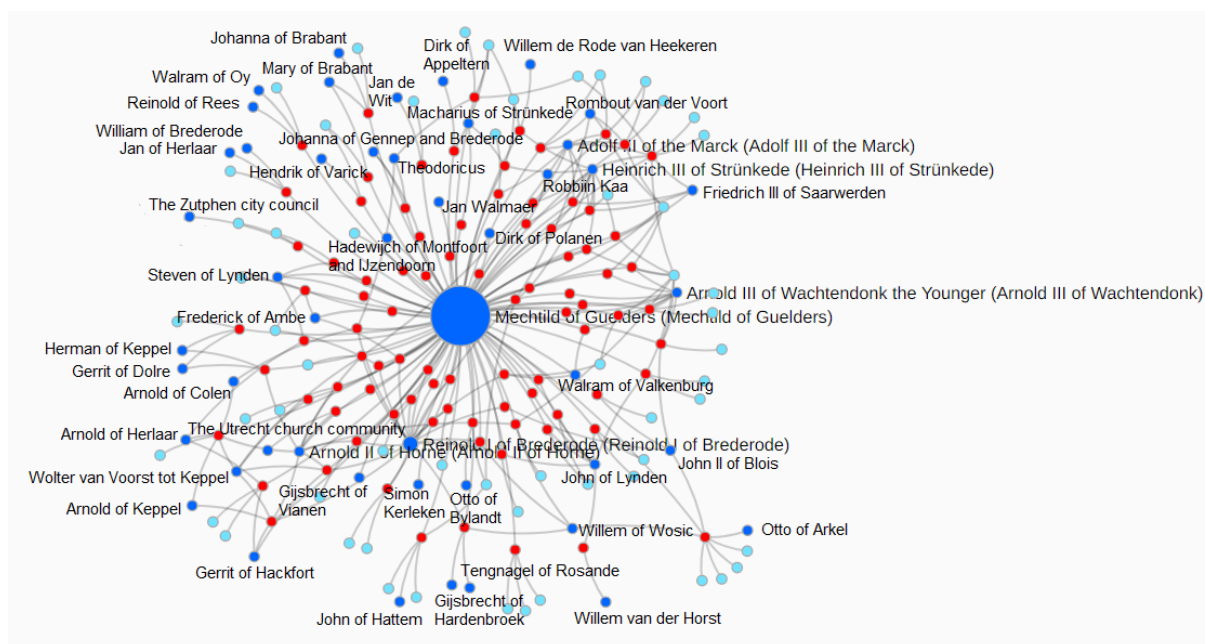
Several letters explicitly refer to this siege. In one of them, Arnold of Horne hoped that Mechtild would support him during the siege; in another, Arnold's marshal Gijsbrecht of

<sup>383</sup> Dubbe, 'De val', 553; Fehrmann and Schaap, 'De conflicten', 273-277.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*, 281-283.

Hardenbroek cancelled an appointment with Mechtild because of the siege.<sup>385</sup> A letter by John of Hattem, lord of Hattem, shows a different side of the conflict, as he urged Mechtild in his letter to talk Arnold out of besieging Puttenstein, as the monks from a local monastery suffered greatly because of the siege.<sup>386</sup>

## 5.5. 1377-1384: The final years



**Figure 12.** *Visualisation of Mechtild's letter network between 1377 and 1384.*

In 1377, the little support Mechtild still had left fell apart little by little.<sup>387</sup> Once the now-adult William of Jülich was officially enfeoffed with Guelders by imperial decree, many political entities that had supported Mechtild before now joined the side of Jülich. The duchies of Brabant, Cleves and the Mark concluded several treaties with Jülich, and the towns in the

<sup>385</sup> The letter by Arnold of Horne is GldA 2.07.3.3.559 (1), the letter by Gijsbrecht of Hardenbroek is GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (24).

<sup>386</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7).

<sup>387</sup> Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers, 'Mechteld', 10.

north of Guelders that had come under Mechtild's rule after the Treaty of Straelen eventually did the same in these years, as they never were fully subjugated to the rule of Mechtild.<sup>388</sup>

Yet there were still towns and nobles that supported Mechtild in these final years of the war. Support was especially strong in the Betuwe, with towns such as Tiel and Zaltbommel being some of the final holdouts for Mechtild's rule, only surrendering to William of Jülich after Mechtild's defeat in 1379.<sup>389</sup> The Lynden brothers, whose noble family also had territories in the Betuwe, were loyal to Mechtild until this was no longer possible. Steven of Lynden tried to reconquer the town of Wageningen in the name of Mechtild in 1381, two years after the decisive battle of Hönnepel.<sup>390</sup> He would only accept William of Jülich as duke of Guelders in 1382.<sup>391</sup>

Despite most of her early 'powerful' allies joining the side of Jülich during 1377, Arnold of Horne and Reinold of Brederode remained loyal to Mechtild in these waning years. Reinold of Brederode was able to fight for Mechtild's cause as long as he received financial funds.<sup>392</sup> Brederode's loyalty continued throughout the late 1370s, as he signs several of his letters as the 'lord of Brederode', a title he only used after the death of his father in November 1377.<sup>393</sup> Besides, one of his letters mentions Splinter of Loenersloot, a nobleman with whom Arnold of Horne feuded between 1377-1378.<sup>394</sup> In the case of Arnold of Horne, his support to Mechtild ended once he had become the new bishop of Liège in 1378.

It seems that, after Mechtild had lost the war, the network of correspondents crumbled as well. Only one letter can be explicitly dated to the 1380s. It was sent by Mechtild's

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<sup>388</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 229; Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, pp. xxvi, xxxv-xxxviii.

<sup>389</sup> Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers, 'Mechteld', 10; For information on Tiel, see: Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 235; Nijhoff, *Gedenkwaardigheden III*, p. xxxix; Jappe Alberts 1966, p. 80. For information on Zaltbommel, see: Benders, 'De muntslag', 64.

<sup>390</sup> Van de Bunt, 'Mechteld', 6.

<sup>391</sup> Christopher Butkens, *Annales généalogiques de la maison de Lynden, divisées en XV livres* (Antwerp: Jehan Cnobbaert, 1626), p. 147.

<sup>392</sup> Verhoog, *Onvoltooide roem*, p. 280.

<sup>393</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (3, 9, 14).

<sup>394</sup> Olde Meierink, *Kastelen en ridderhofsteden*, p. 290; Abraham J. van der Aa, *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden. Deel 11* (Haarlem: J.J. Brederode, 1865), p. 565; GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (12).

secretary Theodoricus.<sup>395</sup> The letter makes mention of William of Jülich now being duke of Guelders (as ‘*uwe Neue van Gelren*’, ‘your cousin [the duke] of Guelders’) as well as the duke of Berg (‘*dye hertoghe vanden Berghe*’); Berg was only elevated from a county to a duchy in 1380.<sup>396</sup> But Theodoricus had been part of Mechtild’s entourage for a longer time, as references to this scribe appear already in letters written in earlier years.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1).

<sup>396</sup> GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1).

<sup>397</sup> In GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (3) Theodoricus is referred to as ‘*her Deric u scriver*’, and in GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (1) as ‘*Tricus uwen scriuer*’.



## 6. Conclusions

Medieval narrative sources on the First War of the Guelderian Succession often present the war as being dominated by men, with the two pretenders for the ducal throne being side-lined in favour of their respective husbands. However, when one compares this statement with the letters from Mechtild's letter collection, a different picture emerges. In the case of the Bronkhorst party, the aforementioned statement remains true, as both the elder and the younger William of Jülich were actively involved in the conflict much more than Mary ever was.

It is much less the case with the Heekeren party, as Mechtild was directly involved in many decisions that were made during the war, be they military, political, financial, or judicial. Mechtild not only organised and regularly took part in meetings with her allies during the war, but she was also expected to be aware of everything that happened under her rule. Due to Mechtild not only ruling over territories within the duchy of Guelders itself, but also over external fiefdoms such as Linn, Huissen, and the Land of Mechelen, she had to be aware of the activities of a large number of people across a fragmented area. This sense of general awareness was one of the main purposes served by the letters Mechtild received. Besides, through the small number of letters Mechtild wrote herself, it can be said that Mechtild herself was actively involved in organising these events.

The letters are also a testimony to the legitimacy of Mechtild's rulership. To her allies, and even to some enemies, she constituted the highest authority they could reach – by letter if not by other means. Therefore, letters were sometimes sent in the hope that Mechtild would be able to put an end to certain situations. Something similar can be said on a material level, as her seals were deemed to give such authority and legitimacy, that people requested her to seal their letters.

When looking at the different letter categories, a multifaceted image of Mechtild appears. The letters show a plethora of people making various requests of Mechtild. They testify to her being familiar with topics concerning politics, warfare, finance, and the law. Despite Mechtild employing subordinates to do the actual fighting and some of the ruling in her name, she was nevertheless expected to be aware of all that happened on the battlefield or in the political, financial, or juridical spheres, as well as being in some cases required to take important decisions, as was expected from a ruler.

Besides these governance-related letters, Mechtild also received private, personal letters. Close allies, friends, and kin were able to tell her their most personal stories; it was mostly fellow women who would send these personal letters to Mechtild. Most extant letters that were written before the First War of the Guelderian Succession are personal letters; noblewomen such as Margareta of the Mark and Johanna of Brabant corresponded frequently with Mechtild in the late 1360s. During the war, these personal letters became much less frequent. However, she also gained new female correspondents during the war, such as the wives of her allies Reinold of Brederode and Jan of Langerak. According to these letters, it can be said that Mechtild often interacted and met up with these women.

The people within her letter network changed over time. The war serves here as a caesura as well. Before the war, Mechtild's correspondents were mostly limited to other noblewomen and people from the Rhineland. Due to Mechtild's marriage to John II, duke of Cleves, which lasted until 1368, she may have obtained these connections through this marital union. Mechtild's connections to external political powers, mainly from the Rhineland, were also vital for her support during the first years of the First War of the Guelderian Succession. However, most of them would join the side of Jülich from 1377 onwards, after the younger William of Jülich became of age. The domain of Linn, which was a fiefdom Mechtild received as part of her inheritance as duchess of Cleves, might have been the decisive issue

why Adolf III of Cleves, one of these early allies, eventually became an adversary of Mechtild's in these later years.

Similarly, Mechtild's marriage to John II of Blois did not yield the success both partners were hoping for either, as the count of Blois already quit military operations related to the war in Guelders by the summer of 1372. Despite this, it seemed the couple and their respective courtiers kept in contact afterwards, even if they seemed to be growing apart: the letters, as well as other written sources, testify to Mechtild and John regularly meeting up with each other, as well as with their respective underlings. Their marriage also caused certain noble families from Guelders to join the Heekeren party: the Herlaar family, which had supported the Bronkhorst party during the Guelders Fratricidal War, now supported the Heekeren party, due to their strong ties to the Schoonhoven court.

Towns, on the other hand, tended to be indecisive on the matter. At the beginning of the war, not many towns opted to support Mechtild, and towns that were on her side at the time, such as Arnhem, Zutphen, and Harderwijk, were captured by Bronkhorst forces relatively early on. Even after the Treaty of Straelen of 1374, when Mechtild received control over the north-western part of Guelders, most of the towns in the area resisted her rule. Zutphen only re-accepted Mechtild's rule under certain conditions, and in the case of Harderwijk, her rule had to be enforced through violence. Not all towns were hostile to Mechtild, however. Tiel and Zaltbommel, for instance, were supportive of her until the end of the war, and even Zutphen's aldermen accepted Mechtild's requests during the years under her rule.

Other correspondents would prove to be more loyal over the course of the war. Mechtild's main two allies, Reinold of Brederode and Arnold of Horne, kept on fighting for her cause throughout the war, even with Mechtild's financial supplies running out and having financial issues of their own as well. An interesting outlier here is correspondent and

Heekeren ally Steven of Lynden, who only accepted William of Jülich as duke of Guelders a few years after the decisive battle of Hönnepel in 1379. As Steven of Lynden also served as Mechtild's official in the Bommeler- and Tielerwaard from 1373 until 1379, it can be said that he remained loyal to Mechtild throughout the war. Similarly, his fellow official Heinrich of Strünkede had also been appointed as Mechtild's official of Linn because of his loyalty to her.

It can be said that Mechtild was never the most popular pretender during the First War of the Guelderian Succession. To speak with Matthias Böck, her rule was 'tolerated' rather than 'widely accepted' in the territories she claimed or reclaimed.<sup>398</sup> However, some of the supporters who were on her side ended up being quite loyal and powerful. That is why this war the outcome of which was already decided by the middle of 1372, was able to continue throughout most of the decade.

### **6.1. Recommendations for further research**

Each of the 184 letters has its own story to tell, and each could be the focus of an article by itself. Due to the more general approach this thesis provides, however, many letters still have to be explored in depth. Not everything could be explored in detail due to constraints of time, especially as most of the historical sources (see 7.1) do not have transcriptions or translations; this made research of these sources more time-consuming. For instance, the overlap between the Schoonhoven sources and the letters by John II of Blois and by Jan of Langerak in Mechtild's collection could not be explored yet, due to the large scope of the extant Schoonhoven sources. Something similar can be said about the letters on Willem of Wosic and his run-in with Den Bosch law (see Introduction, p. 9): the late medieval Den Bosch aldermen protocols have been preserved in large part but are difficult to navigate, making it hard to trace Wosic in these sources.

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<sup>398</sup> Böck, *Herzöge*, p. 223.

In Appendix 2 and 3, all named and identified people and places from the letters are listed. However, there are also several places and people mentioned in letters that have not been identified yet. This is especially the case for people who resided in territories that today are part of Germany, such as the German parts of Guelders and part of Mechtild's territories, but also parts of the duchy of Cleves. Extensive studies on nobles and *ministeriales* outside of Guelders are rare; however, they are even rarer when we start looking at these 'German' territories.<sup>399</sup> Therefore, a larger survey of the extant archival documents from the 1360s and 1370s in archives across Gelderland and the German Rhineland will be needed to gain a more detailed understanding of the persons within the network that are currently still shrouded in mystery.

It can be said that the knowledge of Mechtild's letter collection, its history, the topics discussed in the letters, and the correspondents may change over time when new information becomes available. This thesis has to be viewed as a 'snapshot' of most of the information on the letter collection and its related network of persons available at this moment.

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<sup>399</sup> According to Johanna Maria van Winter, no similar studies to her 1962 study (Van Winter, *Ministerialiteit*) exist for other territories.

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#### 7.1.1. Primary archival sources

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*For the specific letters contained in Mechtild's archives, the reader is referred to Appendix 1, which gives all available information on the 184 letters preserved at the Gelders Archief in Arnhem.*

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## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Appendix 1. Overview of the letters in the archives of Mechtild of Guelders, GldA 0001.2.07

ID	Gelders Archief reference number		Sender	Reciever	Place	Date	External source reference(s)
1	0001.2.07.1.1.362	1	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1368-≤1371	
2	0001.2.07.1.1.362	2	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1368-≤1371	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 8-9 (ed) Vollmer 1929, pp. 60-61 (transl)
3	0001.2.07.1.1.362	3	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		26-07-1369?	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 9-10 (ed)
4	0001.2.07.1.1.362	4	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1367-≤1371	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 6-7 (ed)
5	0001.2.07.1.1.362	5	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		01-1367	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 4-5 (ed) Vollmer 1929, pp. 58-59 (transl) Nijsten 1986, p. 293 (mention) Van Oostrom 1987, pp. 133-134 (mention) Jungman 1990, pp. 117-119 (mention) Sternberg 2006, pp. 262-264 (photo reproduction, partial edition)
6	0001.2.07.1.1.362	6	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		<02-03-1367 of <21-02-1368	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 7-8 (ed)
7	0001.2.07.1.1.363	1	Elisabeth of Guelders	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1376	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 13, note 2 (brief mention)
8	0001.2.07.1.1.363	2	Johanna of Gennep and Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Gennep	02-10-1376?	
9	0001.2.07.1.1.363	3	Johanna of Gennep and Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
10	0001.2.07.1.1.363	4	Mary of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Oijen	24-09-≥1372- ≤1375	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 15-16 (ed)



<b>11</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	5	Mary of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Oijen	20-07-≥1372- ≤1378	
<b>12</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	6	Mary of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Oijen	21-06-1372	Sternberg 2004, p. 123 (transl)
<b>13</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	7	Elisabeth of Langerak	Mechtild of Guelders	Langerak	22-02-1376?	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 14 (ed) Sternberg 2004, pp. 121-122 (ed/transl)
<b>14</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	8	Elisabeth of Guelders	Mechtild of Guelders		≥15-09-1372- ≤15-09-1376	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 12-13 (ed)
<b>15</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	9	Margareta of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders		<1371	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 11-12 (ed)
<b>16</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	10	Hadewijch of IJzendoorn	Mechtild of Guelders		≤1372	
<b>17</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	11	Elisabeth of Guelders	Mechtild of Guelders	Graefenthal	≥22-07-1372- ≤22-07-1376	Steinhausen 1899, p. 13 (ed)
<b>18</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	12	Elisabeth of Guelders	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1376	
<b>19</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	13	Elisabeth of Guelders	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1376	
<b>20</b>	0001.2.07.1.1.363	14	Mary of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Oijen	≥09-11-1372- ≤09-11-1376	
<b>21</b>	0001.2.07.2.2.535	1	Rombout van der Voort	Mechtild of Guelders	Berlaar	≥20-10-1372- ≤15-10-1376	
<b>22</b>	0001.2.07.2.2.535	2	Rombout van der Voort	Mechtild of Guelders	Berlaar	01-04-1375?	Steinhausen 1899, p. 17 (ed)
<b>23</b>	0001.2.07.2.2.535	3	Rombout van der Voort	Mechtild of Guelders	Berlaar	≥07-07-1372- ≤07-07-1378	Steinhausen 1899, p. 18 (ed)
<b>24</b>	0001.2.07.2.2.536	1	Rombout van der Voort	Mechtild of Guelders	Berlaar	≥28-04-1372- ≤28-04-1378	
<b>25</b>	0001.2.07.2.2.536	2	Rombout van der Voort	Mechtild of Guelders	Berlaar	≥27-01-1373- ≤27-01-1379	
<b>26</b>	0001.2.07.3.1.538	1	John II of Blois	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1377	
<b>27</b>	0001.2.07.3.1.538	2	John II of Blois	Mechtild of Guelders	Landrecies	≥21-10-1372- ≤21-10-1376	
<b>28</b>	0001.2.07.3.1.538	3	John II of Blois	Mechtild of Guelders	Maubeuge	02-10-1372?	
<b>29</b>	0001.2.07.3.1.538	4	John II of Blois	Mechtild of Guelders	Schoonhoven	≥30-11-1373- ≤26-11-1376	
<b>30</b>	0001.2.07.3.1.538	5	John II of Blois	Mechtild of Guelders	Schoonhoven	≥27-04-1375- ≤18-04-1376	

<b>31</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	1	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		14-08-1377	
<b>32</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	2	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		≥04-10-1369- ≤08-10-1377	
<b>33</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	3	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		28-09-1377?	
<b>34</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	4	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		16-06-1377	
<b>35</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	5	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		22-08-1377	
<b>36</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	6	Heinrich of Strünkede	Reinold of Brederode		≥19-06-1372- ≤20-06-1377	
<b>37</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	7	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		11-03-1369 or 24-03-1370	
<b>38</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	8	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		≥18-07-1370- ≤16-07-1377	
<b>39</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	9	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		01-07-1377	
<b>40</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	10	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		20-07-1377	
<b>41</b>	0001.2.07.3.2.541	12	Heinrich of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		≥16-11-1370- ≤14-11-1377	
<b>42</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	1	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	21-04-1372	
<b>43</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	2	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	09-12-1371	
<b>44</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	3	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	30-06-1366	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 10-11 (ed)
<b>45</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	4	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	19-04-1373	
<b>46</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	5	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	21-04-1367	Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers 1973, p. 5 (edition)
<b>47</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	6	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	09-06-1373	
<b>48</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	7	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	≤13-02-1371	
<b>49</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	8	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	06-09-1372	
<b>50</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	9	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	21-07-1372	Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers 1973, pp. 7-8 (edition)
<b>51</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	10	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	11-06-1373	Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers 1973, pp. 6-7 (photo reproduction, edition)
<b>52</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.553	11	Johanna of Brabant	Mechtild of Guelders	Brussels	31-05-1373?	
<b>53</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.559	1	Arnold II of Horne	Mechtild of Guelders	Puttenstein	25-08-1375	
<b>54</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.559	2	Arnold II of Horne	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-1378	

<b>55</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.559	3	Arnold II of Horne	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	≥06-12-1372- ≤06-12-1378	
<b>56</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.559	4	The church community of Utrecht	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	≥12-11-1372- ≤12-11-1378	
<b>57</b>	0001.2.07.3.3.560	1	Frederick III of Saarwerden	Mechtild of Guelders	Godesberg	22-01-1378?	
<b>58</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	1	John of Lynden, Steven of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥03-1372-≤06-1372	
<b>59</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	2	Steven of Lynden, Wouter of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥02-1372- ≤1381	
<b>60</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	3	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>61</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	4	? of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>62</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	5	Steven (?) of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>63</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	6	? of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>64</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	7	Steven of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1373-≤1379	Kuys 1987, p. 332 (mention)
<b>65</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	8	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders	Ter Lede	23-11-1372?	
<b>66</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	9	Wouter of Lynden, Steven of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		01-02-1372?	
<b>67</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	10	Steven of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1373-≤1379	
<b>68</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	11	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>69</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	12	Steven of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥02-1372- ≤1381	
<b>70</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	13	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders			
<b>71</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	14	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>72</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	15	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>73</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	16	John of Lynden	Willem van der Horst		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>74</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	17	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders	Ter Lede	17-10-1372?	
<b>75</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.561	18	John of Lynden	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>76</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	1	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥29-08-1372- ≤29-08-1378	
<b>77</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	2	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥28-05-1372- ≤29-05-1378	

<b>78</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	3	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	John II of Blois		≥27-05-1372- ≤28-05-1378	
<b>79</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	4	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>80</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	5	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥22-01-1372- ≤22-01-1379	
<b>81</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	6	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>82</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	7	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Macharius of Strünckede, Johan of Hillen			
<b>83</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	8	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥22-12-1374- ≤22-12-1378	
<b>84</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	9	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥08-12-1372- ≤08-12-1378	
<b>85</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.562	10	Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger	Mechtild of Guelders		≥08-09-1372- ≤08-09-1378	
<b>86</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	1	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		≥14-03-1372- ≤15-03-1378	
<b>87</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	2	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Odijk	≥11-06-1372- ≤11-06-1378	
<b>88</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	3	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		05-06-1378?	
<b>89</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	4	Mechtild of Guelders	Reinout van Brederode	Rhenen	18-11-1376	
<b>90</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	5	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Heteren	≥27-05-1372- ≤17-06-1378	
<b>91</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	6	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	≥14-11-1373- ≤17-11-1375	
<b>92</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	7	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	19-11-1376	
<b>93</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	8	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	≥15-11-1372- ≤12-11-1375	
<b>94</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	9	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		11-09-1378?	
<b>95</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	10	Reinold of Brederode?	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	21-09-1372- ≤21-09-1376	

<b>96</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	11	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Venlo	04-11-1372 or 03-11-1373	Benders 2007, p. 67 (edition)
<b>97</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	12	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		1378?	
<b>98</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	13	Dirk of Eyll, Simon of Schuilenburg, Reinold of Rees, Hendrik of Hackfort	Reinold of Brederode		≥1372-≤1378	
<b>99</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	14	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		19-09-1378?	
<b>100</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	15	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		26-12-1373 or 26-12-1375	
<b>101</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	16	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Utrecht	23-11-1376	
<b>102</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	17	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		≥07-02-1372- ≤06-02-1379	Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers 1973, p. 8 (edition)
<b>103</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	18	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Gennep	≥22-10-1372- ≤22-10-1378	Kockelkorn-Nijenhuis and Elbers 1973, p. 8 (edition)
<b>104</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.563	19	Reinold of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders		≥04-07-1372- ≤04-07-1376	
<b>105</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	1	Arnold of Keppel, Gerrit of Hackfort	Mechtild of Guelders		02-11-1376	
<b>106</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	2	Dirk of Polanen	Mechtild of Guelders	Asperen	≥26-07-1372- ≤26-07-1378	
<b>107</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	3	Jan of Langerak	Mechtild of Guelders		12-12-1375	
<b>108</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	4	Hendrik of Varick	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>109</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	5	Herman of Wye	Mechtild of Guelders		≥11-1376-≤03- 1379	
<b>110</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	6	? van Langerak	Jan of Langerak			
<b>111</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	7	Otto of Arkel	Mechtild of Guelders	Gorinchem	≥24-07-1372- ≤24-07-1378	
<b>112</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	8	Macharius of Strünkede	Mechtild of Guelders		≥03-11-1369- ≤06-11-1377	
<b>113</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	9	Tengnagel of Rosande	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤04-12- 1376	
<b>114</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	1	Arnold of Keppel, Gerrit of Hackfort	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1375-≤1377	
<b>115</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	11	Jan of Langerak	Mechtild of Guelders		17-09-1376	

<b>116</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	12	Loef of Issum	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤07-04-1377	
<b>117</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	13	Arnold of Herlaar	Mechtild of Guelders	Den Bosch	22-07-1372 or 22-07-1373	
<b>118</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	14	Dirk of Appeltern	Mechtild of Guelders		05-1378?	
<b>119</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	15	Gijsbert of Vianen	Mechtild of Guelders		≥28-10-1372-≤28-10-1378	
<b>120</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	16	Johan van Heeckeren van der Eze	Mechtild of Guelders		17-11-1376?	
<b>121</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	17	Walraven of Oye	Mechtild of Guelders		≥01-09-1372-≤01-09-1378	
<b>122</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	18	Jan II of Polanen	Mechtild of Guelders		12-08-1373	Steinhausen 1899, p. 16 (ed)
<b>123</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	19	Otto of Bylandt	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>124</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	20	Arnold of Herlaar	Mechtild of Guelders	Zaltbommel	25-07-1372 or 25-07-1373	
<b>125</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	21	Arnold of Keppel	Mechtild of Guelders		1376	
<b>126</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	22	Herman of Keppel, Gerrit of Dolre	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>127</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	23	Tengnagel of Rosande, Willem of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders		≥18-08-1372-≤18-08-1378	
<b>128</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	24	Gijsbrecht of Hardenbroek	Mechtild of Guelders		13-08-1375	
<b>129</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	25	Herman of Keppel, Gerrit of Dolre	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>130</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	26	Wolter van Voorst tot Keppel	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>131</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	27	Jan of Langerak	Mechtild of Guelders	Langerak	29-10-1375?	
<b>132</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	28	Willem of Brederode	Mechtild of Guelders	Harderwijk	04-06-1372?	
<b>133</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.564	29	Jan of Herlaar	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	
<b>134</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.565	1	Frederick of Ambe	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	14-11-1372?	
<b>135</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.565	2	Frederick of Ambe	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	≥06-08-1374-≤02-08-1377	
<b>136</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.565	3	Frederick of Ambe	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	≥20-07-1372-≤20-07-1378	

<b>137</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.565	4	Frederick of Ambe	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	≥16-11-1372- ≤16-11-1378	
<b>138</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.567	1	Arnold of Colen	Mechtild of Guelders		≥1372-≤1379	Steinhausen 1899, pp. 14-15 (ed)
<b>139</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.567	2	Arnold of Colen	Mechtild of Guelders	Harderwijk	≥16-10-1373- ≤11-10-1377	
<b>140</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.568	1	The city council of Wageningen	Mechtild of Guelders	Wageningen	1372?	
<b>141</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.577	1	The Heteren tower companions	Mechtild of Guelders	Heteren	1376?	
<b>142</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.578	1	Berend of Dunen	Mechtild of Guelders		21-07-1375?	
<b>143</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.578	2	Berend of Dunen	Mechtild of Guelders	Vrienenstein	≥25-07-1372- ≤25-07-1378	
<b>144</b>	0001.2.07.3.4.578	3	Berend of Dunen	Mechtild of Guelders	Vrienenstein	≥24-06-1372- ≤24-06-1379	
<b>145</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.1.582	1	Adolf III of the Mark	Mechtild of Guelders	Büderich	≥20-03-1373- ≤10-04-1378	
<b>146</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.1.583	1	Mechtild of Guelders	Arnold of Keppel	Ter Lede	≥13-09-1374- ≤09-09-1377	
<b>147</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.1.583	2	Mechtild of Guelders	Gerrit of Hackfort	Ter Lede	≥13-09-1374- ≤09-09-1377	
<b>148</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.2.584	1	The chapter of Zutphen	Mechtild of Guelders	Zutphen	≤18-07-1376	
<b>149</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	1	The city council of Roermond	Mechtild of Guelders	Roermond	01-1372	
<b>150</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	2	The city council of Zutphen	Mechtild of Guelders	Zutphen	01-1372?	
<b>151</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	3	The city council of Harderwijk	John II of Blois en Mechtild of Guelders	Harderwijk	03-04-1372	Benders 2007, p. 69 (mention)
<b>152</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	4	The city council of Harderwijk	John II of Blois	Harderwijk	01-04-1372	Benders 2007, p. 69 (mention)
<b>153</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	5	Arnold of Alpen, the city council of van Erkelenz	Mechtild of Guelders	Erkelenz	>04-12-1371	Benders 2021, p. 148, 153 (mention, photo reproduction)
<b>154</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	6	The city council of Nijmegen	John II of Blois en Mechtild of Guelders	Nijmegen	>14-02-1372	Benders 2007, p. 69 (mention)
<b>155</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	7	The city council of Roermond	Mechtild of Guelders	Roermond	05-04-1372	

<b>156</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	8	The city council of Harderwijk	Mechtild of Guelders	Harderwijk	02-01-1372	Benders 2007, p. 69 (mention)
<b>157</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	9	The city council of Nieuwstadt	Mechtild of Guelders	Nieuwstadt	01-01-1372?	
<b>158</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	10	The city council of Venlo	Mechtild of Guelders	Venlo	01-01-1372?	Benders 2007, p. 68 (mention)
<b>159</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.615	11	The city council of Erkelenz	Mechtild of Guelders	Erkelenz	01-01-1372?	
<b>160</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.620	1	Willem de Rode van Heekeren	Mechtild of Guelders		12-07-1375	
<b>161</b>	0001.2.07.3.5.3.623	1	The city council of Zutphen	Mechtild of Guelders	Zutphen	14-12-1375?	
<b>162</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.647	1	Mechtild of Guelders	Robbiin Kaa	Linn	21-07-1373?	
<b>163</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.648	1	Johannes Duchteric, Johan vanden Broec, Herman Houwer	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	1373?	
<b>164</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.648	2	Johan of Woudenberch	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	17-11-1373?	
<b>165</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.649	1	Johan Alferdsz., Heyn Middelbergh	Hendrik Stapelryeme		1373?	
<b>166</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.651	1	Willem of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders		06-05-1378	
<b>167</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.651	2	Willem of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders		07-11-1375	Benders 2019, pp. 62-63 (mention, partial edition)
<b>168</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.651	3	Willem of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders	Den Bosch	31-01-1377	
<b>169</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.651	4	Willem of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders	Huissen	≥30-08-1372- ≤30-08-1377	
<b>170</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.651	5	Willem of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders	Zaltbommel	10-07-1373?	
<b>171</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.656	1	Jan of Dorenchem, Jan of Wosic	Mechtild of Guelders		1376?	
<b>172</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.657	1	Theodoricus	Mechtild of Guelders	Lobith	≥1380-≤1384	
<b>173</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.658	1	Walraven of Valkenburg	Mechtild of Guelders	Ravenstein	≥21-08-1373- ≤16-08-1377	
<b>174</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.659	1	Wilhelm of Quad	Mechtild of Guelders		≥24-08-1372- ≤24-08-1378	
<b>175</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	1	Jan de Wit	Mechtild of Guelders		>1372	



<b>176</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	2	Arend van Vorden, Steven op de Korenmarkt, Willem van den Kolke, Johan Creinc, Johan Zerbolt, Gerrit ter Kapellen	Mechtild of Guelders	Zutphen	17-06-1376	
<b>177</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	3	Simon Kerleken	Mechtild of Guelders	Nunspeet	$\geq 23-06-1372-$ $\leq 23-06-1378$	
<b>178</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	4	The city council of Harderwijk	Mechtild of Guelders	Harderwijk		
<b>179</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	5	Hendrik Buck of Bommel	Mechtild of Guelders			
<b>180</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	6	Jan of Hattem	Mechtild of Guelders			
<b>181</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	7	Jan of Hattem	Mechtild of Guelders		$\geq 15-06-\leq 31-$ $08-1375$	
<b>182</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	8	Jan Walmaer	Mechtild of Guelders			Steinhausen 1899, pp. 13-14 (ed)
<b>183</b>	0001.2.07.3.7.660	9	Hendrik Maaszoon	Mechtild of Guelders			
<b>184</b>	0001.2.07.3.8.670	1	Anonymous Aachen lector	Mechtild of Guelders	Aachen	11-04-1372	

## 8.2. Appendix 2. Alphabetical index of individuals mentioned in the letters

Note: only named individuals mentioned in the letters are mentioned here; unidentified people and groups of otherwise unnamed people (such as church councils, city councils and aldermen) are not taken into account. Individuals are sorted by their given name, as the surnames of several individuals remain unknown.

Given name		Family name		Bio	Sent	Recieved	Mentioned
Adolf III	of the	Mark	M	Nobleman and clergyman; bishop of Münster (1357-1363), Archbishop-Elector of Cologne (1363), count of Cleves (1368-1394), count of Mark (1391-1393)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.582 (1)		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9)
Aerd			M	Messenger to Mechtild			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2)
Alart	of	Weerdenburg	M	Nobleman; knight, lord of Weerdenburg			GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Alart V	of	Buren and Beusichem	M	Nobleman and knight; lord of Buren and Beusichem			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (9)
Albrecht I	of	Bavaria	M	Nobleman; duke of Lower Bavaria, feudal lord of			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7)

				Holland, Hainaut and Zeeland			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (15)
Aleide			F	Servant to Mary of Brabant			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5)
Andries			M	Messenger to Mechtild			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2)
Arent	van	Vorden	M	Zutphen-based merchant	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)		
Arnold	of	Alpen	M	Nobleman; mayor of Erkelenz and knight	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5)		
Arnold III	of	Alpen	M	Nobleman; lord of Hönnepel			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4)
Arnold	of	Colen	M	Servant and chaplain to Mechtild.	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (4)
Arnold	of	Herlaar	M	Nobleman, knight, lord of Ammersoyen (1354- <1381); Mechtild's official in Bommeler- and Tielerswaard (1372-1373)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (13) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (20)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (19) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2)
Arnold	of	Heumen	M	Nobleman; pledgee and official in the Rijk van Nijmegen area (>1375); prominent Bronkhorst ally			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2)
Arnold	of	Keppel	M	Nobleman; counselor to Mechtild	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (21)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2)
Arnold II	of	Horne	M	Noble-born clergyman; bishop of Utrecht (1371-1378); bishop of Liège (1378-1389)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (3)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (21) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (22) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (24) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1)

							GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9)
Arnold III	of	Alpen	M	Nobleman; lord of Hönnepel			
Arnold III the Younger	of	Wachtendonk	M	Nobleman; knight, lord of Wachtendonk and Dyck (>1371)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (10)		
Arnt	of	Brienen	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)
Arnt		Eypelvant?	M	Wine trader			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Arnt	den	Koc	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (13)
Berend	of	Dunen	M	Servant and castlekeep to the lord of Vrienstein	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (3)		
Berend		Jansknecht	M	Horse buyer			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (7)
Berend III	of	Dorenweerd	M	Nobleman; knight; lord of Dorenweerd; advisor to Eduard of Guelders (1368); military ally to John II of Blois (early 1372)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.2.584 (1)
Bertkijn		Hebnicszoon	M	Steward ('hofmeester') at Millingen monastery			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3)
Charles IV	of	Luxembourg	M	Nobleman; king of Germany (>1346), Bohemia (>1347), Italy (>1355) and Emperor of			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (9)

				the Holy Roman Empire (>1355)			
Claes			M	Brought Frederick of Ambe money			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (1)
Coenraet			M	Clergyman; priest employed by Otto of Arkel			GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Dietrich		Henke?	M				GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.659 (1)
Dietrich	of	Hessen	M	Nobleman; knight; lord of Veiweiden and Till (?) in service of the counts of Cleves			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (12)
Dirk	of	Appeltern	M	Knight, advisor and witness to Cleves (1360s) and Mechteld (>1371); Lord of House Doddendaal (>1373)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (14)		
Dirk	of	Eyll	M	Ally to Reinold of Brederode	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13)		
Dirk	of	Horne	M	Nobleman; lord of Perwijs, Kranenburg, Geel and Herlaar; vassal and counselor to Wenceslas of Brabant			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (3)
Dirk	of	Huissen	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1)
Dirk	of	Polanen	M	Nobleman; lord of Asperen (>1366), Landdrost of Heusden (>1359)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (2)		
Dirk		Voppensz.	M	Clergyman; clerk and civil servant as well as canon in service of several high-ranking nobles from Holland			GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.651 (3)

Eduard	of	Guelders	M	Nobleman; duke of Guelders and count of Zutphen (1361-1371)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (9)
Egbert			M	Messenger to Wolter van Voorst tot Keppel			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (26)
Eghen	uit	Frankrijk	M	Horse buyer			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (7)
Elisabeth	of	Bar-Pierrepont	F	Noblewoman; wife to Otto of Arkel (>1360)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (29)
Elisabeth	of	Cleves	F	Noblewoman; wife to Otto II of Hessen			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6)
Elisabeth	of	Doornik	F	Noblewoman; lady of Doornik and Hemmen			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (2)
Elisabeth	of	Guelders	F	Noble-born clergywoman; abbess of Graefenthal convent (1368-1376)	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (13)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (19)
Elisabeth	of	Wadenoijen and Langerak	F	Noblewoman; lady of Wadenoijen and Langerak	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7)		
Engelbert III	of the	Mark	M	Noble-born clergyman; Archbishop-Elector of Cologne (1364-1368), Prince-Bishop of Liège (1345-1364)			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2)
Engelbert III	of the	Mark	M	Count of the Mark (1347-1391)			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)
Engelbrecht		Sobbe	M	Knight; mentioned 1356-1374. Lord of Elberfeld Castle (>1366)			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (1)
Everaet Gijsbrecht		Loefszoon	M	Subject to Otto of Arkel; sold horses to Berend			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (7)

				Jansknecht and Eghen uit Frankrijk			
Evert	of	Diedem	M	Clergyman; commander of the Teutonic Order at Dieren (certainly between 1372 and 1376)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (6)
Evert	van	Heekeren van der Eze	M	Nobleman; Heekeren party member; political governor (' <i>drost</i> ') of Twente (>1372)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9)
Evert	of	Ulft	M	Nobleman; lord of Ulft; knight allied to Mechtild			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (17)
Frank I	of	Borssele	M	Nobleman; lord of Sint-Maartensdijk and vassal to the counts of Holland			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (17)
Frederick	of	Ambe	M	Lower nobility; Castlekeep and steward of Mechtild at Huissen (1379)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (4)		
Friedrich III	of	Saarwerden	M	Noble-born clergyman; Archbishop of Cologne (1370-1414)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.560 (1)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7)
Gelis Kentszoon	of	Ewijk	M	Sealer of a letter			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (9)
Gerard Alfartz.	of	Drinen	M	Zutphen alderman and regent; member of influential family of regents.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)
Gerard III	of	Rotselaar	M	Nobleman, knight; lord of Vorselaar, banneret and confidant to Wenceslas I of Brabant			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (1)
Gerrit	of	Doernic	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Gerrit	of	Dolre	M		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (22)		

					GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (25)		
Gerrit	van der	Eme	M	Messenger to Mechtild?			GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3)
Gerrit	of	Hackfort	M	Nobleman; lord of Hackfort, Sinderen (>1356), and Vorden (>1367); sheriff of Zutphen 1359, <i>landdrost</i> of Zutphen (1375); counselor to Mechtild	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (2)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1)
Gerrit	ter	Kapellen	M	Zutphen-based merchant (?)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)		
Gertrude			F	Servant to Mechtild.			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (6)
Gerwaes			M	Servant to John of Lynden			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5)
Gijsbrecht	of	Bronckhorst and Borculo	M	Nobleman; prominent Bronckhorst-allied knight until his conciliation with Mechtild and John in late 1376			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (21) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1)
Gijsbrecht	of	Hardenbroek	M	Nobleman; knight (>1367), lord of Hardenbroek; marshall to the Bishopric of Utrecht	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (24)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23)
Gijsbrecht	of	Vianen	M	Nobleman; lord of Vianen, Helsdingen and Goye	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (15)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (5)
Godeken	of	Schoonbeke	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (16)
Godert	of	Laecmonde	M	Nobleman; knight?			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)
Goossen	of	Lienden	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23)



Goossen	of	Varick	M	Nobleman; knight; conqueror of Tiel (July 1372)			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (4)
Grelise	van den	Damme van Haergheweden	F				GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2)
Guy II	of	Blois	M	Nobleman; count of Blois and Soissons, and lord of Avesnes, Schoonhoven, and Gouda (1381–1397), and lord of Beaumont and Chimay			GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (3)
Hadewijch	of	Montfoort and IJzendoorn	M	Noblewoman; lady of Montfoort, IJzendoorn and Hostensteyn	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (10)		
Heinric	van den	Bossche	M	Clergyman; chaplain and messenger to Mechtild			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (27) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3)
Heinrich	of	Kellen	M				GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9)
Heinrich III	of	Strünckede	M	Nobleman; knight; Amtman of Mechtild at Linn and Orsoy (1368->1380); legitimate owner of Linn territory (>1378)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (12)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1)
Helmich	von	Sümmern	M	Nobleman; knight of Sümmern, temporary			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (12)

				deputy to Heinrich of Strünckede			
Hendrik	of	Brienen	M	Nobleman; knight; lord of Brienen			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)
Hendrik	of	Hackfort	M	Ally to Reinold of Brederode	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13)		
Hendrik		Maaszoen	M	Servant and sheriff (?) to Mechtild	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9)		
Hendrik		Stapelryeme	M	Landlord at Huissen		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1)	
Hendrik	of	Steenbergen	M	Noble-born clergyman; provost of Zutphen (1369-1385); prominent Bronkhorst ally			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10)
Hendrik	of	Varick	M		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (4)		
Hendrik	of	Wisic?	M				GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Hendrik Buck	of	Bemmel	M		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (5)		
Hendrik II	of	Wisch	M	Nobleman; lord of Wisch (>1369); Bronkhorst ally (until 1373 armistice with Mechtild)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2)
Herberen	of	IJzendoorn	M	Nobleman; knight; official of Tiel, Zandwijk and Lower Betuwe (1375)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (9)
Herman	of	Budberg	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (12)
Herman	of	Cleve	M				GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.659 (1)
Herman		Houwer	M	Tower guard at Mechtild's Huissen residence			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1)
Herman	of	Keppel	M		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (22) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (25)		
Herman		Maasland	M				GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (10)
Herman		Northolt	M	Clergyman; chaplain to Adolf III of Cleves			GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.582 (1)

Herman	of	Wye	M		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (5)		
Hermann	von	Goch	M	Influential Cologne citizen; advisor and confidant to Emperor Charles IV, secretary to Archbishop Friedrich III of Saarwerden (>1378)			GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Heyn		Middelbergh	M	Merchant (?)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1)		
Jacob			M	Messenger to Mechtild			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (19) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (6)
Jacob V	of	Mierlaer	M	Nobleman; lord of Myllendonk and former advisor to Reinold II of Guelders			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (4)
Jan	der	Backer	M	Servant; first to Arnold of Horne, later to Mechtild.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (2)
Jan		Breyen	M	Steward (and servant?) to John II of Blois			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (27) GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.651 (2)
Jan	of	Broeckhuysen the Younger	M	Nobleman; lord of Broeckhuysen (1354-1379)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (11)
Jan	of	Bylant	M	Toll/tax collector at Huissen.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (8)
Jan	of	Doernic	M				GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Jan	of	Dorenchem	M	Kin to Willem of Wosic.	GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.656 (1)		
Jan	den	Duutschen here	M	Letter messenger			GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (1)
Jan	of	Hattem	M	Nobleman; lord of Hattem, illegitimate child of Reinout III, duke of Guelders. Received Mechtild's Betuwe	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7)		

				territories as a loan (>1371)			
Jan	of	Herlaar	M	Nobleman; Rhineland bailiff (1352); lord of castle Ammersoyen, as a vassal to his brother Arnold of Herlaar (>1354)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (29)		
Jan	van	Heter	M	Rye buyer			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (25)
Jan	of	Langerak	M	Nobleman; lord of Langerak; bailiff of Schoonhoven and Gouda (1356-1363); vassal, counsellor and confidant of John II of Blois (1358-1378), in this role, he was also John's main advisor and engineer on a military level; sheriff and knight	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (27)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (6)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2)
Jan	van der	Moelen	M	Sealer of a letter			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (4)
Jan		Tolnaar	M	Clergyman; chaplain and steward to John II of Blois.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2)
Jan		Walmaer	M	Fur worker (?) (according to later added note on letter) and servant to Mechtild	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (8)		
Jan	de	Wit	M		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (1)		
Jan	de	Wit	M	Son to Jan de Wit sr.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (1)
Jan	of	Wosic	M	Kin to Willem of Wosic.	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1)		
Jan			M	Chaplain to Mary of Jülich			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1)
Jan II	of	Polanen	M	Nobleman; Lord of Polanen, the Leck and Breda (>1350)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (18)		

Johan			M	Clergyman; chaplain to Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (3)
Johan		Alferdz.	M	Merchant (?)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1)		
Johan	of	Assel	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (12)
Johan		Blide	M	Underling to Johan Alferdsz.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1)
Johan	of	Brienen	M	Nobleman; knight; Bronkhorst party member until 1376 reconciliation with Mechtild and John			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)
Johan	van den	Broec	M	Tower guard at Mechtild's Huissen residence	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1)		
Johan		Creinc	M	Zutphen-based merchant and alderman	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)		
Johan	of	Dorenberch	M	Town scribe in service of the Zutphen city council, (1375-1420)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.623 (1)
Johan	of	Hassche	M	Underling to (Mary of) Jülich?			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2)
Johan	van	Heekeren van der Eze	M	Nobleman; sixth and youngest son of Frederik van Heekeren van der Eze 'The Elder'; squire and witness to Mechtild (1375)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (16)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (28) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9)
Johan	of	Hillen	M	Ally and witness (1385) to Arnold of Wachtendonk the Younger		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7)	
Johan	of	Woudenberch	M	Gatekeeper at Mechtild's Huissen residence	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (2)		
Johan		Zerbolt	M	Zutphen-based merchant from influential Zutphen family	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)		
Johan Hubertsz.			M	Kin to John of Lynden			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (11)

Johan Wouters	of	Zuylen and Natewisch	M	Nobleman; knight; lord of Zuijlensteijn, Heulestein and Natewisch			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (10)
Johanna	of	Brabant	F	Noblewoman; duchess of Brabant, Luxemburg, Lotharingia and Limburg and margravine of the Holy Roman Empire	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10)		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14)
Johanna	of	Gennep and Brederode	F	Noblewoman; lady of Gennep and wife of Reinoud of Brederode	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (3)		
Johannes		Duchteric	M	Tower guard at Mechtild's Huissen residence	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1)		
Johannes			M	Servant to an unknown kin of the Guelders ducal family			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (13)
John	of	Arkel	M	Noble-born clergyman; Bishop of Utrecht (1342-1364), Prince-Bishop of Liège (1364-1378)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)
John	of	Lynden	M	Nobleman; lord of Lienden, Ter Lede, Oudeweert and Ommeren; knight	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (13) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (15) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (17) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (18)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9)

John I	of	Nassau-Dillenburg	M	Nobleman; count of Nassau, Siegen and Dillenburg			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5)
John II	of	Cleves	M	Nobleman; count of Cleves (1347-1368); second husband to Mechtild of Guelders			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)
John II	of	of Blois	M	Nobleman; Count of Blois and Dunois, Lord of Avesnes, Schoonhoven, Gouda, Beaumont, Chimay and Waarde, among others. Third husband of Mechtild (>1372)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (5)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (7)	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (27) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (4)
John V	of	Arkel	M	Nobleman; later lord of Arkel, Haastrecht and Hagestein			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)
Jorden	of	Wye	M	Nobleman; mentioned as a squire (1365), witness (1377, 1379); official in Tiel and the Overbetuwe (1390-1392)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (5)
Kuno II	of	Falkenstein	M	Noble-born clergyman; Archbishop-Elector of Trier (1362-1388)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4)
Loeff	of	Issum	M	Squire, counselor and witness to the counts of			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (12)

				Cleves; official in Aspel and Rees (1390s)			
Louis II	of	Flanders	M	Nobleman; count of Flanders (>1346); count of Artois and Burgundy (>1382)			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2)
Macharius	of	Strünckede	M	Nobleman; lord of Hillen	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (8)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (12)
Margareta	of the	Mark	F	Noblewoman, Countess of the Mark and Nassau-Siegen	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9)		
Mary	of	Brabant	F	Noblewoman; lady of Oijen and Turnhout, wife and later widow of Reinold III of Guelders	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14)		
Mary	of	Jülich and Guelders	F	Noblewoman; wife to duke William of Jülich. Sister to Mechtild, as well as major adversary during the Guelderian War of Succession			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8)  GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5) GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.651 (5) GldA 0001. 2.07.3.8.670 (1)
Mauritius	of	Arde	M	Clergyman; chaplain to Mechtild, later serves Zutphen church chapter			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.2.584 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2)



Müys			M	Servant to Heinrich of Strünckede			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (8)
Otto	of	Arkel	M	Nobleman; Lord of Arkel, Hagestein, Haastrecht (>1360); knight; advisor and witness to the counts of Holland	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (7)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Otto	of	Bylandt	M	Nobleman, knight (?); official to the dukes of Cleves in Huissen (1361) and Cleves (1373)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (19)		
Otto	des	Hoghen	M	Letter messenger			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10)
Otto II the Younger	of	Hessen	M	Nobleman; Landgrave of Hessen			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (5)
Otto Willemsz.	of	Doornik	M	Illegitimate child to Doornik family?			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)
Peter	of	Steenbergen	M	Nobleman; Bronckhorst-allied knight and lord of Nijenbeek Castle.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (4)
Peter	of	Wosic	M	Clergyman; member of the Illustrious Brotherhood of Our Blessed Lady of Den Bosch			GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2)
Philipp	of	Holte	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (8)
Philips		Maltmeyster	M				GldA 0001. 2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Reiniden		Hawen	M	Clergyman; priest and messenger to John of Lynden			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (11)
Reinold	of	Rees	M	Nobleman; lord of Heeshuizen (by Emmerich)?. Knight allied to Mechtild			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (17)

Reinold I	of	Brederode	M	Nobleman; Lord of Brederode and Gennep, military leader of Heekeren party together with Mechtild and Arnold of Horne (>mid-1372 onwards); comital officer, chancellor and councilor	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (15) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (17) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (18) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (19)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13)	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (15) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.577 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.658 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (5)
Reinold III	of	Guelders	M	Nobleman; duke of Guelders and Count of Zutphen (1343-1361, 1371)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.658 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (6)
Reinout			M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (6)
Robbiin		Kaa	M	Toll/tax collector to Mechtild at Lobith		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1)	
Robijn			M	Chaplain in the service of Elisabeth of Guelders at Grevendaal abbey			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (1)
Rombout	van der	Voort	M	Clergyman; priest, chaplain and overseer to Mechtild's lands in Malines	GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2)		

Rutger	of	Zandwijk	M	Criminal			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (20)
Simon		Kerleken	M	Clergyman; parochial priest ('cureyt') to Mechtild at Nunspeet	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3)		
Simon	of	Schuilenburg	M	Nobleman; knight, lord of castle Schuilenburg (1362-1380/1); vassal to Mechtild	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13)		
Splinter	of	Loenersloot	M	Nobleman; knight and lord of Loenersloot			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (12)
Steven	op de	Korenmarkt	M	Zutphen-based merchant; member of influential Zutphen-based merchant family. Traded in wine and perhaps also in other things	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)		
Steven	of	Lynden	M	Nobleman; knight (>1359); lord of Hemmen, Aalst and Grunsvoort. Official of the Overbetuwe en Tieler- and Bommelerwaard (ca. 1373-ca. 1379)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (4)
Steven	of	Rha	M	Mentioned as a member of the court of law at Ermelo in 1370.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (4)
Tengnagel	of	Rosande	M	Nobleman; ally to John II of Blois (1372)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23)		
Theodoricus			M	Scribe in Mechtild's service at Lobith	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (1)
Ulrich	of	Finstingen	M	Nobleman; Knight; lord of Falkenberg, advocatus of the Unterelsass (1367-1387)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)

Walraven	of	Benthem	M	Nobleman; son to Mechtild of Lynden, who was a sister to John, Steven and Wolter of Lynden.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (14)
Walraven	of	Oye	M	Nobleman; knight; official at Duffelt, in service of the Bronkhorst party (ca. 1367 – ca. 1379)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (17)		
Walraven	of	Valkenburg	M	Local nobleman; Lord of Born, Sittard and Susteren, Ravenstein, Herpen and Asperen. Major Heekeren ally during the earlier Guelders Succession Wars of the 1350s	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.658 (1)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (6)
Wenceslas I	of	Brabant and Luxembourg	M	Nobleman; duke of Luxembourg (>1354); duke of Brabant and Limburg (>1355)			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (11)
Wennemar IV	of	Gymnich	M	Nobleman; knight; lord of Gymnich, Düdelingen en Moestroff. Fought alongside Wenceslas of Brabant during the Battle of Baesweiler			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)
Wilhelm	of	Quad	M	Nobleman; Knight and Lord of Rode. Mentioned as a member of the Jülich council (1341, 1393)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.659 (1)		
Wilhelm	of	Wildenrath	M	Nobleman; knight; served Gerhard von Odenkirchen,			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (6)

				a feared 'Raubritter' during 1371.			
Willam	of	Dolre	M	Nobleman; vassal to Steven of Lynden.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (18)
Willekin	van der	Woert	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (1)
Willem	of	Brederode	M	Nobleman; Knight and Lord of Waalwijk. Commander during the Battle of Baesweiler (1371)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (28)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (29)
Willem	of	Gelre	M	Steward and cook to Mechtild (certainly from 1368 onwards)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (4)
Willem	van der	Horst	M	Confidant and ally to John of Lynden		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (16)	
Willem	of	Issum	M	Vassal to Adolf III of the Marck			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9)
Willem	van den	Kolke	M	Zutphen-based merchant	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)		
Willem	van	Meerten	M	Ally to Mechtild.			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (16)
Willem	de	Rode van Heekeren	M	Nobleman; knight; witness in Mechtild's service to 1375 Zutphen peace agreement	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.620 (1)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (12)
Willem Willemsz.	of	Wosic	M	Personal steward of Mechtild at Zaltbommel	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1)
William I	of	Jülich and Guelders	M	Nobleman; duke of Guelders (>1377); duke of Jülich, (>1393)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (14)

							GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
William II	of	Berg	M	Nobleman; count of Berg (>1360); duke of Berg (>1380)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
William II	of	Jülich	M	Nobleman; duke of Jülich (>1361)			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (17) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1)
Wolter	van	Voorst tot Keppel	M	Nobleman; Lord of Voorst and house Keppel (1367 - before 1393), servant, steward to Mechtild in Zutphen (>02-02-1375); advisor and ally to Mechtild	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (26)		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (13) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (2)
Wouter	of	IJzendoorn	M	Nobleman; lord of IJzendoorn (>1369); signed Bronkhorst party treaty (1372)			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (9)
Wouter	of	Lynden	M	Noble-born clergyman; lord of Aalst; Knight Hospitaller	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9)		
Wouter		Matgorijszoon	M				GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3)

Wouter Bertoutsz.	of	Doornik	M	Nobleman; Lord of Doornik			GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (11)
Wynand			M	Lombard?			GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2)
Wynant	of	Arnhem	M	Nobleman and knight in service of John II of Blois			GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (1)
Zeger	of	Groesbeek	M	Nobleman; lord of Groesbeek and Heumen			GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (1)
Zweder III	of	Abcoude	M	Nobleman; Lord of Gaasbeek, Putten and Strijen (>1357); confidant to both the dukes of Brabant and the counts of Holland			GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (17)

### 8.3. Appendix 3. Alphabetical index of places mentioned in the letters in the archives of Mechtild of Guelders

Note: castles and houses are mentioned besides the geographically closest town, which is presented in between brackets.

Place	Entity ca. 1350	Modern entity	Mentioned in date notation	Mentioned in letter
Aachen	Aachen	Germany	GldA 0001.2.07.3.8.670 (1)	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (13)
Antwerp	Brabant	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (8)
Arkel	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (13)
Arnhem	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (17) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (21) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Arnsberg	Cologne	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1)
Asperen	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (2)	
Bad Godesberg	Cologne	Germany	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.560 (1)	
Berlaar	Brabant	Belgium	GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2)	
Breda	Brabant	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (18)
Bruges	Flanders	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (3)
Brussels	Brabant	Belgium	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (11)	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Büderich	Cleves	Germany	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.582 (1)	



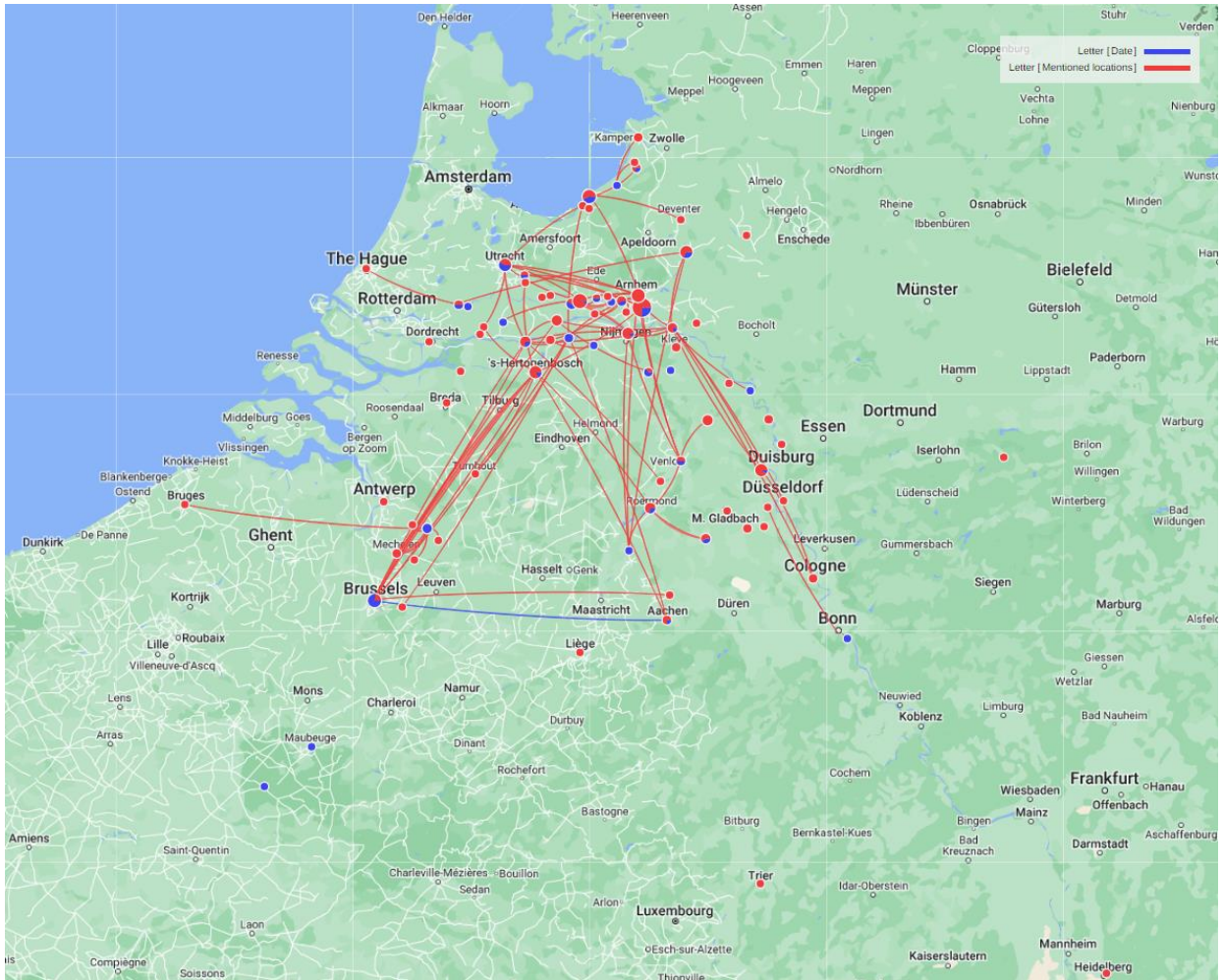
Cologne	Cologne	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Deventer	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2)
Diepenheim	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1)
Dodewaard	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2)
Dordrecht	Holland	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (17)
Duisburg	Cleves	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6)
Düsseldorf	Berg	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Dyck	Dyck	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (9)
Elst	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (18) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (3)
Erkelenz	Guelders	Germany	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (11)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (11)
Geertruidenberg	Brabant	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9)
Geldern	Guelders	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (12)
Gennep	Gennep	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (18)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (18)
Gorinchem	Holland	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (7)
Graefenthal	Guelders	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (11)
Grunsvoord (Renkum)	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12)
Harderwijk	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (28) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (4)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (28) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.620 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9)
Heerwaarden	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.658 (1)
Heidelberg	Electoral Palatinate	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (6)
Heist-op-den-Berg	Brabant	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2)

Herzogenrath	Brabant	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (5)
Heteren	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.577 (1)	
Horst	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (16)
Huissen	Cleves	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (4)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.565 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.648 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (4)
Hülchrath	Jülich	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (7)
Kampen	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.567 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7)
Kessel	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5)
Kleve	Cleves	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (15)
Landrecies	Hainaut	France	GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (2)	
Langerak	Holland	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (27)	
Liège	Liège	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.362 (2)
Lier	Brabant	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1)
Linn	Cleves	Germany	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Lobith	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.582 (1)

				GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.647 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.649 (1)
Maubeuge	Hainaut	France	GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (3)	
Mechelen	Mechelen	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.536 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5)
Mönchengladbach	Jülich	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (10)
Natewisch	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (10)
Neuss	Cologne	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.560 (1)
Nieuwstadt	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (9)	
Nijmegen	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (17) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Nunspeet	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3)	
Odijk	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (2)
Oijen	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14)	
Oosterwolde	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (3)
Orsoy	Cleves	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (12)
Puttenstein (Oldenbroek)	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (1)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (24) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (7)
Ravenstein	Brabant	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.658 (1)	
Rhenen	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (4)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (15) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (21) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (22) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.568 (1)

				GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.577 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (2)
Rijmenam	Brabant	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.2.2.535 (2)
Roermond	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (7)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Schoonhoven	Holland	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (5)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2)
's-Heerenberg	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (3)
's-Hertogenbosch	Brabant	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (13) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.656 (1)
Staverden (Ermelo)	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (4)
Ter Lede (Lienden)	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (17) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.1.583 (2)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (23)
Tervuren	Brabant	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14)
The Hague	Holland	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (7)
Tiel	Guelders	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (12) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (18) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (20) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (6)
Trier	Trier	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (4)
Turnhout	Brabant	Belgium		GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Utrecht	Utrecht	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (3) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (6) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (7) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (16)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.559 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (16) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5)
Venlo	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (11) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (10)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.562 (8) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (10)

Vredestein (Driel)	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (3)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.578 (3)
Wageningen	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.568 (1)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (1)
Weerdenburg (Werkhoven)	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (3)
Wijk bij Duurstede	Utrecht	The Netherlands		GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.563 (9)
Winnenthal (Xanten)	Cleves	Germany		GldA 0001.2.07.3.2.541 (1)
Zaltbommel	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (20) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (5)	GldA 0001.2.07.1.1.363 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.3.553 (4) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.561 (13) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1)
Zutphen	Guelders	The Netherlands	GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.2.584 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.623 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2)	GldA 0001.2.07.3.1.538 (5) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (10) GldA 0001.2.07.3.4.564 (14) GldA 0001.2.07.3.5.3.615 (9) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.651 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.657 (1) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (2) GldA 0001.2.07.3.7.660 (9)



**Figure 13.** A visualization of all mentioned geographical locations in the letters through Nodegoat. Blue symbolizes locations mentioned in date notation, red symbolizes locations that only get mentioned. The lines symbolize the connection between places that are mentioned in the same letter.