

[This is the fourth and final “prize” letter in the series that is called the Vrooman Cluster. Unlike the previous three letters, this one was not drafted by a Vrooman. It was probably bundled together with the Vrooman letters as they were all taken from the same Dutch ship. However, in a *post scriptum*, Pieter mentions both Hendrick and Jacob Vrooman as his good friends. Pieter appears to be writing because of the sudden insecurity of the situation in New Netherland. The English takeover had probably given rise to an apprehension of being cut off from the Netherlands. Pieter was especially concerned about goods that he may have inherited from his deceased father and grandfather. Not only did he seem concerned about receiving such goods but also specifically requested such goods that might soon become scarce. All four letters express anxiety from recent developments that might lead to a disruption in their lives. Prospects of a bright future had suddenly turned into one of fear and uncertainty.]

Beloved Uncle Hendrick Pietersz Thol.

I have received your letter dated 1 February, and am pleased to learn that you and all of our friends are healthy, but saddened to learn of the passing of my grandfather Pieter Pietersz Borsboom, in which we must trust in God, as he has passed the way of all flesh, which shall also happen to us, if it pleases God. Regarding me and my wife and our children, namely my son Pieter and daughter Anneke, are also still in good health, praise God. However, the change that has occurred here in the country with the English, causes great difficulty and harm, the one more or less than the other as you shall learn from the other passengers coming over.

Moreover, it is my friendly request, since my grandfather, deceased, together with my oldest uncle, Pieter Pietersz Borsboom, have been the executors over the goods and estate-remains, and as I don't know how it stands with such things, I nevertheless doubt whether there is anything remaining for me from my deceased father; therefore, please let me know what specifically has been left as my share. And, if it be possible, that some things therefrom might be sent to me,

such as linen, cloth, stockings, and shoes that would be well suited in my household. The rest would also serve my wife and children well in life and death. I had hoped to come over this year, but it couldn't be because of the troubles with the English. However, the good God grant everything to turn for the best and hope that we shall see and talk to one another again. Hereby I shall end this, and after heartfelt greetings to you and your wife, my aunt, as well as my other uncles and aunts, sisters and brothers, nieces and nephews and all the good acquaintances at Valckenburgh and all the surrounding places, no one excepted, we shall commend you altogether to God's grace, and remain,

Your dutiful nephew  
Whatever is in my power,

By me Pieter Jacopsen  
Borsboom

In Rensselaerswijck  
the 10/20 October 1664,<sup>1</sup>  
greetings also from  
Pieter Pietersz Quackebos  
van Valckenburch, and  
Paulus Martensz van Benthuijsen  
born at Reijnsburch,<sup>2</sup> as  
well as Pieter Meussz and  
Hendrick Meussz, my good  
friends in this country.

[Addressed:]  
Honorable, pious, very  
discete,  
Hendrick Pietersz Thol,  
residing near Leijden  
at  
Valckenburgh.

With Pieter Bruijnsz van Bohemen.<sup>3</sup>  
May God guide.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that Pieter is already adjusting to English use of the Julian calendar by double-dating the calendar entry..

<sup>2</sup> In 2006, both Reijnsburch and Valckenburch were merged into the municipality of Katwijk in South Holland as Rijnsburg and Valkenburg

<sup>3</sup> Bohemia. As a result of political and religious unrest, there were many displaced people in the Netherlands at this time from what would become the Czech Republic.