The (so-called) Sheffield portrait by van Dijck in the Royal Picture Gallery at the Mauritshuis in the Hague.

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The half length portrait of a man painted by van Dijck in the Royal Picture Gallery at the Mauritshuis in the Hague, a reproduction of which figures on the opposite page, was formerly in the collection of GOVERT VAN SLINGELANDT, from whence it passed to that of WILLIAM the V. In the catalogue of the last named owner it is stated that the coat of arms hanging from a sculptured lion's head in the left hand top corner of the picture indicates that the picture represents a SHEFFIELD, Duke of BUCKINGHAM. All the later catalogues up till the notice of 1874 have omitted the name of SHEFFIELD and repeated that the portrait in question represented a Duke of BUCKINGHAM. This was manifestly an error, for the Dukedom of Buckingham was only granted by Queen ANNE to JOHN SHEFFIELD in 1703.

The identity of the portrait has been for many years past a question of debate, and it has generally been agreed that it does not represent an Englishman; as the type of face and the dress are not English.

Having lately had the opportunity given me of visiting the Duke of BUCCLEUCH's pictures at Montagu House, I at once noticed amongst the VAN DIJCK

Oud-Holland, 1910.
sketches a portrait which struck me as representing the same man as the 
SHEFFIELD picture at the Mauritshuis in the Hague. This portrait was engraved 
by LUCAS VORSTERMAN and represents PETER STEVENS, a wealthy citizen of 
Antwerp and a lover of art, who flourished at the time when VAN DIJCK was 
painting. I am told by DR. BREDIUS, that PETER STEVENS himself painted land-
scapes, some of which are to be found in the Picture Gallery of Weimar. Mr. 
MAX ROOSES, the Conservator of the Plantin Museum at Antwerp, tells me that 
there can be no doubt as to the identity of the two portraits in the Duke of 
BUCCLEUCH’s Gallery and in the Mauritshuis, and moreover he has discovered that 
the coat of arms on the portrait in the Hague is the coat of arms of STEVENS, 
which appears to confirm the identity of the VAN DIJCK portrait in the Mauritshuis 
beyond doubt. The coat of arms of PETER STEVENS hangs from a sculptured 
lion’s head on a pillar on the left hand of the portrait which is signed at the 
base: Aetatis suae 37, 1627, ANTO VAN DIJCK, fecit.

In the picture representing VAN DER GEEST’s picture gallery, painted by 
GUILLIAM VAN HAECHT, belonging to LORD HUNTINGFIELD, exhibited at the 
Winter Exhibition of Old Masters in 1906—07, a man is represented standing in 
the foreground holding up a small picture in his hand which he is showing to 
someone standing near him. This appears to me also to represent PETER STEVENS, 
a friend of CORNELIS VAN DER GEEST, the owner of the picture gallery in 
question, and is even more like the portrait in the Hague Gallery than that in 
the Duke of BUCCLEUCH’s collection. This gentleman is the only one of the whole 
party in the picture gallery to wear gloves, and the portrait in the Mauritshuis 
is also represented wearing gloves.

As it is not very usual for the hands in a portrait to be covered at all, 
the hands being always considered a feature by the painter, is it not possible 
that either VAN DIJCK did not paint the hands himself, and that therefore they 
were not brought into the picture, or that the person represented had some 
deformity which he wished to conceal, more probably the former, for, if I remember 
rightly, the sketch portrait of PETER STEVENS in the Duke of BUCCLEUCH’s collection 
is painted with the gloves off.

At any rate it seems likely that there is some special reason for the 
gloves being worn, as the portrait represents PETER STEVENS uncovered, and 
without a hat in his hand, whereas it would seem more natural that if the gloves 
were shown in the portrait the hat would appear also; but this is merely a 
surmise of my own. I may very likely be contradicted by the experience of 
experts.

As regards the companion portrait in the Mauritshuis which has always