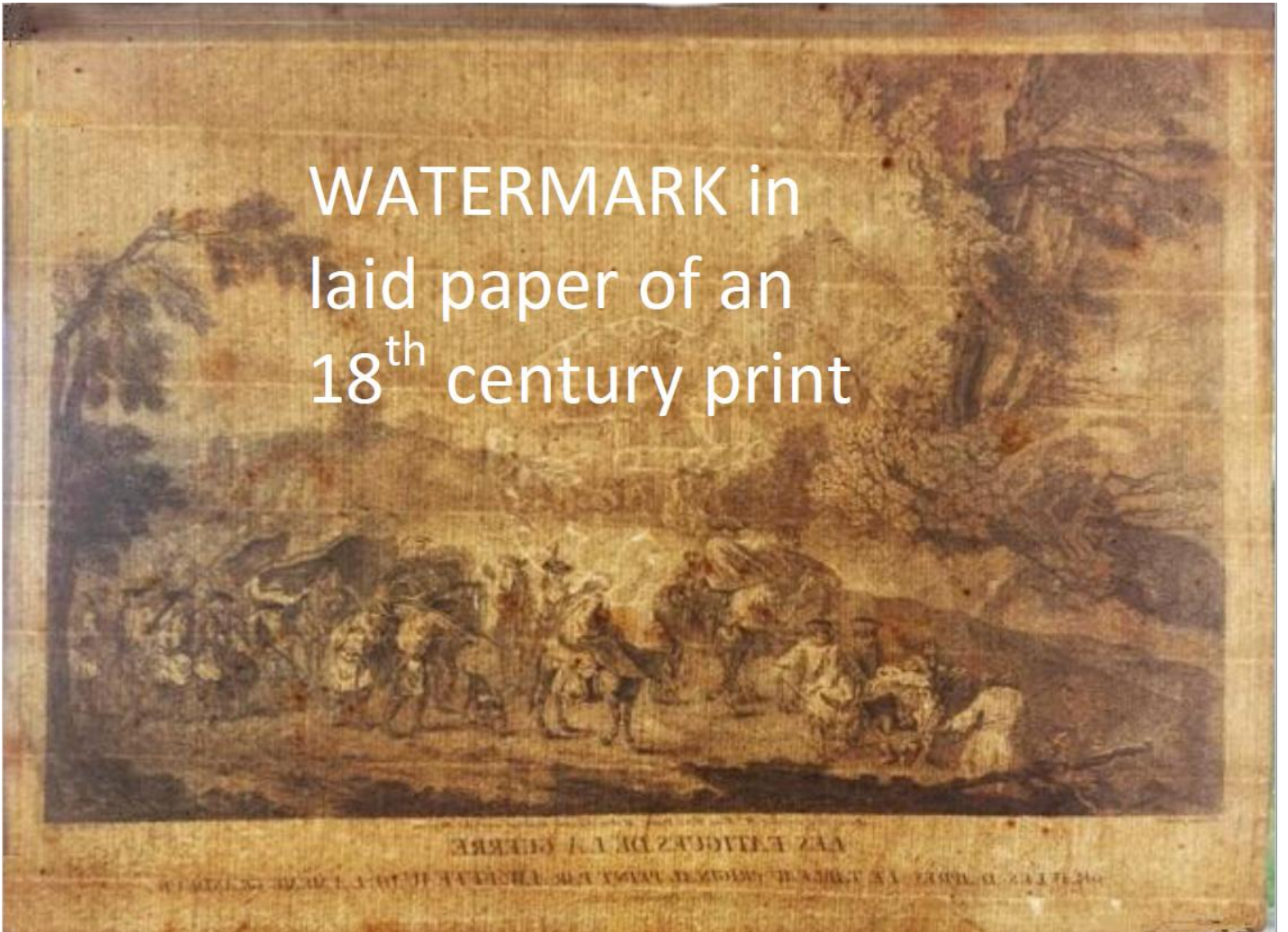


WATERMARK in
laid paper of an
18th century print



Quest for information about
a watermark in old laid paper

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June 2026

Cover: Sheet with print of Les Fatigues de la Guerre, print by G. J-B Scotin, II based on a painting by Antoine Watteau

The printing plate is made by the engraver Gerard Jean-Baptiste Scotin (1698-1755) in the form of an etching or 'taille-douce', possibly combined with the use of a burin and rocker for certain gray areas. The printing plate was made after a painting on copperplate by the French artist Jean Antoine Watteau (1684-1721). The illuminated reverse side of the white printing paper is shown here. The tint of the paper depends on the angle of the lighting at which the photo was taken to achieve maximum detail of the warp threads and watermark.

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Concise investigation into the characteristics of an old black-and-white print and the paper support.

FOREWORD

A circular watermark in a sheet of paper containing, within the translucent mark, a number of motifs relating to the creation of paper works as an act that connects people. In times of war and peace, paper production continues as long as raw materials are available. Paper can be imported but can also leave the country. Decrees are issued on paper, but images can also become visible on paper that remain hidden from many people, or which people prefer to close their eyes to. Through the dissemination of printed images on paper—which in this study are based on two 18th-century paintings by Watteau and depict moments preceding the violence during the War of Spanish Succession in Northern France and its bitter aftermath—many more people are reached, both then and now, and are prompted to reflect on what war truly does to people. It is precisely the omission of the actual violence of war in the images that makes the viewer aware of other moments in life that are far more important and that make it possible to walk the path to harmony together. "Paper is patient" is a well-known saying. Printed paper is a communication medium par excellence, whether it holds text or serves to hold up a mirror to us through an image, even after centuries. Naturally, you feel a sense of powerlessness regarding what people do to one another; you want to stop violence, but in a peaceful manner.

As I write this, it is May 4th, the day in the Netherlands to commemorate the fallen. Fortunately, that is still possible and permitted in our country. Let us continue to keep that in mind. Begin by naming violence close to home and making each other aware that this is not the purpose of living together. Do not deprive those around you of their freedom by restricting the freedom of others yourself. Art can offer an opening that connects people. Whether it be images, music, dance, or theatre... Through artists, printers, dealers, collectors, researchers, and art historians, a number of visual remnants from bygone eras are accessible to us. I never thought it possible that a single print of a work created three centuries ago could spark so much research. Research raises questions, and answers give rise to new questions. We are given food for thought, about others, but also about ourselves. As an illustrator, you also want to be part of the creative process yourself. That is what makes this type of activity so fascinating to me. I hope you enjoy looking and reading.

The object, Central to this Research, is a print of an etching/ 'taille-douce', possibly combined with the use of a burin and other tools, by Jean-Baptiste Scotin (1698-1755) after a work by the great French painter and draftsman Jean Antoine Watteau, better known as Antoine Watteau (Valenciennes, October 10, 1684 – Nogent-sur-Marne, July 18, 1721). Watteau lived to be 36 years old.

The print is part of a pair of prints made after paintings by Antoine Watteau. They are visually and thematically counterparts, both prints are examined in detail in this study. The paintings that precede them are also examined, as well as the sketches of figures in his sketchbooks that were consulted by Watteau as examples.

Although the watermark has yet to reveal its secrets, an attempt has been made to fathom the meaning of two remarkable paintings. Thanks to the transparency of the paper and the visual motifs depicted, the painting and graphic techniques, the craftsmanship of the makers, and the motivations of collectors, an attempt has been made to determine what knowledge and societal significance two exceptional paintings might yield.

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on a circular watermark on a sheet of laid paper containing the print of an image on a copper plate with a life-size representation after a painting by Antoine Watteau.

The intaglio print, which served as the starting point for this study, has connections with various individuals in the period between 1700 and 1731. The first is Antoine Watteau. He is the creator of sketches that form the basis of a painting on copper. Pierre Sirois commissioned the painting. Next follow the successive owners of the painting (Antoine De La Roque, Pierre Crozat and his nephew Louis Antoine, then Catherine the Great of Russia, and currently the Pushkin Museum in Moscow). Subsequently, art dealers Gersaint and Surugues play an important role, commissioning the engraving from Gerard J-B Scotin II, a Parisian engraver. They were the first to offer a print of the engraving after the painting for sale. Antoine de la Roque and Jean Jullienne must certainly have been in possession of a copy of the print. A print of the engraving by Scotin can also be seen in the 'Receuil de Jullienne'.

In addition to the paper search, connections have also been made with figures in Watteau's sketches and the rendering of the characters in the engravings.

Next to preliminary studies for parts of the print by Scotin, were other prints made by Watteau himself also examined for drawn preliminary studies underlying the figures and representations on prints in and/or after his work. Watermarks in the paper play no role in this.

The many engravers who occupied themselves with the reproduction of Watteau's works in printed form proved to be important in this regard.

The search for the paper watermark has led to a number of assumptions. The search led via Italy, due to the rather large and irregular spacing between the warp threads, and via Ober-Langendorf (Silesia, now the Czech Republic) due to small circles acting as links between rectangular shapes within the circle), and via the assumption of a small VDL monogram and a motif of a so-called "Hollander" or grinding vat to the Dutch Zaan region, including the whiteness of the paper. But the search ended undefined in France. In France there are all ingredients in the first half of the 18th century for all sorts of laid paper and watermarks for a French print.

Naturally, the substantiation still needs to follow. Optical, chemical, physical, historical and structural research may be possible for this purpose.

THE PROVENANCE OF THE PRINT



Boutique in an old half-timbered house, with a gable stone on the right side, on the corner of Rue du Four and Rue du Léon Fautrat, in the old centre of Senlis. When visiting Senlis during the Journées du Patrimoine, a visit to her premises was a fixed part of my walk through the old centre. What I remember most about her shop are the slender chairs hanging from the ceiling, the walls filled with books and booklets, household items, and sleeping cats in various places in the display windows and inside the shop. The photo of the building and the display window was taken by the author in 2012.



The print is an intaglio print of an etching/ 'taille-douce', possibly combined with the use of a burin, by Jean-Baptiste Scotin (1698-1755) after a work by the French painter and draftsman Antoine Watteau (1684-1721).

A LOOSE, UNFRAMED PRINT, PURCHASED IN SENLIS

Recently re-examining the sheet on which the print was made I noticed a circular watermark. In my opinion, the origin of the circular watermark, with an inwardly lobed edge and a composite fill, was worth investigating. A photo, taken from the reverse side, shows how the chain lines and water lines run across the sheet. The distance between the chain lines is 31, 37, 33, 34, 36, 36 and 34 mm from top to bottom. The water lines are spaced approximately 1 mm apart. Eight water lines are visible per cm. The paper pulp is quite coarse in

texture compared to the grain of letterpress paper pulp from that period, and is very white (not visible in the backlight photo due to the lighting angle). The rectangular image is not printed exactly parallel to the chain lines.

TWO PENDANTS

Sirois bought these two paintings (at least part of them) directly from the artist, providing Watteau with the financial means to make a planned trip to Valenciennes. Sirois, whose son-in-law was the famous art dealer Edme-François Gersaint, acted as one of the early patrons and dealers of Watteau's work. Jean-Baptiste Sirois, who later even became Watteau's landlord, played a crucial role as patron and art dealer in the creation and sale of "Les Délassements de la Guerre" and its pendant "Les Fatigues de la Guerre" by Antoine Watteau.



Left: Oilpainting (1711-1715) 'Les Délassements de la Guerre' van Jean-Antoine Watteau on copper plate. Format 21,5 x 32,5 cm. Right: Oilpainting (1711-1715) 'Les Fatigues de la Guerre' of Jean-Antoine Watteau on copperplate.¹

WHY PAINTING ON A COPPER PLATE?

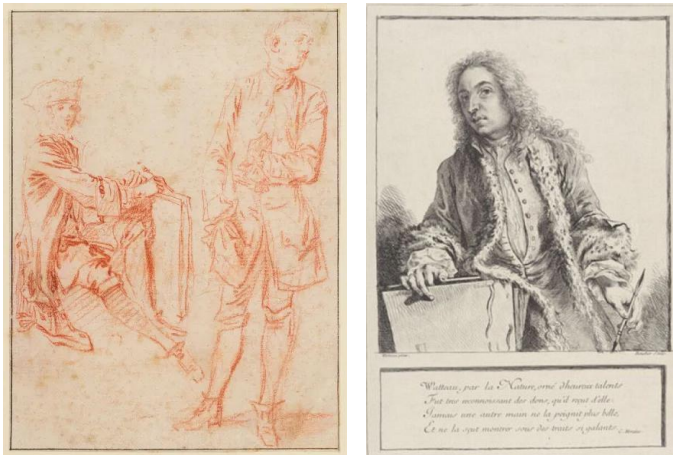
A small-format copper plate practically calls for fine and detailed painting. As a draftsman, Watteau had naturally been observing closely and rendering details for years. His choice of painting technique may be related to the warm, translucent reflection of the golden undercoat colour. A copper plate is very smooth, although roughening it with pumice powder is certainly advisable to facilitate the adhesion of binder and pigment, and allows for finely painted details, provided the oil paint is not applied too thickly. However, the oil painting technique also allows for easy correction. The linseed oil, which penetrates the top layer in paintings on canvas, remains on the surface of a copper plate. Copper as a support, covered on the polished side by oil paint and on the reverse by a layer of lacquer

(compare this to preparing a copper or zinc plate for making an etching or engraving), provides natural preservation of the support. Insects, moisture, temperature fluctuations, and the like do not affect the support. The warping of (thin) oak panels is also prevented by using copper plate as a support. The thin copper plate, provided it is not too large, can be easily transported. Once dried and cured, such an oil painting on copper plate can be carried, for example, in a flat protective folder.

Even when wet, a painting on copper plate can be easily transported, provided it is well protected, and used, for example, for studies in the open air. Charles de la Fosse and Antoine Watteau have influenced each other, working for Pierre Crozat. See François Marandet about Charles de la Fosse and Antoine Watteau and the small paintings on copperplate in Hotel Crozat's dining room of Pierre Crozat around 1716.² [URL->](#)

¹ Today, both digital reproductions can be found on the website of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow (Russia) and no longer on the website of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. These paintings have been part of Russian art collections since 1772, acquired in 1772 through a purchase from the estate of Louis Antoine Crozat, Baron de Thiers (1700-1770), in Paris. Sirois was very pleased with an earlier oil painting on canvas with a military theme, "Retour de campagne". This led to more works of that kind for Watteau.

WATTEAU : BOUNDED BOOKS AND PORTFOLIO'S



Sitting man with a large portfolio or drawing folder and a red chalk holder for drawing (as can be seen from the stacking rings) in his right hand and at the right a standing man with both his hands hiding in his overcoat, ca. 1710. Red chalk, within brown ink framing lines at the outside, 124 x 92 mm. Private collection. It is possibly that Watteau kept his separate, loose drawing sheets in these kinds of portfolio's. On another image, by Boucher, of Watteau and his sketchbook (ca 1727) is seen a smaller map for drawings (see the twisted strips of fabrics and the dimensions of the folder based on the width of his hand). For drawing on paper in the open air the portfolio provides a pleasant surface for paper to work on for formats larger than small notebooks.



Two drawings separated from each other and brought together on one sheet of paper at an exhibition in Musée Condé, Château de Chantilly, from 8 March till 15 June 2025. The presentation, besides each other, of two separate drawings of Watteau made in the same format can give the impression that these drawings were made in a sketchbook. Once the two parts formed one sheet. See the cuff in the middle and the shoeheel. It is possible in both cases that the total page has been cut loose, to lay out at different places, using the figure sketches for the preparation of a painting. This feeds the suspicion that Watteau lay out loose parts of drawings for the placement of his figures in a painting.

SYNONYMS AND TRANSLATIONS

2 François Marandet, Charles de La Fosse et les arts en France autour de 1700. New Hypotheses on the Evolution of the Painted Decor of the Hôtel Crozat's Dining Room, Le Printemps, ultime modello de Charles de La Fosse pour l'hôtel Crozat ? Open Edition Journals, 15 | 2019.

Comte de Caylus, Watteau's friend and 'critical' biographer noted this unconventional process of composing in 1748 in an address to the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture: *"He usually **collected** his studies in a bound book, so that he always had a large number of them at hand; he chose the poses that nature presented to him, and generally preferred the simplest ones. When he felt like painting a picture, certain of finding things in his book that he approved, he formed his groups of subjects, most often based on a landscape he had conceived or prepared."*³

Emphasis on another translation then "made" of the French word "faisait" in the text of Caylus.

Synonym to "faire" is e.g. in French "amasser" or "assembler" (Petit Dictionnaire de L'Académie Française, Firmin Didot, Paris 1845, p. 258). Given the differences in paper size and quality of the drawing sheets of Watteau, I think placing that sheets, on which drawings have been made, between the pages of a blank or printed book is also a possible way to preserve red chalk drawings by Watteau.

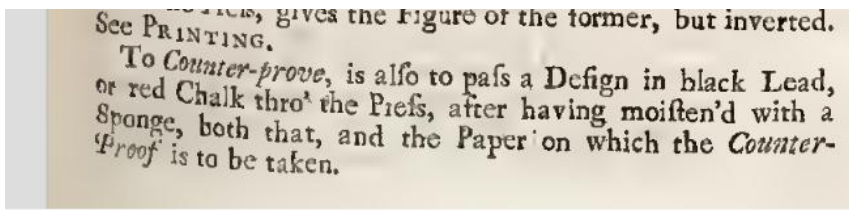


Antoine Watteau, Two studies. Left: two seated soldiers and Right: studies of a seated soldier, seen from behind, holding a pipe; the other standing, with his arm in a sling. Sanguine 13,1 × 12 cm. and 13 × 12,3 cm. Verso: Studies of three and two cats. Three cats are drawn at the backside of the standing soldier and his compagon. Private collection

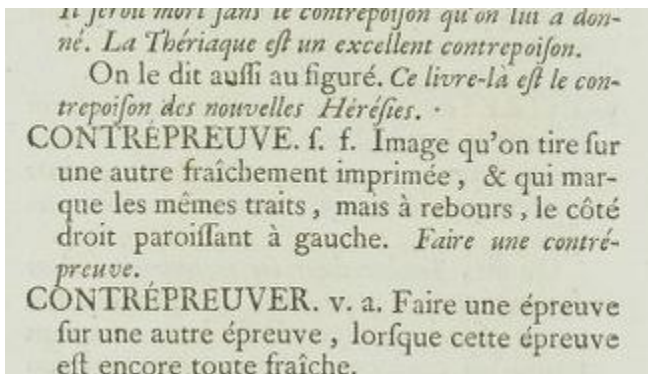
For painted figures Watteau used often drawings from sketches in his own collections. But as far it is known no original sketchbooks by Watteau have survived the collectors. A lot of his drawings are on small formats (like our current sizes A5 and A4) for drawing outside. For attachment to a folder or portfolio a draftsman needs a clamp. In the text of "ABRÉGÉ DE LA VIE D'ANTOINE WATTEAU, PEINTRE DU ROY EN SON ACADEMIE ROYALE DE PEINTURE ET DE SCULPTURE" of Jean de Jullienne, is no mentioning of sketchbooks used by Watteau. Jullienne mentioned at the end of his notice in 1726 the quantity of the drawings and its bundling in a collection (Recueil de Jullienne). If Watteau's chalk drawings of the same dimensions were kept in sketchbooks, then fresh prints of it should be visible on the back of such sheets, like making a counterproof or 'contre-épreuve'. The number of counterproofs of drawings made by Watteau is however very limited. But there are some drawings of his hand in reverse and whether or not worked up. A counterproof in the collection of the Louvre showing a trio of three soldiers by Watteau (nr. 274 in the bottom left corner [URL->](#)) looks very flat and is not a fresh, sparkling drawing like most

³ Original text: Caylus, le 23 février 1748, lue à l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture: *"Je dis donc qu'il dessinait sans objet; car il n'a jamais fait l'esquisse ni de pensée d'aucun de ses tableaux, quelque légère et peu arrêtée qu'elle ait été. **Il faisait ordinairement ses études dans un livre relié**, de façon qu'il en avait toujours un grand nombre sous sa main; il choisissait les attitudes que la nature lui présentait, et préférait ordinairement les plus simples. Quand il avait envie de faire un tableau, sûr de trouver dans son livre des choses qu'il avait approuvées, il en formait ses groupes, le plus souvent en conséquence d'un paysage qu'il avait conçu ou préparé."*

drawings of his hand. 4 The advantage of a mirrored representation is the ability to check the composition by examining the coherence between the same motifs in a different perspective. Engravers have the possibility by using a mirrored image by making a counterproof to cut the reverse version on the plate for exact resemblance. The quality of the contrasts and chalk colours in the original drawing can shrink and the original drawing may look flat and need new accents.



Ephraim Chambers, Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, London, 1728. p. 339 : Counter-Proof. *"To Counter-prove, is also to pass a Design in black Lead, of red Chalk thro the Prefs, after having moisten'd with a Sponge, both that, and the Paper on which the Counter-Proof is to be taken."*



Titre: Dictionnaire de l'Académie française. Vol. 1 A-K / . Troisième édition. Tome premier [- tome second]. \\Auteur : Académie française. Auteur du texte. Éditeur: A Paris, chez Jean-Baptiste Coignard, imprimeur du Roy, & de l'Académie française. M D CC XL. Avec privilege de Sa Majesté. Date d'édition: 1740

COUNTERPROOFS AND WATTEAU

In the French language the word "Contrépreuve" changed in "Contre Épreuve" after 1740. Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville, Abregé de la vie des plus fameux peintres. Partie 2 / , avec leurs portraits gravés en

4 This nearly empty private album, which once contained 500 **artificially** bound drawings by Watteau, is currently in the collection of the Louvre. All pages were numbered. An 18th-century collector (identifiable by written text pages dated 1772 and 1791) numbered each of the 500 pages containing Watteau's work in the lower left or right corner. Many album pages are dispersed among museum collections worldwide. The pages from the album are recognizable by the numbers written in ink in the lower left or right corner of the drawings. The original album endpaper, without a drawing, including 5 pages, and the final endpaper have been preserved. The Louvre houses 99 original drawings by Watteau, including counterprints. This album is known as the 'Groult-band' van Camille and Jean Groult or the pre-revolution album assemblage (with approximately 500 numbered sheets). The Album Lepeltier or Groult Album is another appellation.

British Museum (London) – Possesses a large collection of Watteau drawings, including several sheets bearing the distinctive old numbering in the corners

Teylers Museum (Haarlem) – Houses a refined collection of French 18th-century masters, including authentic sheets by Watteau. (nr. 222) ([URL ->](#))

Musée des Beaux-Arts (Lille) – Possesses a group of Watteau drawings closely linked to the early French collections.

Städel Museum (Frankfurt am Main) – Works with Teylers Museum and also possesses original Watteau sheets.

Albertina (Vienna) – Is having an extensive and historic collection that includes sheets from this provenance. These drawings are mostly of Pater instead of Watteau.

Hermitage (Saint Petersburg) – Historical Russian collections (often through 18th-century purchases from Parisian cabinets) contain leaves from these early albums. None of the Watteau drawing in the Hermitage are from the Groult of Lepeltier album

taille-douce, les indications de leurs principaux ouvrages, quelques reflexions sur leurs caractères, et la maniere de connoître les desseins des grands maîtres. [...], Paris, 1745-1752 p. 424

*“Watteau's drawings are highly regarded by connoisseurs. **The red crayon was the one he used most often on white paper, in order to obtain counterproofs [des contre-épreuves], which allowed him to see his subject from both sides.** He rarely highlighted his drawings in white; the paper background created this effect. Many drawings are done with two crayons: black chalk and sanguine pencil, or lead pencil and sanguine pencil, which he used for heads, hands, and flesh tones. Sometimes all three crayons were used; at other times he employed pastel, oil paints, and gouache. In short, everything was acceptable to him except the pen, provided it produced the desired effect. The hatching in his designs were almost perpendicular, sometimes slightly sloping from right to left, others softened with some light wash and subtle strokes: the freedom of the hand, the lightness of the touch, a finesse in the profiles of his heads, his taste for sculpting them, the character of the figures, the compositions, the spirit that reigns there, reveal to the curious the name of Wateau. The first works of this master consist of small figures he painted on the ceilings of Claude Audran's house and several Chinese figures painted on the paneling of the Château de la Muette; his other works are all easel paintings, the one he gave to the Academy being a pilgrimage to Cythera.”*

It is possible that D  zallier by mentioning the counterproof as composition technique (by means of double folding one half of a design) by Watteau, may have been trying to indicate that Watteau was already employing that technique when he was designing the frames and representations for the ceilings at Claude Audran's house. The relation of the use of white paper to obtain counterproofs to see a subject from a different side is specially handsome to see the main form(s) sharp and clear in asymmetric silhouettes and poses. See [\(URL->\)](#) and [\(URL->\)](#). In the last example some remnants of red chalk are visible at the top of the sheet.

WATTEAU INFLUENCED BY TEXT OF A SPEECH OF CHARLES LE BRUN IN 1702?

That Watteau is using counterproofs, according to D  zallier, has possibly a relation with items about body gesture and face expression as mentioned by Charles le Brun in his readings in “M  thode pour apprendre    dessiner les passions” (1702). p. 1-2 SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE By Mr. Le Brun.

p. 1-2

“Gentlemen, At the last meeting, you approved the destiny I undertook to speak to you about Expression. It is therefore necessary to state before anything else what is disliked in which it is confined. Expression, in my opinion, is a naive and natural reflection of the things that one has to represent: It is necessary and enters into all parts of Painting; a Painting should not be perfect without expression; it is expression that marks the true characteristics of each. It is through colour that we distinguish the nature of bodies; that figures seem to have movement; and everything that is feigned appears to be true. It is as much in color as in outline; it must also be in the representation of landscapes and in the arrangement of figures.”

p. 33-34 *“Here, gentlemen, is a part of the external movements I have observed in the face. But as we said at the beginning of this discourse, that other parts of the body can contribute to expression, it will be good to say a little about it at the outset. If admiration does not bring about much change in the face, it produces little agitation in the other parts of the body, and this first movement can be represented by a person standing upright, with both hands open, arms slightly close to the body, and feet together in the same position. But in the end, the body will be slightly bent, the shoulders only slightly raised arms bent and joined to the body, hands open and drawn close together, and knees bent. In Veneration, the body will be even more bowed than in Eminence, the arms and hands will be almost joined, the knees will be on the ground, and all parts of the body will show a profound respect.*

But in the action that marks Faith, the body may be completely inclined, the arms bent and joined to the body, the hands crossed one over the other, and the whole action must show profound humility.

Ravishing, or ecstasy, may cause the body to appear thrown back, the arms raised, the hands open, and the whole action will show a transfer of joy. In Contempt and Aversion, the body may be drawn back, the arms raised in the action of rejecting the object for which one has aversion; it may [...]."

The body gestures of the persons in the drawings and paintings of Watteau are often based on Commedia dell'Arte figures. Theatrical poses are often used by him. But a lot of poses are derived from life itself. Soldiers waiting for action, relational poses between men and women, observations from everyday Life, and not to forget the facial expressions of the depicted persons in various positions and foreshortenings in the postures and poses..

REWORKED DRAWING COUNTERPROOF



Known is a reworked drawing counterproof in the collection of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam resulting from the reprocessing of a counter pressure of a red chalk drawing by Antoine Watteau titled: Landscape with many dancing and drinking figures at an inn after Dominico Campagnola, 222 x 333 mm. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). [URL->](#)

If not, then Watteau used a good method of fixation) that might still be chemically traceable. Perhaps he used a kind of blocknotes consisting of loose sheets sewn together on one side. They are easy to pull off after drawing. Traces of sewing might still be visible on one side. Some drawings he made on the same format. He collected his drawings of different formats in portfolio's, as seen by Boucher.

Florence Raymond, a French scholar, has made an inventarisation of different dimensions of drawings made by Watteau.⁵

During the lifetime of Watteau the following 'Marchands de papier' are active in Paris:

1705 Robert, marchand ordinaire, Vend toutes sorte de papiers lavez, battu et registres (glued/coloured? , hammered/smoothed?) ... "A L'Image Ste. Genevieve", rue de la Vieille Draperie, pres le Palais, A Paris.

1708 Louvet, Marchand, Vend toutes sortes de Papier battu, lavés pour les Deffeins &, "A L'Image Ste Geneviève", Ruë de Bussy, près le petit Marché, A Paris.

1710 Bouton, Marchand Papetier Ordinaire, vend toutes sortes de beaux Papiers... pour le Dessein..., "Aux armes de France et de Navarre", Rue neuve et à côté de la Grille des Petits Peres, de la place de Victoires, A Paris.

⁵ See Florence Raymond , Watteau, Langres, Pater: Correspondences à travers l'oeuvre dessiné, peint et gravé, pages 194 -196 of *Techne* Numéro 30-31 2009-10

1713 [and 1717] Belanger, Marchand-Papetier, vend toutes sortes de Papier batus et lavés pour les Dessins et..., "A la Petite Vertu", rue Dauphine et lad. Ruë St. Honoré, à la Regle d'or, A Paris.

1719 Saillard, Marchand, Vend du papier, lavé, batu, verny, Coupé a dessinée de toute grandeur ... des porte crayons, etc., "Au Roy de France", ruë Montorgeuil vis a vis la ruë Tictonne, a Paris.

See for more watermark information Claire Bustarret , Usages des supports d'écriture au xviii^e siècle : une esquisse codicologique, 2012: ([URL →](#))

The scenes in both painted representations likely take place in the vicinity of Valenciennes in Northern France. Watteau created these works around 1709–1711, after returning from the region around Valenciennes, his native city, where the War of Spanish Succession was being fought. Some figures from his red chalk sketches reappear in the painted pendants, drawn studies, and individual prints. Compositionally, both paintings on copper of Watteau are notable for their central elements. In one painting, this is a dark group of trees in the centre against a light background. Under the large canvas that protects them from the sun, the soldiers enjoy their rest, surrounded by an abundance of provisions and women who look after them: the sutlers.

In the other painting, we see a stormy sky with barely any light in a dark setting. The arduous advance, accelerated by the storm, ends with a donkey standing still before a brook, its back laden with sacks and poultry; on some horses, the loads are protected by a tarpaulin; only one woman is visible, wrapped up, sitting on what appears to be a stationary donkey.

The fragments of the prints to which drawn figures from Watteau's sketchbooks connect are shown side by side below. In his decorative panel paintings in the Rococo style, Watteau, as well as other painters around 1700, liked to use the double-folding of a design/drawing (e.g., a counterproof in red chalk) to achieve optical symmetry through the imprint of the other half. In practice, it was precisely the variations in the two halves that were often very surprising due to their asymmetrical solutions. ([URL->](#))⁶

TWO ENGRAVERS: FLAMISH ROOTS INVOLVED THE CREATION PROCESS

Was there contact between GJB Scotin le jeune and Louis Crépy? They each lived and worked for some time in the same street, Rue St. Jacques in Paris. Everyone made an etching/combined etching-engraving (taille-douce) after a painting on copper by Watteau that was in the collection of Antoine de la Roque at that time. They must have had every contact with the owner of the two paintings.

Louis Crépy (1680-1760): Engraver, designer, éditeur et marchand d'estampes. - *Fils du engraver Jean Crépy. - Actif à Paris de 1727 à 1754. A 1750 agreement indicates that he had been in partnership with his brother Etienne-Louis since the death of their father (1739). Date of commencement of activity: 1727, Date of cessation of activity: 1754. Address: Paris (1727-1754), Rue Saint-Jacques, in Saint-Pierre, near Rue de la Parcheminerie.*

GJB Scotin II: 'Il travailla rue des Noyers et rue Saint-Jacques à Paris. Engraver in taille-douce (to indicate the contrast with the relief printing technique (woodcut/letterpress/stamp)) and marbling as a planographic technique or actually a painting technique.

Scotin is a Frenchification of the surname Schoutens, a Flemish family from Antwerp.

Flemish ancestors are also involved with Crépy, The engraver of the pendant engraving.. The engravers may have been drawn to the birthplace of Antoine Watteau.

⁶ Antoine Watteau, La Coquette, vers 1713, pierre noire, gouache et aquarelle, 21 × 42 cm, Londres, The British Museum © The Trustees of the British Museum

THE SOURCES OF THE IMAGES OF TWO PRINTS

SKETCHES OF FIGURES OF WATTEAU IN THE PRINT OF LOUIS CRÉPY: “LES DÉLASSEMENTS DE LA GUERRE”



Painting on copper of “Les Délasséments de la Guerre”

PREPATORY SKETCHES BY WATTEAU



The Drummer: In *Les Délasséments de la Guerre*, the figure of the drummer is based on a pose that is part of a triple study in red chalk (currently in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University), in which the soldier is drawn from various angles. (ca. 1713, thus before 1715). The engraved figure is derived from the soldier on the left in the drawing.



In *Les Délassements de la Guerre*, the group of reclining soldiers is based on a study in red chalk (Museum Boymans van Beuningen, Rotterdam) in which the soldiers are drawn individually in various poses around a standing female figure. (ca 1712- 1713, before 1715).





The seated posture and the drapery of the women's clothing in Louis Crépy's etching "Les Délassements de la Guerre" can also be seen in various red chalk sketches by Watteau. Compare the figures in the drawing of the women in seated poses (in the collection of the British Museum, London) (c. 1712, thus before 1715) with those in the etching. Until now I have not found a corresponding drawing for the group on the bench. Possibly Crépy has used a more detailed image for his engraving from the collection drawings, used for Le Receuil of Jean Jullienne

Resting soldiers and women: The paintings show soldiers communicating or resting with women by tents. These groups are often based on individual studies of soldiers in uniform and women in contemporary clothing, which Watteau sketched and later integrated into his compositions.

SKETCHED FIGURES IN THE PRINT OF G.J-B SCOTIN II: "LES FATIGUES DE LA GUERRE"



In 'Les Fatigues de la Guerre', several soldiers are depicted walking with rifles and backpacks. Although Watteau did not follow the preliminary sketches one-to-one in his copperplate painting, related poses were used. Dated ca. 1710, thus before 1715. Collection National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.



Examples of early landscape drawings by Watteau

The thicket, tree-lined sections and buildings: in both prints are examples of thickets and tree-lined sections can be found in more red chalk drawings by Watteau.

In *Les Fatigues de la Guerre*, Watteau's style of drawing houses as natural part of the landscape can also be recognized. (c. 1714, thus before 1715.) Both images: Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Format 8,4 x 14,3 cm.

The question naturally arises whether both engravers had access to Watteau's collections of drawings after his death in 1721. Some details in the engravings/etchings are sharper than can be discerned from the paintings. While working on the *Receuil de Jullienne* (started in 1721 and completed in 1731), Scotin and Crépy might have been able to view drawings based on the original figure studies. The sketches required for this were at that time in the possession of/loaned to Jean Jullienne.

After the death of Antoine Watteau in 1721, his numerous collections of drawings were distributed among four of his close friends, who were also his most important collectors and patrons. The best-known and most important custodian was Jean de Jullienne (1686-1766), a textile merchant and art collector who documented a large part of Watteau's oeuvre. In addition, Edme-François Gersaint (art dealer), Pierre Crozat (art collector), and Nicolat-Henri Tardieu (engraver) were in possession of drawings by Watteau. Known is a sketchbook from and by Philippe de France, duc d'Anjou, dated 1700. (Queval, Hélène. *Trois carnets de dessins des petits-fils de Louis XIV à la Fondation Custodia*. In: *Versalia. Revue de la Société des Amis de Versailles*, n°23, 2020. pp. 179-196;) ⁷

⁷ The size of such a bound booklet (a *carnet de dessin* ou *carnet de croquis*) is small and oblong in shape for easy handling and to fit in a pocket, each of three notebooks measures approximately 107 mm. high and 174 mm. wide. Nowadays, that size is comparable to A5. The notebooks of Philippe de France were primarily a workbook, intended to be seen only by the princes, their drawing master and tutor, as well as their parents and the king, who all wished to regularly observe the progress of their students' learning. The bound format makes it possible to easily follow the progress. For professional artists, that probably played a subordinate role. They regarded such a booklet more as a repository for observations and ideas, as a starting point for developing their artistic expressions.

EARLY RESALE OF COPPER PLATES USED FOR THE 'RECEUIL JULLIENNE'

Even before Jullienne's death, a large portion of the copper plates in his possession was sold in 1739 to the Veuve Chéreau (Marguerite Caillou), a Parisian dealer in high-quality prints. With this, she took over the commercial exploitation of the plates. In 1744, her son took over.

"Also known as La veuve Chéreau primary name: Chéreau, Marguerite other name: Caillou, Marguerite other name: Chéreau, Marguerite Caillou. Details individual; publisher/printer; French; Female. Life dates 1729 active-1755. Address Rue St. Jacques, aux Deux Piliers d'or, Paris

Biography Widow of the printseller and publisher François Chéreau I, continued to run his business from same address after his death in 1729, in parallel with her son, François Chéreau II (1717-1755) who used the sign 'au Grand Saint-Henry'. She died 17 April 1755. " (Information of the British Museum)

"The widow Chereau hereby informs print collectors that she has just acquired the plates and complete works of the celebrated Watteau, whose name alone commands praise in the minds of all connoisseurs, for the skill with which he brought the gallant style of which he is the author. These plates were engraved by the most skilled engravers of the time, at the expense of M. de Jullienne, Knight of the Order of Saint Michael, who contributed his expertise and good taste to the perfection of the work, through the friendship that united him with the late Watteau. As the complete works of this famous painter were selling for five hundred livres, the widow Chereau has reduced them to two hundred and fifty livres, to make these beautiful works more accessible to the public. She has likewise reduced by half the price of those that will be sold in Details, at the Buyer's discretion. She lives on rue S. Jacques, aux deux Piliers d'or " ⁸

It was common practice for the sales addresses listed on the plates to be adjusted to the new points of sale. It is unclear whether these were also adjusted on the master plates. Often, the title was placed in the center and other information was displayed on either side beneath the image. This implies that the engraved sales address may have been adjusted to the new supplier. I have not been able to determine whether this is actually the case regarding the print in my possession.

A search for information regarding the watermark in the paper of a *taille-douce* print by Gerard J-B. Scotin II (1698 - after 1755) is no easy task. The print is based on a painting on copperplate, currently in Russia, by Jean-Antoine Watteau: titled "Les Fatigues de la Guerre". The intaglio print was executed at actual size after the painting of the same name by Antoine Watteau. Experts disagree on whether the print originates from an engraving, an etching, or a combination of both. ⁹ The use of an instrument like a small "berceau" or small cradle (Dutch: "klein wiegijzer") ("3. Autre petit berceau, dont on se sert pour grainer de petits endroits qu'on aurait trop usés".) used by making an image on a plate for an intaglio print is known long before 1730.

The intaglio print of the "Les Fatigues de la Guerre" in question possesses a clearly visible rim and was likely produced around 1729 (1731), possibly as a proof print by Gerard Jean-Baptiste Scotin II (le jeune) or by a printer in Gersaint's employ. From 1731 (the year of the first offer via the Mercure de France by Gersaint and Surugues) until the sale of the plates in 1739 to the widow Marguerite Caillou (Veuve Chéreau), prints may have been made with the original caption, on which Gersaint and Surugues are mentioned.

Guillaume Glorieux has identified at least twelve trips of Gersaint to the Netherlands to obtain an important part of his merchandise (e.g. sometime in 1733 (before November 23), May 1734, September 1734, October 1735, September 1736, sometime in 1737, September 1738, September 1739, September 1740, July-August

⁸ Announcement in the *Mercure de France* of October 1739, p. 2439.

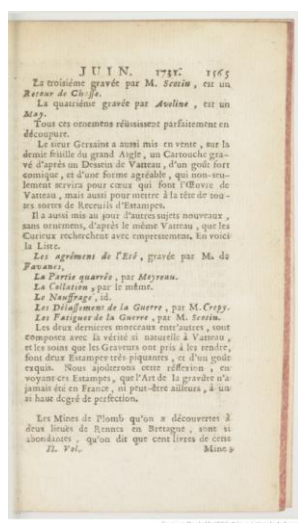
⁹ Dacier, Émile; Vuafart, Albert, *Jean de Jullienne et les graveurs de Watteau au XVIII. Siècle* (Band 2), Historique, Paris, 1922. *L'OEUVRE GRAVÉ DE WATTEAU. HISTORIQUE ET DESCRIPTION*. 83

"Par ailleurs, certaines planches ont été gravées avec une si minime intervention du burin qu'on peut les considérer comme relevant à peu près entièrement de l'eau-forte; telles sont: le Teste-d-teste [B. Audran, 173], le Rendez-vous [B. Audran, 174]» *é's Fatigues de la guerre* [G. Scotin, 1 3 8], *Retour de guinguette* [Chedel, 1 54], *les Délassements de la guerre* [L. Crépy, 2 1 6], *l'Amante inquiété* [Aveline, 1 65]."

1743, July-August 1745, and sometime in 1749). Also G. Glorieux, op. cit. (page 301, note 5, Seven trips are mentioned in the *Mercure de France* in several years), pp. 301-314. ("Les Achats en Hollande"). Should it be

possible that Gersaint has bought in Amsterdam some Dutch white paper from the Zaan region, for printing the plates of the *Fatigues de la Guerre* in France?

In 1735, after the discontinuation of the publication of the *Receuil Jullienne* (or *Receuil de Jullienne*)—for which 100 prints were supposedly made per copper plate—many prints per plate were still made during the period the *Veuve Chéreau* was owner and later her daughter. The "second state" or later state of a print should often be marked by the address of the widow Chéreau or the absence of the original publisher's information. This points to a long-term commercial exploitation of the copper plates. The quality of the plates must have declined, resulting in less high-contrast images. Perhaps this explains the preference for brighter paper in late prints. It would be interesting to place various prints from the copper plates side by side. Another factor is the demand for certain prints. Low demand allows the quality of the etchings/engravings to last longer.



Announcement for "Les dernières morceaux" in the *Mercure de France*, Juin 1731

What happened to the copper plates afterwards is difficult to trace. However, it is often observed that after the copper plates were resold, the name of the new print seller appeared on the plate in the credits below the image. That is not the case with the plate that is the subject of this research.

The 18th-century copper plates made for the *Recueil Jullienne* (or *le Receuil de Jullienne*) have largely become dispersed, but a portion was preserved in the *Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal* and the *Bibliothèque de l'Institut* in Paris. Whether contact regarding this with 'la Chalcographie du Louvre' will yield any results remains to be seen. At Tuesday, 5 May 2026 I received the answer: "Dear Sir, Unfortunately, the engraved plaque is not in our collections, nor is its counterpart, *The Relaxations of War*. Regarding the watermark, I unfortunately cannot provide you with any further information: we do have engraved plates after Watteau in our collection but we do not keep any old prints. Sincerely, Juliette Vielcanet. ART WORKSHOPS / ART WORKSHOPS. Grand Palais Rmn."

THE EXPERTISE OF TWO ENGRAVERS

GERARD JEAN-BAPTISTE SCOTIN II (LE JEUNE) 1698-1755, A PARIS ENGRAVER

It is known that Gerard Jean-Baptiste Scotin Le Jeune (II) (1698-1755) produced several prints after works by Antoine Wateau as a printmaker. He worked in Paris from 1715 to 1733. In the years before 1731, the year the print appeared—he was about 30 years old at the time—he worked on the print.

Engravers at that time used optical aids such as loupes, magnifying glasses, and glass spheres filled with water for fine work.¹⁰ [URL->](#)

¹⁰ Abraham Bosse, *TRAITE DES MANIERES DE GRAVER EN TAILLE-DOUCE SUR L'AIRAIN*,

In 1733, he left for London together with his brother Louis Gérard, and there, in 1745, he produced prints based on drawings by William Hogarth ('Marriage-à-la-Mode' series). He died in 1755. It is known that in his graphic work based on Watteau, he took the latter's style as a starting point as much as possible, both in terms of drawing and painting. In doing so, Scotin employed an engraving technique similar to that of Louis Crépy. See fragment of etching with some engraving by Scotin II, for La Lorgneuse - Aliter Intenta, Receuil Jullienne, 1727.

44 Deux des plus piquans Tableaux que 680 –
Watteau ait peint; ils sont sur cuivre, ils
 portent douze pouces & demi de large
 sur douze pouces de haut; ils représen-
 tent des Sujets de Guerre; je les ai fait
 graver sous les Inscriptions des *Fatigues*
 & des *Délassemens de la Guerre*, par M.
 Crepi. Ils sont très-purs, extrêmement
 finis, & en même-tems touchez avec
 tout l'esprit & toute la finesse dont
Watteau étoit capable.



See for full etching [URL->](#)

(according to Gersaint in his 1744 catalogue, that of M. Crepi), a Parisian engraver and publisher who produced the plate "Délassemens de la Guerre" after a painting by Watteau that served as a pendant. In those plates, many intermediate areas in shades of gray are visible, rendered in the plate by hatching of slightly undulating lines. Both representations were captured on the plate without inversion. This was important for certain large-format images to hold the viewer's attention. ¹¹ [URL->](#)

THE LINEWORK OF SCOTIN



Par le moyen des eaux fortes & des vernis durs & mols. D'imprimer les planches, & de conftruire la preffe. Par le sieur A. Bosse. Augmenté de la nouvelle maniere dont se fert Monfieur Le Clerc Graveur du Roy. A PARIS, Chez PIERRE EMERY, Quay des Auguftins, au coin de la ruë Gille-Cœur, à l'Ecu de France. M. DCC. I. AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY. (1701)

¹¹ Chloé Perrot, Annoncer l'estampe dans le *Mercure de France* (1724-1744) OpenEdition Journals, 2024. *Nous trouvons une autre précision technique dans le Mercure de mai 1742 Annoncer l'estampe dans le Mercure de France (1724-1744), qui fait la promotion d'une estampe destinée à faire pendant à une autre, annoncée l'année précédente. Les deux pièces sont de Le Bas. Il s'agit de deux sujets militaires d'après Jean-François Chantreaux. La première représente la distribution des grains – en réalité du fourrage – aux troupes de la maison du Roi et la seconde un campement de la brigade des gardes du corps dans un paysage. Si nous n'avons pas pu localiser les tableaux, le rédacteur indique qu'il « est bon d'observer que ces deux morceaux ont été gravés au miroir, afin que les actions, le port de l'épée et les autres attitudes du tableau ne vinssent point du côté gauche dans la gravure, ce qui fait un assujettissement considérable pour le graveur 26.» Dans 'De la manière de graver à l'eau-forte et au burin,' Abraham Brosse indique que cette technique ne se pratique que pour du petit car cela deviendrait très contraignant en grand²⁷. Or, Chantreaux semble privilégier des formats moyens (30x40 cm ou 40x60 cm), et leur interprétation en miroir devait effectivement représenter un travail conséquent, d'autant que les sujets sont pourvus de nombreux détails comme le souligne d'ailleurs l'annonce : « tout le sujet est orné et varié, autant qu'il en pouvait être susceptible ».*



Some examples of the hatching in Gérard-Jean-Baptiste Scotin's print "Les Fatigues de la Guerre". Scotin's etching technique. What stands out are the many differences in tonal values and line thickness, and the variation in the angles at which the etching needle/burin was held. If a burin was also used, often only one proof print is required. The slight undulation and interruption in the lines also indicate very skillful hand-eye coordination. A "échoppe" (aiguille biseautée) may also have been used to apply hatched areas.

RESEARCH INTO SOURCES REGARDING THE PRINT BY SCOTIN

Little can be found on the internet about this print, and absolutely nothing about a circular watermark in the handmade paper on which this print was made. This may indicate gaps in archives or forgeries, very early proofs, or lost information. Fortunately, the print and its pendant are present in the collections of a number of well-known museums. Important museums that have the print after Watteau anno 2026 in their collection: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam - [URL->](#) , British Museum London [URL->](#) , Louvre Paris - [URL->](#) and Musée d'art d'histoire Genève – [URL->](#) .¹² Research into the engraver of the print (Scotin) and the painter of the original image (Watteau) reveals several historical mentions of the print. In the June issue of the *Mercure de France* from 1731, there is an announcement of the sale of the print combined with a pendant.¹³ [URL->](#) Searching for information about another way of printing through counter pressure from a red chalk drawing, there was some likeness with the composition of a drawing of Dominico Campagnola (Landscape with many dancing and drinking figures at an inn after Dominico Campagnola, 222 x 333 mm. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) between the structure of the painting by Watteau and the engraving by Scotin.

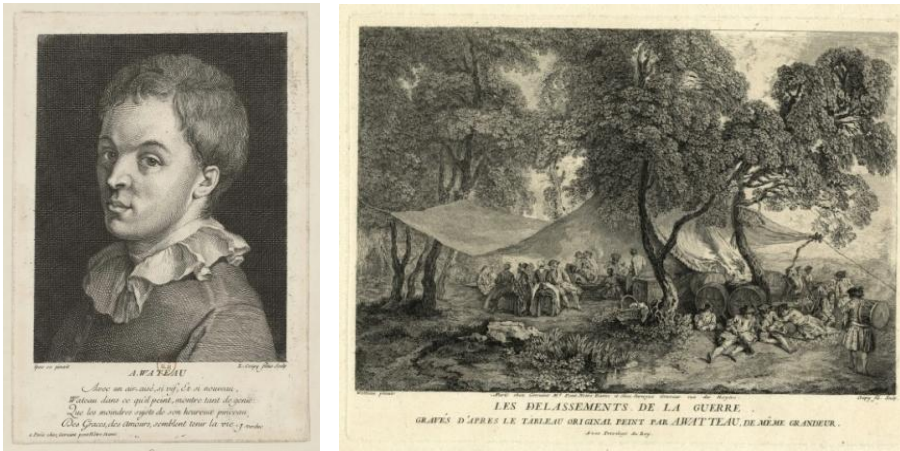
THE PENDANT PRINT BY LOUIS CRÉPY (1685-1775), A PARIS ENGRAVER

The print is in mirror image of the painting, but the engraving is executed one-to-one after the painting, given the "small format" (slightly larger than A4). In large formats, the figure poses and objects would be too distorted. The reproduction of this pendant print shown is, as a graphic representation, part of the collection of the Musée d'art d'histoire in Geneva, and can be viewed on their website.

¹² They provide an extensive description, but do not mention a watermark in the paper.

¹³ 1731 *Mercure de France* JUIN. p.1565 . This concerns an announcement for the sale of a single print after Watteau (Vatteau), for sale at art dealer Gersaint and his son-in-law Surugue, both in Paris in 1731. Also offered is another print after Watteau which can be considered a pendant. This concerns an intaglio print by Louis Crépy entitled "Les Délassements de la Guerre".

DETAIL OF PRINT AFTER WATTEAU BY LOUIS CRÉPY



Crépy is an admirer of Watteau's work, as evidenced by the portrait of Watteau by Crépy.



Fortunately, the reproduction of the print of the Crépy engraving after Watteau in the Musée d'art d'histoire in Geneva is of an excellent quality, making the manner of the hatching clearly visible.

Here, too, no inversion was applied during the engraving. The mirror image emerges. Scotin distributed the representation on the original painting, then (ca 1730?) in the possession of Antoine de Laroque, across the plate with minute lines in many directions like brushstrokes, and applied the light and dark as variedly as possible. Two of the three women at the foreground, on benches, are conversing with a man at the table.

About proof prints of etches and engravings after Jean Antoine Watteau is some information available in the Introduction text of "Figures de différents caractères, de paysages, d'études dessinées d'après nature par Antoine Watteau, Peintre du Roy en son Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, gravées à l'eau forte par des

plus habiles peintres et graveurs du temps, tirées des plus beaux cabinets de Paris. Tome premier \[suivi de] Tome second et dernier", Paris, 1729. ([URL->](#))

From the serie "Les Figures de Modes" (1709-1710):



Antoine Watteau: oil painting on linen "La Halte" (1710-1711) (Collection Museum Thyssen, Madrid). The attitude of woman is possibly used by Watteau for his etching.

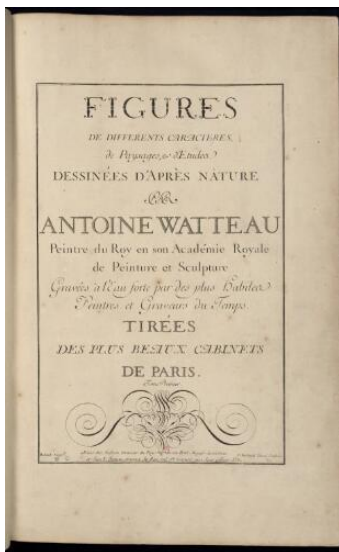


Red chalk drawing (115 x 75 mm) by Watteau (Stockholm Nationalmuseum) of a woman holding her skirt from behind. The red chalk drawing looks like a drawing after the etching and looks not as a preparatory drawing (in mirror image) for the etching plate. Or the website-image is incorrect posted. Print of etching plate by Watteau himself (Watteau inv. et fecit). Format image 115 x 75 mm. The print in the collection of the "Petit Palais, Paris" shows Vateau inv. et fecit and under the bottom left corner and a collectors mark in the corner. ([URL ->](#))



Original drawing (337 x 187 mm) in red chalk by Watteau (Collection British Museum),
Preparatory drawing in red chalk (120 x 75 mm) in mirror image for print by Watteau (Collection Stockholm Nationalmuseum)
The result as print (Image by Watteau del., etching by Déplace scul.) (Collection of National Gallery of Art, Washington)

ŒUVRES D'ESTAMPES D'APRÈS LES TABLEAUX ET DESSEINS ORIGINAUX DE FEU ANTOINE WATTEAU,
Peintre Flamand, de l'Académie Royale de Peinture & Sculpture.
Tirés du Cabinet du Roy & des plus beaux de l'Europe.



At the border of the page: Roland Script. [scripsit] a Paris chez Audran Graveur du Roy, en son Hotel Royal das Goblins et Chez F. Chereau graveur du Roy, rue St. Jacques aux deux pilliers d'Or.
F. Baillieul Laisné [l'ainé] Sculpsic. [Sculpsit],

André-François Roland (1720-1792) était un célèbre maître écrivain, qui s'est notamment illustré en tant que graveur et calligraphe sous le règne de Louis XVI. Ses travaux dans l'art de l'écriture manuscrite et la gravure sont remarquables dans les ouvrages de l'époque.

In three pages with text Jean Jullienne informs the user about the quality of the prints by and after Watteau in this album (Paris, 1726-1728).

"The price of each work will be five hundred livres for those who submit their orders to him during the year 1735. After which time, he will not issue any copies of said works except for the price of eight hundred livres, should he need any more. The said five hundred livres will be paid by making a deposit of two hundred and fifty livres, and

the remainder upon collection of the copy chosen. It is very important to warn the public that, as Watteau's paintings have been imitated for some years now, several prints that were engraved in Paris after the original paintings and drawings have also been engraved and even copied in foreign countries."

This text shows the use of making copies of the prints after works by Watteau, even in other countries than France, before the 'Receuil Jullienne' has become at the market.

Jullienne mentions the King's collection of Watteau's works as the standard for the quality of the prints in his publication "Receuil de Jullienne" with prints from the works of Antoine Watteau. Business motives certainly play a role in this. However, it is not the case that the court also possessed the engraved plates necessary for the prints. Proof prints and earlier prints of etched and engraved plates with figures by Watteau were already in circulation in and outside France between 1709 and 1726-1727.

Copies after prints of works of Watteau are made in England and Germany.

A common 18th-century example of print forgery outside France was the creation of illegal copies via counter-prints or simply re-engraving compositions of Watteau. Because an etching plate mirrors the image when printed, foreign pirated prints are often the mirrored counterpart of the official Parisian prints. See [\(URL->\)](#)

Print dealers, particularly in London and Augsburg (Germany), brought these cheaper, sometimes inferior-quality copies to the market to profit from the 'Watteau hype' without paying the Parisian engravers. Laurent Cars after Antoine Watteau. Fêtes venetiennes, ca. 1732. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. and in MAHMAH.CH, Print edited by Marguerite Chéreau (vers 1724 ? - Paris, 1755), éditeur)



Watteau himself also engraved a number of small-format fashion plates in 1709/1710, which is clearly visible in the dynamic line work on the prints. In my opinion, these would be even more convincing in a slightly larger format.

Watteau himself also produced a larger etching with dry point about the subject "Recruits Going to Join the Regiment" (c. 1715). This same subject was later executed by Henri-Simon Thomassin after Watteau as an etching combined with the use of the burin (1716?-1726). This plate may only have been executed after Watteau's death (1721). This version is much more contrasting and dramatic than Watteau's version, and the light arc, which appears as a rainbow in Watteau's, has disappeared. In Thomassin's version, the dark head coverings dominate his scene from a distance.

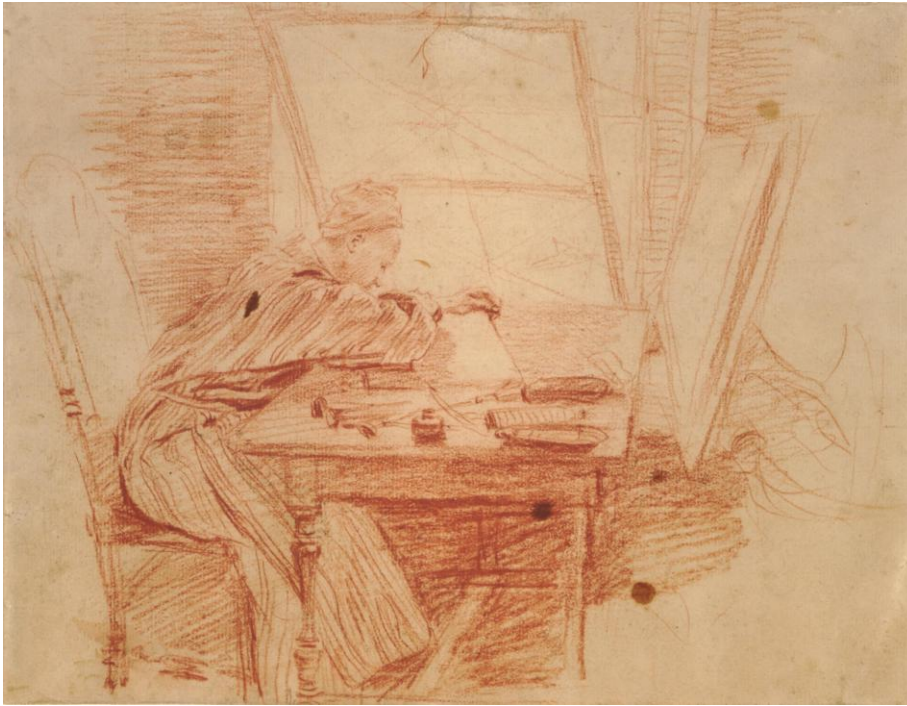
Voorbeelden

A large number of printable plates based on drawings of his work were produced by engravers such as Audran (Jean & Benoit), Aveline (Pierre), Boucher (François), Caylus, Cochin, Desplaces, Jeaurat, Huquier, Jullienne, de Larmasin (Nicolas), Lépicié (François=Bernard), van Loo (Carle), Trémolière, and Thomassin. Julien was the commissioner in this regard. Etchings and engravings based on Watteau's paintings were executed by Louis Crépy, G.J.B. Scotin II (Le Jeune), Nicolas-Henri Tardieu, and many, many others.

THE ENGRAVING TECHNIQUE



See for an explanation of the instruments showed at the illustrations in the “Encyclopédie Diderot et d’Alembert” the attached note. Explanations at the pages in The Encyclopédie (click for URL’s): [Planche I:](#) [Planche II:](#) [Planche III \(a\):](#) [Planche III \(b\):](#) [Planche IV:](#) [Planche VII:](#)



“An engraver at work, sitting at his table, ca 1719-1720 red chalk drawing by Antoine Watteau.

During his lifetime were made some etchings and engravings .

Figures de modes (c. 1709/1710): Watteau was drawing and personally etched a series of fashion. These were lightly finished by the engraver Henri-Simon Thomassin the Younger. (example: 1710 A seated woman holding a closed fan before a drawn curtain, a tree and sky beyond). See: [URL->](#)

COLLECTORS

OF “LES DÉLASSEMENTS & LES FATIGUES DE LA GUERRE”

WATTEAU'S FIRST PATRON, PIERRE SIROIS (1665-1726)



Sanguine drawing ¹⁴ made by Antoine Watteau (in the period between 1710 and 1718), believed to be a portrait of Pierre Sirois (c. 1665–1726) ¹⁵. Also known are drawings by Watteau of Sirois's daughters.

¹⁴ This reproduction is in black and white, there is no colour image available.

¹⁵ Malcolm Cormack, The drawings of Watteau, Hamlyn Publishing Group, 1970, p. 38 plate 101. Private collection P. Bourdeaux – Groult, Paris.

Sirois was so pleased with an earlier painting on canvas with a military theme ("Retour de campagne" or "Camp Volant") that he asked Watteau to create a pendant. These paintings on canvas can be considered the precursors to the two paintings on copperplate, which depict the rest and weariness of soldier life.

ANTOINE DE LA ROCQUE (1672-1744)



Drawing by Antoine Watteau, in red chalk, depicting, presumably, Antoine de la Rocque. The drawing can be dated to around 1714. The print, with the caption "...propriétaire du Mercure de France.." (this co-ownership has been recorded since 1721), was engraved by François Bernard Lépicié in 1734 after a painting by Antoine Watteau from 1718. Before that time (sometime between 1711 and 1715), de la Rocque had become the owner of the painting "Les Fatigues de la Guerre".

The painting "Les Délassements de la Guerre" was part of the collection of Antoine de La Rocque (1672–1744). He was a French army officer and newspaper publisher in Paris. He owned the painting together with the pendant Les Fatigues de la Guerre. After his death, it was auctioned in April 1745.

Watteau and de la Rocque were friends from 1711 until Watteau's death in 1721. In 1721, De la Rocque became co-owner of the magazine Le Mercure (later Mercure de France) and wrote about art, among other things. He and Edme Gersaint were involved with the magazine 'de Mercure'. Information about Watteau was printed in de Mercure on several occasions. It is unclear whether Edme Gersaint continued to own both paintings after that. He was, however, involved in the sale of both pieces to Pierre Crozat, among others.

PIERRE CROZAT (1661-1740) AND

LOUIS ANTOINE CROZAT, BARON DE THIERS (1700-1770)



Pierre Crozat (1661/1665-1740) was a French banker, art patron, and collector who belonged to a wide circle of connoisseurs; He was the brother of Antoine Crozat. At Pierre Crozat's, Watteau had many drawn studies in red chalk in 1715, after engravings by old Italian masters such as the Venetian Dominico Campagnolo and the Fleming Pieter Paul Rubens. Louis Antoine Crozat was a prominent French art collector who expanded the collection of his uncle Pierre Crozat. Many works by Antoine Watteau were in their collections.

JEAN DE JULLIENNE (1686-1766)



The prints after the Paintings are shown in the 'Receuil Jullienne' (or Le Receuil de Jullienne) in 1735. The etchings are printed on paper with a larger sheet size than a separate print. The paper is yellowed. The total top size is approximately 63 x 35 cm. OEUVRES Des Estampes Gravees d'apres Les Tableaux & Desseins de feu Antoine WATTEAU PEINTRE FLAMAND de l'Academie Royale de de Peinture es de Sculpture. Quatrieme & derniere Partie. Paris Chez Gersaint Md Pont Notre Dame avec privilege du Roy. Moyreau Sculp. (1729 - 1731 Jean Moyreau, Jean-Antoine Watteau, Edme François Gersaint, Louis Surugue) ¹⁶ [URL->](#) Dimensions: Description material 1 volume ([114 pl.] ; 63 cm. (height of the book)

¹⁶ The print "Les Fatigues de la Guerre" was also published in the Receuil Jullienne "L'oeuvre d'Antoine Watteau" in 1735, and can be found in volume 4, with reproductions of Watteau's paintings in engraving form on sheets with more blank space around them.

See also for dimensions of this individual sheet: feuille: 262 x 365 mm, MAHMAH.CH Museum Genève. The skin in MAHMAH is heavily yellowed. ¹⁷ [URL->](#)

There may be more sources regarding this print and its pendant (*Les Délassements de la Guerre*), engraved by Louis Crepy fils before 1731 and also sold by Gersaint.

Both works by Watteau depict contrasting elements of the War of Spanish Succession around 1715. The relaxed waiting before the battle and the retreat after a skirmish show what war does to the soldiers and other involved parties.

CATHARINA THE GREAT (WORKS OF WATTEAU IN HER COLLECTION SINCE 1772)



In 1772, the entire collection of the Crozats was purchased at an auction in France by Catherine the Great of Russia for her museum in the Winter Palace. The purchase was negotiated through the French philosopher and author Denis Diderot (of the *Encyclopédie* de Diderot et d'Alembert), with assistance from Russian diplomat and Prince Dmitri Alexeyevich Golitsyn and collector François Tronchin (a Swiss lawyer, banker, and collector).

In 1765 Diderot's daughter was about to be married, but he could not afford to provide the dowry. The Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great, heard of Diderot's financial troubles and she offered to buy his personal library from him for £1,000 (approx. \$150,000 today). She was a book lover and enjoyed his *Encyclopaedia*. The arrangement was that Diderot would still keep the books and be in charge of the library for that sum. He has to visit in 1773 her in St. Petersburg.

The museum the Hermitage was founded by Catherine the Great of Russia in 1764.

Since the Russian Revolution of 1917, Watteau's paintings have been Russian state property, and information about both paintings on copper can be found on the website of the Pushkin Museum in Moscow.

Another (unfortunately limited) source about Watteau is Edmont de Concourt's¹⁸ [URL->](#)

¹⁷ MAHMAH.CH Musée d'Art et d'Histoire Genève.

¹⁸ Concourt. *Catalogue Raisonné l'oeuvre de Watteau* from 1875 (1874):

LAI D PAPER AND WATERMARK RESEARCH

PAPER SIZES AND DISTANCES BETWEEN CHAINLINES

1779. Etienne Munier's RECUEIL D'OBSERVATIONS, p. 351 / 375 (Paris, 1779),

In a chapter of volume 2 about hand made paper something about paper sizes:

"Le petit chapelet fin azuré & hollandé vaut 51 livres la rame du poids de foixante livres. La feuille entiere non coupée a vingt-huit pouces fix lignes de longueur fur vingt pouces fix lignes de hauteur."

(The small, fine azure-blue Dutch rosary is worth 51 livres per belt and weighs sixty pounds. The entire uncut sheet is 28 inches and 6 lines long by 20 inches and 6 lines high.)

1 pouce (inch): ± 2.707 cm

1 ligne (line): 1/12 of an pouce (± 0.226 cm)

28 inches and 6 lines = 77.15 cm (rounded) x 54.14 cm

A sheet of 262 x 353 mm is therefore a quarter of that.

It is unknown whether a circular watermark is visible per every quarter sheet, or whether it occurs in only one-fourth part.

Florence Raymond about distances between the chain lines of paper used during the lifetime of/by Watteau: in her article in *Technè*, numero 30-31 2009-10, page 205

"Transl. The paper then becomes thicker. The distances between the chain lines then fluctuate between 2.5 and 3 cm and can reach up to 4 cm (as evidenced by the drawing of Pater, Standing Woman, INV. 32286, the only sheet to exhibit such spacing). It should be noted that, for large papers, "a stronger and thicker paste was used, and on the form, the brass wires were proportionally slightly stronger and slightly further apart."34 Interestingly, the drawings executed by Watteau on heavy gray paper, with indistinguishable chain lines, are significantly larger than his other sketches. Could this be a format proportional to the type of paper used? Are there identifiable "families of sheets" within the Louvre's collection?"

All these features are present in the sheet of the print concerning this study.

WATERMARKS IN PAPER RELATED TO WATTEAU

Information about watermarks in prints after Watteau can be found incidentally in a 2010 article in *Technè* by Florence Raymond, pp. 198-208 [URL1->](#) or [URL2->](#)

Her article features watermarks in which similar motifs can be seen. Page 201 and 203

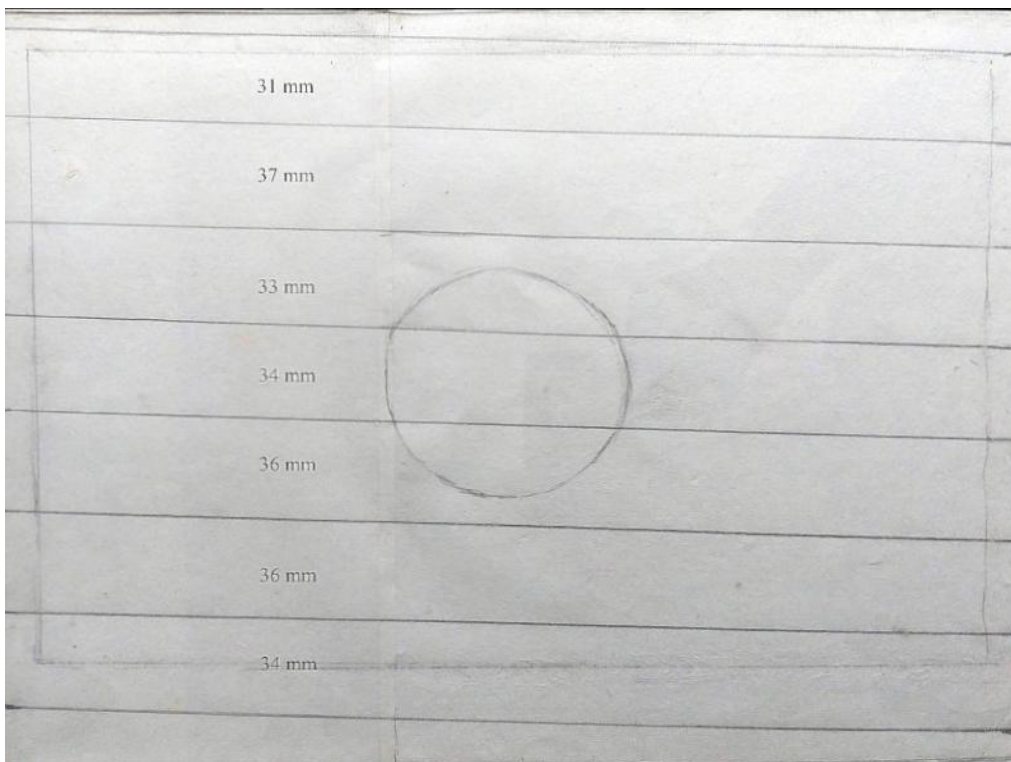
In February 2026, an almost identical reproduction of the print "Les Fatigues de la Guerre" was offered on Ebay.fr. Inquiries with the seller in Bretagne (Northern France) regarding a possible watermark revealed that this print did not have a watermark. In May the same print is available again.

THE PRINT IN THE COLLECTION OF THE AUTHOR

SIZE OF THE TOTAL SHEET: 353 x 262 MM.

This print ("Les Fatigues de la Guerre", after Antoine Watteau) has the following dimensions:

- total sheet of paper: 262 x 353 mm., - margin of the etching plate 252 x 338 mm., - actual figurative representation (full-size painting??) 215 x 325 mm. The size of the sheet was probably not created by folding and cutting a larger sheet, given the central position of the watermark. There are no traces of sewing. It appears that the attachment of the warp threads to the paper-making frame is more solid and more uniform in spacing on one short side than on the opposite side.



The chain lines in the sheet, subject of this article

Image seen from behind the sheet. The chain lines do not run exactly parallel to the paper cut out. Horizontal lines are the chain lines. The amount of mm's is the distance between the chainlines. Spacing between the chain lines varies from 31 to 37 mm. The diameter of the watermark circle is 82 mm. The thinly indicated rectangle is the outline of the image.

LOCATION OF THE WATERMARK IN THE SHEET, SUBJECT OF THIS ARTICLE

The central positioning of the circular watermark in the laid sheet of paper on which the print is made is striking. The legibility of the internal motifs within the lobed circle is not clearly tied to a specific orientation. The elements are distributed approximately evenly across the surface of the circle. Outside the circle, no countermarks in the form of initials or the name of the papermaker are visible. It is quite possible that a mold was used that was made to produce a special series of prints. It should also be noted that the cut of the sheet does not run exactly parallel to the chain lines.

WHITE PAPER COLOUR, SUBJECT OF THIS ARTICLE

Finally, the sheet on which Watteau's print is reproduced has a strikingly white color. The Van der Ley family's paper mill was a wind-driven paper mill and was known for supplying "white" paper. Around 1720, rags in the Netherlands were also treated additionally to produce a white color, although chemical research will still have to prove this. But in France the same development was taking place.

Whether this is due to the use of better grinding in the (bronze?) grinding vat or powder blue (in Dutch: "Blauwsel") to the pulp is still a matter of research.

For the type of "crépy"-like prints by Louis Crépy and Jean-Baptiste Scotin based on Antoine Watteau, the brightness of the paper was of great importance. Scotin must have personally made the choice for the white paper in order to make the painting on copper, after Watteau, which was possibly already darkening significantly at the time, as visible as possible.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAID PAPER PATTERN, SUBJECT OF THIS ARTICLE

The sheet subject to this research may possibly be a proof print by Scotin or a later, separate reprint of the original plate. After the sale of the plates to the widow Chéreau in 1739, later prints were brought to market with different sales locations. Nowhere is a seam visible indicating provenance from a book. This print is trimmed fairly close to the margin, in contrast to examples in museum collections, which appear to come from the 'Receuil Jullienne' (or Le Receuil de Jullienne).

DISTANCES BETWEEN THE CHAIN LINES IN THE VERGÉ PAPER, SUBJECT OF THIS ARTICLE

The early examples show more space around the actual print, on which the title and publisher are indicated in all cases. It is also worth noting as a striking peculiarity that the warp threads of the paper-making frame on the depicted sheet of paper run at unequal distances from each other: 31, 37, 33, 34, 36, 35, 36 and 34mm (mm chain lines). It is certainly important to investigate whether sheets engraved by Scotin can be found that originate from a similar papermaking mould.

Raymond Gaudriault, FILIGRANES et autres caractéristiques DES PAPIERS FABRIQUÉS EN FRANCE AUX XVII^e ET XVIII^e SIÈCLES, Paris, 1995. p. 37.

“Transl.: However, the trend which, since the middle of the 14th century, (”) was towards greater density, reversed in the 18th century with distances between the lines that gradually become established between 25 and 30 millimeters and can reach up to about 40 millimeters. Correspondingly, the paper is generally thicker than that of the 17th century.”

Raymond Gaudriault, FILIGRANES et autres caractéristiques DES PAPIERS FABRIQUÉS EN FRANCE AUX XVII^e ET XVIII^e SIÈCLES, Paris, 1995. p 46

1.4 - RELATIONS AVEC LES PAYS ÉTRANGERS ET INCIDENCE SUR LES MARQUES FRANÇAISES

1. – Italie

*“The density of the laid lines follows roughly the same trend as in France, but in 17th-century Italian papers, the distances between chain lines are often much greater than in France, 30 or even 35 mm, with the exception of the line corresponding to the additional chain thread that supports the watermark at its central axis. The laid lines and chain lines, like the watermark itself, are often easily read, with a slight gap. High-quality Italian papers **are often very white**, and this characteristic alone is enough to immediately distinguish an Italian paper from cream-colored French papers.(6) Otherwise, their color tends toward light gray or crème.*

(6) Eineder (op. cit., p. 165) notes that Venetian printing papers are renowned for their purity and whiteness. This is sometimes accompanied by a certain sheen.”

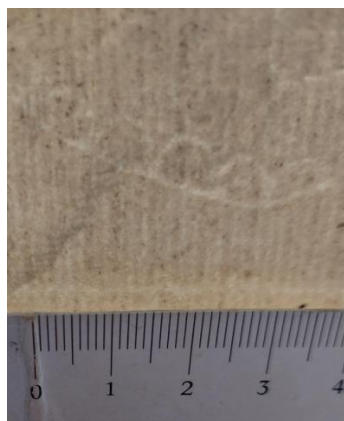
p. 47

2. – Suisse

“The warp threads run lengthwise along the sheet and could originate from a single paper-making frame with a similar arrangement, where the watermark is placed centrally in the frame but runs parallel to the direction of the warp threads.”

This initially led to the provisional assumption that the print was possibly on Italian paper, apart from the watermark. See ([URL ->](#))

It is noteworthy, however, that the chain lines do not run perfectly parallel to the cut edges along the length of the sheet of paper, subject in this article. The sheet of paper on which the print is made measures 353 x 262 mm. (= approx. 0.0925 m²) and is thicker than the thin sheets in small, handy booklets from around 1700. The gram weight (per m²) is: 100 grs. (?)



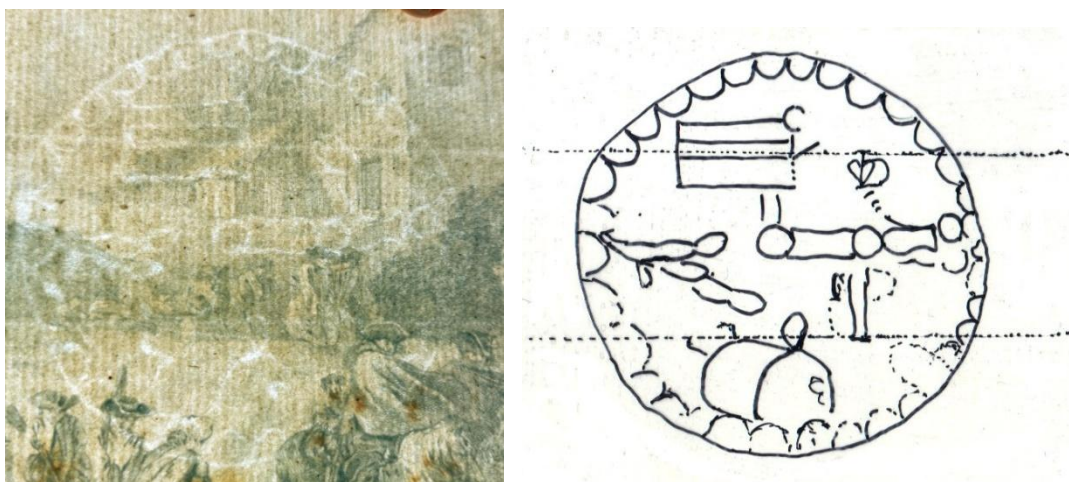
CONSULTATION OF PROFESSIONAL WATERMARK SOURCES

Unfortunately, sources such as Bernstein, Briquet, Churchill, Condorcet, Doucet, Eineder, Gauthier, Heawood, etc., yielded insufficient information. Fortunately, Gaudriault, Dacier and Vuaflart, Florence Raymond and Theo, and Frans Laurentius did provide some leads. The search was primarily focused on sources concerning circular paper watermarks from the period between 1731 and the first early sale of the etching/copper plates in 1734 to 1739. However, the search gradually expanded to include the makers, the graphic technique applied to the plates, the merchants, the paper mills in France and the Netherlands in the period around 1731, the owners of the copper plates (paintings on copper and engravings) and their current whereabouts, specialist literature on watermarks and paper merchants, the papermaking process in the early 18th century, etc.

To begin with, the dating of the print and the paper is a point of attention. Prior to that, the creation of the paintings is of course of importance.

THE WATERMARK IN THIS STUDY

The watermark in the print of the Scotin engraving after Watteau discussed here is possibly an early, as yet unknown watermark from 1729 at the earliest, in a sheet of a batch of white paper, which later ended up in Paris or in Senlis, just above Paris.

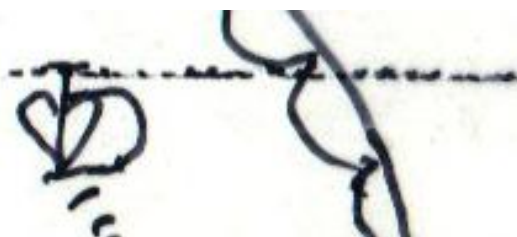


In some cases, if the paper is thin and there is a black print at one side, it is possible to replace digitally the black printing ink colour with a fill colour to show the lighter watermark better. Here is that through the density of the paper mass and the printed parts not really possible.

MOTIFS WITHIN THE CIRCULAR WATERMARK

References for the watermark iconology may possibly be found in a number of places if the mark is of van der Ley:

- The block shape in the watermark shows three strips side by side that could refer to a repetition of the letter L and the family connection/generations. In later watermarks, the letter L is dominantly present as a double strip. But it is also possibly to see the form of a 'Hollander' from aside.
- The (flower?) stems with buds pointing inwards from the edge of the circle on the left side could refer to the three young brothers and their age differences.
- The horizontal shape on the right, composed of circles and strips, could refer to (the closeness of) the family bond between the brothers, but also to the four windmill sails.
- The cylindrical shape at the bottom can be seen as a reference to the cylinder in the so-called "Hollander" or is it a lime pot?
- There is also a 5th motif (?), a small countermark depicted above the strip with circles and bands:



(VDL ?????)

a monogram consisting of a capital letter L (from van der “Ley”) enclosed in a heart shape (as the letter V from “van”) and a capital letter D, for “der” to the right against the L. Due to all other visual characteristics, this initially escapes the viewer. The monogram is located outside printed parts of the image within the depiction (part of a house wall next to a window) and is intersected by a warp thread. In my opinion, this monogram is of great importance for establishing the provenance of the paper. Or should the viewer, upon closer examination, see a burning torch in it?

Other countermarks at van der Ley

Frans Laurentuis and Theo Laurentius WATERMARKS 1450-1850 A Concise History of Paper in Western Europe mentioned:

- watermark 262 from 1755 dig p. 215 Below a crowned shield with a French lily, letters VD joined together with L to the right.
- watermark 293 from 1817 dig p. 230 Under Fortuna with wind-catching vane standing on a globe. The letters V and D connected and to the right the letter L.

The name Fortuna here is undoubtedly a reference to the paper mill Het Fortuin.

VISUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WATERMARK

A temporary assumption was based on some visual characteristics looking like the shapes of Papermaker Jacob Weis from Ober-Langendorf (Silesia, now the Czech Republic) due to small circles acting as links between rectangular shapes within the circle, possibly referring to Papiermaker Weis dated 1812, plate 251), See: Eineder – **For WEIS goto “Menu: plate nr. 251”** [URL->](#)

But within the circle, subject in this article, are more motifs.

Characteristic is the circular shape of the watermark (diam. 82 mm), which, in terms of border filling, is sometimes compared to a rosary (chapelet/chatelet). Inside, there are four figurative motives that require further interpretation. Microscopic or special optical examination might possibly provide clarity on this. Upon closer examination, a small, inconspicuous monogram also appeared to be visible. That small monogram is key to the following assumption.

Possible Dutch origin of the paper and the watermark?

The print may have been printed on paper originating from the angular post mill/watermill “Het Fortuin”, founded in 1720 in Zaandijk on the north side of the Guispad, just north of the current (year 2026) roundabout near the police station. However, “Het onfortuinlijke Fortuin” burned down in 1894. Whether any archival documents from the early period still exist is certainly worth further investigation.

The mill “Het Fortuin” was equipped with a “Hollander”, a grinding vat, to grind the rags/pulp finer than was done with traditional hammers. As a result, the paper was also whiter than with other production methods. In the period 1720-1740, leadership shifted from the first generation, Jan Pietersz van der Ley (1660-1750), to the brothers:

(Pieter Pietersz van der Ley (1696-1724), 25 years old in 1721),

- Jan van de Ley (1697-1750), 24 years old in 1721,
- Claes van der Ley (1699-1765/ 1773), 22 years old in 1721, and
- Aris van der Ley (1707-1800), 14 years old in 1721.

The youngest brother was 14 years old at the start of the family business in 1721.

The family name van der Ley is derived from “watercourse, ditch, or brook (waterloop, sloot of beekje)”. Here, possibly a reference to the river Zaan. As a watermark, Van der Ley successively used the images Jester's Cap, Coat of Arms of Amsterdam, Dutch Lion, Post Horn, Pro Patria, Merchant's Mark, Double Cross, Freedom, and

Unity (Narrekap, Wapen van Amsterdam, Hollandse leeuw, Posthoorn, Pro Patria, Koopmansmerk, Dubbelkruis, Vrijheid en Eendracht.).

Inquiries with Ms. van de Kamp, affiliated with the Zaanstad municipal archive, and the website of the Zaanse Papier Foundation yielded a number of entry points for searching. That investigation is still ongoing. At first glance, the watermark did not look familiar to her.

Paper suppliers of Jean Jullienne (or Jean de Jullienne): Dupuy and Goubeyre.

In the publication of ÉMILE DACIER & ALBERT VUAFLART: JEAN DE JULLIENNE ET LES GRAVEURS DE WATTEAU we can read at page 136, translated from French:

“On two lines: [here, a well] DUPUY. FIN | AUVERGNE. 1742. This papermaker is the same as Thomas Dupuy, supplier to Jullienne, whose mills were located at La Grandrive, on the Chadernolles River, in the parish of Marsac, barony of Ambert. On three lines: FIN II L [here, a heart] TAMISIER II AUVERGNE.

Because of the heart mark, it can be assumed that Tamisier was the successor of Pierre Goubeyre, supplier to Jullienne, established at Noyas, on the Valeyre River, in the parish and barony of Ambert.”

There is a relation between the paper used for printing the Receuil Jullienne and these papermakers in 1742: Thomas Dupuy and Pierre Goubeyre later Tamisier, in the Barony of Ambert.

I suppose Jullienne had contact with them from 1729 (and possibly earlier in 1721), at the start of the activities for the Receuil de Jullienne with engravings after Watteau. See for images of the watermarks of the paper used by Jullienne for his Receuil “Émile Dacier & Albert Vuaflart, Jean Jullienne et les graveurs de Watteau au XVIII^e siècle, Paris, 1922. p. 85. There is no resemblance with the watermark in the sheet, subject in this study. [URL->](#)

AN ATTEMPT TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS

- Is the depiction on the print authentic? *In my opinion, this is confirmed by information about the print at a number of major museums in Europe.*
- Is the paper on which the print is printed authentically 18th-century pre-1739? *We will only know this if more reproductions of prints on the same paper can be found. The prints in the ‘Receuil Jullienne’ may be made of a different type of paper that yellows more quickly and has other watermarks.*
- Can the country of origin of the paper on which the print appears be determined? *If it can be confirmed that the paper mill ‘Het Fortuin’ is the source of the paper and the watermark. No countermarks of van der Ley are visible on this sheet.*
- When can both the paper and the plate print be dated? *If Van der Ley, then possibly from 1721. The plate is available before 1731.*
- What role does a watermark play in this? *That would make it easier to determine the printing period and the quality of the paper.*
- Is it possible that we are dealing with an “Épreuve d’Artiste”? *That is a possibility, I think. Scotin and Crépy both had contacts with Flanders and their motherland: the Netherlands. For the printing of this type of etching, possibly using a burin, white paper yielded a more expressive representation.*
- Could this be a print of the print made by Scotin himself to document a phase of his work? *It is possible I think; he worked in the Rue St. Jacques, with many printmaking workshops.*
- Are there any other comparable prints known? *Yes, recently (last spring 2026) in Brittany (France), however without watermark. Is there a quality difference in the prints?*
- Is information about this watermark missing because this version of the print was for private use and not sold? *If yes, then a description of the types of paper on which the print is printed is missing so far.*
- Are there any indications to be found regarding the origin of the paper on which this print was made, compared with prints of the same image in the “Receuil Jullienne”? *In my opinion, no, because examples of early Dutch paper from the paper mill ‘Het Fortuin’ like the watermark in this study cannot be found in public publications and documentation material may have been lost due to the mill fire at the end of the 18th century. The period around 1739 was difficult for many master paper makers in France. They had to handle with new regulations for marking the origin of their paper sheets. Perhaps that provides an explanation.*

CONCLUSION, QUESTIONS AND WISHES

Conclusions: 1. The preliminary quest for the watermark is not ended. 2. Referring the question to other experts in a wider range is possibly important. 3. The opinions of other researchers are highly appreciated.

Questions: 1. Is the impression of white paper due to bluing? 2. Has this watermark escaped the investigative efforts? 3. Is there any interest in this sheet within the world of universities, restoration studios, and museums?

Wishes: 1. Continuation this preliminary research into the watermark and paper via optical, chemical, physical, and structural research. 2. Performing an antiquity analysis on the paper, to enlarge or to reduce the period of production. 3. To encourage museums and collectors to check whether the watermark shown here also appears in their paper and print collections.

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The author is familiar with paper as an art teacher in secondary education in Amsterdam and, from 1977 in Utrecht, as a lecturer at the former SOL in Utrecht, at the training program to become an art teacher who wished to practice their profession in secondary education. In addition, he grew up as the son of a representative for Fine Paper at the paper wholesaler Proost & Brandt, who was many years active in the post-war period in Amsterdam and the immediate surroundings. Consequently, books with paper samples were regularly to be found in the house of his parents.

If you have more information about paper watermarks in prints and/or drawings by Watteau and you are willing to share that information with me, I would greatly appreciate it.