The collector and amateur art historian Christiaan P. van Eeghen died, aged 93, in The Hague on 31 December 2014. He was the youngest of six children of the eponymous banker, businessman, and collector Chr. P. van Eeghen (1880–1968), whose extensive collection of Amsterdam prints and drawings is preserved in that city’s Stadsarchief, where another of the six siblings, Chris’s sister Isabella (“Isa”) van Eeghen (1913–1996), worked for many years as an historian and adjunct archivist. Like his father, Chris followed a career in trade and banking, while in his private life he pursued his shared passion for drawings, music, and family. The drawings that he inherited from his father were augmented by his own acquisitions, which he bought, for instance, at auctions during his business travels to London and Paris. At the insistence of his wife, Meke, he added Italian drawings to his holdings.

Chris was a loyal member of the Amsterdamse Prentkring (Print Circle), hosting his last kunstbeschouwing (art viewing) at his home on 16 February 2013. A selection of mostly seventeenth-century Dutch drawings was passed around the table, as the members listened with bated breath to his explanations. The Van Eeghen family has enjoyed a long association with the Prentkring (founded in 1947). Chris’s father and his brother Piet van Eeghen (1911–1968) were members, as are now his daughter Ada and his son, Chris Jr. He himself long served as the group’s chairman (or vinder [“finder”], as the role was called by early member I. Q. van Regeren Altena) and faithfully attended as many meetings as possible. His interests were far from confined to the period and genre in which he himself collected, so he always looked long and hard at the prints and drawings circulated by other hosts. (This meant that the smooth progress of the objects around the table could sometimes come to a complete standstill when the sheet arrived at his seat!)

Through art-historical publications, his and others, Chris ensured that his collection and his accumulated knowledge were shared with a wider public. Readers of this journal will be familiar not only with drawings reproduced in these pages from his collection, but also with his own research. Part III of his in-depth study of the drawings of Simon de Vlieger can be found on pp. 313–42 (the first two parts having appeared in 2006 and 2011). One of his last truly memorable days, according to his family, was spent working on this text with Editor Jane Turner a few weeks before his death. His energies sustained by a post-prandial glass of spirits, he worked tirelessly, refusing all offers of a break or rest. Such a pity that he was unable to see this final chapter in print! The same applies to a book he was preparing with Pieter van der Kuil on seventeenth-century Dutch drawings of views along the Rhine between Rhenen and Cleves, closely linked to Wolfheze and Oosterbeek (where the family has a property). That book, completed by Laurens M. Schoemaker, will be published later this autumn by Uitgeverij Matrijs, Utrecht.

Coen Schimmelpenninck van der Oije
Chairman, De Amsterdamse Prentkring