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**The Cover**

The Renaissance came late to The Netherlands, and when it did arrive it came as a crossbreed that bore little resemblance to either its northern or Italian forebears. "For a generation or so," quotes art historian Helen Gardner, "the north . . . 'simply could not get its Renaissance on straight.'"

At the beginning of this period stands Jan van Hemessen (c 1500-1566?), whose uncertain history is typical of many artists of that period. He was born about 1500, in the village of Hemixen, near Antwerp, and died sometime after 1556 but before 1566, perhaps in Haarlem. He married before 1528, had a daughter, Katharina (who herself became a painter of note), was a master by 1524, and dean of the guild in 1548. He sold a house in Antwerp in 1550; after that he disappears from the public records. His last dated painting is in 1556. Further, he was also

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