

# Visualizing a new reality: Sumatra, land and culture in pictures in 1892

Photographs from C. B. Nieuwenhuis 1863-1922

By drs (Msc) Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Christiaan Benjamin Nieuwenhuis was his full name, but he was also well-known as C. Nieuwenhuis shortly. The pictures below are from his album "Nieuwenhuis, C: Sumatra's Westkust; Padang 1920". This album is part of my library.

He came to Batavia-Jakarta as a volunteer for military service to join the Dutch East-Indian Armed Forces and entered a military band as a trumpeter in 1884. Batavia-Jakarta in the olden days numbered a lot of elegant colonial clubhouses called in Dutch: sociëteiten / societies. Military musicians were always very welcome in these upper class establishments with bandstands, such as Clubhouse Concordia, along the Waterlooplein-Lapangan Banteng (Buffalo Square) and Harmony Society. Societeit Harmonie-Harmony Society was to be found at the junction of the southern end of Molenvliet East-JI Gajah Mada and the northern end of Rijswijkse Straat-JI Majapahit. Interested visitors of our site could take a glance at our Photo Gallery via our index page.

Later Nieuwenhuis learned to be a photographer in one of the private studios in Batavia-Jakarta. I don't know which one. In 1892 he had a studio of his own in Padang along Sumatra's West Coast. He made portraits of Europeans and wealthy native Sumatrans. He did a lot of travelling all over Sumatra photographing landscapes, towns and infrastructure like bridges, railway tracks, trains and railway stations. Nieuwenhuis had special interest in the native population and their culture: Aceh, Batak, Minangkabau, daily life, traditional dresses. The photographs, in an album or individually, were sold to travellers, authors and to popular as well as scientific publishers. In 1901 he started a second studio in Medan, North Sumatra (in Sultanate Deli, not Atjeh-Aceh).

Colonial photographers earned a lot of money taking pictures of natives and their cultures. They visualized a new reality. These photographers in the Dutch East-Indies were mostly Dutchmen. On Sumatra C. J. Kleingrothe, H. Ernst and C. B. Nieuwenhuis were celebrities in their field. After 1925 their work has been continued by Chinese and Indonesians increasingly, but from 1880 until around 1925 Europeans and Indos (mixed blood) were the trendsetters of colonial photography.

Christiaan Benjamin Nieuwenhuis died in Medan in 1922.

This article consists of 15 pages and 25 photographs. I gave account of my source in the start of this page 1.



1. Apenberg / Monkeys Mountain at the mouth of Padang Rivier / Padang River, Sumatra 1892

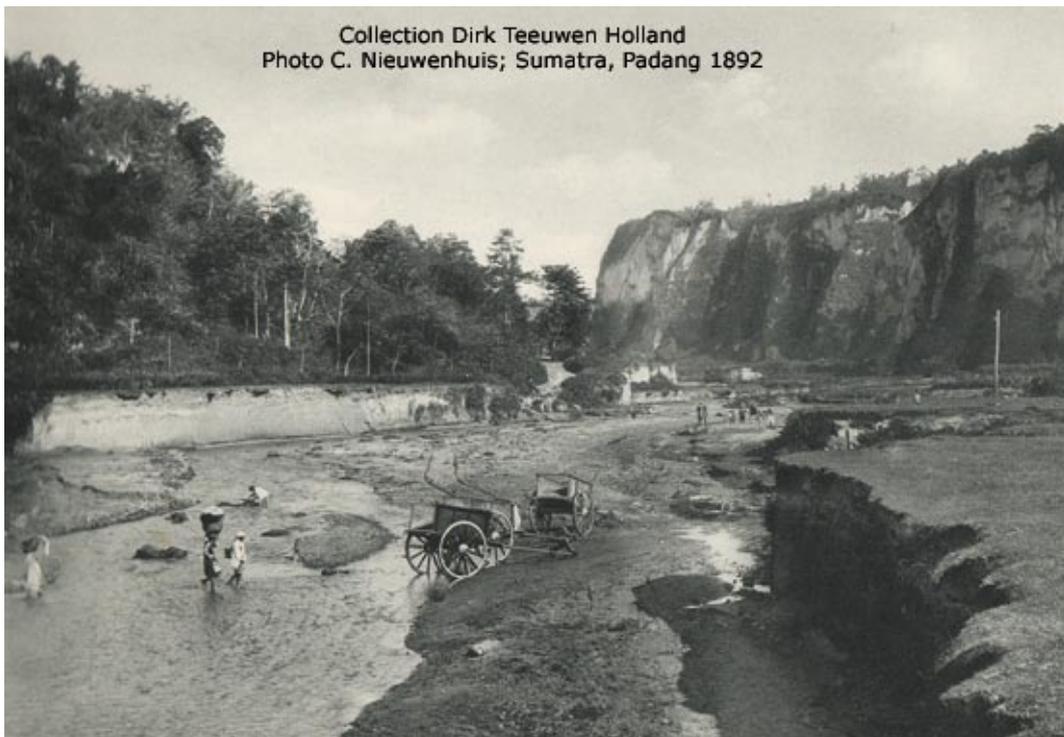


Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

2. Michielsplein / Michiels Square and Padri Wars Memorial at Padang, West Coast Sumatra 1892



3. Railway track and station at Kota Baru, West Coast Sumatra 1892



4. Karbouwengat / Water-buffalo Hole (Ngarai Sianok) near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



5. Karbouwengat / Water-buffalo Hole (Ngarai Sianok) near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



6. Karbouwengat / Water-buffalo Hole (Ngarai Sianok) near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

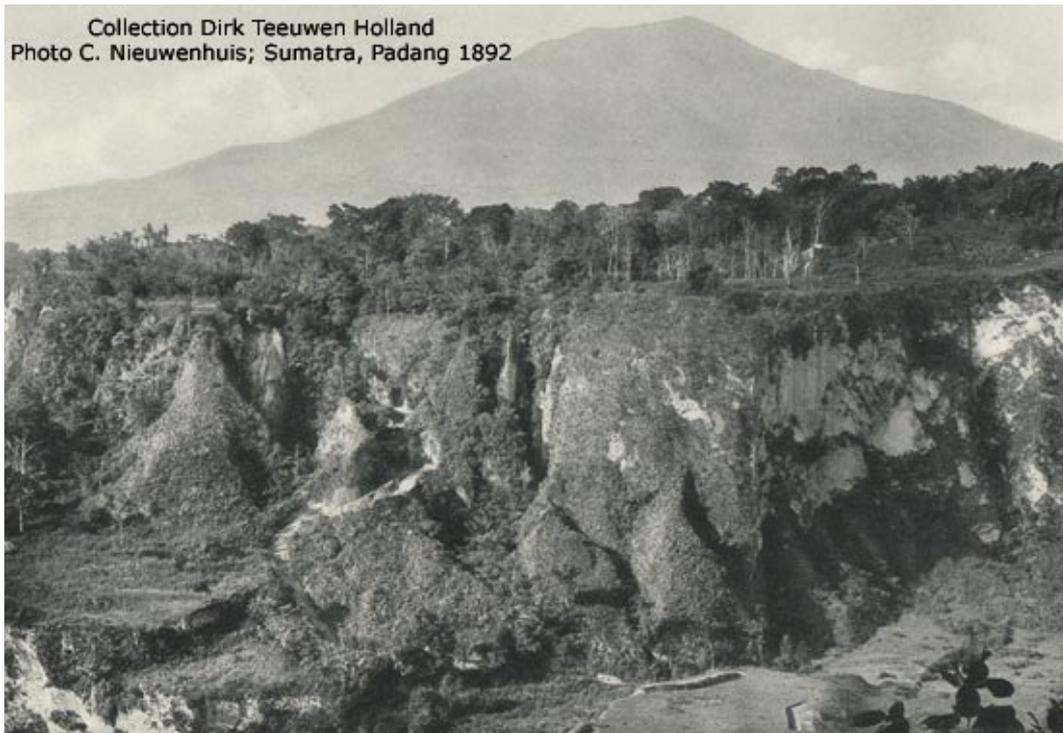
7. Karbouwengat / Water-buffalo Hole (Ngarai Sianok) near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra  
1892



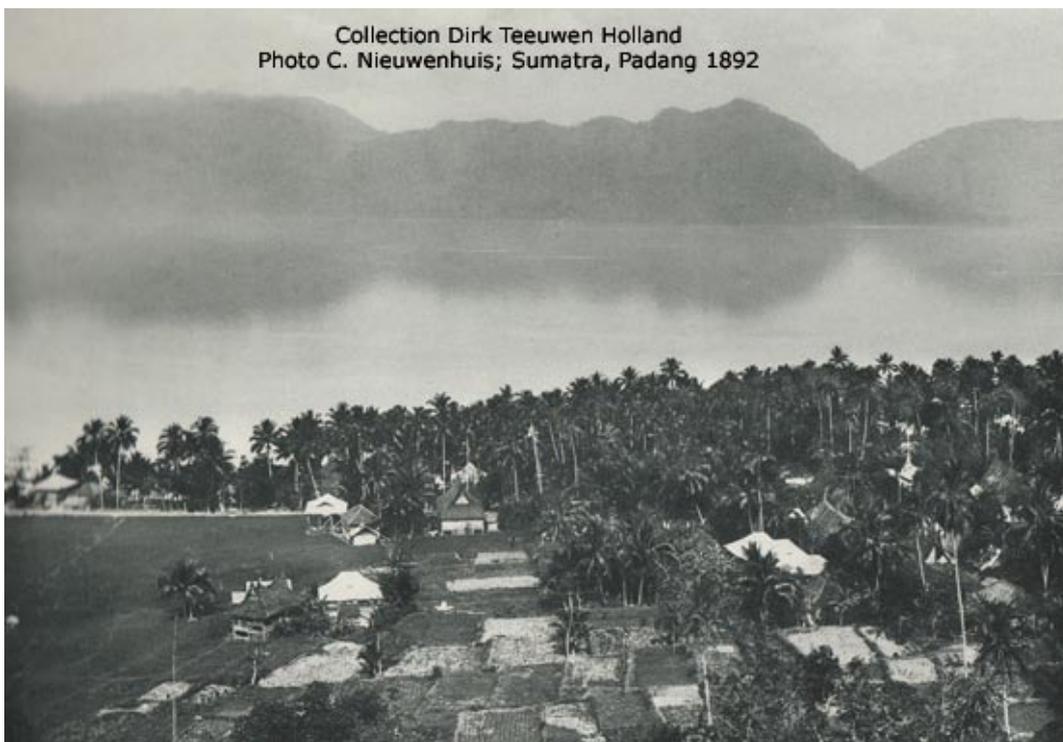
8. Paddi (rice) cultivation under the volcano Merapi near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



9. Kampung Taluk near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



10. Karbouwengat / Water-buffalo Hole (Ngarai Sianok) road to Kota Gedang near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



11. Meer van Manindjau / Lake Manindjau eighty kilometres west from Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

12. Malay from Kota Gedang not far from Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892

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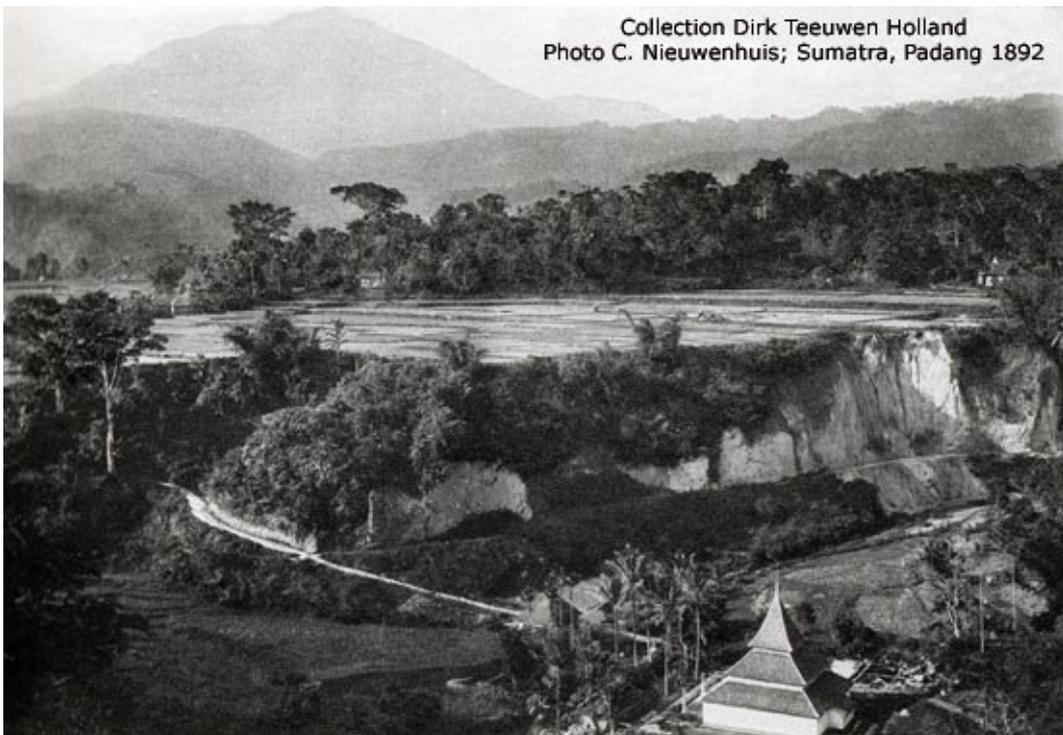
13. Fishermen on Meer van Maninjau / Lake Maninjau, near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



14. Shore of Meer van Maninjau / Lake Maninjau near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892

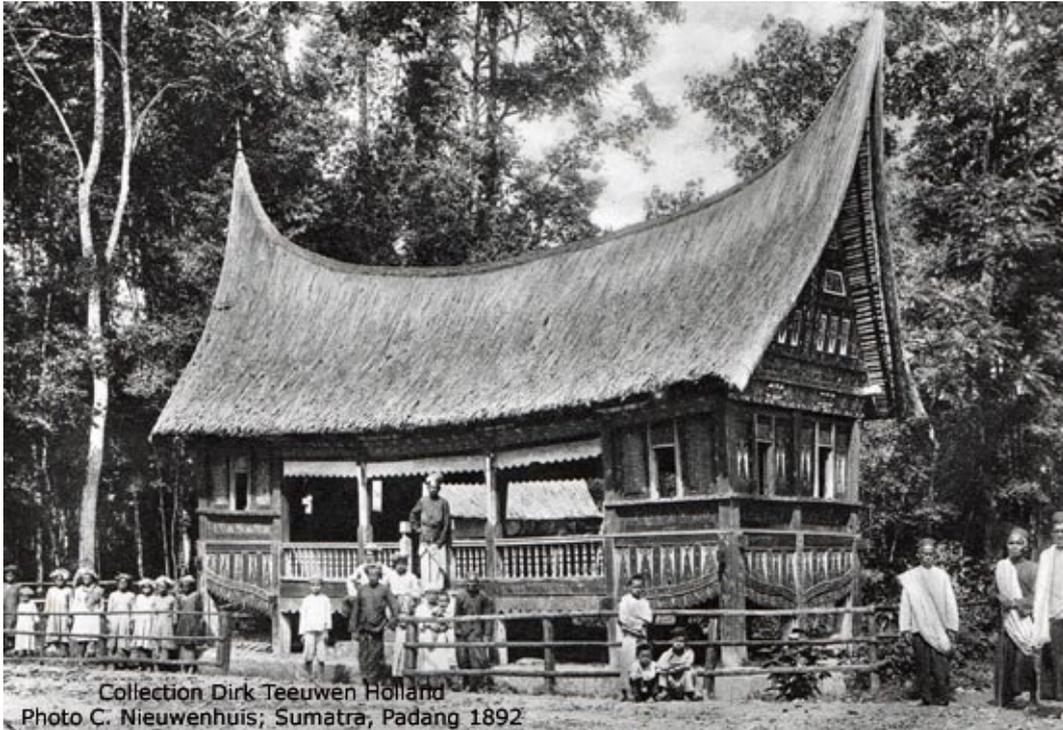


15. Meer van Manindjau / Lake Maninjau near Fort De Kock / Bukittinggi, Sumatra 1892



16. Landscape near Matur, thirty kilometres east from Lake Maninjau, Sumatra 1892

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Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

17. House at Matur, Sumatra 1892



Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

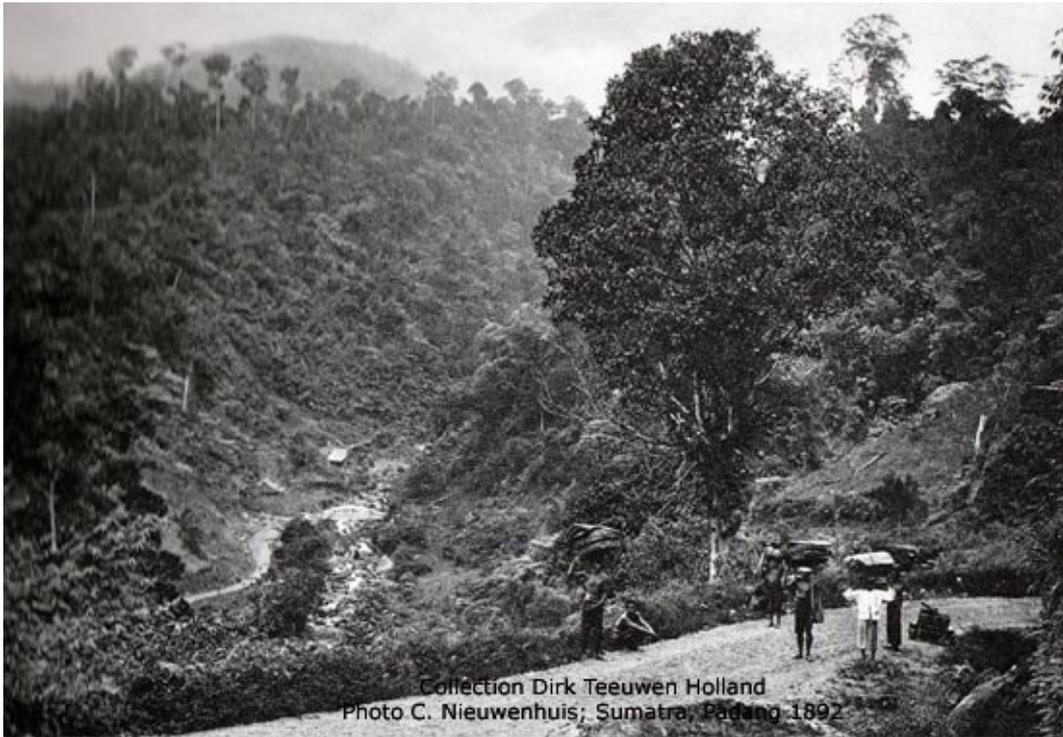
18. Matur, thirty kilometres east from Meer van Manindjau / Lake Manindjau and fifty kilometres west from Fort De Kock / Tubuttinggi, Sumatra 1892



19. Batipu near Meer van Singarak / Lake Singarak, Central Sumatra 1892

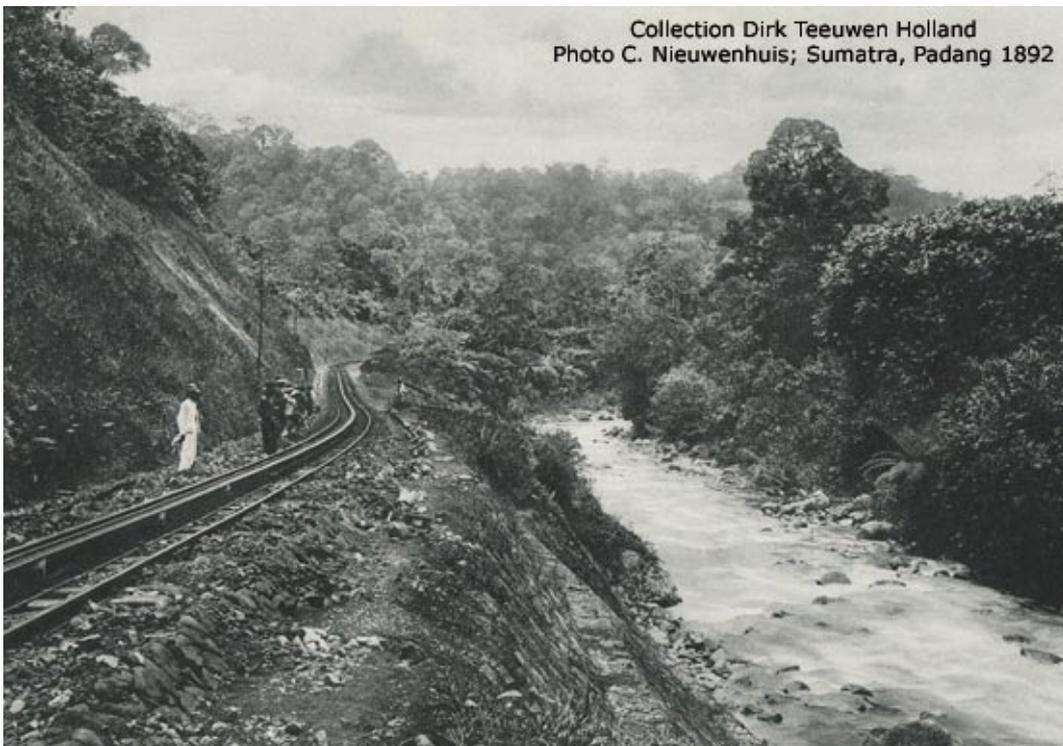


20. Street in Singarak, Central Sumatra 1892



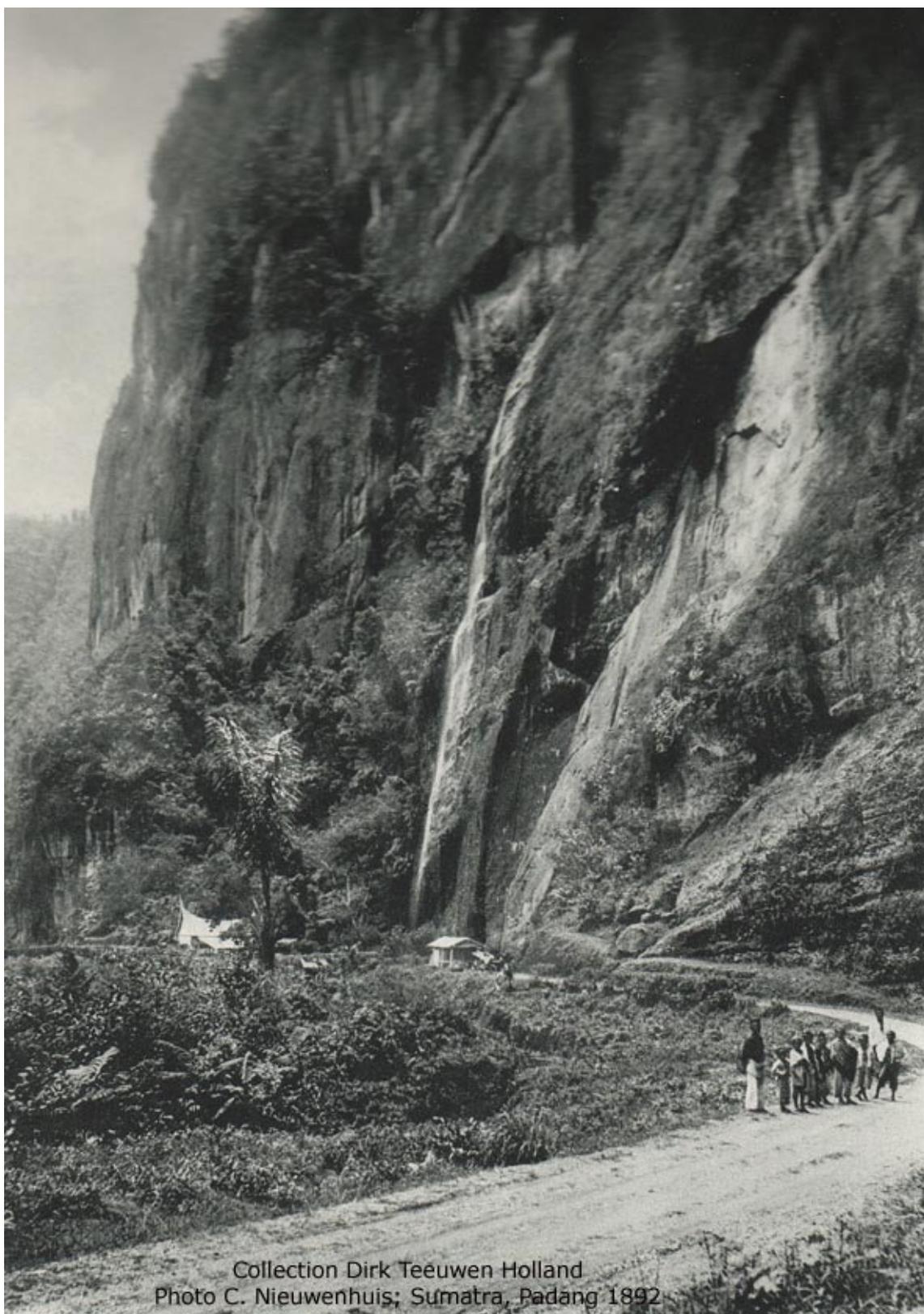
Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

21. Lubuk Peraku between Padang and (seventy kilometres to the east) Lubuk Kilangan, Sumatra  
1892



Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

22. Anei Kloof / Anei Gorge near Padang, Sumatra 1892



Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

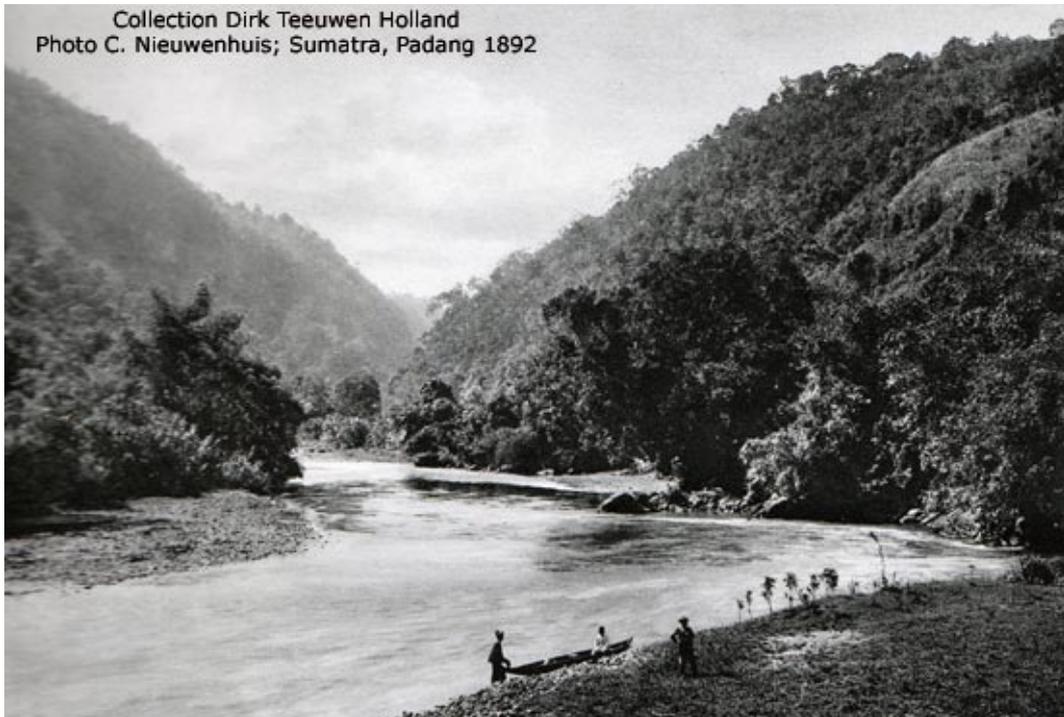
23. Harau Kloof / Harau Gorge twenty kilometres east from Fort De Kock / Bukuttinggi, Sumatra  
1892

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Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

24. Houses near Padang, Sumatra 1892



Collection Dirk Teeuwen Holland  
Photo C. Nieuwenhuis; Sumatra, Padang 1892

25. Ombilin Rivier / River Ombilin near Sawah Lunto, Central Sumatra 1892  
The Ombilin River flows from Lake Singkarak eastward to Strait of Malacca.

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