

Preface

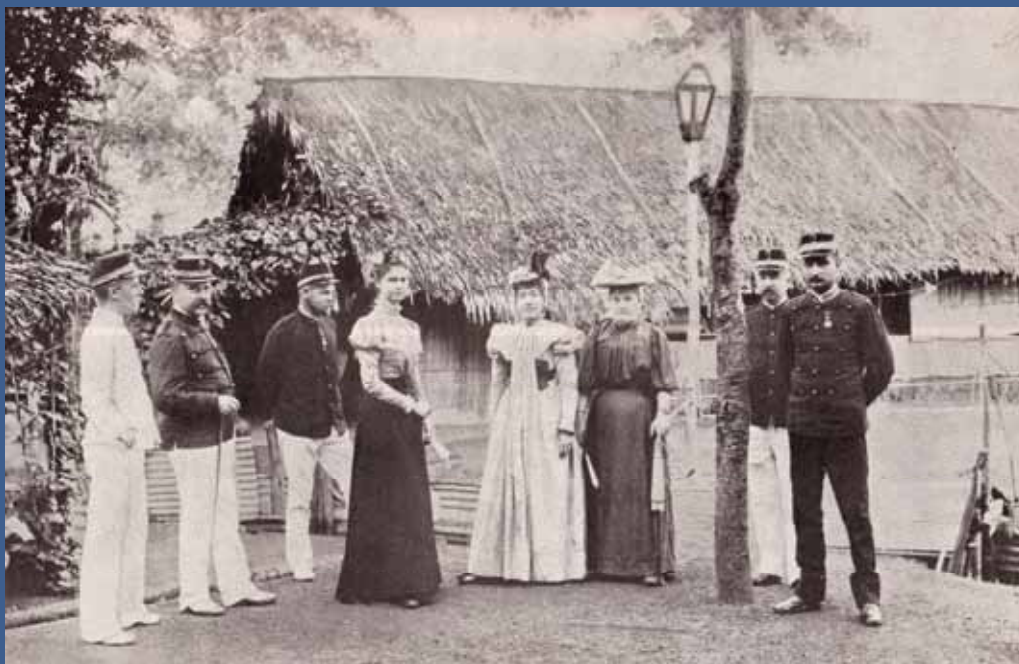


Preface picture 1. Groot-Atjeh / Aceh Proper 1875.

The author describes only the essentials of one of the most fascinating episodes from the Dutch colonial past as well as from the history of Aceh: the Aceh War. The Aceh War is a part of the modern history of the Acehnese struggle for national identity and for Acehnese self-esteem. On the other hand this war has laid the foundation of the boundaries of Indonesia.

In 1873 the central problem was the state of anarchy of Aceh. Therefore colonial powers were not able to start diplomatic negotiations with an Acehnese government to solve conflicts.

Later, anarchy as well as colonial arrogance made peace negotiations between The Netherlands and Aceh impossible and caused a lot of misery on both sides. In a way the Aceh War never came to an end.



P p.2. Dutch officers and their ladies in Kota Radja, approximately 1880.

**P p.3. Dutch military in front of the kraton of Kota Radja / Banda Aceh. The photo was taken shortly after the capture of the kraton in 1874.**



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2. the second expedition (December 9, 1873, until September 1881);
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**Pictures:**

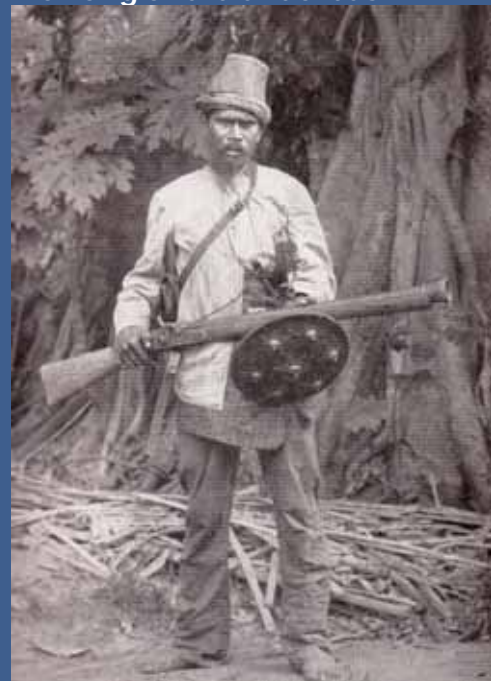
**P p.1: G. L. Kepper, Wapenfeiten Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger; The Hague Holland 1898, p. 360**

**P p.2; H.C. Zentgraaff, Atjeh; Batavia 1936**

**P p.3: G. L. Kepper, Wapenfeiten Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger; The Hague Holland 1898, p. 373**

**P p.4: J. C. Brassier, Soldatenleven in de Indische wildernis; Zutphen Holland 1930, p. 170**

**P p.4. Acehnese villager with klewang and blunderbus.**





Sources:

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Jongejans, p. 24a

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## **1. The first Dutch expedition (March 26 until April 29, 1873)**

*Summary:*

*Some explanation about the roots of all the trouble between The Netherlands East-Indies and Aceh.*

*1870! Sumatra Pact between The Netherlands and Great-Britain. The Netherlands are free to put Acehnese affairs straight.*

*1873 March! The Dutch declare war on the sultanate of Aceh.*

*1873 April 4! The Dutch invade Aceh.*

*1873 April 29) The Dutch are forced to leave Aceh because of their miserable military and civil intelligence.*

In 1824, under the London Treaty, the British and the Dutch came to an agreement in the matter of colonial affairs. The Dutch promised to charge themselves with the maintenance of security in the waters around Aceh without interfering with the independence of the sultanate. **(1.1)** In 1870 The Netherlands and Great-Britain substituted a new convention, the Sumatra Pact, for the London Treaty. The obligation of political non-interference in the Acehnese region came to an end.

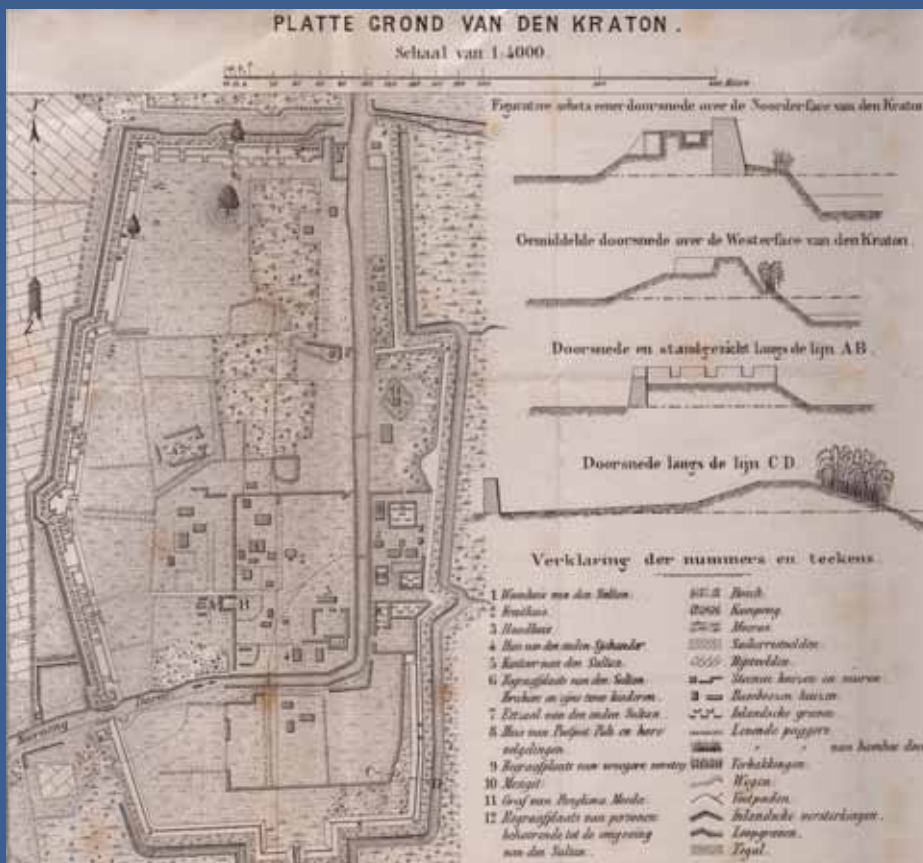
In 1872 the sultan of Aceh, fearing for a war with the Dutch, appealed to the government of Turkey and the president of France. In 1873 an Acehnese delegation called on the American and Italian consulates in Singapore. The ambassadors of The Netherlands in Istanbul and Paris, as well as the Dutch consul in Singapore, informed their authorities about the Acehnese efforts. A situation might arise which would be very threatening to the position of the Dutch in the Far East.

Complaints caused by the increasing insecurity in the Acehnese waters urged the necessity of action being taken by the minister of the colonies Franssen van de Putte and the governor-general of The Netherlands East-Indies Loudon. The threatening of shipping came mostly from subservient Acehnese potentates. **(1.2)** From the Acehnese point of view piracy was an internal matter, because this was the result of mutual rivalry between a couple of subordinates.

The sultan of Aceh, Tuanku Mahmud Syah, being at the head of a land of anarchy, refused to start negotiations with the Government. **(1.3)** He also ignored the order to recognize the Dutch authority. Such a recognition would impede the presence of a rival power in Sumatra.



P 1.1. Bivouac on the beach near Olehleh, first expedition 1873



P 1.2. Kota Radja, Kraton 1873

Taking in the situation from the Dutch point of view, the Government had good reasons to carry on this campaign. (1.4)

- The Acehnese efforts to secure the assistance of a foreign power were threatening for the Dutch political influence in East-Asia.

- The opening of the Suez Canal and the development of steam-navigation caused an augmentation of the traffic through the Straits of Malacca instead of the Straits of Sunda. (1.5)

- The erection of a lighthouse at the northern entrance of the Straits of Malacca became a necessity. The Dutch wanted to busy themselves with this matter. If the Dutch did not pay attention, other seafaring nations would do so.

- The continuous threatening of shipping by Acehnese potentates and the impotence of the Acehnese sultanate to take action. The Dutch had to meet their obligations to the British.

- The sultan refused to enter into negotiations for a demarcation of boundaries.

After an ultimatum to the sultan of Aceh, war was declared to his kingdom on March 26, 1873. On April 4 an expeditionary force, 3600 military, arrived under general Köhler at the mouth of Krueng Aceh / Aceh River to march upon the sultan's kraton, in normal circumstances a stroll of two hours. The kraton was a fortified "palace", in fact a small fortified town with about thousand inhabitants. Around the kraton there were a couple of villages and a fortified mosque. Later the Dutch named the place Kota Radja, present Banda Aceh. (1.6)



1.3 Landing April 1873, first expedition



#### 1.4. General J. H. R. Köhler



Dutch ships, men of war, started to fire and to bombard the coast. On April 6 the colonial forces landed on muddy Pantai / Beach Ceureumen, east of Ulee Lheue / Olehleh and west of Aceh River. Almost instantly nine colonial soldiers were killed and 47 wounded, mostly by surprising Acehese klewang-attacks from the surrounding bush.

Acehnese rifles and guns appeared to be rather modern because of commercial relations with Singapore and Penang. One of the six warships, the Citadel van Antwerpen, received twelve hits above the waterline on the first landing day. (1.7) The fortified Mesjid Raya / Great Mosque was taken after a sharp fight. During this combat the commander of the troops, general Köhler, met with his death.



**P 1.5. Captain E. W. Bischoff van Heemskerck kills with his revolver three Acehese and puts two others to his sword in an attempt to encourage his wavering soldiers. April 6, 1873 on the beach near Olehleh (Pantai Ceureumen) at 9.00 pm. Litho P. J. Veer 1894**

Köhler was looking through his binocular under the shade of a tree nearby the open backside of the fortifications of the mosque. Köhler did so because Acehese fighters continued to attack this Dutch Achilles' heel. During this observation a bullet took his life. Later the tree was named after him: Köhler Tree. Colonel Van Daalen took over command. Van Daalen's grandson became well-known because of his memorable military expedition in the Acehese inner regions Gayo and Alas.



The exact position of the centre of the kraton could not be fixed soon. The soldiers became over-fatigued. The operations had to be discontinued and the forces withdrawn to the coast. In the bivouac the sick and wounded accumulated, because of the surrounding swamps and the lack of adequate shelter. The forces returned to Java on April 29, 1873. The Dutch navy put up a blockade off the shores. A second expedition became inevitable.

#### **P 1.6 Captain E. W. Bischoff van Heemskerck**

The expedition was a failure, because the affair had been considered as a bagatelle and because of rushing matters. The Government had neglected to make inquiries regarding country, people and the location of the centre of the kraton as well as Acehnese military forces and the influence of religion. In battle, on Dutch side, four officers and 52 men were killed; 27 officers and 411 men were wounded.

#### **Pictures:**

**P 1.1: A. J. A. Gerlach, Neerlands Heldenfeiten in Oost-Indië; The Hague 1876, p. 303**

**P 1.2: A. J. A. Gerlach, Neerlands Heldenfeiten in Oost-Indië; The Hague 1876, p. 303**

**P 1.3: Detail of a map from Paul van't Veer, De Atjeh-oorlog; Amsterdam 1969, p. 1**

**P 1.4: M.H. du Croo, Marechaussee in Atjeh; Maastricht Holland 1942, p. 24**

**P 1.5: G. L. Kepper, Wapenfeiten Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger; The Hague Holland 1898, p. 337**

**P 1.6: G. L. Kepper, Wapenfeiten Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger; The Hague Holland 1898, p. 338**

#### **Notes:**

**(1.1) In the 17<sup>th</sup> century there was a friendly relationship between Aceh and Holland for some time. Acheneese noblemen paid a visit to The Netherlands on the invitation of the Dutch stadtholder pangaran / prince Maurits of Orange.**

**(1.2) Friendly relations with the sultanate ought to be aimed at, but strong action would have to be taken against piracy. According to the Dutch these aims were incompatible because of the anarchy in the region.**

**(1.3) I (DT) mean: Dutch-Indian Government. Described as "Government" (in Dutch "Gouvernement") for short.**

**The sultan's refusal was dictated by "the-internal-matters-argument" and because of his personal antipathy against the Dutch negotiator the resident (governor of a district) Netscher. I don't know the reason why the sultan disliked the Dutchman.**

**(1.4) E.S. de Klerck II, p. 342 and 343.**

**(1.5) Steam-navigation could operate independently of gulf-stream and trade-wind.**

**(1.6) By reason of simplicity I shall call this settlement Kota Radja consequently.**

**(1.7) Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, p. 24**



## 2. The second expedition (December 9, 1873 until September 1881)

Summary:

Some explanation about the internal affairs of Aceh.

1873 December! Disembarkation of Dutch forces east of Aceh River under command of general Van Swieten.

1874! Occupation of Kota Radja by the Dutch.

1874, 1875! Construction of the first military barrier line ("Pel's barrier"). This defence line protected the northern part of Aceh Proper.

1877! Van der Heijden, the one-eyed general, or king-one-eye according to Acehnese folklore. He was appointed to be commander in chief.

1878, 1879! Van der Heijden conquers Aceh Proper and some surrounding districts.

1880! Replacement of Pel's barrier, construction of a defence line, consisting of bentengs located from Meulaboh on the western coast until Sigli in the east.



**P 2.1. General J. Van Swieten**

A sagi was an Acehnese district consisting of a number of mukims. A mukim, one or more kampongs / villages, was an Islamic parish. For example the Sagi of the XXVI Mukims was a district with 26 parishes. Two or more sagi's could form a federation. Aceh Proper/ Groot Atjeh consisted of the Sagi of the XXV Mukims, the Sagi of the XXVI Mukims, the Sagi of the XXII Mukims and the sultan's district.

The position of the sagi-chiefs was heritable. The sultan, however, was elected. The three sagi-chiefs of Aceh Proper and other paladins had the right of voting. Such a voter was called panglima / war lord. Among them at that time, the chief of the Sagi of the XXII Mukims panglima Polim, an Acehnese nationalist, was primus inter pares. His sagi was located upstream River Aceh. As a rule the panglima's nominated one of the members of the many princely families (hulubalangs or radja-families) as a sultan.

Understandably, because of the preceding, Aceh Proper was a federation of three sagi's and a small area around Kota Radja, ruled directly by the sultan himself. Every sagi-chief and every hulubalang tried to expand his power at the cost of his neighbours. They had one aim in common: trying to minimize the power of the sultan.

The second expedition was almost twice as strong as the first one and better equipped. More information was gathered. The location of the centre of the kraton was known. The commander was general Van Swieten, for eleven years retired and aged 61. He was appointed because of his experience. True, he had gained a lot of experience during the colonial Bali- and Sulawesi-(Boni-)wars, but nevertheless, maybe, his advanced age was a handicap. He was very cautious and he conducted his operations in a slow manner. Van Swieten, a soldier with a conscience, was firmly opposed to the practice of burning down hostile kampongs by the colonial army. **(2.1)** Van Swieten was assisted by major-general Verspijck.



**P 2.2. The staff of the second expedition in January 25, 1874. Sitting from left to right: J. Van Swieten, G. M. Verspijck. Van Swieten and Verspijck are seated on old Achinese guns. Nowadays the guns belong to the collection of Museum and Military Home of Rest "Bronbeek" (on show in the gun-gallery of beautiful Bronbeek), Arnhem Holland.**

The military landed in the village of Leué nearby Gighen Estuary, east of Aceh River, ten kilometres north of desa / hamlet Kuala Gighen, December 9, 1873. Kota Radja was situated at the other side (west) of the Aceh-River. On January 6 (!) 1874 the fortified mosque was taken after heavy bombardments. Eight days later the outwork of the kraton was also overrun. On January 24 the Dutch occupied the kraton without a shot being fired. The natives were gone, because a cholera epidemic struck the area. The sultan, Tuanku Mahmud Siah, came down with cholera and died. However the Acehnese forces had hardly been shaken.

The opinion of Van Swieten was that there was nothing more to be done than quietly await the subjection of the Acehnese. The general's conclusion was based on the fact that he possessed the sultan's residence, which was (in his opinion) the heart of the Acehnese administration. But only a footing had been gained in so-called Groot-Atjeh / Aceh-Proper. However the sultanate was split up into a number of petty states, one of which being Aceh-Proper, the original sultanate. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1874 Aceh was declared Government territory. The declaration made no impression at all upon the natives.



### **P 2.3. General J. L. J. H. Pel**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 1874 Van Swieten returned to Batavia leaving general Pel behind. Casualties of the campaign (lasting five months): 28 officers and 1024 subordinates killed in battle, 52 officers and 1052 subordinates wounded or sick. The mortality **(2.2)** gave cause for permanent concern.

In the opinion of Pel it would be necessary to occupy the valley of the Aceh-River and to fence it off partly by a line of military posts. The coast of Aceh-Proper had to be fenced off on the land-side at the same time.

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The rest of Aceh would be isolated, import of opium and weapons from the coast would be impeded and the blockade by the Dutch navy could be restricted. Sources of Acehese welfare would drain up. These sources were the pepper and betel-nut production in the coastal districts. To finance the war with this production was now impossible for the Acehese, but the blockade and the defence-line made smuggling profitable.



#### P 2.4. Pel's Defence line

In addition: the importance of the regions (outside Aceh-Propert) was underestimated. Therefore Pel's ideas were doomed to failure. However the plan was approved by the Government.

A barrier line of bentengs (mud-forts) was built from Krueng Raya in the north to Krueng Raba in the south. "The number of posts had risen to 47 at the time and the forces had been gradually increased to 8500 soldiers, 3000 chained convicts and 500 free coolies in 1886. During this year of evil (1876) the deaths numbered 1400 military and 1500 chained convicts. Disabled were 7600 men. The Government had to raise 17000 men to keep 8500 military on their legs. (2.3)

The war expenses were no less important; they amounted to 40 million guilders up to 1876 and increased during the same year at the rate of a million and a half per month." (2.4)

By comparison: in 1876 the expenses of the Government came to 140 million guilders totally. (2.5)

Pel died in a bivouac near Kota Radja on February 25, 1876 due to a heart attack. He was buried in Kota Radja in Pusara (Cemetery) Peucut / Kerkhof Peucut.

General Van der Heijden, commander in chief since July 1877, was instructed to bring the whole valley of the Aceh-River in Aceh-Propert into subjection. At first the coastal area was chastised (Leuhong, Simpang Olim, Langsa and Samalanga). But nevertheless the situation in Aceh-Propert remained turbulent.

Because of anarchism Acehese were used to fight against each other. Every village was fortified and every Acehese man possessed a rifle and a klewang, sharp as a razor. To put the case cynically, one could say that fighting was more or less their favourite pursuit. Now groups of natives had the delightful opportunity to put their activities elsewhere also: in front and behind the Dutch mud-forts of the defence line in Aceh-Propert. Being killed by the Dutch unbelievers meant going to heaven. A Dutchman, as an unbeliever killed in battle, went straight to hell.

The Dutch wanted to change the situation once and for all. The aim of the Government was to furnish a clear proof of the superiority of the colonial forces over the Acehese. The force was increased from 8500 to 11000 men. In 1878, after his campaign in the coastal districts, Van der Heijden marched into the valley of River Aceh and realized a series of conquests with the expedition to Seulimeum in the remotest part. In 1878, because of the valley-expedition, the colonial losses were six military men and 42 wounded.

#### P 2.5. General J. H. R. Van der Heijden





Substituting most of the bentengs / mud forts built by Pel, Van der Heijden constructed a series of posts for the occupation of strategic places and for the protection of friendly disposed Acehnese. Military posts were established at Sigli on the north coast and Meulaboh on the west coast. Kota Radja was out of danger. Some twenty of Pel's small posts and blockhouses were still maintained. In fact their garrisons were withdrawn from active service!



**P 2.6. Soldiers in front of the northern gate of the kraton, Kota Radja 1874**

In September 1878 peace prevailed in the coastal districts. Van der Heijden decided to set up again a blockade by the navy until September 1881. Samalanga on the north coast was still a turbulent district. However, Samalanga asked for a pardon with success. Only Samalanga's Batee Iliee, a holy place and very much fortified, could resist the attacks of the soldiers of Van der Heijden. In 1877, while leading in vain a fierce assault on Batee Iliee, Van der Heijden received an injury from a bullet in his left eye. Despite his serious wound Van der Heijden continued to command his troops.

**Pictures:**

P 2.1, 2.3, 2.5: M.H. du Croo, *Marechaussee in Atjeh*; Maastricht Holland 1942, p. 24

P 2.2: M.H. du Croo, *Marechaussee in Atjeh*; Maastricht Holland 1942, p. 23

P 2.4: Red. P. Klein e.a., *Weerzien met Indië*; Zwolle 1995, detail of a map p. 837

P 2.6: G. L. Kepper, *Wapenfeiten Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger*; The Hague Holland 1898, p. 378

**Notes:**

(2.1) See "Max Havelaar" by E. Douwes Dekker (Multatuli), chapter 17 "the story of Saïdja and Adinda".

(2.2) Mainly malaria, beri-beri and cholera. A continuous, expensive replacement of troops was necessary.

(2.3) E.S. de Klerck II, p. 354,

(2.4) Paul van't Veer p.118

(2.5) Paul van't Veer, p. 170

### **3. The concentrated defence system 1881-1896**

*Summary:*

*Dutch policy and diplomatic opportunities.*

*1881 War expenses get out of hand and Dutch military action is substituted by civil administration.*

*1885 Construction of the third Dutch defence line protecting 55 square km in Aceh Proper. This line replaces the other ones.*

*1885 Teungku di Tiro preaches the holy war.*

*1893 The surrender of Teuku Umar*

*1896 Teuku Umar goes over to the Acehnese forces.*

*1898 The Dutch want consistent military as well as civil action against the Acehnese.*

On rare occasions the Dutch got a chance to solve the Acehnese problem. Presumption as well as Acehnese anarchy made a diplomatic success impossible. One such occasion was the following.

On the 24th of September 1872 an Acehnese ship saluted a Dutch man-of-war near the east coast of Aceh. It appeared that the Arab Habib Abdurrahman was on board. Abdurrahman had great influence with the sultan of Aceh. He had done much travelling and in 1864 had established himself in Aceh. In Aceh he had gained great respect.

On board of the man-of-war the Dutch and Abdurrahman discussed their grievances and the latter declared that he was willing to come to an arrangement. The Arab was aware of the fact that that Aceh could not escape western influence and that it would be much better to come to an understanding with the Dutch. The Government however saw no good in his services being of the opinion that the power of the sultan was overrated.

In 1875 Abdurrahman offered his services as an intermediary again. The Dutch declined his proposal. So the Arab joined the fighting on the Acehnese side and broke through the line of Dutch outposts in May 1878, but he was unable to hold his positions.

Thanks to the actions of Van der Heyden from July 1877 until September 1878, after the general's conquest of the whole valley of Aceh Proper, Habib Abdurrahman had been subjected in October 1878. He offered to leave the country and spent his remaining years of life in Mecca enjoying an annual allowance offered by the Government.

"In order to show the world that the sultanate of Aceh was still under one lawful reign, Tuanku Muhamad Daud Syah was installed as sultan in the mosque of Indrapuri in 1878...the sultan was still under age.." **(3.1)** Maybe this installation was the main reason of Abdurrahman to surrender.

In April 1881 the military governor Van der Heijden was replaced by Pruys van der Hoeven, resident of Palembang at the time. Military rule was substituted by civil administration. All military patrols previously exercised by Van der Heijden, were suspended. A field-police force was charged with maintaining of peace and order.

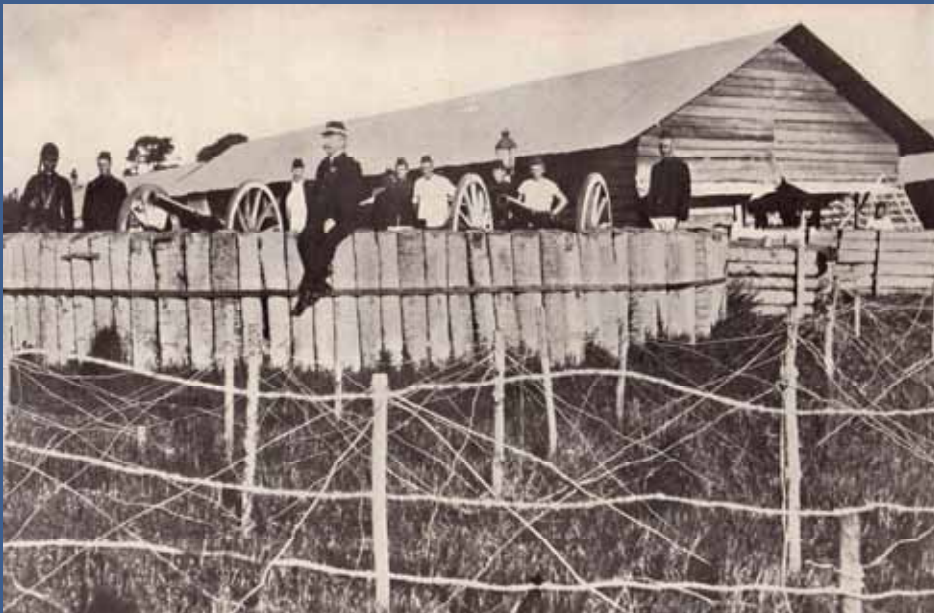
However: **(3.2)**

- War expenses had amounted to at least 135 million guilders.
- The most influential chiefs were still hostile.
- Persistence in the struggle was advocated by the ulamas.
- The pacification of the mainland depended principally upon the disposition of the dependencies on the coasts.
- The false idea that military measures were no longer needed to maintain peace.

Pruys van der Hoeven, an interim leader, was succeeded by Laging Tobias. In September 1883 the new civil governor described the situation as bad. The state of affairs made it possible for the Acehnese to infiltrate behind the Dutch defence lines and caused disorganization of Dutch troops. The ulama **(3.3)** Teungku di Tiro Syeh Saman and other Islamic priests declared the holy war to the Dutch. Di Tiro succeeded in mobilizing about 5000 men. A Dutch aggressive policy was highly necessary.

To defray expenses the Government decided to introduce a shipping regulation and a concentrated defence system.

Under the shipping regulation / sloopvaartregeling certain Acehnese ports were again opened up for international trade. Control had to be exercised by custom-house officers. Duties, formerly due to the sultan would fall to the Government. A small proportion would fall to loyal rajahs and chiefs.



**P 3.1.  
Benteng  
Tjot  
Mantjang,  
defence  
line 1885.**

The government decided to concentrate the position of the military forces in a ring of bentengs around Kota Radja (in Dutch "Geconcentreerde Linie") at about an hour's distance from it. The fortifications were connected by a circular railway and three branch lines linked up with Kota Radja. In 1885 this defence line was completed. The evacuation of the posts built by Van der Heijden outside this line as well as the construction of the Geconcentreerde Linie itself caused heavy casualties. The enemy grew bolder from day to day.

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**P 3.2. Colonial mortars (in Dutch: Coehoorn-mortier) around 1875. The Dutchman Menno van Coehoorn invented this weapon in 1680.**

In the eyes of the Acehnese the withdrawal of the troops was a token of weakness. Nevertheless now Van Swieten's ideas were carried into effect. True: a period of calm reigned after Pel's activities. But partisans were only temporarily paralysed by Van der Heijden's efficacious actions. The new governor Laging Tobias, 1883-1884, had good reason to demand vigorous action without delay. Unfortunately there was only one vigorous action taken by the Government: his replacement by colonel Demmeni in 1884.

Colonel Demmeni was of the opinion that the opposition in Aceh Proper was not dependent on the support from the rest of the country. So Demmeni did not exercise any constraint in the coastal districts. Results: increasing lawlessness, preaching of a holy war and raising of war funds. The Acehnese war party became arrogant and powerful under the lead of Teungku Chi'di Tiro Muhamad Saman, the ulama of the greatest influence. The Dutch bentengs were continually fired upon, Acehnese gangs operated behind the defence line, residents inside the barrier supported the enemy. In 1886 Demmeni died and was replaced by General Van Teijn.

In 1888 Van Teijn was allowed to close the west coast to trade, because the enemy created trouble there. Later that year Van Teijn closed the north coast as well. In 1890 he sent troops to Idi. The closing of the coasts caused much privation and compelled many chiefs to subjection. In 1889 Teungku Chi'di Tiro Muhamad Saman died. In 1891 Van Teijn retired on account of ill-health and was succeeded by the lenient colonel Pompe van Meerdervoort. In 1892 Van Meerdervoort was replaced by colonel Deykerhoff.

"Deykerhoff's system was based on the notion that the more substantial classes were longing for peace and quietness, whereas the others, who had nothing to lose, were averse to it. Therefore the important thing was to gain the adherence of the peaceful classes to the cause of pacification by using them to oust the mischief-makers and to consolidate the territory to be cleared. The shipping regulations would also have to be put into operation again and those dependencies which remained recalcitrant would have to be coerced to obedience by the closing of their ports." **(3.4)**



**P 3.3. Dutch defence line (bentengs and railways) in 1885.**

At first there was no efficient reaction from the Government. Acting on the advice of Snouck Hurgronje (see below) the Dutch authorities accepted the surrender of the important Acehese leader Teuku Umar in September 1893. Accompanied by fifteen of his panglimas he paid allegiance to the Dutch government. **(3.5)**

Teuku Umar, a man who had given repeated proofs of his unreliability **(3.6)**, offered to clear Aceh Proper from partisans. His offer was accepted. He was given the right to possess an army of 250 men and was installed as uleebalang of Leupung,

south of Aceh- Proper. He was also to receive annually the sum of 66360 guilders. Because of so many painful memories the Dutch officially changed his name into Teuku Johan. Z 20



**P 3.4. Military column on its way to a benteng to relief the forces. Approximately 1890.**

In August 1893 Teuku Johan **(3.7)** was instructed to get to work and so he did with a lot of success. Thanks to Johan the Dutch were able to form a new defence line without important casualties for themselves. Giving pain to Dutch and British Teuku Johan went over to the enemy March 1896 taking along the whole of the weapons entrusted to him as well as large quantities of opium and a sum of money. From now on Teuku Johan carried out again his original businesses in high spirits under his initial name Teuku Umar.

The reasons of his treason, he betrayed his countrymen in the first place and later the Dutch, remained more or less unknown. Maybe everything was well thought-out from the beginning. Two years later, in 1898, his treason compelled recognition of the fact that consistent action was the essential condition to bring the Acehese to their knees. The Government had to come to a decision as to what to be done, because the population of Aceh Proper was going over to Umar's side.

**Pictures:**

P 3.1: H.C. Zentgraaff, *Atjeh; Batavia 1935*, p. 20

P 3.2: P. Van Meel (redakteur *Stabelan*), *Tanda mata KNIL; Dordrecht Holland 1983*, p. 14

P 3.3: From Robert Cribb, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia*; London 2000, p. 116

P 3.4: H.C. Zentgraaff, *Atjeh; Batavia 1935*, p. 21

**Notes:**

(3.1) Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, *Perang Kolonial Belanda di Aceh; Banda Aceh 1977*, p. 31 and 32

(3.2) E.S. de Klerck II, p. 356 and 357

(3.3) Ulama: muslim learned in sacred law and theology (Islam theologian). Their influence was very much underestimated by the Dutch. Every Acehnese with a clerical title was called *teungku*. The *ulama* was the highest in clerical status.

(3.4) E.S. de Klerck II, p. 361

(3.5) Pusat Dokumentasi dan informasi Aceh, p. 42 and 43

(3.6) E.S. de Klerck II, p. 362

(3.7) *Teuku Umar* was a *hulubalang* from the west coast. His powerful position was based on exploitation of pepper, intelligence, bravery, marriages of convenience and terror. In 1870 he married the fanatic *Tjut Nja Din*. *Umar* always tried to get closer to the Dutch when his pepper needed transport. He was engaged in acts of piracy: his raid on the Penang-Chinese steamboat *Hok Canton* in 1886 (*Rigas Bay*, west coast) and his involvement in the *Nisero* case. The *Nisero* was a British vessel. The vessel was stranded on the shore of west Aceh in 1883. The sailors were kept in captivity and a ransom was demanded. *Umar*, fighting on the Dutch side this time, promised to help the colonials. The Dutch steamer *Bengkoelen* took *Umar* and his men on board. Before reaching their destination (the whereabouts of the raiders) *Umar* and his men killed the boatmen and seized all the weapons they could get. Probably because his treatment by the Dutch was humiliating.



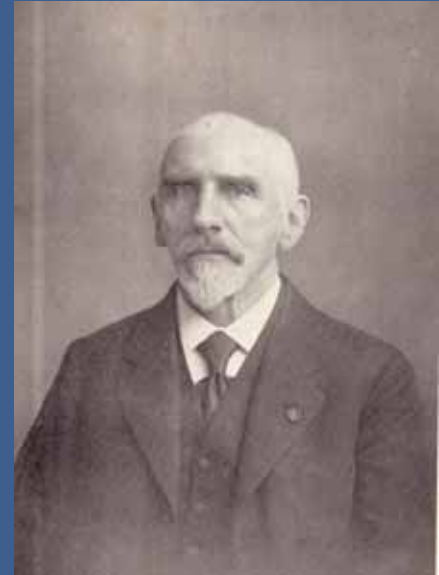
#### 4. The end: Vetter, Van Heutsz and Swart 1896-1918



P 4.1. General J.A. Vetter



P 4.2. General J.B. van Heutsz  
Snouck Hurgronje



P 4.3. dr C.  
Snouck Hurgronje

##### *Summary:*

*1896! General Vetter arrives in Aceh and starts uninterrupted military operations outside the defence line.*

*1893! Establishing of the Corps Marachaussee.*

*1898! Van Heutsz is governor of Aceh. Snouck Hurgronje is his advisor. Succesfull military operations are continued.*

*1903! Panglima Polim and the sultan offer their submission.*

*1904! Colonel Van Daalen subjects the interior of Aceh.*

*1913! Most of the Acehnese resistance comes to an end.*

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**P 4. 4. Family of sultan Muhamad Daud Syah after their detainment by petty lieutenant H.Christoffel on November 6, 1902.**

In 1893 the book "De Atjehers" by dr. C. Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) was published. "De Atjehers" contained the views of the author on social, political and religious relations in Aceh. Snouck was an university professor teaching Arabic and at the same time he was an advisor of the Government. He made researches into the Islam in Mekka under the name of Abd al-Ghaffar. During his stay in Mekka he met a lot of Acehnese. The book embodied Snouck's findings that, if an end was to be brought to the war, force of arms would have to be made use of. At the same time the Government had to furtherance the welfare of the Acehnese. The aim was to win the confidence of the natives. Simultaneously a report by colonel (later general) Van Heutsz (1851-1924) was published. Colonel Van Heutsz championed a war to the bitter end and expected no good to come out of the restoration of the sultanate. The Government thought such a restoration advisable.



**P 4.5. Teungku Umar**

In 1896 general Vetter arrived in Aceh. He secured the territory within the defence line in Aceh-Proper. In May uninterrupted military operations began. Peace was restored within the defence line and also in a wide circle around it. Hostile gangs were ousted. The sultan and panglima Polim fled to Pidië on the east coast. In 1897 the valley of River Aceh was pacified. The population returned to their villages. Chiefs offered their subjection. Vetter returned to Java.

In 1898 Van Heutsz had been appointed governor. Snouck was sent to Aceh to act as his advisor. Pidië was conquered. The morale of the Dutch troops was restored! In September 1898 Van Heutsz attacked the sultan and panglima Polim in the mountains of Pidië and at the same time a military expedition was hunting up Teuku Umar near the west coast. In 1899 Umar fell into an ambush and was killed.

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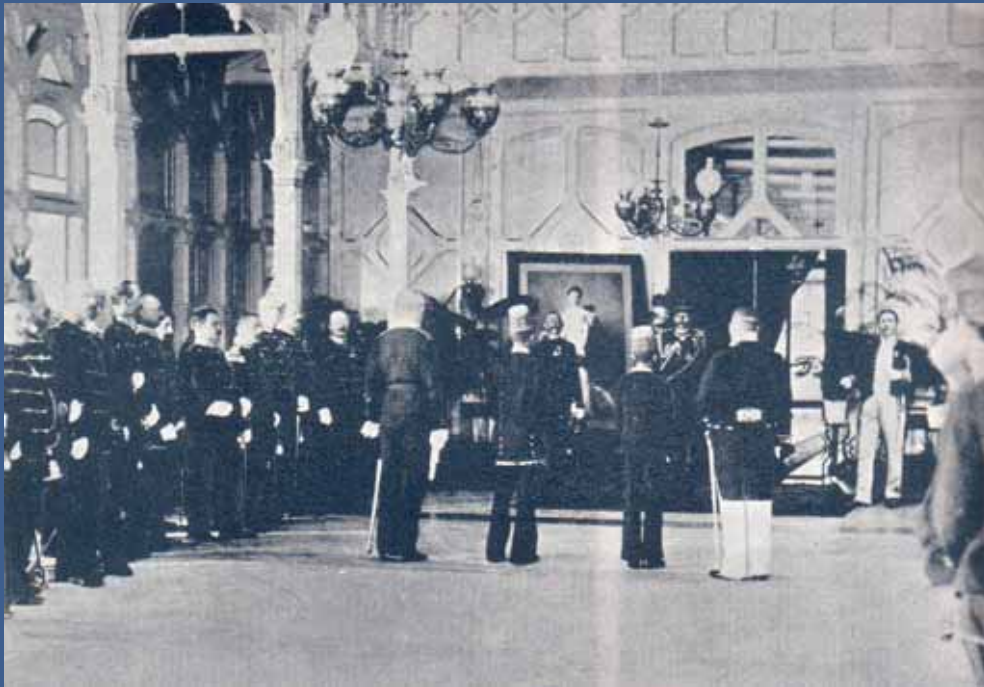


P 4.6.  
Marechaussees and  
"beeren" (convicts)  
fording a river in  
Aceh around 1900.





**P 4.7. Clockwise! Panglima Polim after he was forced to make peace in September 1903. Sultan Muhamad Daud Syah (1884-1903) in 1903 after his surrender to the Dutch. The sultan very shortly after his surrender in 1903.**



**P 4.8. Formal surrender by the sultan of Aceh in the governor's villa in Kota Radja 1903. The sultan is standing in the middle opposite major Hendrik Colijn and the portrait of Queen Wilhelmina. At the left side of the portrait (right for us): governor Van Heutsz.**

In July 1898 Van Heutsz invaded Idi and most of the petty states along the east coast. In 1899 the Dutch forces in Aceh were reduced. However during 1899 and 1900 continuous action was necessary in the dependencies. In 1901 Van Heutsz action took action against Samalanga. Batu Iliee was carried by assault. Operations on a large scale were no longer necessary. Consolidation was entrusted to the Corps Marechaussee ("forces of military police", established in 1893). The story of the Corps will be described in a separate article.

In 1902 marechaussee forces kidnapped two of the Sultan's wives. The following year the sultan and panglima Polim offered their submission. Polim was the chief of the XXII Mukims and stood in high respect. His example was followed by many ulamas.

Lieutenant-colonel Van Daalen, with twenty brigades of marechaussees (240 men), subjected Gayo and Alas. His well-known expedition started from Bireun on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1904. After 163 days of fierce and successful fighting the column returned to Kota Radja via Sibolga.

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In 1904 Van Heutsz was appointed governor-general. His successor in Aceh was general Van der Wijck. In 1905 Van Daalen took his place. In May 1908(-1918) he was replaced by lieutenant-colonel Swart. In the same year civil administration was introduced, but a strong hand was needed until 1942. In 1913 and 1914 most of the Acehnese resistance had been suppressed. The Dutch were succesfull because finally they understood that an unconventional ennemy has to be fight against with unconventional weapons. Marechaussees were excellent jungle-fighters and did not give the ennemy a moment's rest.



**P 4.9. Van Heutsz and his staff on a hill near Batee Iliee, Salamanga (east coast) on February 3, 1901.**

The Acehnese tragedy was the result of Dutch colonial ambition to clear Sumatra from anarchy. Sometimes the Dutch succeeded through diplomatic channels: for example the Siak-Treaty, 1858. Acehnese anarchy made diplomatic action impossible. A condemnation of colonialism makes things too simple. One has to look "through the eyes" of the Dutch in 1873. Acehnese nobility played their own roll and had a responsibility of their own. Too little is known about the suffering of the Acehnese lower class because of this roll and this responsibility.

How far the English brought pressure upon the Dutch to build their defence lines and to minimize their coast blockade is unknown until today.

**Pictures:**

P 4.1: M.H. du Croo, Marechaussee in Atjeh; Maastricht Holland 1942, p. 40

P 4.2: Postcard-collection Dirk Teeuwen, Nieuwpoort Holland

P 4.3: M.H. du Croo, Marechaussee in Atjeh; Maastricht Holland 1942, p. 40

P 4.4: H.C. Zentgraaff, Atjeh; Batavia 1935, p. 49

P 4.5: M.H. du Croo, Marechaussee in Atjeh; Maastricht Holland 1942, p. 65

P 4.6: J. Jongejans, Land en volk van Atjeh; Baarn Holland 1939, p. 288

P 4.7: J. Jongejans, Land en volk van Atjeh; Baarn Holland 1939, p. 273, 274

P 4.8: Photo-collection Dirk Teeuwen. The picture is hanging on the wall of Cafe Stadhuis in Jakarta-Kota.

P 4.9: J. Jongejans, Land en volk van Atjeh; Baarn Holland 1939, p. 192

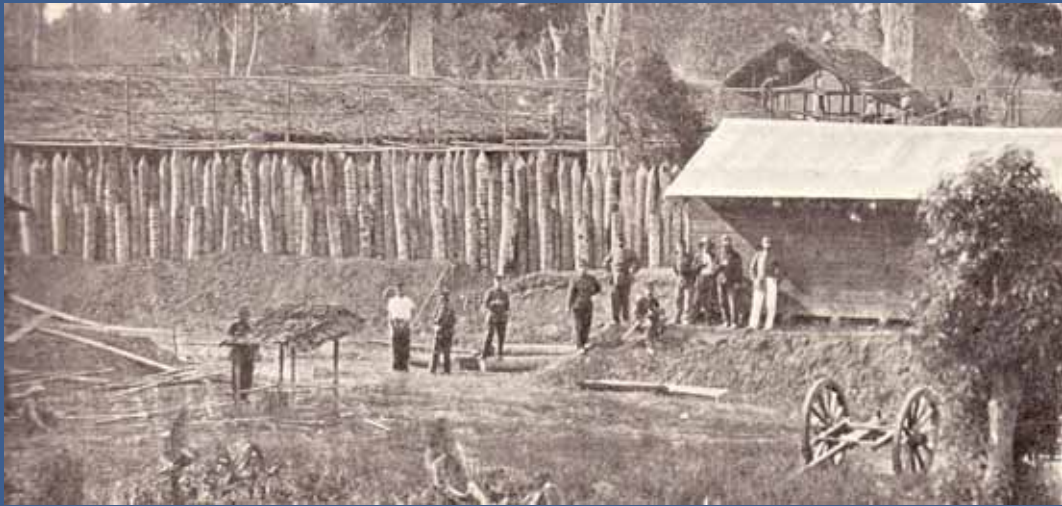
**Appendix**



1. From: Kepper: officers in Kota Radja, second expedition (1. Pel)

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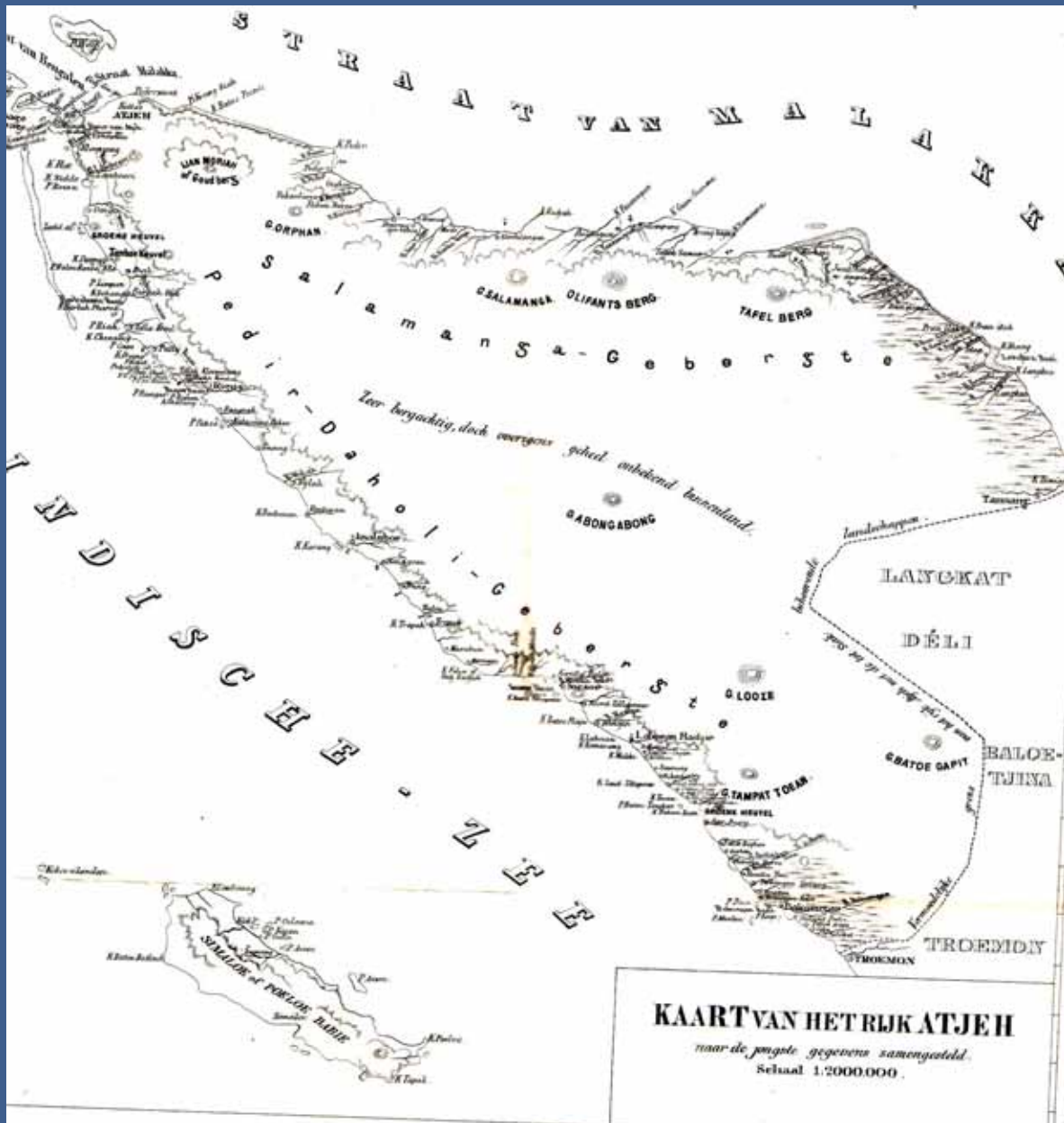




2. and 3. From Kepper: Kota Radja, south, second expedition



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4. From Gerlach, map Aceh

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