



# Nieuwpoort Holland, vicinity Dussen Castle Dirk Teeuwen MSc



Luise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz and Prussia,  
artist Joseph Grassi 1804 (Wikipedia, public  
domain, see my annotations) >>>>  
<<<< Dirk Teeuwen, artist unknown  
Account of sources, see last page

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## Introduction

Dussen is a small town in the Dutch Province of North-Brabant. Its number of inhabitants nowadays is about 2.100. Dussen was a separate municipality until 1997. From then the community of Dussen is a part of the municipality of the Werkendam Village. Dussen is located in a cluster of polders, called "Land van Altena", about 50 km east from my town of residence, Nieuwpoort Holland. The history of Dussen goes back to the early Middle Ages and Dussen Castle is an illustration of this fact.



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<sup>1</sup> Weaponry Family Van der Dussen; source, Wikipedia

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland Dussen Castle 2015



**A faraway feeling; Dussen Castle in The Netherlands, 2015**  
**The towers are from 1474. The original ones were built in, circa, 1390.**  
**Before 1390 there was a keep (donjon, fortified residential tower). Most**  
**probably there was a wooden stronghold before 1200 A.C..**  
**The cellars are from before 1390. The tower, the right one I mean, was a local**  
**prison in the olden days**

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# 1. Dussen Castle until the year of 1421

The history of <sup>2</sup>Dussen Castle starts before 1200 AC and we know that, about 1200 AC, the <sup>3</sup>Duke of Brabant handed one of his noble fiefs – which was a small fortified house, called Dussen - over to the Lord of Holland. From that moment the residents of Dussen became vassals of the Lord of Holland. Nevertheless, in 1288, Jan IV <sup>4</sup>van der Dussen supported the Duke of Brabant during the <sup>5</sup>Battle of <sup>6</sup>Woeringen (near Cologne Germany). On that occasion Jan broke his leg, I don't know how and why.

In 1330 Jan VI van der Dussen – then the aristocratic ruler of <sup>7</sup>Heusden and a vassal of the Lord of Brabant also – asked permission to build a “keep”, sometimes called “kype”, (by us Europeans, Dutch and French, called “donjon”, sometimes “motte”) in Dussen. A “keep” was a fortified tower as well as a safe place of residence. Normally such a tower was surrounded by a defence wall and a moat. In 1387 Arent II van Dussen, bailiff of Holland and grandson of Jan VI, asked the Lord of Holland permission to build out the keep. Around the keep a large new castle was realized. In 1418 his son, Arent III, inherited his properties. In 1421 Arent III was overtaken by an almost irremediable catastrophe, a flooding, which destroyed his castle. One tower and the cellars remained intact.



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<sup>2</sup> Dussen is located 50 km east from Nieuwpoort and 80 km north-east from Rotterdam.

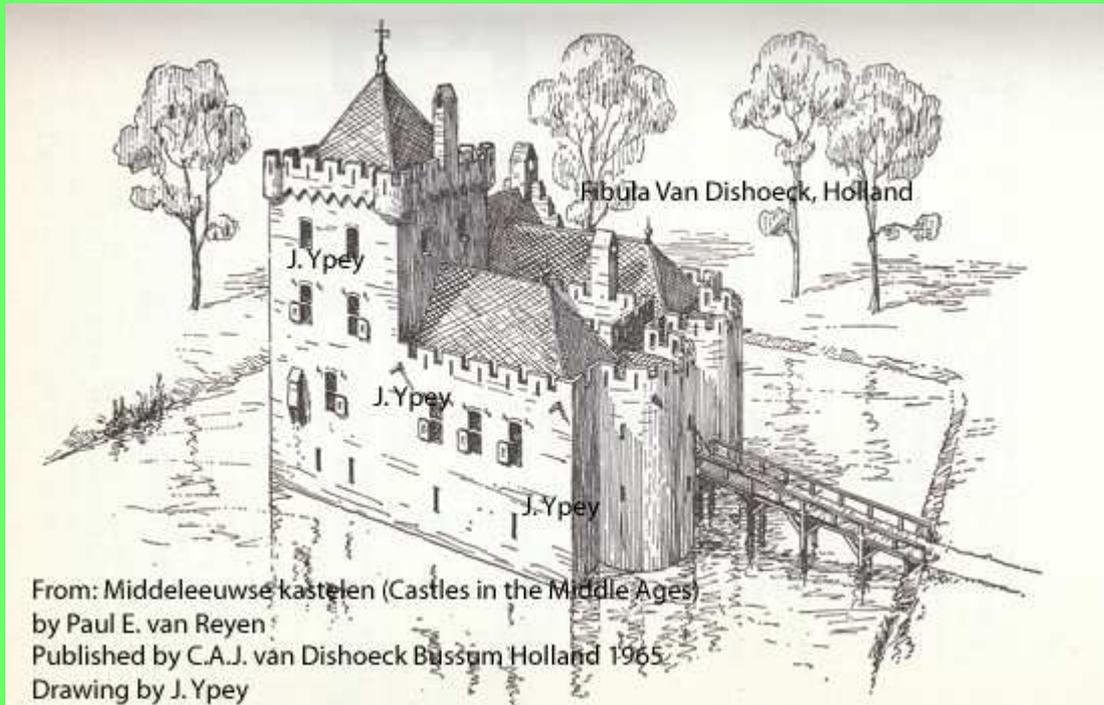
<sup>3</sup> As a fact the Duke was the ruler of Brabant.

<sup>4</sup> In Dutch “van” is very often part of a name. It means “coming from”. Dirk van Maasdam, living in Gouda, was from Maasdam. “Van” in “Van der Dussen” means “from” Dussen, as well as the (aristocratic) “owner, fief of Dussen”. In “van der” is “der” not important: “van der” means simply “van”.

<sup>5</sup> The Battle of Woeringen (Cologne Germany), June 5<sup>th</sup> 1288 was fought for the possession of the Duchy of Limburg and was one of the larger battles in the Middle Ages in Europe. The battle ended in a victory of the Duke, Lord, of Brabant (The Netherlands) and in a defeat of German and French aristocracy.

<sup>6</sup> Near Cologne in Germany.

<sup>7</sup> Heusden was/is a town in Brabant, The Netherlands. Not far from Dussen.



**A reconstruction of Dussen Castle, circa 1390  
 The area of the castle was/is 26-30 meters each way<sup>8</sup>. The walls of the 14<sup>th</sup>  
 century cellars were/are 3 meters thick<sup>9</sup>.**



**A remain of the early Middle Ages! The keep (donjon) of Châtillon-sur-Indres, France 2015. This small town was visited by us on a too rainy, too stormy day in September 2015.**

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<sup>8</sup> Van Reyen, page 91; Kransberg, Mils, page 189

<sup>9</sup> Van Reyen, page 91; Kransberg, Mils, page 189



Brederode Castle, Holland 2014  
Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

**The keep (donjon) of Brederode Castle in Santpoort, Holland 2014**



Teilingen Castle 2014 (West-Holland)  
Source: Wikipedia

**The keep (donjon) of Teilingen Castle in The Netherlands**

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# Dussen Castle until 1474

The name "Dutch St Elisabeth's Flood" points to a flooding of an inconceivable area in 1421 in, what is now, The Netherlands. It ranks <sup>10</sup>20<sup>th</sup> in the list of worst floods in history. During the night of November 18<sup>th</sup> 1421 to and including November 20<sup>th</sup>, of the same year of course, a heavy storm near the North Sea coast caused a bursting of the dikes. As a result this storm and the mass of water laid these dikes in ruins. A larger part of the low polder lands was gone. A gigantic flow of water, caused by storm surges, destroyed most of the west of The Netherlands and its most important agricultural area as well. The flood swallowed hundreds of hamlets, villages, small towns and caused about 10.000 casualties. It caused a widespread agricultural devastation and havoc in <sup>11</sup>Holland, Zeeland and Brabant. Most of the area remained flooded for a long time. Some areas are flooded even today. For example: the "Biesbosch", a very large area of (most beautiful) swampy nature. In case you have the intention to visit Holland, you could find the Biesbosch area near the very old Dutch city of Dordrecht.

Between 1422 and 1467 the polders in the area - called "Land van Altena" - were reclaimed and Dussen Castle was rebuilt partially. Arent III died in 1445 and his uncle Arent IV took over. Arent IV delegated his rights to his son Floris I van der Dussen. Floris was bailiff of the town of Dordrecht and Governor of Loevestein Castle (later a Dutch State Prison, <sup>12</sup>an impressive fortress). Floris' son Jan V herited his fathers properties. This Jan restored Dussen Castle completely in 1474. Dirk Teeuwen Holland



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen Castle 2015

North-western part of Dussen Castle, Holland 2015  
The towers are from 1470, the front at right is from 1608.

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<sup>10</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>11</sup> Holland, Brabant and Zeeland (Sealand) are provinces of The Netherlands now.

<sup>12</sup> Open for public now

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen 2015



**Dussen Castle, inner court, 2015**

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### **3. Dussen Castle until now, making a long story short**

- Jan died in 1496, his son Floris II took over. Floris died in 1509.
- His son, Jan VI van der Dussen, died childless in 1540.
- Jan's sister, Cornelia, was married with one Godfried van Brecht. Their son, Jan van Brecht, owned the estate from 1585 until 1593.
- In 1607 the family Van der Dussen-Van Brecht sold the estate to Walraven van Gent. Walraven was the owner of Oijen Castle, not far from Dussen. He restored Dussen Castle in Italian style. The inner court became a gallery in renaissance style.
- Walraven sold Oijen and Dussen (1626) to Eduard van Axel. Poor devil Walraven had no choice: lack of money.
- In 1657 Maarten van Axel took over and in 1682 Eduard van der Schueren van Hagoort was next. This Eduard was related to the Van Axel family.
- Jean Louis van der Schueren van Hagoort was the master from 1692 until 1726.
- His daughter Elisabeth was married with Alexander Goutte. This couple remained childless. Alexander was Count of Groesbeek also.
- In 1758 Alexander's sister Marie-Anne inherited the castle and in 1766 her son Charles I de Croix took over and so did Charles II de Croix in 1832. His daughter Marie-Camille, <sup>13</sup>Countess D'Ursel, was the owner until 1920.
- In 1901 Marie-Camille put the castle at the disposal of a French monastic order. The order had to leave France because of French secularization politics.
- The order left Dussen in 1920 and the castle was sold to the Suringar family from Koudekerke Village in The Netherlands<sup>14</sup>. In 1931 the resident of the castle, the Honourable Lady Rolina Suringar, died and the family's property was sold to the municipality of Dussen and the castle became Dussen's Town Hall.
- In 1997 the community of Dussen became a part of the municipality of Werkendam Village. Now the "Stichting Vrienden Kasteel Dussen" (the Society of Friends of Dussen Castle) organizes a lot of cultural activities in and around the castle.
- In case you like a stylish marriage: such is possible in beautiful medieval Dussen Castle.

### **4. Dussen Castle nowadays**

Most of the building is from 1474. Some parts of it are older. The castle consists largely of a residential area and an inner court. Both, for the greater part, from 1474. There are two big towers, also from 1474. The cellars are from before 1387. The renaissance gallery is from 1609. The western wing is from 1628.

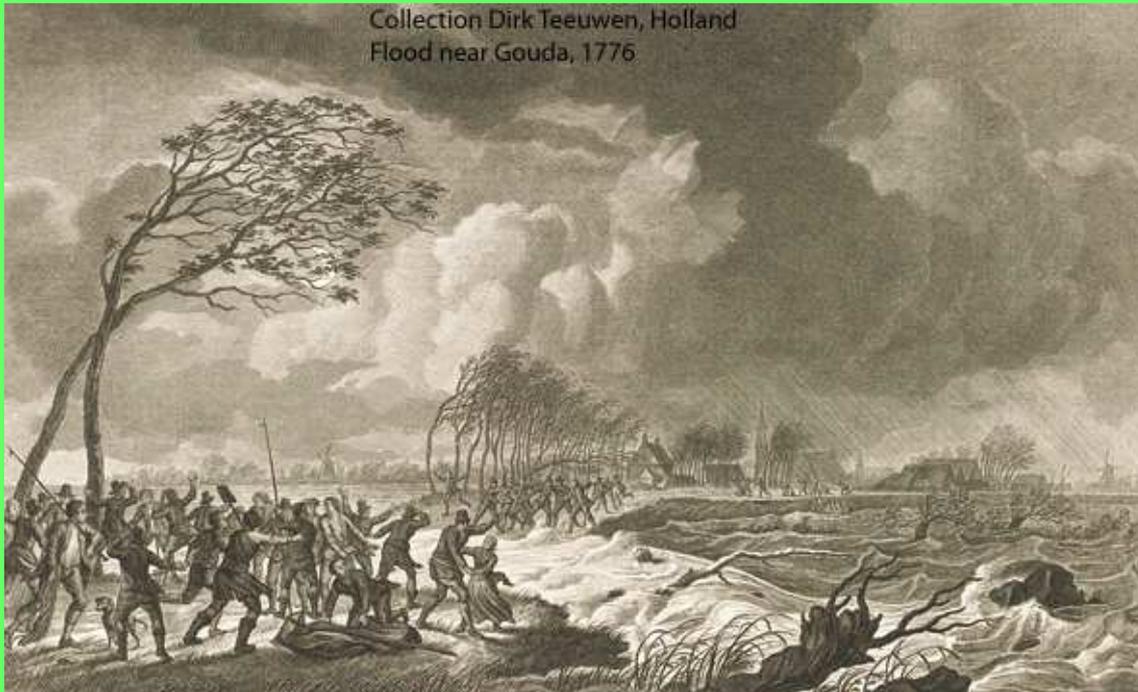
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<sup>13</sup> Kransberg, Mils, p. 189

<sup>14</sup> Kransberg, Mils, page 189

## 5. Dussen Castle Picture Gallery



**Flood in Holland, near Gouda in 1776  
Personal collection, Dirk Teeuwen Holland**



**Oijen Caste in The Netherlands, built in 1361, destroyed in 1511. Rebuilt in 1594, partly destroyed in 1837. What you are looking at are the remains of the castle from 1594. Why do I show you this picture? See page 8, chapter 3, Walraven van Gent (van Oijen).**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Northern front of Dussen Castle, Holland  
The front was built circa 1470.



**The front of Dussen Castle, Holland 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen-Castle, 2015

**The main gate, Dussen Castle 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
The main gate of Dussen Castle

**From the Middle Ages: the main gate of Dussen castle, Dussen Holland 2015**

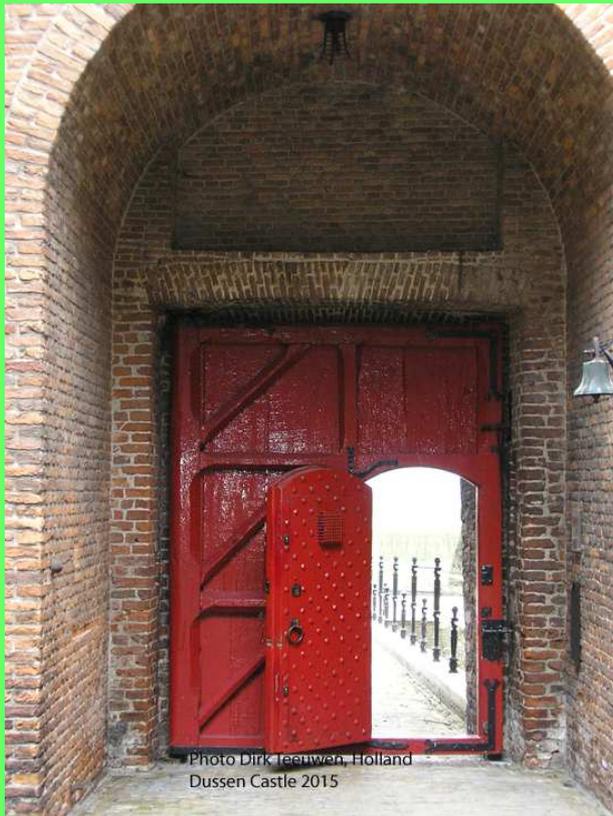


Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen Castle 2015

**The main gate seen from the inner court, Dussen Castle 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen Castle 2015

**The main gate seen from the inner court, Dussen Castle 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen  
Holland



**The inner court, Dussen Castle 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**



**The inner court in renaissance style, Dussen Castle 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**



**Without words, Dussen Castle 2015**

**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen Castle 2015



**The tower, I mean the right one, has been a local prison for along time. Dussen Castle 2015**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen Castle 2015



**The western part of the castle, Dussen Castle 2015**

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Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland  
Dussen Castle 2015



**Dussen Castle 2015**

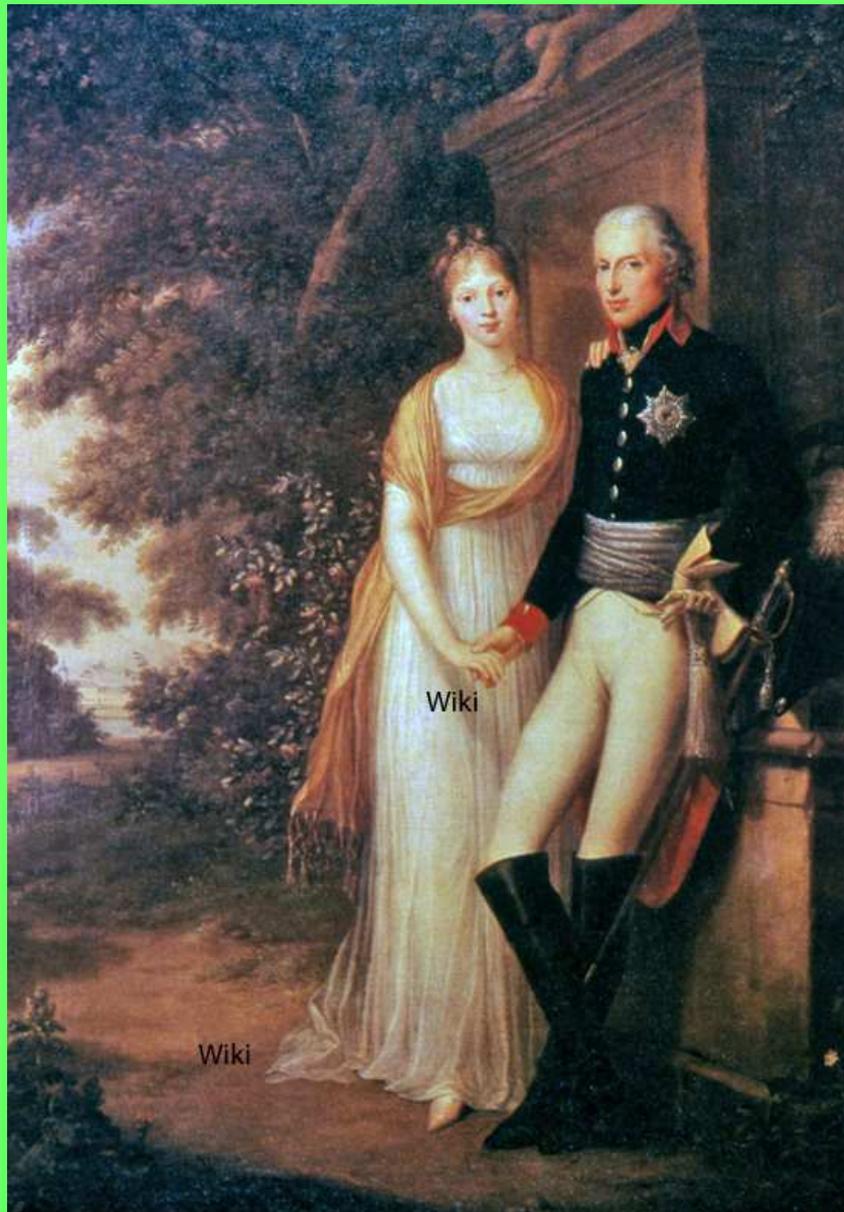
**Dirk Teeuwen Holland**

# Annotations and sources

## *Annotations*

1. Jhr. (Esq.) Carel Jacob Hendrik van der Dussen (1852-1909), mayor of Waddenoijen Village in The Netherlands, was the last descendant of the noble House Van der Dussen. Source: Wikipedia

2. Luise von Mecklenburgh-Strelitz – Von Preussen, Queen of Prussia 1776-1810. She was one of the most beautiful aristocratic ladies of her time. Her husband was King Frederic Willam III of Prussia. I know: she has nothing to do with this article. She was just a very beautiful lady! That's all!



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[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Ch%C3%A2teau de Ch%C3%A2tillon-sur-Indre - Tour de C%C3%A9sar.JPG](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Ch%C3%A2teau_de_Ch%C3%A2tillon-sur-Indre_-_Tour_de_C%C3%A9sar.JPG)

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[https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise van Mecklenburg-](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise van Mecklenburg-Strelitz#/media/File:Friedrich Wilhelm III mit K%C3%B6nigin Luise auf der Pfaueninsel.jpg)

[Strelitz#/media/File:Friedrich Wilhelm III mit K%C3%B6nigin Luise auf de r Pfaueninsel.jpg](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise van Mecklenburg-Strelitz#/media/File:Friedrich Wilhelm III mit K%C3%B6nigin Luise auf der Pfaueninsel.jpg)

## *Sources*

1. Pictures: photography, Dirk Teeuwen
2. Paul E. van Reyen: *Middeleeuwse kastelen; Bussum Holland 1965, page 90,91*
3. Van Nispen tot Sevenaer, Esq./Jhr. Dr. E. O. M.: *Nederlandse kastelen; Amsterdam 1949, page 24, 72, 91*
4. Bruls, W.; Hooff, D. van: *Langs kastelen, burchten en donjons; Utrecht Holland 1993, page 68, 69, 70*
5. Kransberg, D.; Mils, H.: *Kastelengids van Nederland, middeleeuwen; Bussum Holland 1979, page 187, 188, 189*
6. (page 1, picture right)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz#/media/File:Louise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.PNG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise_of_Mecklenburg-Strelitz#/media/File:Louise_of_Mecklenburg-Strelitz.PNG)
7. (page 4)  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Ch%C3%A2teau de Ch%C3%A2tillon-sur-Indre - Tour de C%C3%A9sar.JPG](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Ch%C3%A2teau_de_Ch%C3%A2tillon-sur-Indre_-_Tour_de_C%C3%A9sar.JPG)
8. (page 5)  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9a/Slot Teylingen north side.jp](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9a/Slot_Teylingen_north_side.jp)

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## **Ending**