



Dirk Teeuwen Holland

Nieuwpoort Vesting

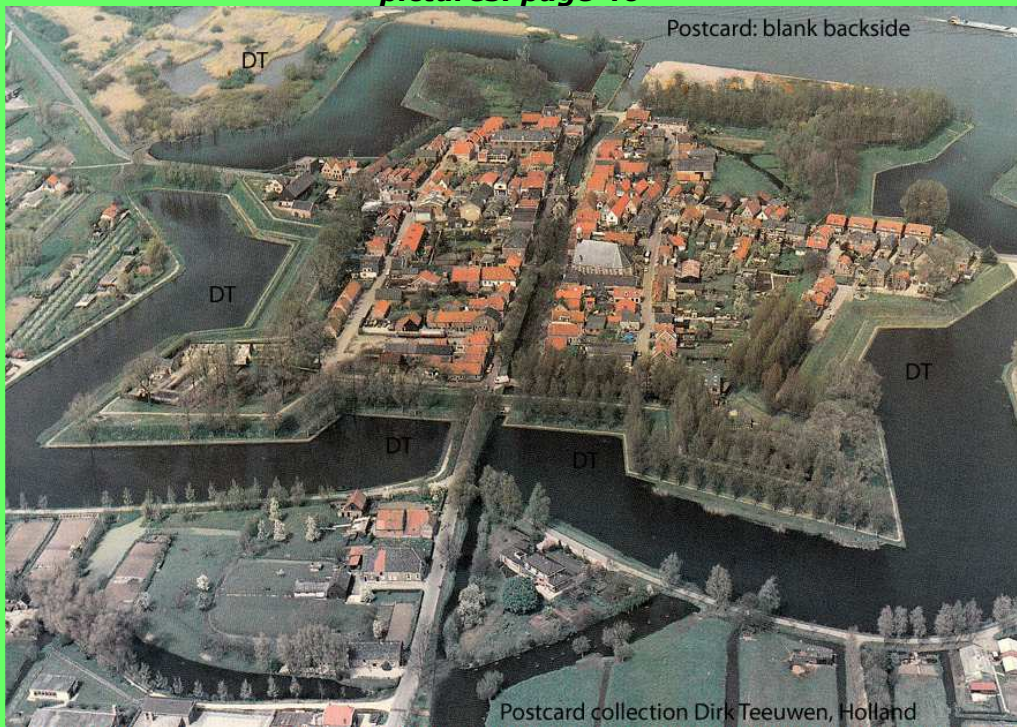
Dirk Teeuwen MSc

Nieuwpoort Fortress Town

*Pictures are available on request.
Account of sources, text and pictures: page 46*



1625
Hanthorst
Wiki



Postcard: blank backside

Postcard collection Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

A bird's eye view of Nieuwpoort, about 1975

Artist unknown, publisher unknown, printing office unknown.

In case a map could help you! Click internet: "Nieuwpoort Holland kaarten".



Collection Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

**Bouter, C., Nauta, I,: Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis; Groningen Holland & Batavia
Jakarta 1933, p. 28**

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Appendix

Rulers from the House of Holland, a short survey from circa 900 until 1581;

Guide

Mark the following! North- and South-Holland are now two western provinces in the Netherlands. In the olden days Holland was a state, more or less independent. Only one of the states called, together as an umbrella name: the Netherlands, which – translated in real English – Low Countries.

In this article! I try to show you some aspects of the historical beauty of the small Dutch town Nieuwpoort (people 1300), Holland. Several photo galleries below give an account of its historical beauty. Until 1600 the town and its people suffered severely by local wars and condottieri. It seemed that looting, raping and massacres became part of normal life in the (late) Middle Ages in this part of the country. In chapter 5 you can find more about this misery. The Lords of the House of Holland cast their shadow over what happened. In my Appendix I worked out a short analysis of this dynasty.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

More in the Appendix! William IV, Lord of Holland, was the last male ruler from the dynasty "House of Holland". William died in 1345. His eldest sister, Lady Margaretha, succeeded him. She married Ludwig of Bayern. As a consequence - through the female line - the House of Holland was continued via the House of Bayern, later, the House of Burgundy and subsequently the House of Habsburg.

As a matter of secondary importance! In this article I try to justify the statement that Philips II of Habsburg, 1527-1598, was (until 1581) the last ruling Lord from the House of Holland, or in Dutch "hij was de laatste Graaf van Holland uit het Hollandse Huis". Due to Margaretha. The House of Holland lived on thanks to a female descendent. In 1581 the Dutch abjured Philip II.

Philip was King of Spain and Lord of the Netherlands! This title implied the following. Philip was Lord (Count, Graaf in Dutch) of Holland, Duke of Gelderland (Guelders), Duke of Brabant, Count of Friesland, Count (Lord) of Flanders, Duke of Luxemburg, etc. "Lord of the Netherlands" was an umbrella term. Philips II inherited the title Lord of Holland from Margaretha.

Continued on page 3

So! Philips II of Habsburg was a descendent of the House of Holland in the female line. He was the last representative of the old House of Holland, the last Lord of Holland (1555-1581).

Conclusion 1! The House of Holland ruled over Holland (the western part of the Netherlands) from 915 until 1581 and did so more than six centuries!!

Conclusion 2! During their Eighty Years War, 1568-1648, the independent Dutch fought against their own ruler, Philips II: Lord of Holland, Lord of the Netherlands. The Dutch fought against the last descendent of their own House of Holland. The Dutch did not fight against Philips II in his capacity as King of Spain.

Recommended literature, library Dirk Teeuwen

- 1. Stinner, J. & others: Gelderland, Geschiedenis en cultuur van het Hertogdom Gelre; Geldern Germany 2001 (History and culture of Guelders)**
- 2. Historischen Vereins für Geldern und Umgegend: De Gouden Eeuw van Gelre; Geldern Germany 2001 (The Golden Age of Guelders)**
- 3. Hellinga, G.G.: Hertogen van Gelre; Zutphen Holland 2012 (Dukes of Guelders)**
- 4. Graaf, R. de: Oorlog om Holland 1000-1375; Hilversum 1996 (Holland Wars)**
- 5. Boer, D.E.H. de & Cordfunke, E.H.P.: Graven van Holland; Zutphen Holland 2010 (Lords, Counts, of Holland)**
- 6. Dijkstra, B.K.S. dr.: Graven en Gravinnen van het Hollandse Huis; Zutphen 1979 (Lords from the House of Holland)**

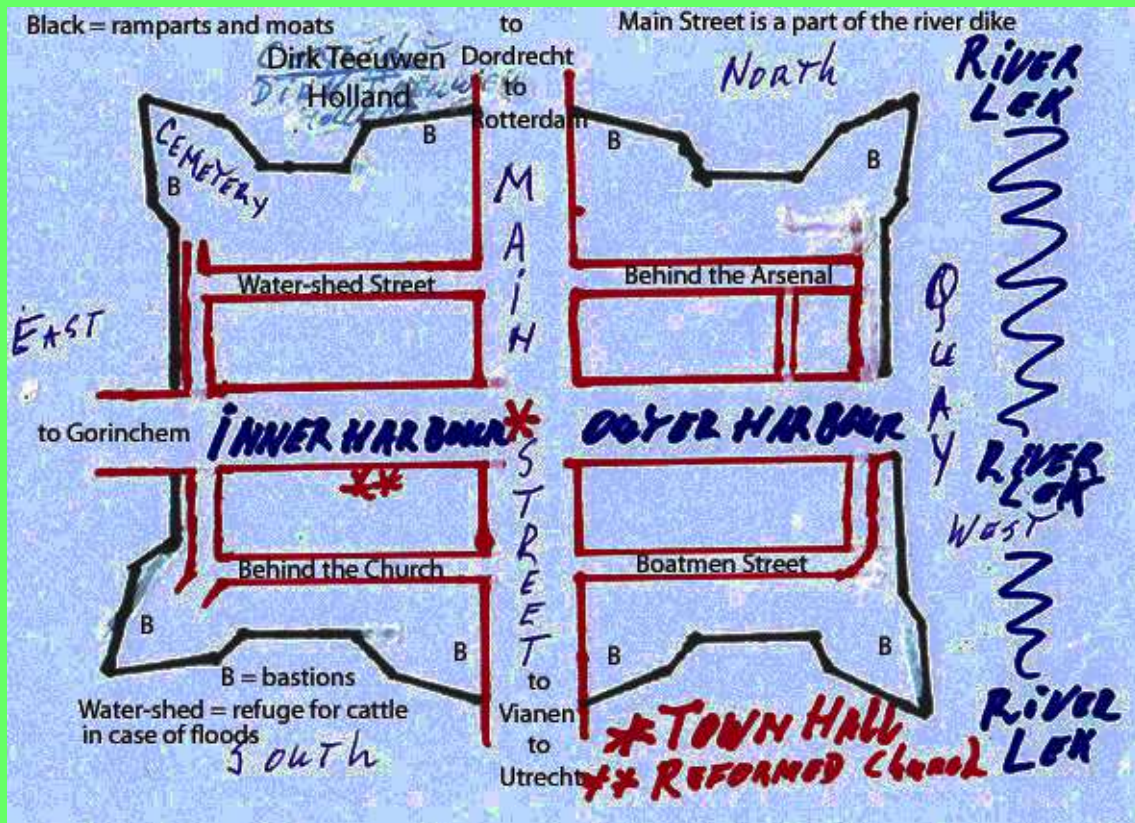


Nieuwpoort in Spring

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

1. Nieuwpoort, Holland

Nieuwpoort - located on the River Lek, a mighty branch of the River Rhine - was given city rights, privileges of a town, in 1283. In fact Nieuwpoort was a creation of the Lord of Holland and the Bishop of Utrecht. Holland and Utrecht are Dutch provinces nowadays.



Nieuwpoort Holland, map, 2015
Drawing by Dirk Teeuwen; no prize winner, I am afraid.

Regarding these city rights the nobleman Van Liesveld and his colleague Van Langerack played an important part. The first one was a fief of the Lord (ruler) of Holland, the second one tried to obey the Bishop of Utrecht. Sometimes Van Langerack was manageable, sometimes he was not. They both gave up some of their properties to realize the creation of this new town called Nieuwpoort (lit. translated: New Gate). I told you before: the history of the town had a turbulent character until circa 1600.



Arms of Nieuwpoort, 1816-1986 (Wikipedia)
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

2. Winter in Nieuwpoort, photo gallery

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Nieuwpoort 1996, view from the River Quay

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Nieuwpoort



Drift-ice, 1996

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Drift-ice, 1996

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Flood 1995

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Flood 1995

**The town of Zaltbommel on the River Waal, a mighty branch of the Rhine.
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Flood 1995

The town of Zaltbommel on the River Waal, a mighty branch of the Rhine.



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Nieuwpoort

**Flood, the town of Gorinchem near Nieuwpoort, 1995
Sandbags for protection in one of the old town gates.**



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

**Flood! Sandbags, beams and a smiling lady with lovely grey hair.
The Town of Woudrichem, town gate from the River Quay, near Nieuwpoort,
1995
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Drift-ice 1996

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Skating young couple with their baby, Dutch dare devils



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Without words

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3. Nieuwpoort; ramparts, moats, modern times

In 1672 new town ramparts and moats around Nieuwpoort were constructed. Rather modern earth ramparts in those days. Before Nieuwpoort was protected by brick ramparts from circa 1550. Before about 1550 its defensive works consisted of moats only. However, after 1672 the inhabitants enjoyed the safety offered by modern ramparts and moats. The ramparts included/include six bastions and three gates. The gates are gone now. The ramparts were a military tool in the first place, but they also saved the town from floods in 1809 and 1820.

Nieuwpoort always had a sleepy image and I hope that things go on like this forever. However, a reconstruction and restoration of the ramparts was finished in 1998, stimulating tourism a little bit.

Nieuwpoort was a separate municipality until 1986, but is now part of the Municipality of Molenwaard. The town of Nieuwpoort has circa 1400 inhabitants and is located in the windmill area of Kinderdijk.

4. Nieuwpoort ramparts, photo gallery



Western ramparts; Nieuwpoort 2015

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Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Part of the western ramparts; Nieuwpoort 2014

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Part of the northern ramparts, quay on the River Lek (Rhine); Nieuwpoort 2015



Part of the southern ramparts and moats; Nieuwpoort 2015
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

5. Nieuwpoort, its turbulent history until circa 1600

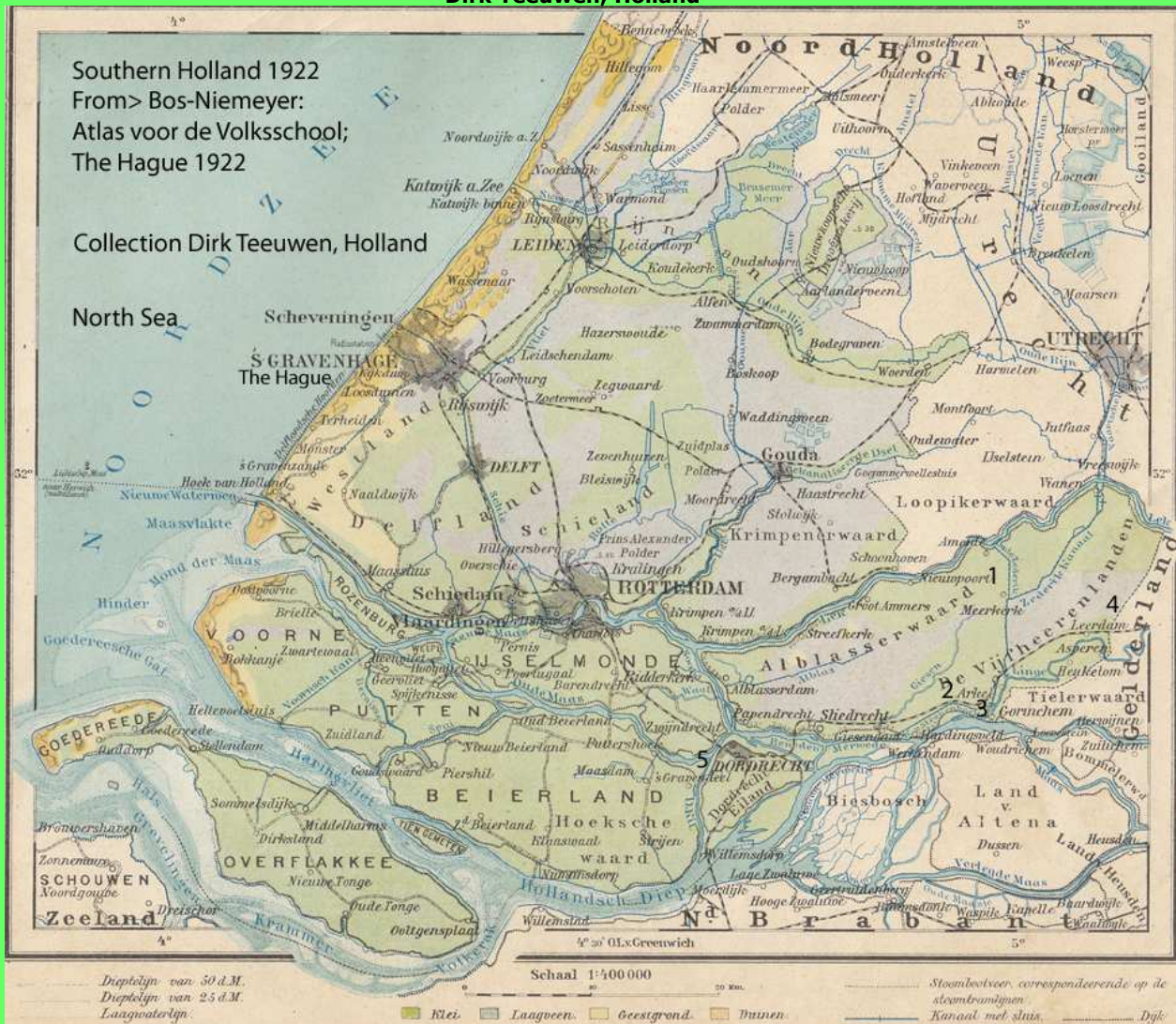
a. The Arkel Wars 1402-1414

Jan V, Lord of Arkel 1362 (born in Gorinchem)-1428 (died in Leerdam), was a Dutch nobleman, a vassal/fief of the Lords of Holland. Then Holland was only the western part of, what are now, the modern Netherlands.

He was a fief of, successively:

- William V, 1354-1389;
- Albrecht, 1389-1404;
- William VI, 1404-1417;
- Lady Jacoba, 1417-1433.

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1. Nieuwpoort, 2. Arkel, 3. Gorinchem, 4. Leerdam, 5. Dordrecht, 1922
The Alblasserwaard is a collection of polders and located between the River Lek in the north and the River Waal/Merwede in the south. Both rivers are mighty branches of the River Rhine.



Detail of the last map, 1922

Jan V acquired the Lordship of Haastrecht in 1380, as well as Hagesteijn in 1382, as a ruler in the name of the Lord of Holland. Of course he was the Lord of Arkel, as well as its vicinity in the first place: as a fief/vassal of the Lord of Holland. This vicinity included villages and towns like Leerdam, Leerbroek, Arkel, Heukelum, Asperen, Gorinchem as well as later Hagestein, east from Vianen, and Haastrecht, near Gouda. After the death of his father Otto van Arkel in 1396. Jan ruled Arkel, etc. until 1414. From 1396, he also was the stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland (Sealand) and West-Friesland, acting as a sort of viceroy in the service of Albrecht, Lord of Holland.

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In 1401, after a conflict with crown prince William VI, Albrecht's son, Jan V van Arkel declared himself independent. He refused to participate in further military campaigns (as the stadtholder) against the Frisians any more and started a war against Albrecht. Indeed, from 1401 until 1414, Jan V van Arkel was the independent ruler of Arkel and vicinity. Nevertheless one could call him a condottiere. He had his seat in the Castle of Arkel, about 20 km from Nieuwpoort Town, ransacking the area without mercy. In 1402 Nieuwpoort was assailed by Jan and his looting heroes. The town was raped, ransacked, as well as set on fire. The citizens, so far as present, were massacred.

In 1414 Jan's army was crushed, absolutely defeated, near the village of Vuren (east from Gorinchem on the River Waal, a very, very mighty branch of the River Rhine south from Nieuwpoort). Troops of William VI finished their job efficiently. Jan's army was crushed, I suggested so before. End of the Arkel Wars. William VI - the Lord of Holland - threw Jan in jail in 1415. He put Jan on a diet of bread and beer. In case you think circumstances in medieval jails were festive, forget it. Prison parties, jailhouse rock, in the olden days? No, no, no. Then, beer - alcohol two percent - was as normal as water is in our days. Jan V enjoyed imprisonment in Gouda first and then in Leerdam. Leerdam was/is a Dutch town along River Linge in the centre of Holland, between the

main branches of the River Rhine. Noblesse oblige, so William of Holland released Jan van Arkel in 1426. Our Jan departed from this world in 1428 in Leerdam, age 66. Now the Lord of Holland, William VI, owned Gorinchem, Arkel, etc.



Jacoba; Countess, ruler (Lord) of Holland, r. 1417-1433

From> Molt, E: Spiegel der Vaderlandse Geschiedenis; Amsterdam 1911, p. 10

But there was one more William - William of Arkel, Jan's son - more or less bankrupt. He styled himself Lord of Arkel, although his father had lost control in 1414.

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In 1406 citizens of Gorinchem asked him to lead their revolt against his father Jan van Arkel. The son agreed to do so. But, nevertheless he left Gorinchem rather soon to side with his father again. At the end of the Arkel War William VI of Holland captured Gorinchem. William of Arkel fled to Brabant. In 1417 William of Arkel made an attempt to recapture the town. In that year Lady Jacoba was Lord of Holland and she was in the vicinity of Gorinchem and so were her military. William of Arkel managed to enter Gorinchem. But in a narrow street he was killed by Jacoba's soldiers and, so you understand, his campaign came to an end.

The troops from Holland smashed William's noble skull in a stinking, muddy, shabby alley in Gorinchem, called *Rivet Alley in 1417. William was the last male Arkel from his dynasty, the House of Arkel.

The sister of Jan V of Arkel, Maria, was married to Jan II, Count of Egmont. Egmond was/is located in Holland. Jan II was an enemy of his Liege William VI of Holland. He assisted William van Arkel in 1417 to assault Gorinchem. Jan II was able to escape. Jan's son Arnold, 1415-1472, also was the grandson of the sister of the Duke of Gelderland Reijnout. Reijnout died childless in 1423. Arnold became his successor until 1472. Arnold's brother became stadtholder, sort of viceroy, in the employ of the Duke of Gelderland, Arnold. Maria of Arkel and her descendents were rather successful.

*Rivet Alley, Revet Steeg in Dutch, is still there. In Gorinchem, I mean.



The eastern Dalem Gate, Gorinchem Holland 1938

In a successful attempt to assist her garrison in Gorinchem against William of Arkel - the Lord of Holland, Countess Jacoba - ordered her troops to assault Gorinchem from here, in 1417.

b. Dordrecht's surprise attack in 1489 and the Gelderland Wars (Guelderian Wars) during 1508-1543

In 1489 citizens of Dordrecht ransacked the area and specially Nieuwpoort, because of trade conflicts. Nevertheless there was much more misery to come: the Gelderland (Guelders) Wars. The Gelderland Wars, 1508-1543, were a series of conflicts in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands (Belgium, Luxemburg, Artois in France now).

Continued on page 19

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Empire of the Duke of Burgundy, Lord of Holland, etc. Charles I the Bold, r. 1465-1477. See text below.

From > Bouter, C., Nauta, I: *Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis*; Groningen Holland Batavia Jakarta 1933, p.34

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

1. At one side!

a. The Habsburg Philips II the Fair, nominally the Duke of Burgundy, 1478-1506;

b. later his son *Charles V from the House of Habsburg, Lord of the Netherlands and King of Spain as well as **Roman (German) Emperor r. 1505-1555;
c. and the son of Charles, the Philip II of Habsburg, Lord of the Netherlands and King of Spain;

c. Philips (a) and Charles V, in the beginning, controlled only a part of the Netherlands: Holland, Flanders, Brabant, Artois and Hainaut.

2. At the other side!

There was Charles, Duke of Gelderland and there was William, his son.

During this war, 1508-1543, there were no large battles. There was a lot of guerrilla warfare instead: many hit and runs, many raids, many ambushes.

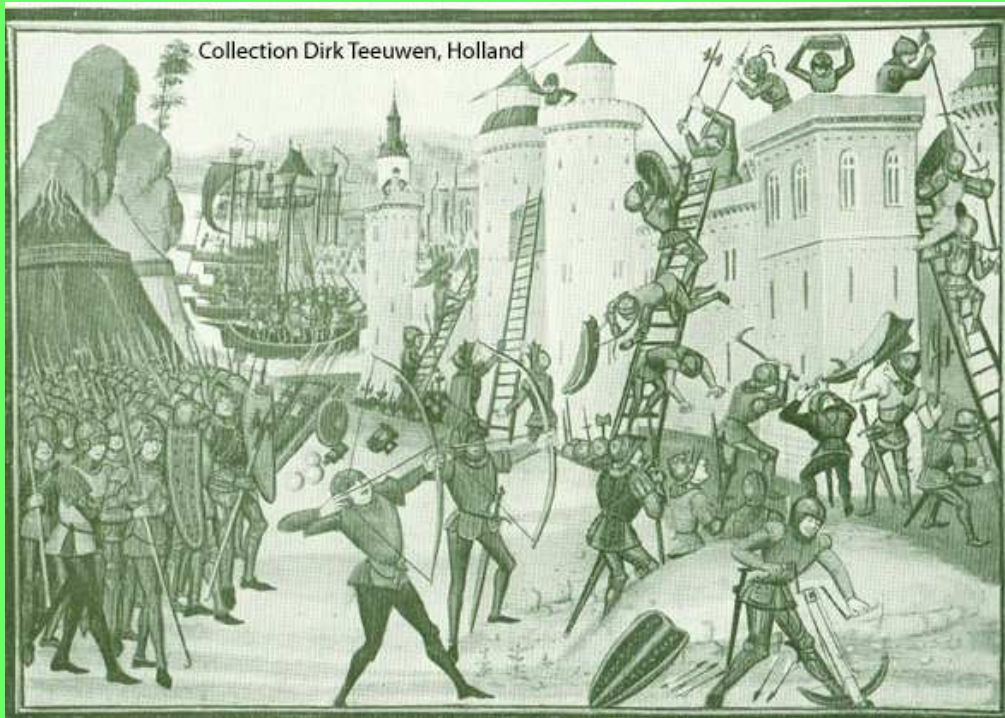


Maarten van Rossum, circa 1490 until 1555
From > Goelst Meijer, A. F. van: Het Slot Rossum;
Rossum (Gemeente) 1956, p. 11
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Terrorizing civilians became normal practice. Hostilities were not restricted to Gelderland. Under the command of the Gelderland/Guelders condottiere Maarten van Rossum, about 1478 until 1555, soldiers looted The Hague in 1528 and tried to loot Antwerp later. However, Antwerp was besieged by him without result in 1542. The war ended with a Burgundian/Habsburg victory in 1543. All the Northern and Southern Netherlands were united under the control of Charles V of Habsburg. He was Lord of the Netherlands, which meant that Charles was Count (Lord) of Holland, Duke of Gelderland, Duke of Brabant, Count of Friesland, Count of Flanders, etc., a patchwork of states. A group of titles known collectively as "Lord of the Netherlands".

Charles V was also King of Spain as well as Holy Roman (German) Emperor. This Emperor was elected by the independent rulers from Germany and North-Italy and crowned by the Pope. The "emperor" was primus inter pares (first

among equals) among other monarchs. He was only as strong as these rulers made him and so his job did not amount to anything.



Assaulting a town, circa 1450

From> Molt, E: *Spiegel der Vaderlandse Geschiedenis*; Amsterdam 1911, p. 12

In 1515 soldiers of the robber baron, the condottiere Maarten van Rossum - a fief and a notorious military man from the Duchy of Gelderland (a Dutch province now) - raped, massacred, looted, set on fire our small defenceless town of Nieuwpoort. Van Rossum himself was not there. Van Rossum did not pay his soldiers; but, instead, promised them a lot of loot. So, looting became an horrible aim in itself.

In 1516, believe it or not, Nieuwpoort was assailed by military men from Holland. After a few months the raping heroes of our condottiere from Gelderland returned. In 1524 soldiers of the Habsburg ruler Charles V, Lord of Holland etc., conquered Nieuwpoort again.

With the seventeenth century more peaceful times for Nieuwpoort started. However, in 1568 a fire destroyed fifty houses there.

* (Page 17) One could not call this Charles fair/handsome. His lower jaw was very much too prominent because of inbreeding. He was not able to chew in a normal way . His son Habsburg Philip II had suchlike problems and he had very skinny legs.

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Collection Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Charles V, circa 1550

**From > Bouter, C., Nauta, I: Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis; Groningen Holland
Batavia Jakarta 1933, p. 50**

**** (Page 17) This Emperor was elected by the independent rulers of Germany
and North-Italy and crowned by the Pope. The "emperor" was primus inter
pares (first among equals) among other monarchs.**

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Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

**Van Rossum's City Palace, the town of Zaltbommel Holland 2009
Owned by Maarten van Rossum, built about 1535.**



Country house in the village of Rossum, from 1845, right on the location of a demolished (1740) castle. This castle was, formerly, the residence of the Van Rossum dynasty. (Rossum 2015 in the Province of Gelderland). Maarten van Rossum, 1478-1555, himself did not live here himself as an adult. He was Lord of Poederoyen (as a fief of the Duke of Gelderland), a village not far from Rossum in Gelderland. The castle of Poederoyen, Van Rossum's residence, was demolished in 1672.

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**The Castle of Poederoyen, circa 1600
From > Goelst Meijer, A. F. van: Het Slot Rossum;
Rossum (Gemeente) 1956, p. 14**

6. Nieuwpoort, photo gallery

a. The River Quay and vicinity



**River Lek, a mighty branch of the Rhine; Nieuwpoort 2015
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland**



River Lek, seen from the River Quay; Nieuwpoort 2015

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Walking from the River Quay, we pass a canon, walk through the ramparts and enter the town. Visible is the small dome, cupola, of the Town Hall. The entrance is complete with doors, which can cut off the opening. Doing so, the town could be protected against floods.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Town entrance; from the River Quay, walking into the Outer Harbour



No grenades, bombs, bullets or shrapnel any more



Flood in 2002, the River Quay is flooded now. The flood doors, part of the old Nieuwpoort defence walls, are closed. See page 19.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Right from the entrance: the old, former "ferry house", Nieuwpoort 2015. A pub-saloon, just a common ale house, with a bad reputation. Waiting for the ferry to the town of Schoonhoven, Rotterdam (to the west), or Vianen, Culemborg, etc. to the east. While waiting, passengers could booze till they dropped.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



The old "ferry house" in Nieuwpoort 2015, a waiting room and a common ale house at the same time, right from the entrance from the river into town.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

b. The Outer Harbour

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Winter 2015. The old Outer Harbour and former Town Hall; Nieuwpoort 2015. Right under the Town Hall there is a military inundation (flooding) sluice. The use of this floodgate was meant to prevent Nieuwpoort and vicinity from trouble. Sort of military museum piece. The Town Hall is a museum today.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



A closer look; 2015

The former Town Hall and its former Weighhouse were built in 1695-1700 and were a replacement of older ones. Walking through the front entrance into the Town Hall one may see two sandstone lions in the first place. These animals stood outside, in front of, the demolished town hall (before 1697). The arms aside of the bridge/sluice - as well as the arms we can see here - are the arms of Nieuwpoort and the former States (governing council) of Holland. Left from the Town Hall (for us) there used to be a butchery. In front of this butchery there is a giant stone. This stone was ballast of a local ship, seventeenth century, involved in whale fishing.

The former Waag (Weighhouse) has been built against the backside of the Town Hall - one could say "built in" - and was ready in 1697 as well. Needless to say, that the Waag was important to local trade. Trade in fruit, milk, cheese, vegetables and specially hemp (for sails and ropes): supplied from farmers with wagons and boats around and in the former Inner Harbour behind the Town Hall. After trading and weighing the products were transported through the Outer Harbour and via the river to other destinations.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

The eastern side of the Outer Harbour, seen from the Town Hall; 2015



Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

The old cigars factory, Nieuwpoort 2015
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



The armoury, built in 1781; Nieuwpoort 2014

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



The old doctor's house; Nieuwpoort 2015

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



House of the bailiff (left), built 1570; Nieuwpoort 2015-02-17

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Tavern and stable for horses, built before 1697; Nieuwpoort 2015



**The stable, the house left and the house in the centre, was located at the other side of the Outer Harbour. Nieuwpoort 2015.
Now Bed&Breakfast "De Uitspanning"
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Nieuwpoort



The old butchery; Nieuwpoort 2015

Some people from Nieuwpoort were fishermen. A few sailed to the Arctic Ocean to hunt the whales for oil and meat. The stone, right, is a ballast stone, used by whale hunters.

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7. The Inner Harbour of Nieuwpoort, photo gallery

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



The Inner Harbour, Nieuwpoort 2014
We are looking at the backside of the Town Hall and the weigh-house, built
between 1695-1700.
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Backside of the old Town Hall, a closer look. A military inundation sluice has been built in the tunnel. Nieuwpoort 2015.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



A farmhouse, from 1783, built within the town ramparts; Nieuwpoort 2015

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



The Protestant Dutch Reformed Church from 1420; Nieuwpoort 2015

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



The old schoolmaster's house from about 1830; Nieuwpoort 2015



The location of the southern gate; Nieuwpoort 2015

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

8. Surprising Nieuwpoort, photo gallery

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



**The blacksmith/farrier forged here (left) and lived with his family in the white house. They did so from about 1600.
Original architecture, Main Street; Nieuwpoort 2015**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Original scow wharf ("akenloods" in Dutch) on Main Street from the nineteenth century

A scow is a small boat with a flat bottom. In the countryside – polders - used by farmers, hunters, local tradesmen, etc. In Holland, in the olden days, waterways were most important for transport.

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Nieuwpoort



A water flood refuge near Main Street (“waterschuur” in Dutch), 19th century, meant for people as well as animals. In case of floods people moved to higher places, mostly to villages, hamlets, churches, farmhouses and “waterschuren” situated on sand hills, river dunes.



A warehouse from 1756 on Main Street (behind the lantern), Nieuwpoort 2015



**Built in 1858, a farmhouse within the ramparts on Main Street
Nieuwpoort 2015**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



**Dwelling from about 1850 on Main Street
Nieuwpoort 2015**

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



Villa from circa 1920 on Main Street, Nieuwpoort 2015

Photo Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



**Coach house from 1801. Reconstructed into a small church, the Peter's Church, in 1898. Accommodation for the "Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk", the Reformed Protestant Christian Church (a secession of the Dutch Reformed Church) until 1921. After 1921 believers could go to their new church in an, out-of-use, old cheese warehouse (very Dutch, is not it?) on Main Street.
Nieuwpoort 2015**

Appendix

Rulers from The House of Holland circa 900 until 1581

During the Middle Ages - from 741 until circa 1000 AC - Franks and their Carolingian (Lotharingia) dynasties dominated the Dutch area in West-Europe. After circa 1000 AC, for several centuries, the Lords of Holland and also those of Brabant, Flanders, Gelderland (Guelders in English), etc., held a patchwork of territories and each tried to behave like independent rulers.

Let's have a closer look at Holland. The title Lord of Holland needs some explanation. In Dutch this Lord was called "Graaf". So: he was "Graaf of Holland" or she was "Gravin of Holland". The translation of the Dutch title "graaf" in English is "count" or "earl", but this title meant in Holland much more than that. The "Graaf of Holland" behaved like an independent ruler. In fact we could call him Lord of Holland. From circa 950 AC until 1345 Holland was ruled by the Lords from the "House of Holland". Sometimes the ruler was a "she", as an example Gravin Ada (r. 1203-1236)

The Lords of Holland did not bother about anything. He (sometimes a "she") had a lot of reasons to behave as a ruling Lord. Officially, the "Graaf" was a fief (feudal benefice) of the Holy Roman (German) Emperor. The Holy Roman Emperor was the elected chief (not a real ruler) of the Holy Roman Empire and was elected by the rulers, electors, of German (petty) states and rulers, electors of states in North-Italy. After election he was crowned by the Pope. The "Emperor" was primus inter pares (first among equals) among other monarchs, nothing more than that. He was only as strong as these rulers made him. These lamed ducks, these so-called emperors I mean, were in daily life the weak results of a catholic mediaeval invention by some pope with too much imagination.

We are nosing around in the Low Countries circa 1.000 AC. Lord of Holland Dirk III, r. 993-1039, was a good example of a fief of the Roman (German) Emperor behaving as an independent Dutch ruler. He ruled Holland, I mean only the west of the modern Netherlands. Illegally he levied tolls from barge skippers sailing on the rivers around the town of Dordrecht. Illegally he appropriated land west from Dordrecht, land owned by the Bishop of Utrecht. Only swamps and jungles in those days. In this - let's call it Wild West - he built the stronghold "Vlaardingen"; west from a small settlement IJsselmonde, called Rotterdam later. A lot of free farmers followed him and were protected by him. Dirk farmed out land to them. Dirk was their God.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

But, oh mother! In 1018 AC a large "imperial" army, made up of troops supplied by the bishops of Utrecht, Cologne and Liege, regions east from Holland, headed for the stronghold Vlaardingen. Such because Dirk misbehaved too much in the eyes of the emperor. The ensuing Battle of Vlaardingen was a disaster for the imperial army and a tremendous victory for the Lord of Holland Dirk III, in the western part of The Netherlands. The troops of the enemy and their horses were transported by vessels. To reach the stronghold Vlaardingen the enemy had to disembark in the first place. Then they tried to march and gallop over swampy meadows and a lot of ditches. Dirk had them for breakfast, beating the enemy to a jelly. Many of the "imperial" commanders and soldiers as well as papal catholic clergymen were cut into pieces. drowned, perished in the swamps of the Dutch muddy waters. Or were simply beaten to death by Dirk personally with pleasure and by his farming friends with even more pleasure.

They were free farmers and were defending their properties and families. So you can understand why they shared Dirk's joy smashing skulls.

The Battle of Vlaardingen took place on 29-7-1018 and was caused by toll collections by Dirk on the River Merwede/Rhine near Dordrecht and the River Maas near Vlaardingen. The skippers, merchant vessels, were forced by him to pay a lot of money or goods. After doing so the skippers were mostly not in a position to pay taxes to the tax collectors of the Roman (German) Emperor. Also Dirk's hunger for territory was an insult in the eyes of the emperor.

In my opinion Dirk III was one of the founders of Holland and a founder of the modern independent Netherlands as well. The Battle of Vlaardingen was one of the deciding factors.

I feel happy that I can tell you that the chief of the invaders, one Duke Godfrey, was captured by Dirk himself. Dirk was not averse to ransoms. After this victory Dirk III was permitted to keep his possessions. In the humble opinion of Dirk the "emperor" might go to the devil and Dirk did as he pleased to do. Like he always did before. So, as an example, he continued levying the, disputable, tolls along the waterways in the Dutch delta. Later on, Dirk III also managed to acquire more land east of his previous domains at the expense of the Bishop of Utrecht. After the death of the feudal (weak) "Roman Emperor" of Germany and North-Italy, Henry II, in 1024, Dirk supported Conrad II for the succession to the emperorship. This support placed him in a more powerful position.

Dirk lived some happy years after and died in peace, a phenomenon remarkable from its rarity in early mediaeval Holland. I mean that most of the members of the House of Holland died from smashed brains.

The House of Holland, the male bloodline, died out in 1345. Lord, Graaf, William IV, the last male descendent, was killed in action during the Battle of Stavoren. He tried to submit the Frisians. His oldest sister Margaretha, was his successor. She, from the House of Holland, married the Roman (German) Emperor Ludwig from the House of Bavaria. Her son Albrecht was the Lord of Holland from 1389 until 1404. His daughter, called Margaretha also, married Philip I, 1396-1467 Duke of Burgundy. Philip of Burgundy became the Lord of Holland and all the other Netherlands: (Burgundy), Flanders, Artois, Holland, Zeeland, Hainaut, Brabant, Limburg, Luxemburg and Namur. Philip's son Charles (r. 1467-1477) was killed in battle in 1482, Burgundy became a French possession.

Charles's daughter Maria, 1457-1482, married Maximilian, 1459-1519 Emperor of Austria and Tirol. He belonged to the House of Habsburg. Maximilian was now Lord of Holland and the other Netherlands as well. His grandson was Charles V of Habsburg 1500-1558. Charles V was Lord of Holland, Lord of the other Netherlands (34 states totally, sometimes petty states), King of Spain, Roman (German) Emperor.

Charles's son Philip II 1527-1598 (Lord of Holland, the other Netherlands and King of Spain), from the House of Habsburg, was a heir to the House of Holland, a descendent via the female branch of the family (see Margaretha, daughter of William IV in 1345). As a conclusion one could say that he, Philip II, was the last (partly autochthonous) Lord of Holland from the House of Holland. The House of Holland ruled from circa 900 until 1581. In 1581 the Dutch abjured Philip II.

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

Final Remark

Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

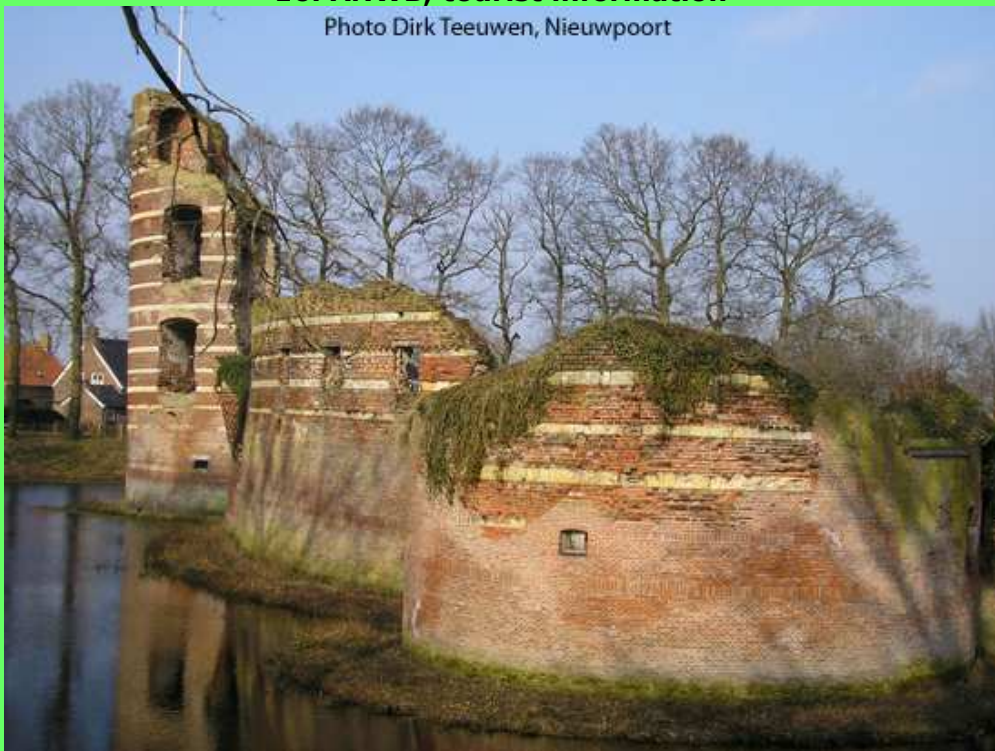
Sources, I made use of:

First picture right (laughing young woman)

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gerrit_van_Honthorst -
De_koppelaarster.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gerrit_van_Honthorst_-_De_koppelaarster.jpg)

Remaining pictures: photo's Dirk Teeuwen, collection Dirk Teeuwen
Aerial on first page: postcard collection Dirk Teeuwen, artist unknown, publisher
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