

Nieuwpoort Holland, Fortress Town

Dirk Teeuwen MSc

The Graveland Town Gate from vulnerable target to military gate



Below, picture gallery and text

By the Dutch artist Gerrit van Honthorst (detail,
see last page), 1625>>>

<<< By unknown Caribbean artist, 1998



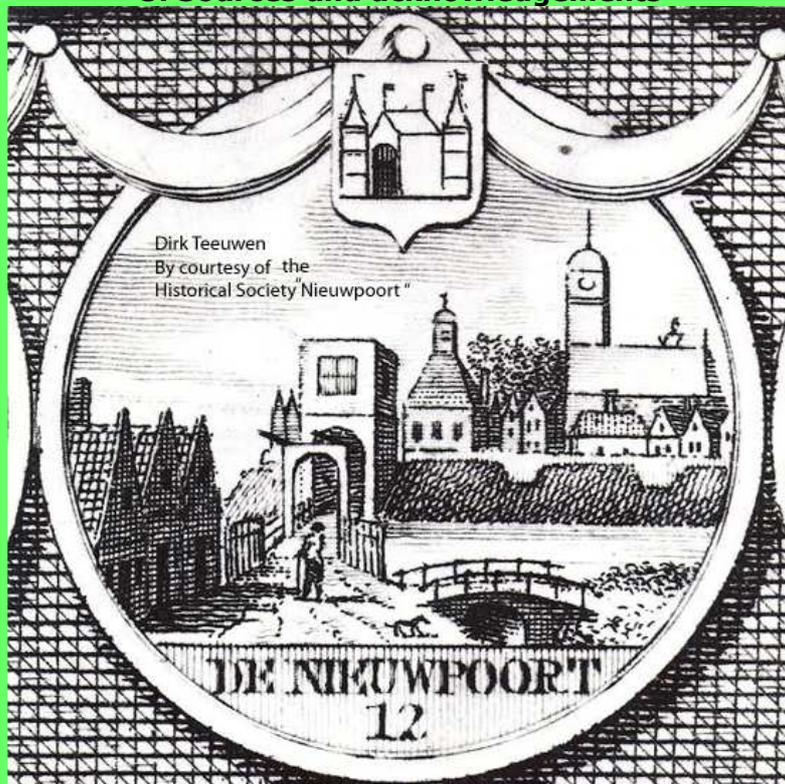
I used some facts from

Gaasbeek, drs. (MSc) F.L.: De Gravelandse Poort te Nieuwpoort, The Graveland Gate in Nieuwpoort Holland; Historical Society of Nieuwpoort, Publications Vol. IV; Goudriaan Holland 1993, p. 19-58 (A most remarkable study!!)

I owe many thanks to Mr Hans Keukelaar, Honorary Chairman of the Historical Society of Nieuwpoort in Holland!

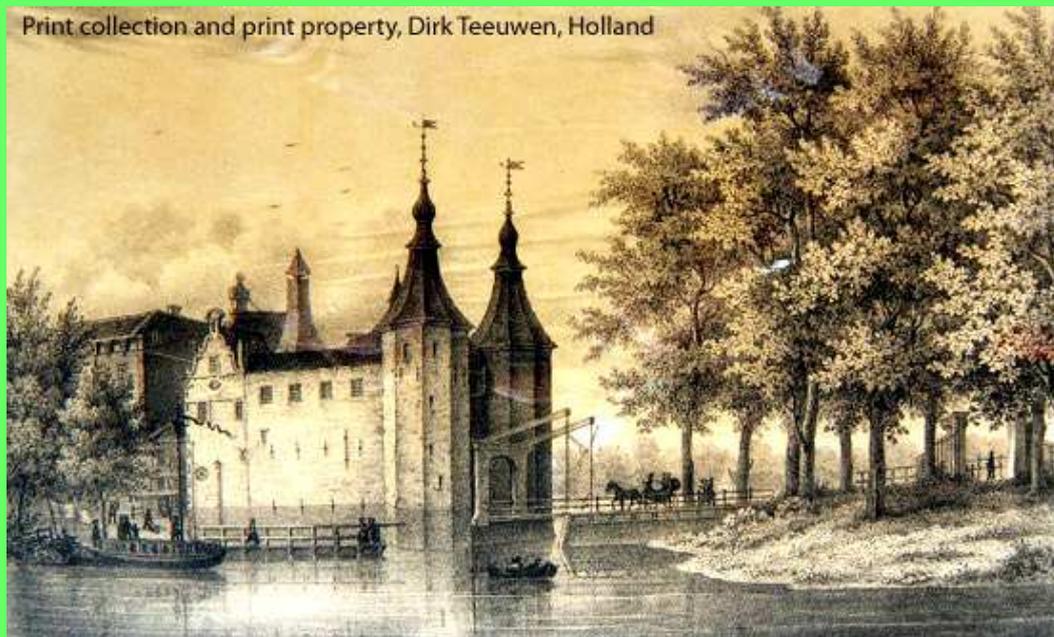
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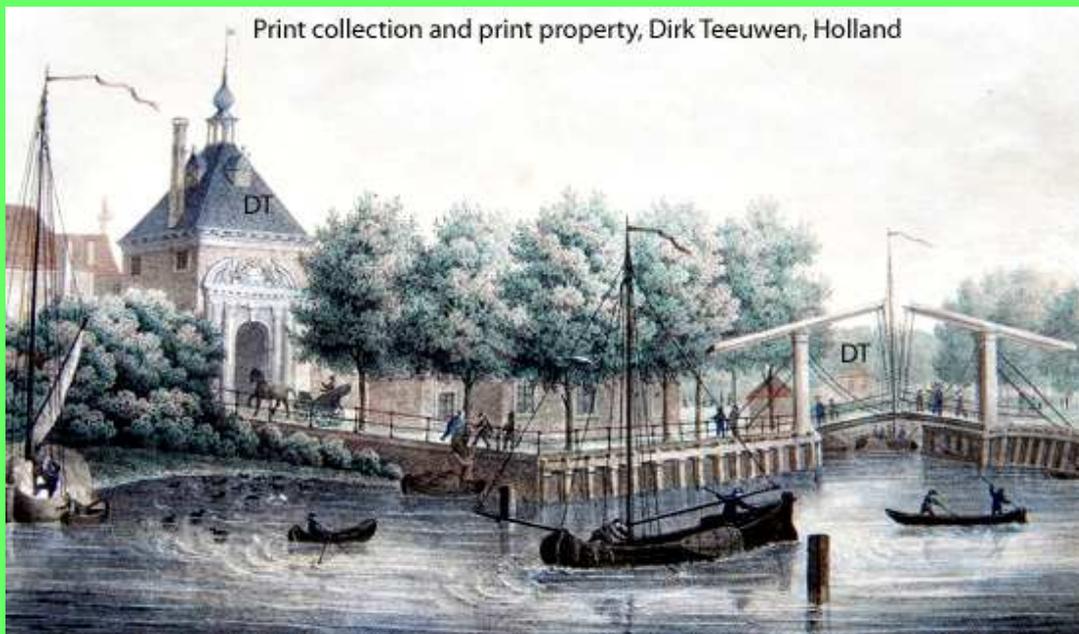
The Graveland Town Gate of Nieuwpoort Holland, 1672-1796
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

1. Introduction, town gate impressions



1.1 The oldest town gate of Gouda Town in Holland, the Tiedewegpoort (Tithe Road Gate) seen from the east, in about 1850. The brick defence walls, once left and right from the gate, have been demolished before 1840.

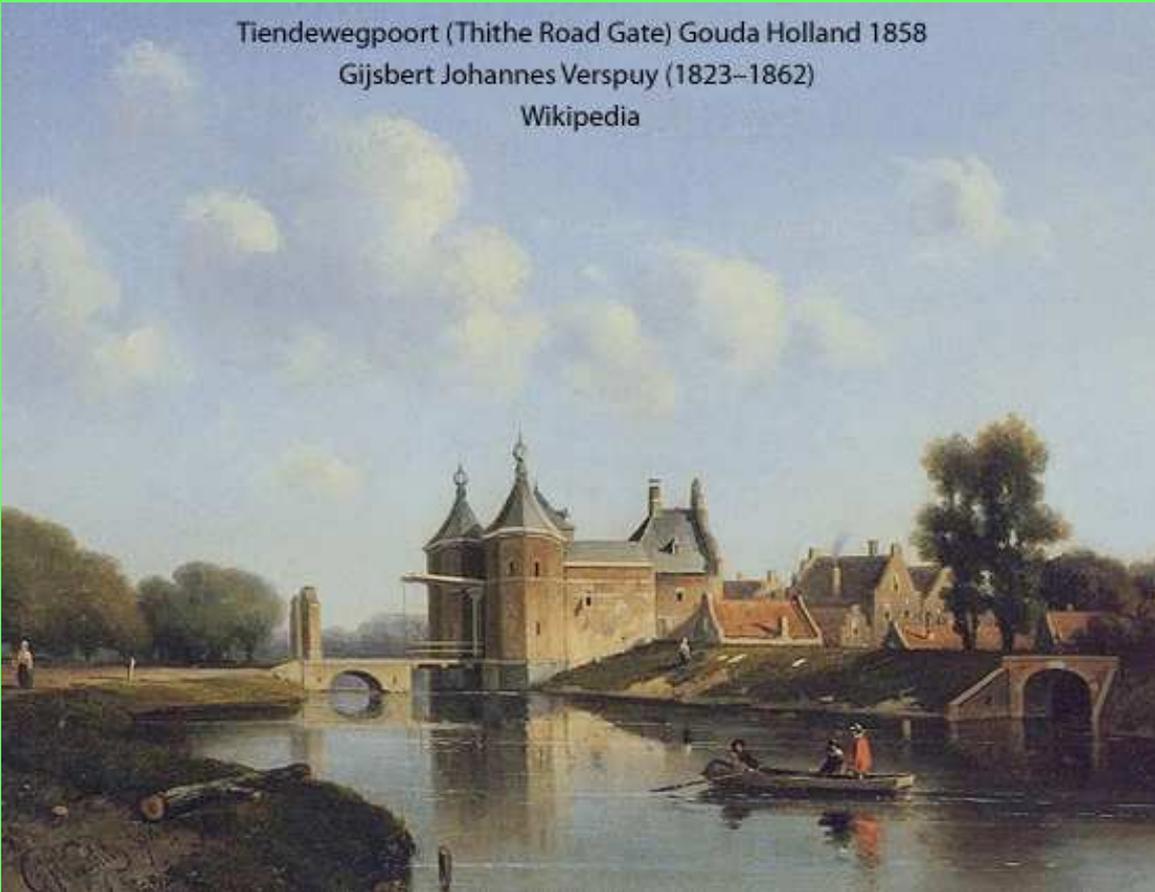
The old Tithe Road Gate was multifunctional. It was an access to town and it housed the local women's prison. This "gate prison" was a spinning house in which female convicts were forced to do hard labour. Behind the trees, left from the gate, a large building, the Arsenal, is visible. The Arsenal premises were the training-grounds where the local militia was being drilled. The gate itself was demolished in 1854, the militia building still exists.



1.3 The Rotterdam Gate in Gouda Holland, 1852. Demolished in 1851.

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Tiendewegpoort (Thithe Road Gate) Gouda Holland 1858
Gijsbert Johannes Verspuy (1823–1862)
Wikipedia



1.2 One more view of the Gouda's Tith Road Gate, from the west now, in 1848. Source: last page.

Koepoort (Cattle Market Gate), Delft Holland,
Wikipedia, Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Holland
Circa 1770, by Abraham Rademaker



1.3 What we see here is the so-called Koepoort (Cattle Market Gate) in Delft, 1700. By Abraham Rademakers (1676-1735). Source: last page.

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1.4 A detail of the last picture.

This Cattle Market Gate consisted of a ground floor and two upper floors. The first upper floor and the second one were suitable for residence. Maybe the guard and his family housed here. Town gates in Holland were part of the town ramparts of course, but were constructed for more practical purposes in daily life also. As a consequence such town gates were easy targets for gunners in times of war. A so-called military town gate consisted of a ground floor only.

In the next chapter (2) we can see that, as an example, there is a remarkable resemblance between the architecture of the Delft Cattle Market Gate and the Nieuwpoort Graveland Gate. Well, I must admit so, on closer analysis this resemblance is not so special; there were many more town gates like this Delft one in the rest of Holland.

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2. The old and new Graveland Gate in Nieuwpoort Holland



2.1 The location of the Graveland Town Gate in Nieuwpoort

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Collection H.K.N. Holland
By courtesy of the Historical Society "Nieuwpoort" H.K.N.



2.2 The old Graveland Town Gate, Nieuwpoort 1400?-1672, in 1602; artist unknown. The old gate was demolished in 1672.

A causeway, see 2.1, across the southern moat leads to the old Dutch Fortress Town of Nieuwpoort. An opening at the end this causeway cuts the southern ramparts. Once, the guard of the only town gate of Nieuwpoort - the Graveland Town Gate - could permit access to the fort. During sunlight admission was free. After sunset, after payment of an entrance fee, it was still possible to pass the gate. However, many returning and departing civilians - the departing ones were boozers mostly - refused to pay at night. With all its consequences: scuffles and arrests.

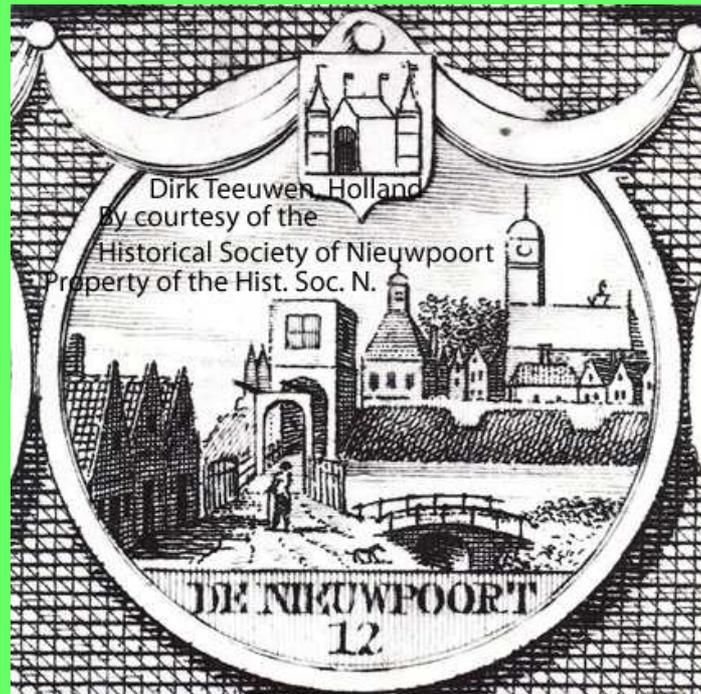
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Nieuwpoort - located on the River Rhine-Lek - was given city rights, privileges of a town, in 1283. In fact Nieuwpoort was a creation of the Lord of Holland and the Bishop of Utrecht. Both, Holland and Utrecht, are Dutch provinces nowadays. The Baron Van Liesveld and his colleague Van Langerack played an important part in granting Nieuwpoort's city rights. The first one was a fief of the Lord (ruler) of Holland, the second one tried to obey the Bishop of Utrecht. Sometimes the Bishop had Van Langerack under control, sometimes he had not. Van Liesveld as well as Van Langerack gave up some of their farmlands to realize the creation of this new small town called "Nieuwpoort". Nieuwpoort or Newport, if you want so, means wordly "New Gate". The history of the town had a turbulent character until circa 1600.

Around Nieuwpoort, from 1672 until 1698, new town ramparts were put up and moats were dug out. In those days these moats and the earth ramparts were rather modern. Before 1672 Nieuwpoort was protected inadequately by brick and earth ramparts, in fact the town protected by some ramshackle constructions only.

However, after 1672-1698 the inhabitants enjoyed the safety offered by modern ramparts and moats. The ramparts included/include six bastions. There was only one town gate, the (new) Nieuwpoort Graveland Gate. Regrettably this gate is not there any more, demolished in 1796. The ramparts are still present, but are not a military tool any more.

Between 1750 and 1800 there were a lot of storms/river floods in The Netherlands: circa 150 times totally. In the 19th century there were a lot of floods also. For example, the ramparts of Nieuwpoort Fortress saved the town from some terrifying floodings in the Dutch delta area, in 1809 and 1820. Just two examples out of many more diasters. The new Nieuwpoort ramparts brought some safety.



2.3 The new Graveland Gate circa 1795, built 1672-1698; demolished in 1796. Two small domes/cupolas are visible. Left: the Town Hall; right: a Protestant Church. A drawing by J.G. Visser 1796. Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



2.4 Flood 1995, River Rhine-Waal



2.5 Flood 1995, River Rhine-Waal near Zaltbommel town in Holland



**2.6 This photo was taken from "Visser's seat, 1796" (see picture 2.3).
Nieuwpoort 2015**

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2.7 Nieuwpoort 2015, a closer look. Two small domes/cupolas are visible. Left: Town Hall; right: Protestant Church.



2.8 The location of the gate as it is now. Doors can be placed in this entrance, cutting off the opening to protect the town against floods.

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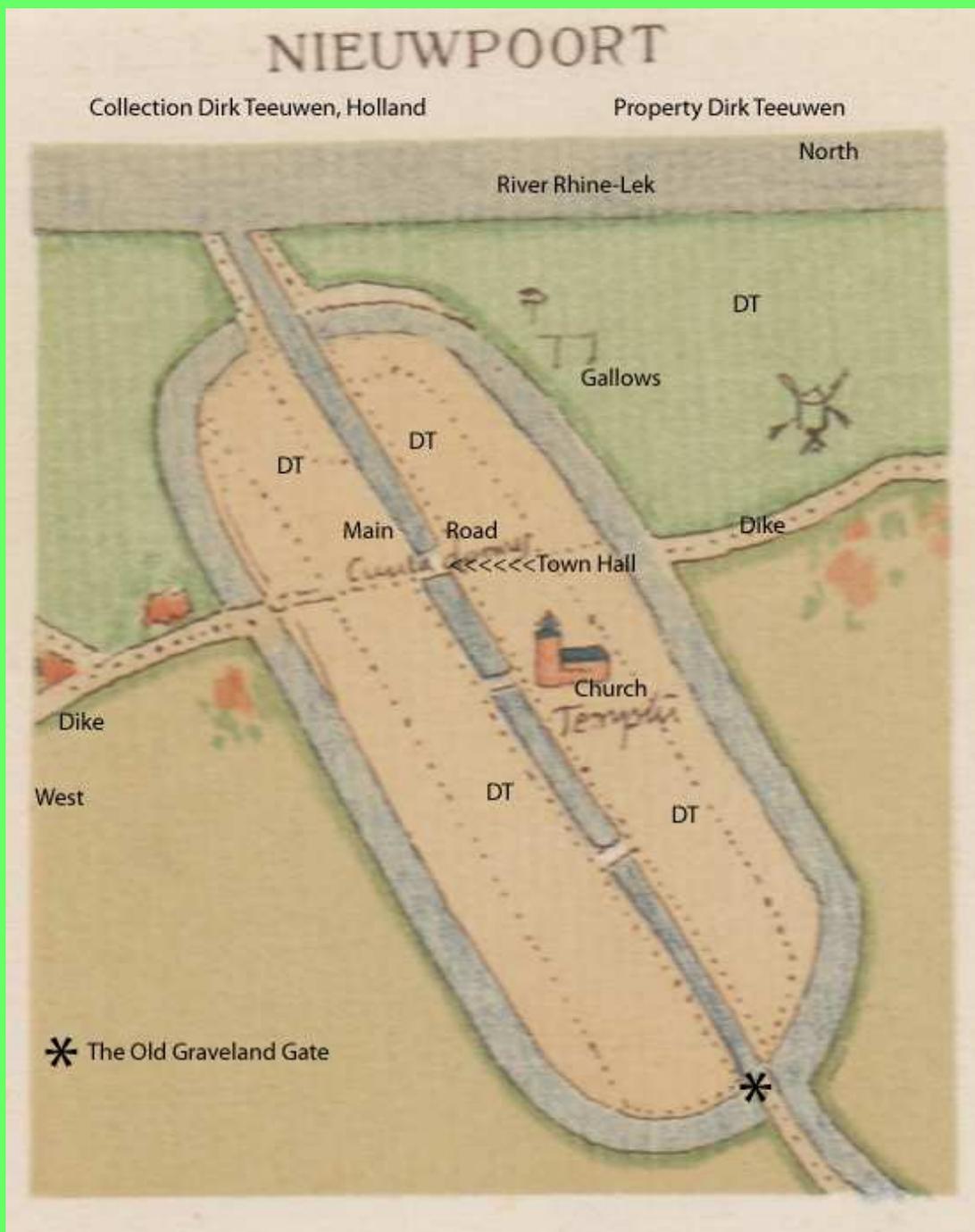


**2.9 The star marks the location of the former town gate.
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**2.8 The multifunctional River Gate of Schoonhoven Town, Holland.
Schoonhoven is not far from Nieuwpoort; three km to the west on River Rhine-
Lek.**

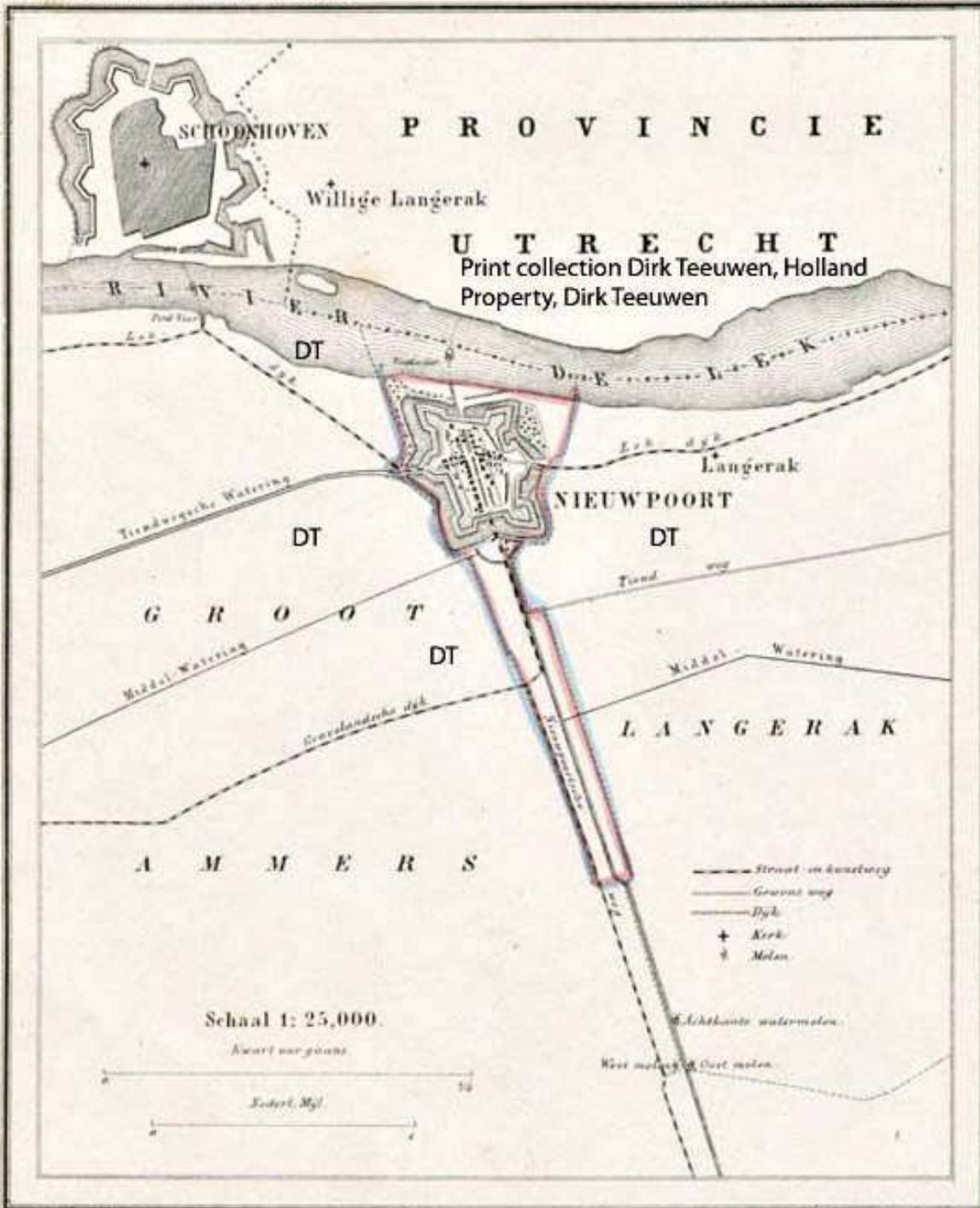
3. Maps



3.1 Nieuwpoort circa 1600

The star marks the location of the old Graveland Town Gate. See picture 2.2. Ramparts and moats were reconstructed between 1672 and 1698. Doing so, a part of the southern old town was cut off and houses there were demolished. After 1672 the Nieuwpoort Fortress area became smaller than it was before.

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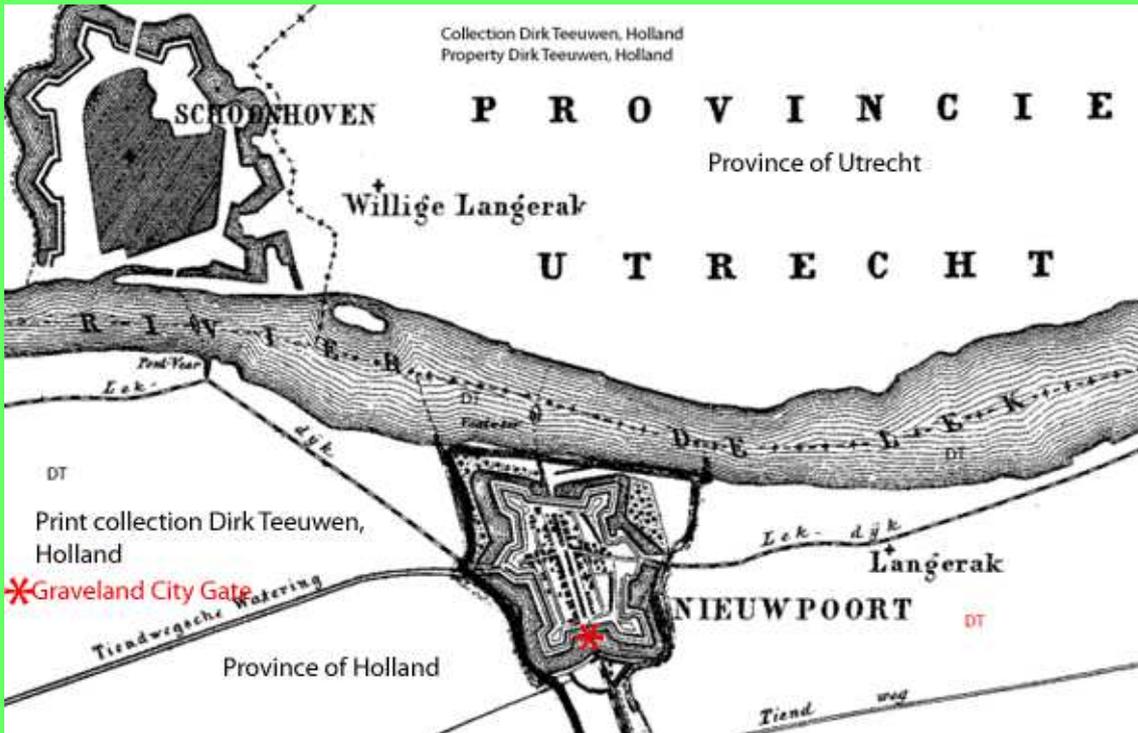
Geschildt door J. Hager

59 Buunders, 625 Inwoners

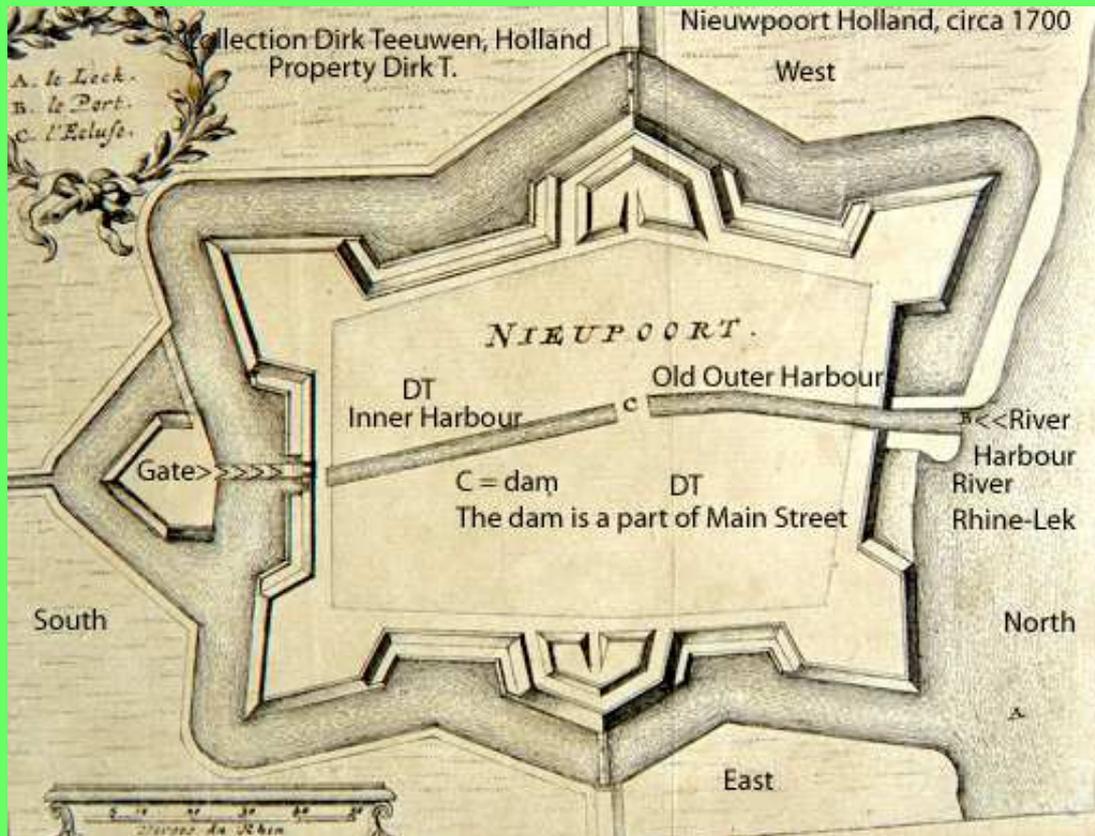
Uitgere van Hoge Scurper te Louwrien

3.2 Nieuwpoort and vicinity, 1840

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3.3 Detail of 3.2

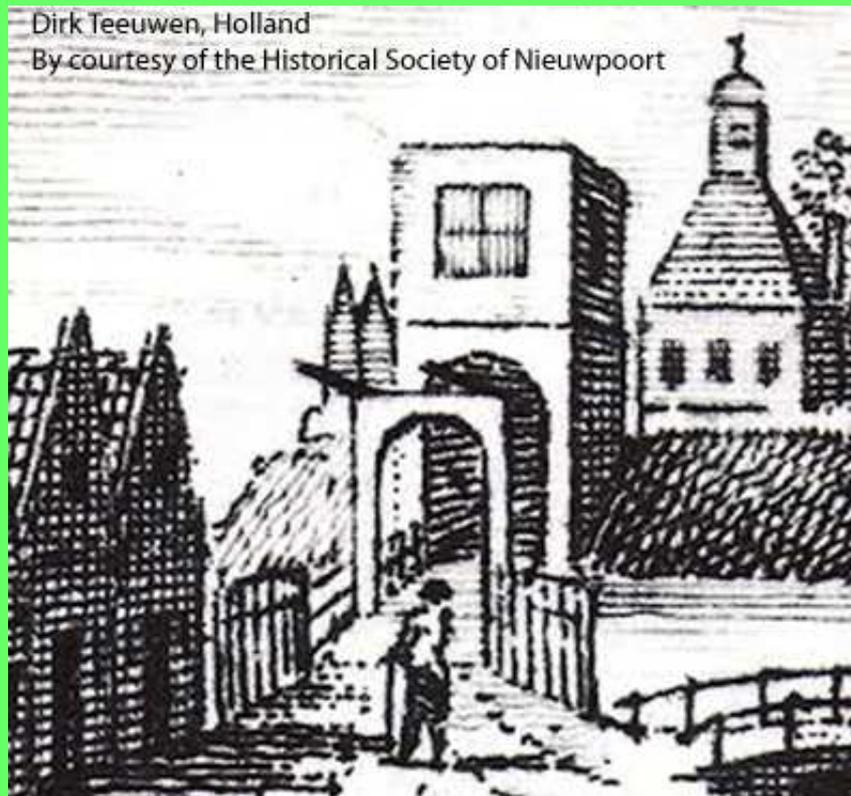


3.4 Nieuwpoort Fortress, with one gate and six bastions, about 1700

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The new Nieuwpoort Fortress was part of, as well as vital for, the so-called (oude) Hollandsche Waterlinie, the (old) Dutch Military Water Defence Line, 1672-1815. After 1815 a new Water Defence Line was designed more to the east. Such a defence line made it possible to inundate land from north to south in times of war. After inundation Holland was an island. Very effectively! Regrettably, from World War I, planes made the Dutch Water Defence Line superfluous.

4. The Nieuwpoort Graveland Gate, conclusion



4.1 The new Nieuwpoort Graveland Gate, a detail, circa 1795

What we see here is a gate with one upper floor. Such gates, protecting small towns in Holland, had two or more upper floor and a pitched roof traditionally. Once this gate had a pitched roof also (Gaasbeek, p. 28), but leaks had to be repaired almost continuously from circa 1700. The final result of too much dilapidation was a crash of the pitched roof in 1784. Only one upper floor remained to house the guard and a couple of soldiers (!). In 1796 the gate was demolished and transformed into a, so-called, military town gate (Gaasbeek, page 30): a ground floor with the gate and just a roof overhead. Such a military town gate was more secure, less vulnerable, in case of bombardings.

After 1815 the gate had no military importance any more. In 1827 (Gaasbeek, page 34) the gate was demolished and the bridge was transformed into a dam, see picture 2.1

There is only one picture of the Nieuwpoort gate. To get an idea we have to search for "lookalikes".

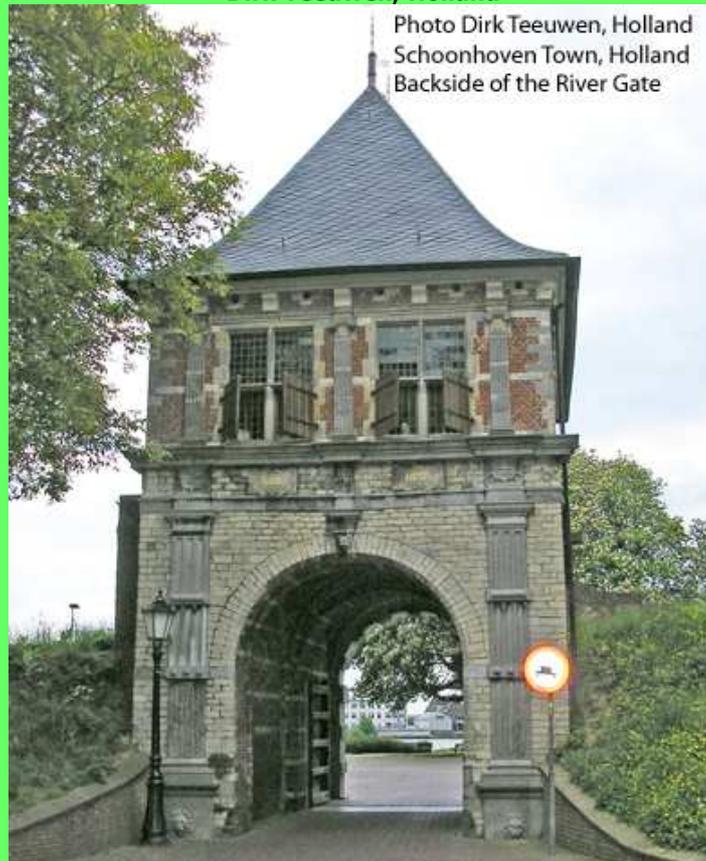
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4.2 The Dalem Gate (East Gate) of Gorinchem Town near Nieuwpoort, 1936
This beautiful small town gate is still there.

The Dalem Town Gate gives us a good impression of what the Nieuwpoort Town Gate might have been: earth walls directly left and right, a gate and two upper floors with a pitched roof.

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4.3 The backside of the River Gate of Schoonhoven Town, Holland 2015
See picture 2.8

This backside of the River Gate of Schoonhoven Town gives us a similar and even a better impression of the Nieuwpoort Gate, because this side of the gate shows hardly any frills. I don't think that the Nieuwpoort gate showed so many ornaments, considering the continuous dilapidation of the building.



The gate of Loevestein Castle on River Rhine-Merwede in the Dutch delta, not far from Nieuwpoort; Holland 2015

This photo gives us a good impression of a "military gate". Just a gate and a roof. Loevestein Castle was named after an aristocratic family name in the 14th century. Knight Dirk Loef van Horne was the founder of the castle in 1357. Loef van Horne: a family which produced a lot of robber barons. Dirk was the most notorious one. In 1372 the Lord of Holland took over. Most of Loevestein's walls and bastions of today are from about 1570-1580. From 1587 until 1831 Loevestein Castle was a Dutch State Prison. Until 1940 the castle was part of the new Dutch Water Military Defence Line. In 1951 its military status was over completely.

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5. Sources and acknowledgements

1. Mr Hans Keukelaar Honorary Chairman of the Historical Society of Nieuwpoort Holland

2. See text on pictures

3. Gaasbeek, drs. (MSc) F.L.: De Gravelandse Poort te Nieuwpoort, The Graveland Gate in Nieuwpoort Holland; Historical Society of Nieuwpoort, Publications Vol. IV; Goudriaan Holland 1993, p. 19-58 (A most remarkable study!!)

4. Source picture page 1 top right

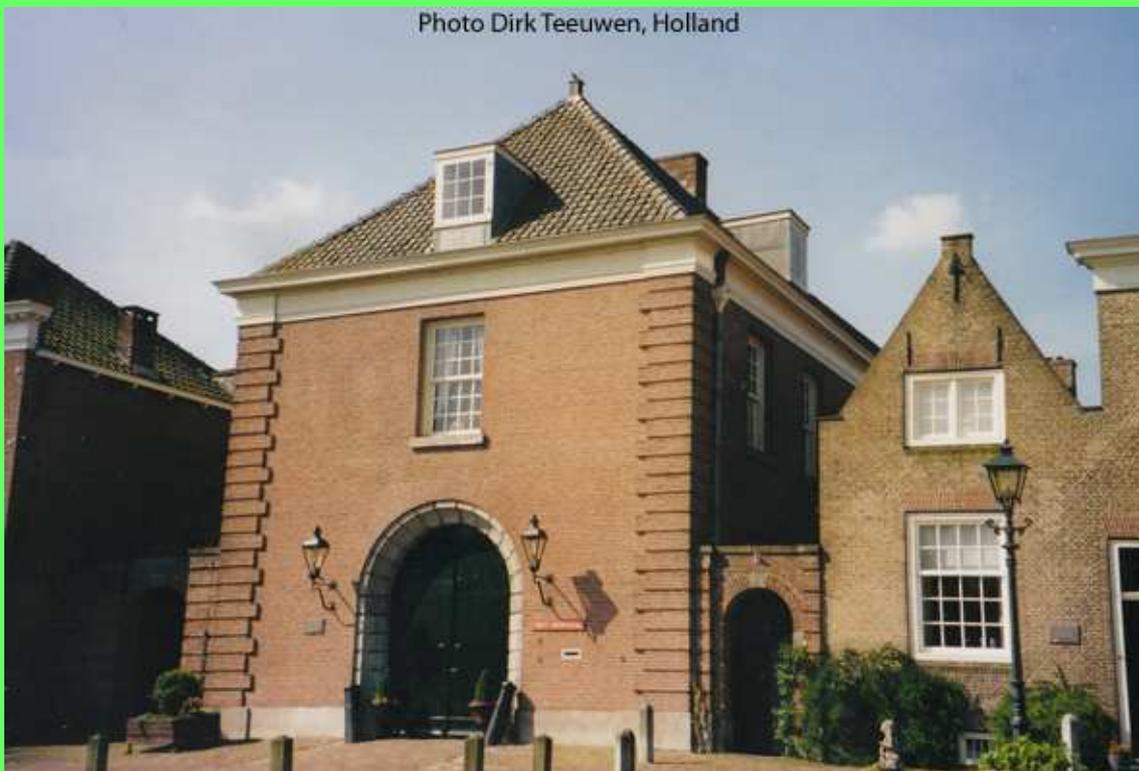
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gerrit_van_Honthorst_-_

5. Source picture 1.2 Kleiwegpoort Gouda

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gijsbert_Johannes_Verspuy_Tiendewegspoort_Gouda.jpg

6. Source picture 1.4 Koepoort Delft

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Koepoort,_A.Rademaker,_reproductie_van_tent._-Delft_-20048619_-RCE.jpg



The old Arsenal, Nieuwpoort Holland 2015

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