

Railways of Indonesia
Government railways in Dutch East-India
“Staatsspoor- en tramwegen in Nederlandsch-Indië
1875 6 april 1925”,

an electrifying memorial book, ed. Topografische Inrichtingen Batavia 1925

A survey of maps, statistics and photographic impressions composed by
drs (Msc) Dirk Teeuwen

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1. Introduction

This jubilee edition was dedicated to the Nederlandsch-Indische Staatsspoorwegen (Dutch East-Indian State Railways Company) established April 6th 1875. The author was R. A. Reitsma, a chief executive in the State Railways. As indicated on page 1, the original edition, showing a beautiful design, has been edited by the Topografische Inrichtingen (Topographical Institute), Batavia - Weltevreden 1925. All maps, statistics, pictures below were taken from this volume.

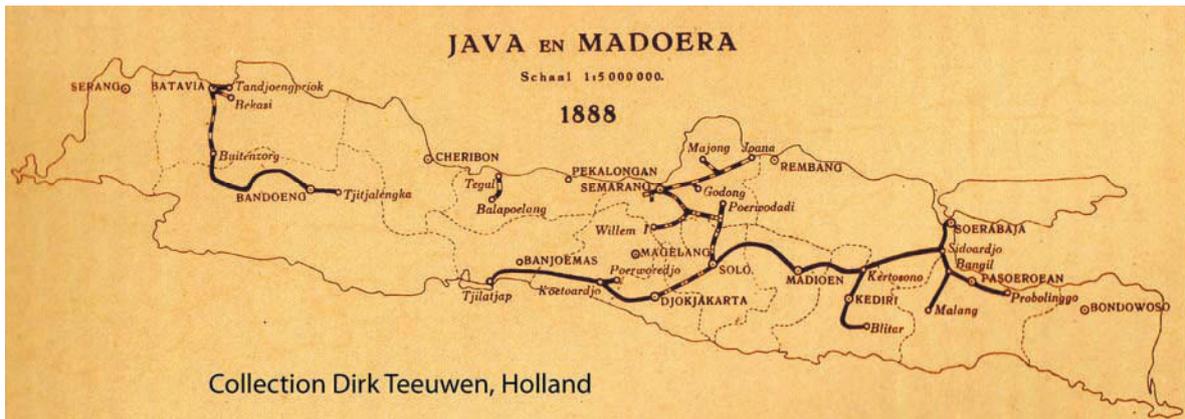
The author is no railroad fanatic and knows very little about "technical" details of locomotives, etc.



*P.1.1 Mallet mountain locomotive, Preanger 1925 Dutch East-India
The Mallet Locomotive is a type of articulated locomotive invented by a Swiss engineer named Anatole Mallet (1837-1917). Mallet's original design was a compound locomotive in which the steam is used twice, first in a set of high-pressure cylinders, then in a set of low-pressure cylinders.
It is quite easy to find more information on the internet.*

2. State Railways 1888-1925, placed on maps

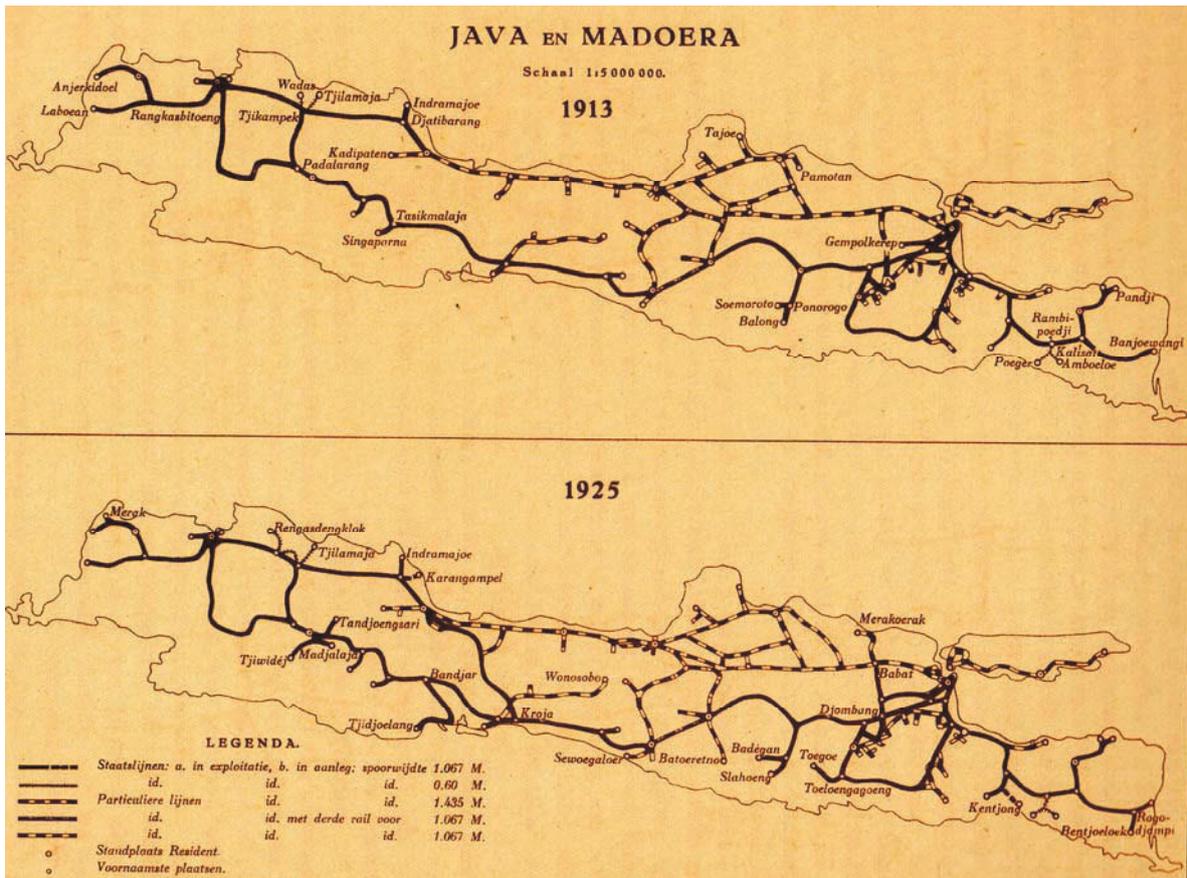
The development of railroad tracks in this special period can easily be followed on the next pages 3, 4, 5 and 6. The maps below speak for themselves.



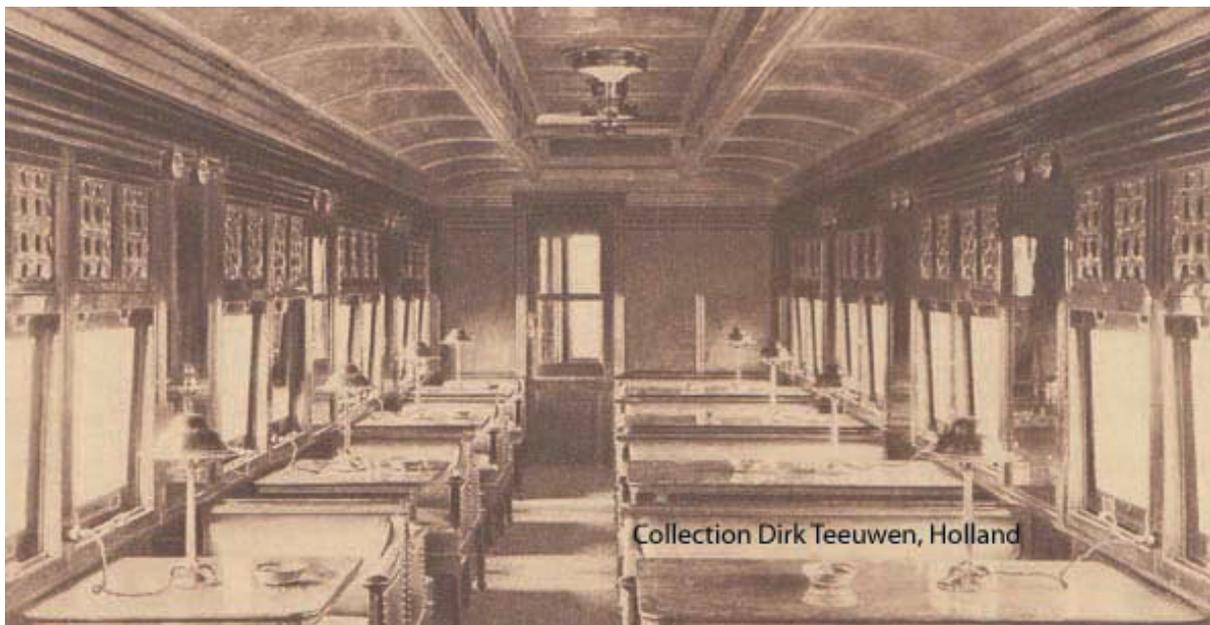
Map 1 (p.72) Java and Madoera railways, 1888 and 1889
Translation legenda: Staatslijnen – government railways, particuliere lijnen – private enterprise railways, standplaats resident – station resident, voornaamste plaatsen – most important towns, spoorwijdte – railroad gauge



P.2.1 Railroad car, Java 1925
Coach designed for first as well as second class passengers



Map 2 Java and Madoera railways, 1913 and 1925
Translation legenda: *Staatslijnen* – government railways, *particuliere lijnen* – private enterprise railways, *standplaats resident* – station resident, *voornaamste plaatsen* – most important towns, *spoorwijdte* – railroad gauge



P.2.2 Dining car, Java 1925



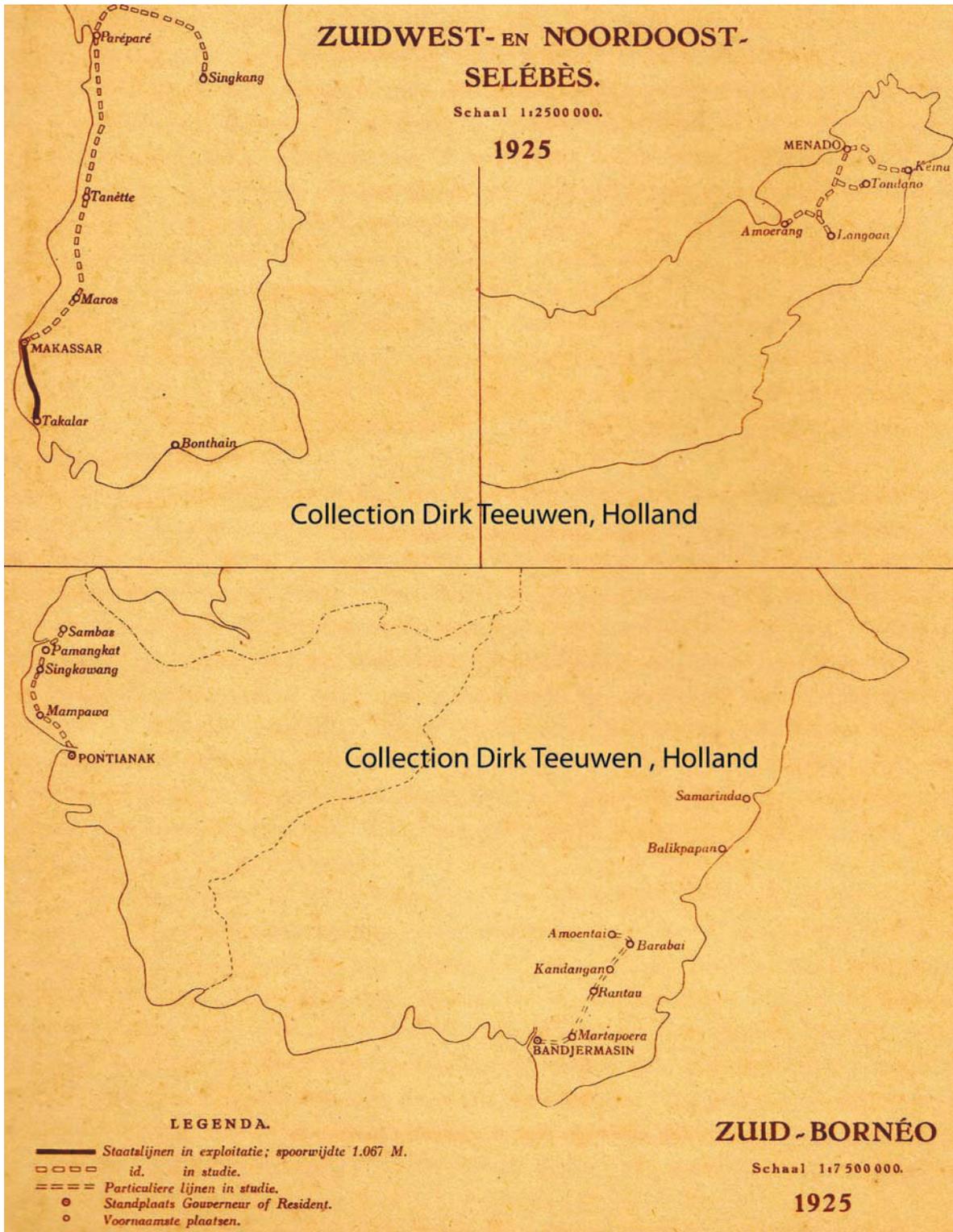
Map 3 Sumatra railways, 1925

Translation legenda: Staatslijnen – state lines, resp. a. operating, b. under construction, c. under consideration; gauge 1.067 m / Ditto (id.) operating; gauge 0,75 m / Particuliere lijnen - private lines, resp. operating; a. gauge 1.067 m., b. with a third rail for 0,75 m., c. under consideration.

Lands automobiëldiensten in exploitatie – motorcar services operating

Standplaats Gouverneur of resident – station governor or resident

Voornaamste plaatsen – most important towns



Map 4 Sulawesi and Borneo railways, 1925

Translation legenda:

Staatslijnen in exploitatie – state lines, operating; gauge 1.067 m.

Id. Ditto in studie – under consideration

Particuliere lijnen in studie – private lines under consideration

Standplaats gouverneur of resident – station governor or resident

Voornaamste plaatsen – most important towns

3. A short history

The following is a partial, more detailed, rewrite of my recently published text in "Manpower, steam tractions and contact wires, the fascination of thundering trains in The Dutch East Indies". This article is part of our Photo Gallery on this site also.

About the year of 1860 the means of transportation in Java, in Dutch East-India / Indonesia, were still primitive and, consequently the conveyance of products from the interior was a complicated matter. In Central Java especially, conditions began to become critical. Transportation took place by draught animals. The draught-cattle-breeding in the Vorstenlanden / Principalities, the area around Yogyakarta and Solo-Surakarta at Java, was overburdened.



3.1 Scale-model of Tanjung Priok Railway Station designed by Ir C. W. Koch; Batavia-Jakarta 1916

Even a ban on the slaughtering of draught animals brought no relieve. The price of buffalos rose from 10 guilders in 1830 to 50 guilders in 1850. Of course, as a result, the costs of transportation were continually increasing. In spite of these circumstances it took some length of time before it was possible to start the construction of a railway net, whereas it was not until the year of 1862 that the first concession was granted to a private concern. This 1862 one was meant for a line between Semarang and Yogyakarta (Vorstenlanden / Principalities) and opened an area for the set up of plantations. (More text on p.8)

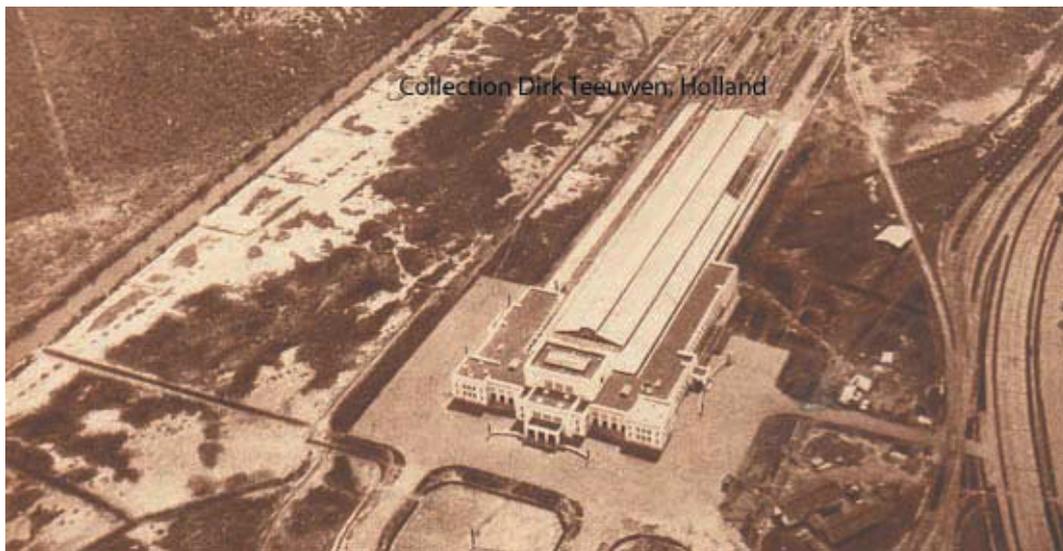


3.2 Roofing-in the new Tanjung Priok Railway Station; Batavia-Jakarta 1919

A second concession in 1864 for a railroad track between Batavia–Jakarta and Buitenzorg–Bogor, which connected Batavia Harbour (Havenkanaal / Sunda Kelapa as well as Batavia-Jakarta Bay) with the centre of the coffee and tea cultivation in the Preanger area on Java.

Thus the private Nederlands-Indische Spoorwegen (Netherlands Indian Railway Company) was established, although in the early years this company had to face severe financial difficulties. The number of plantations grew, but the owners – praising the railways – were very reluctant to invest money in them. It was mainly due to these circumstances that, in spite of government support, the construction of the Central Java lines (from Semarang to the Principalities) – the concession from 1862 - could progress by very slow degrees, while it was only completed in the year 1873! In this very year the line between Batavia–Jakarta and Buitenzorg-Bogor, for which – aforesaid - a concession was granted in 1864, could be opened to traffic.

This ill-luck, however, which had pursued the private Netherlands Indian Railway Company, inevitably resulted in shaking the confidence of capitalists in the success of the enterprise. Neither did this company, nor other private persons, feel the slightest enthusiasm to continue the work of railway construction in Java. Whereas private persons failed to take the initiative, there was no other alternative but for the colonial government to take the lead in constructing the indispensable railway net.



3.3 The new Tanjung Priok Railway Station; Batavia-Jakarta 1924

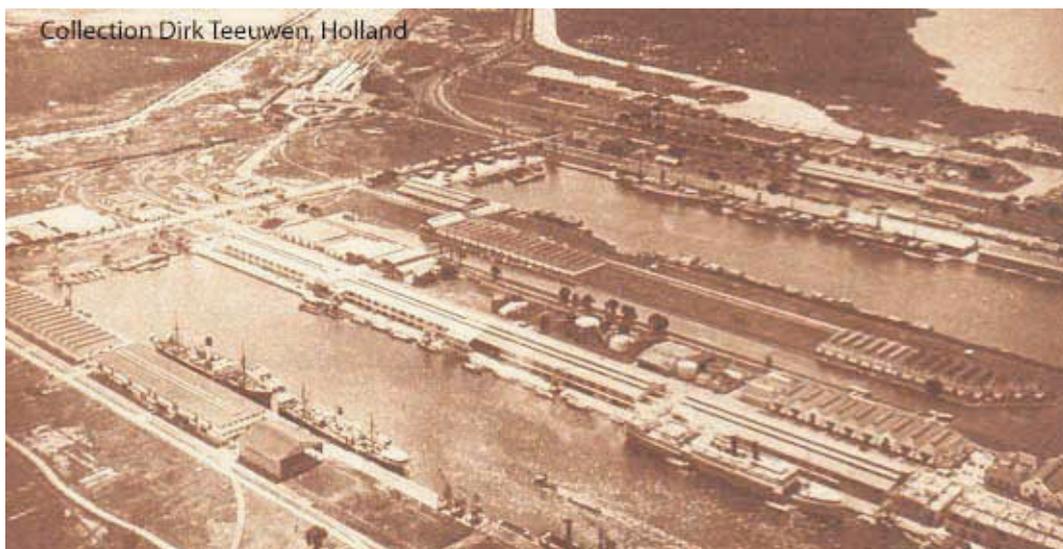
Since the year of 1875, April 6th, this task was energetically carried out by the Nederlandsch-Indische Staatsspoorwegen (Dutch East-Indian State Railways Company). In 1875 the colonial government constructed the first state railway between Surabaya and Malang. The aim was to open up areas for sugar plantations.

The opening of railways in Java was stimulated by economic circumstances. In Sumatra politics and military considerations played an important role. In 1874 the Government started to work on a tramway in Atjeh–Aceh. In 1883 the Deli Tobacco Company was granted a concession in East Sumatra. In 1887 the Government constructed a track between Ombilin (coal mines) and Padang on the west coast of Sumatra.

In the year of 1884 the East Java lines were connected to the Central Java net; in the year 1894 the Java West-Coast could be reached at Anjer and in the year 1903 Banjuwangi, situated on the East-Coast. The accomplishment of this last feat marked the first period in the history of the railway-enterprise in Java, which was the construction of the trunk, primary, lines throughout the island.

In the meantime the construction of secondary lines, local trains (called tramways), had been taken in hand. For this side of the question more interest was displayed from the side of private persons, consequently the tramway lines, which adapt themselves excellently to local conditions, were almost entirely in the hands of private concerns. The first tramway, the line Semarang–Demak, was opened in the year 1883; after the year of 1915 a net of over 2.500 km, mainly situated in Central and East Java and Madura, was open to traffic.

On the 31st of December of the year of 1928 the total length of the rail- and tramway system in Java measured 5.473 km, of which 2.802 km railways of standard gauge (1,067 m); 205 km of broad gauge (1,435 m); 120 km with narrow gauge (0,6 m) and 2.258 km of tramways with a gauge of 1,067 m (with one single exception: municipal trams). Whereas by far the greater part of the net was constructed according to standard gauge, the differences in gauges were no serious impediment, necessitating no more than 4% of total goods-traffic in Java to be trans-shipped from “narrow gauge to standard gauge” in those days. (More text on p. 10)



*3.4 Tanjung Priok, Batavia-Jakarta 1924
Top left, behind the roundabout, the new Tanjung Priok Railway Station.*

Besides these rail- and tramways, open to general traffic, Dutch East-Indian Forest Service as well as large cultural enterprises (viz. the sugar industry), constructed elaborate nets of field railways, the total length measuring 7.000 km. Sugar estates only were responsible for 6.500 km of field railways.

On Sumatra the several separate lines, which were each connected to a different port, never have been mutually connected before 1942 (the year of the Japanese invasion). The authorities were very busy studying a scheme for the construction of a net in Central Sumatra, eventually connected to the South Sumatra lines and to the government railways on the Sumatra West Coast as well as the rail- and tramway system of the Deli Railway Company on the Sumatra East Coast.

In South Sumatra the Government tramways (the Lampung line and the Palembang line) were connected in 1927. The connection between the Aceh tramway and the Deli Railway Company was established also.

Celebes – Sulawesi was disposed of one insignificant State tramway line, connecting Makassar – Ujung Pandang to Takalar in 1923.

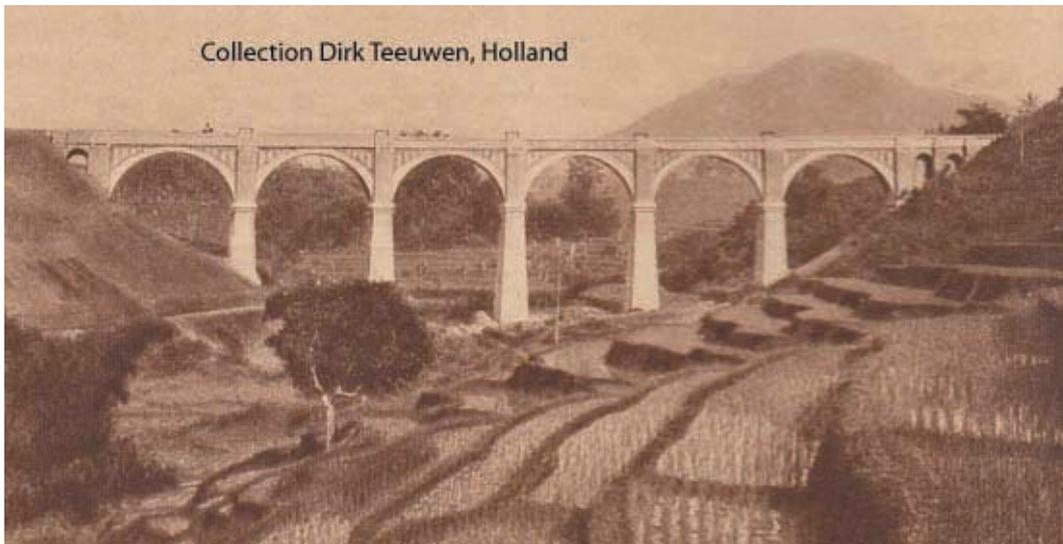


3.5 Inauguration of the State tramline between Makassar-Ujung Pandang and Talakar; Makassar; Celebes-Sulawesi 1923

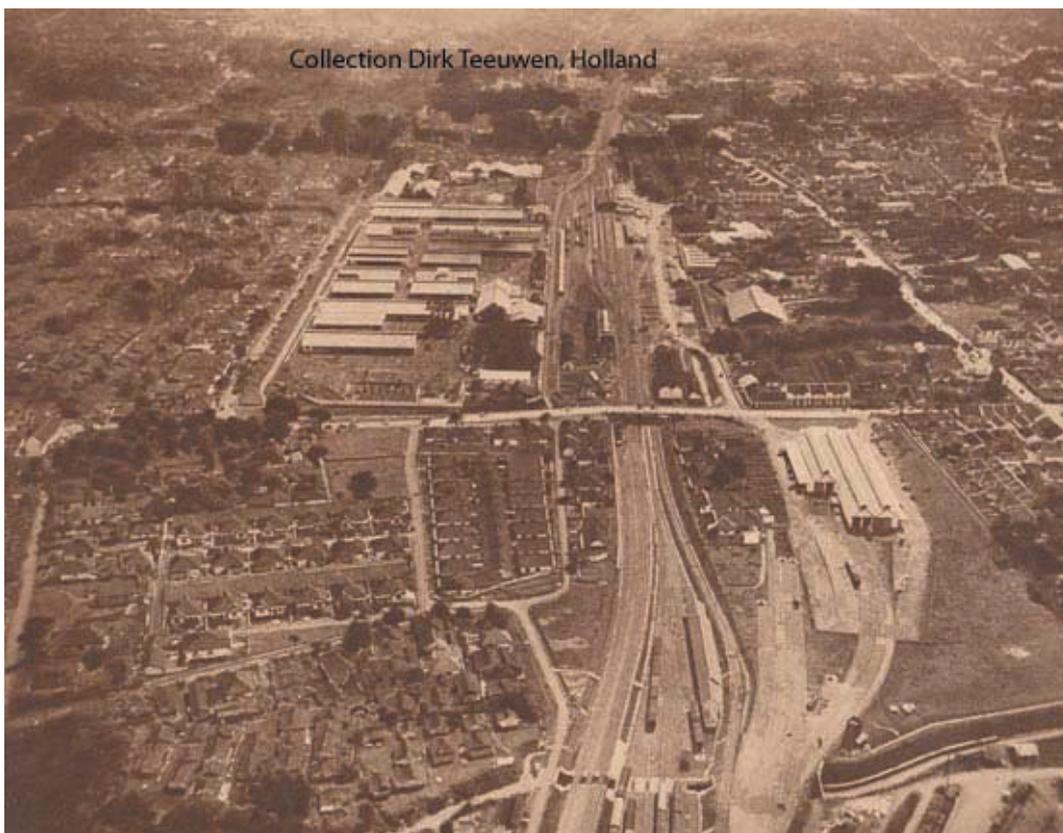


3.6 Electric motor passenger coach meant for urban traffic (2nd and 3rd class); Batavia-Jakarta 1924

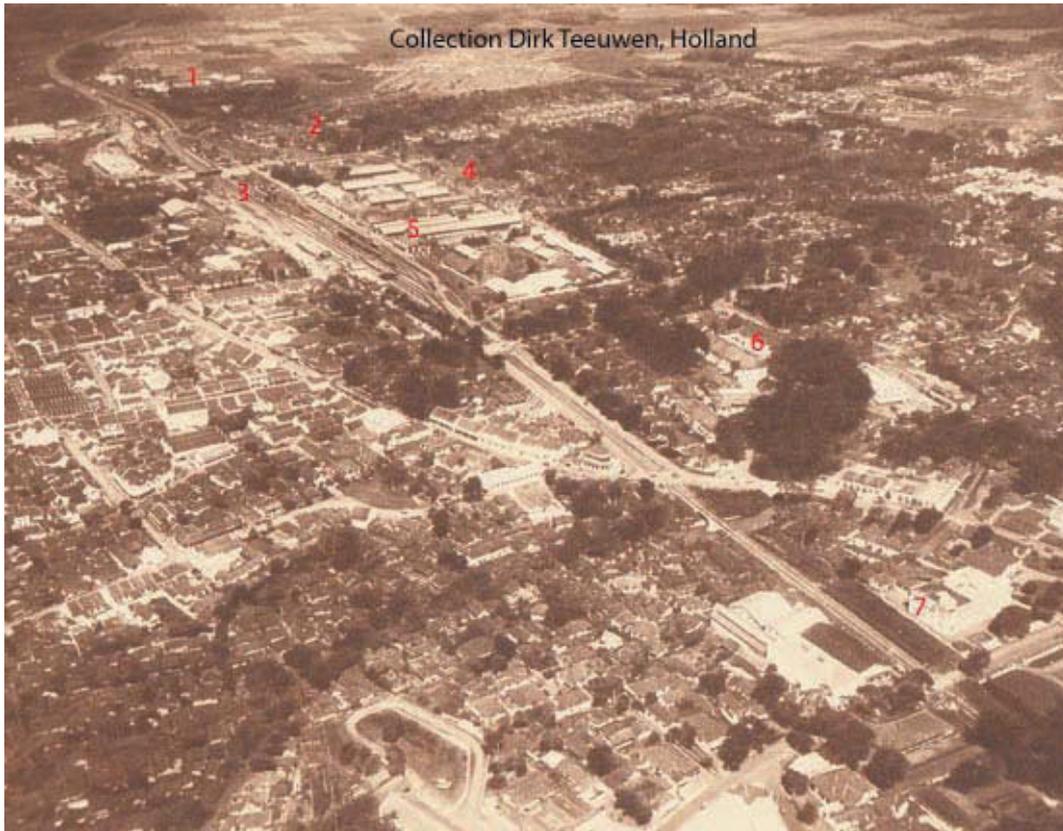
**4. Nederlandsch-Indische Staatsspoorwegen (S. S.)
Dutch East-Indian State Railways Company
A selection of photographs with explanation**



***4.1 Railroad Bridge across Cikuda River between Rancakek and Tandjungsari,
Java 1924***



***4.2 S.S. yards, Bandung 1924
In the centre, up: Bandung's freight station***

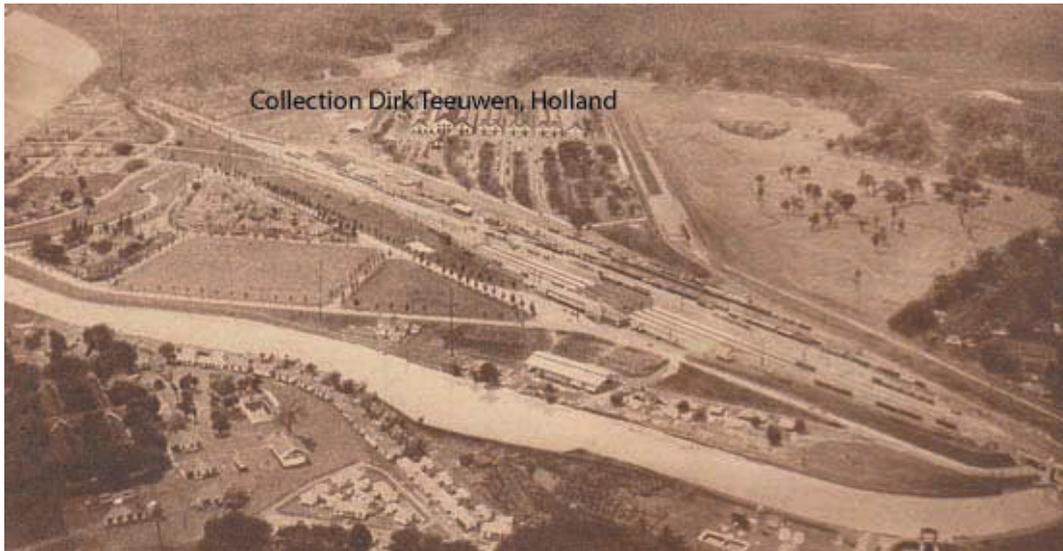


4.3 Bandung from the air, Bandung 1924

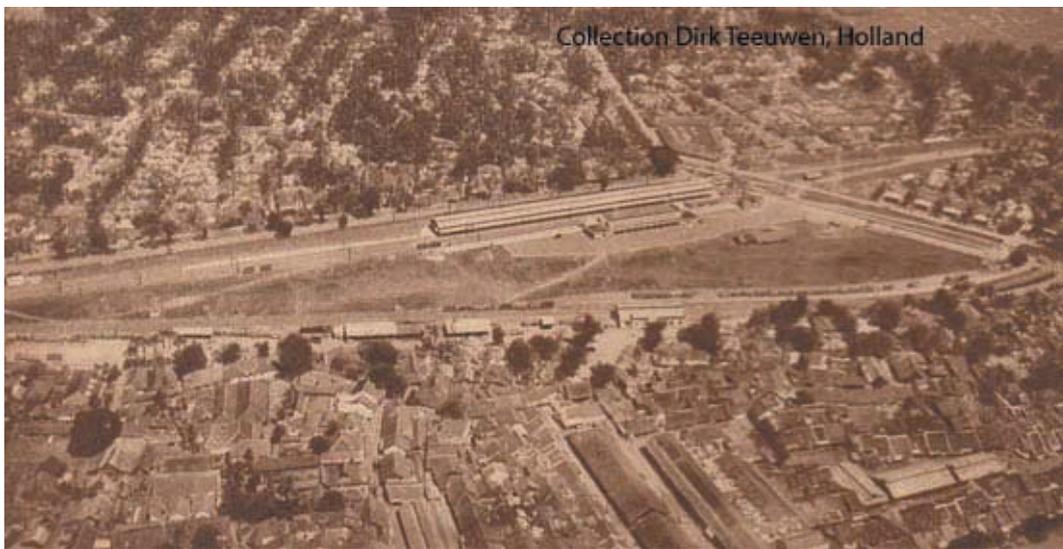
- 1. Railroad track to Buitenzorg and Batavia (Bogor and Jakarta) 2. S.S. Freight yard 3. S.S. Freight Station 4. S.S. Railroad workplaces 5. Travellers railway station 6. S.S. Head Office colonial state railways 7. Railroad track to Surabaya**



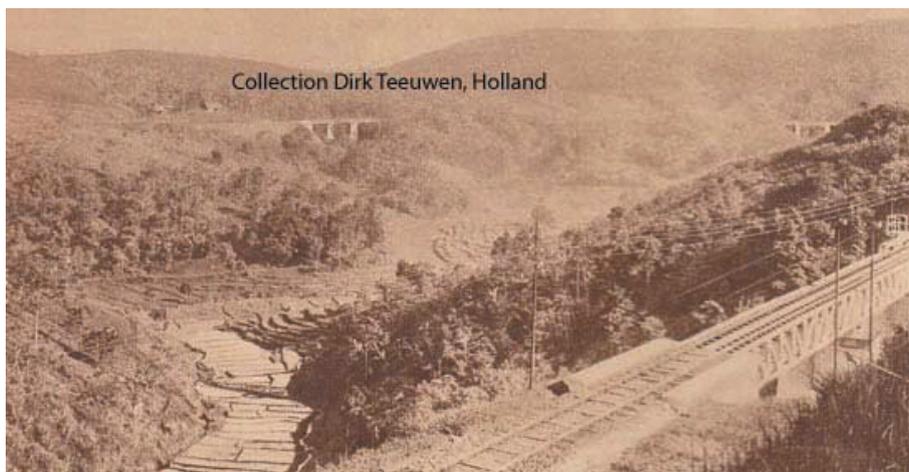
4.4 Electric express train locomotive (1 A – AA- A 1 ??DirkT) Batavia-Jakarta 1924



4.5 S.S. work places Manggarai Railway Station, Batavia-Jakarta 1924



4.6 Pasar Senen Railway Station, Batavia-Jakarta 1924



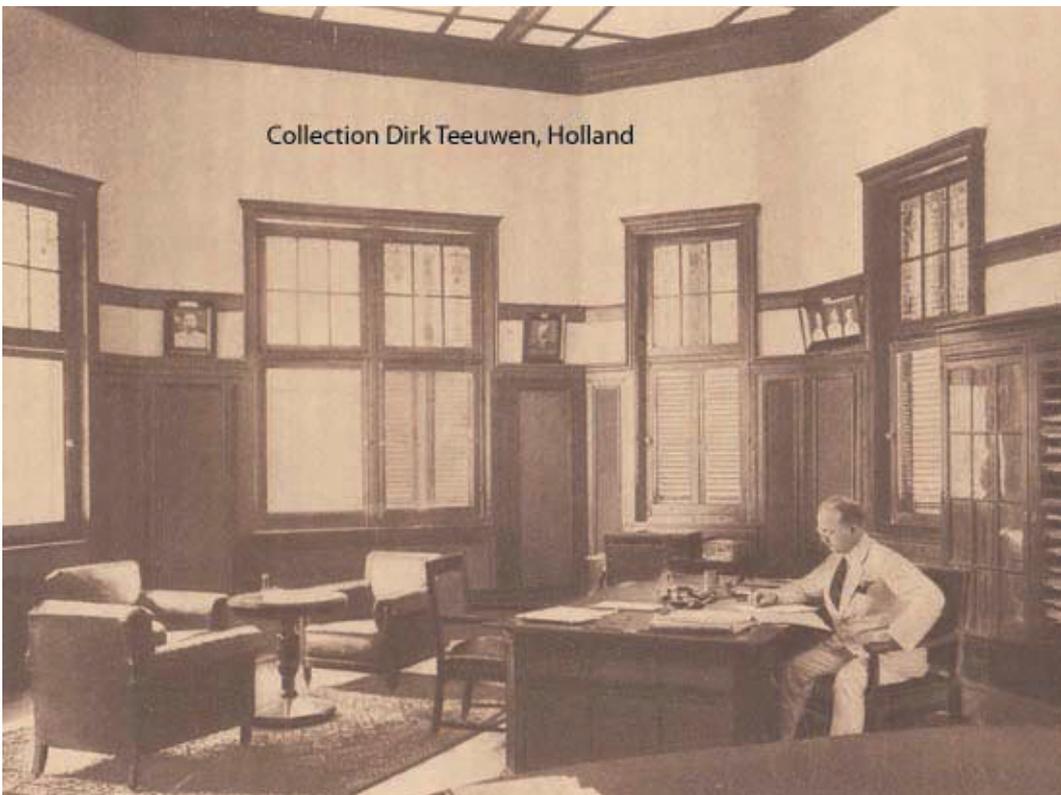
4.7 Preanger railroad track between Purwakarta and Padalarang, Java 1924

Collection Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

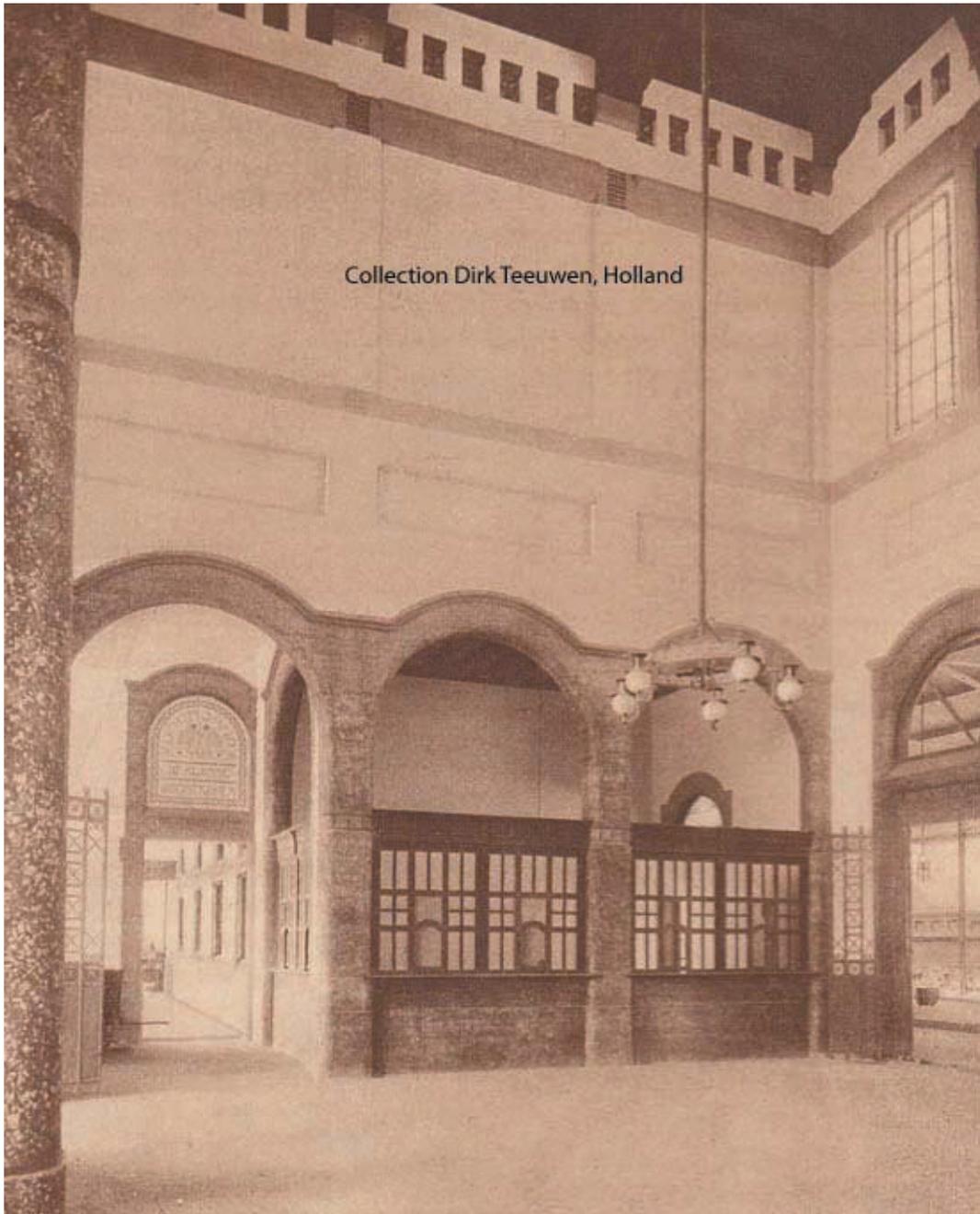


4.8 Cheribon Railway Station, Cirebon 1924

Collection Dirk Teeuwen, Holland



4.9 S.S. Chief Inspector Ir W. F. Staargaard in his office, Bandung 1924



4.10 Cheribon Railway Station, Cirebon 1924