



the **THE HAGUE** book



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the
THE HAGUE
book

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SETTLEMENTS ON BEACH RIDGES

In about 3600 BCE, the area that is now covered by The Hague consisted of mudflats with a row of sandbanks along the coast, traversed by channels through which the seawater ebbed and flowed. The coastline was more to the east at that time: Rijswijk, Voorburg and Leidschendam would have been on the coast. The channels eventually silted up and the sandbanks turned into low-lying dunes or beach ridges. Over the centuries, new dunes developed further out to sea, with flats between the new row of dunes and the old, as the sea receded in stages. This process was repeated several times. The result was three to four rows of dunes running more or less parallel with the current Dutch coast from Ter Heide to Bergen, bisected here and there by rivers. The dunes were ideal as transport routes and for settlements — you kept your feet dry at any rate. Peat formed on the marshy flats between the ridges of dunes. This land could be used as pasture or for arable farming.

Photo by Archaeology Section collection, The Hague



STONE AGE AXES

The discovery of five stone axes in The Hague city centre (near the road called Spui, to be precise) shows that people were already living here more than 4000 years ago. The oldest axe is thought to be about 5000 years old. It was imported from the Belgian flint area. The four other axes are much more recent: they date from around 3000 to 2000 BCE. Axes were important tools in the Neolithic Era. Farmers used them to chop down trees and clear land for arable farming. They then used the tree trunks to build farmhouses. The axes acquired their gleaming, smooth shape through grinding and polishing.



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CANANEFATES AND ROMANS

Photo by Peter de Ruig, undated (Archaeology Section collection, The Hague)



THE PRISON GATE

In the Middle Ages, the Prison Gate was known as the Front Gate as it was the main entrance to the count's castle. This made the gate the most important link with the adjoining village. The open space just outside the gate was also the main village square, known as *hèt Plein*, or '*the Square*'. It was the site of important official events, such as the execution of criminals. The gate itself, which is shown here looking from the *Buitenhof* (in other words, from the 'inside'), was originally a wooden building, but in 1370 this was replaced by a new stone gatehouse. This robust building later served as a prison as well. It continued to have that function for many centuries. The buildings on the same side as the lake (on the right) only appeared at the end of the sixteenth century. They were taken down again in 1924.

The Prison Gate seen from the *Buitenhof* towards *Plaats*, picture postcard, pub. H.S. Speelman, c. 1910

DIE HAGHE VILLAGE HAS ITS OWN COUNCIL

A village of farmers and artisans grew up next to the count's castle. They were entirely subject to the authority of the count or his deputy, the 'master of the court'. They were almost like servants and had to supply goods and services, while they were dependent on the count's judgement in important questions. They were allowed to regulate a few matters themselves. The court designated a number of councillors or 'aldermen' for this purpose. For instance, anyone who had sold a house or plot of land was required to confirm this ceremonially in front of the aldermen. A parchment deed served as proof, with the aldermen's seal as a kind of signature. This local council became more independent of the court later on. The village grew and gradually acquired more powers. But it remained under the supervision of a 'bailiff', a gentleman who represented the count. He had the most

authority and highest status within the village council.



Detail of a memorial tablet from around 1455, with on the right The Hague's bailiff Everard van Hoogwoud, copy from 1555 (Lakenhal Leiden coll.)

THE “MOST SPLENDID VILLAGE IN EUROPE”

THE HAGUE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The sixteenth century was a period of big contrasts for The Hague. In particular, it experienced a great deal of adversity. The village had a number of unpleasant moments due to the fact that it was not protected by walls or moats. Troops from Gelderland were able to enter the village without any problem and plunder it in 1528. At



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the start of the Dutch Revolt (also known as the Eighty Years' War), the village was occupied in turn by Spanish and then Dutch troops, which was far from easy on its inhabitants. Many left, moving to Delft for example, which did have defences. The government bodies left the Binnenhof because they did not feel safe there. The town of Delft even conceived a plan to raze The Hague to the ground because it was attracting danger like a magnet. Religious conflicts also played an important role in The Hague. This was where the first heretics were burnt and several churches suffered in the Iconoclastic Fury. In the 1570s, The Hague's monasteries, convents and churches were taken over by the States of Holland and transferred to the Protestants. Part of their land became the property of the village council. The people of The Hague went through difficult times from an economic perspective too. What had once been a flourishing textile industry now languished, resulting in unemployment. From then on, the village economy was geared to providing basic and luxury goods for the inhabitants of The Hague itself, both the villagers and the residents of the court. Despite the malaise, the village governors decided to build an impressive new town hall in Groenmarkt. The village's fortunes only turned at the end of the century, once the Spanish had been driven out of Holland and the various government bodies returned one by one to their old base. The stadholder, Prince Maurice, also moved back to the 'stadholder's quarter'.



A ROYAL TOWN PALACE IN NOORDEINDE

One of The Hague's oldest palaces is the Old Court, now known as Noordeinde Palace. It was built for the chief bailiff of North Holland, Willem Goudt, in 1533. The States of Holland purchased the house towards the end of the sixteenth century. In 1609, they donated it to the widow of William of Orange, Louise de Coligny, and her son Frederick Henry. She purchased some land behind the house and laid out a garden, on the site of what is now the Princessestuin ('princess garden'). In 1640, the stadholder carried out extensive rebuilding work on the palace, adding two wings. Frederick Henry did not spend much time at the Old Court during his period as stadholder but he did bring important guests there, such as Marie de' Medici, the queen mother of France, and Henrietta Maria, the queen of England. These days, the Dutch king uses the palace as his place of work.

Photo by E.J.A. Molenaar, 2005



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THE MARRIAGE OF PRINCE WILLIAM II OF ORANGE AND MARY STUART

Officially, the stadholder Prince Frederick Henry was a servant of the state. But he also behaved like a ruler with the associated power, prestige and trappings of court. He liked to feel that he was on an equal footing with Europe's royal families. A marriage between his son William and Mary Stuart, the English king's daughter, would consolidate the status he craved so much. It took a year of negotiations before the parties could reach an agreement — over the heads of the couple in question, because they were still mere children. On the wedding day (12 May 1641), William was aged fourteen and Mary nine. Once he became stadholder in 1647, William ran a luxurious establishment with his wife in The Hague and at his country estate of Honselaersdijk. This did not last long as he died three years later. One week after his death, his only son was born, the boy who was later to become King and Stadholder William III. Mary too died young, aged only thirty.

Engraving by J. Braat after I. Isaacs, c. 1651-52



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THE OBELISK IN SCHEVENINGEN

The Prince of Orange's return on 30 November 1813 was the most glorious event the people of Scheveningen had ever experienced. It was therefore hardly surprising that the fiftieth anniversary in 1863 was celebrated in great style, with triumphal arches, speeches, parades and cantatas. But Scheveningen also acquired a lasting memorial, a simple obelisk that rose more than ten metres to tower over the dunes. The granite colossus — created by the sculptor J.M. van der Made according to a design by A. Roodenburg — was erected close to the site of the historic landing. It was ceremonially unveiled on 24 August 1865, the birthday of King William I. Scheveningen was once again the setting for festivities and fairy-tale illuminations.

Photo by Photographics (E.J.A. Molenaar), 2005



A FACELIFT FOR THE TOWN CENTRE: THE 'NIGHTCAP'

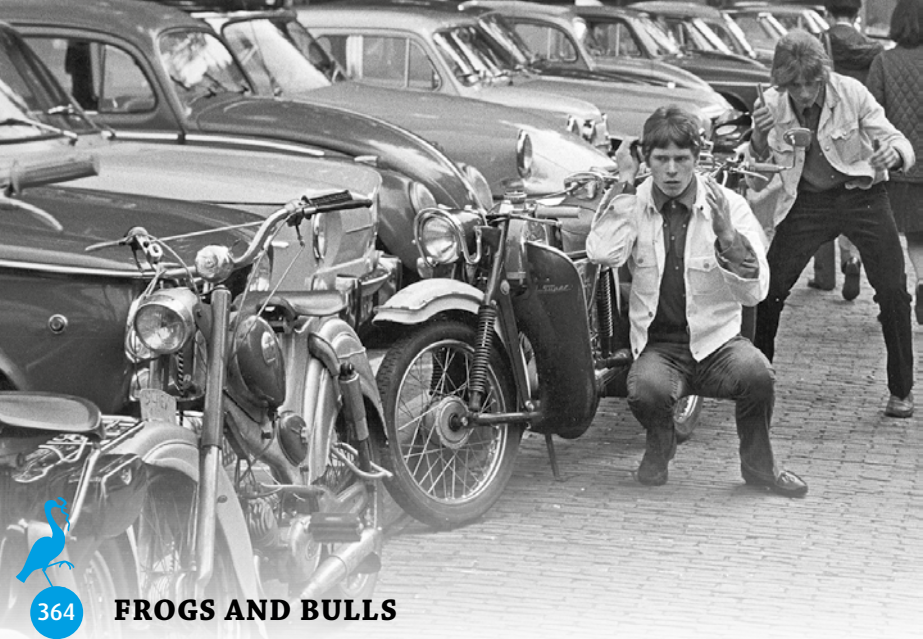
Various parts of The Hague were given a facelift in around 1860. In addition to filling in malodorous canals, the town centre around Groenmarkt was also tackled. More room was created for traffic in 1861 with Gravenstraat and Kettingstraat. In the same period, the shoddy extension to the Grote Kerk (the 'great church') was replaced by a uniform row of cottages for the poor. The sixteenth-century fish halls opposite were replaced by new cast-iron halls. The church itself also underwent extensive renovations, culminating in a cast-iron spire in 1866 in the neo-Gothic style. Cast iron turned out to be ideal for ornaments and pointed arches and it was applied with great enthusiasm. Even the Ridderzaal (the ceremonial hall in the Binnenhof) acquired cast-iron 'vaults' during this period. The Hague's residents were soon calling the new spire the 'nightcap', not a very flattering nickname. It was actually too heavy for the tower and in 1957 the 'nightcap' was replaced by a replica of the previous wooden spire.

Photo by Friezer,
March 1950





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FROGS AND BULLS

"The Hague terrorised by gangs" and "Biggest yob city in the Netherlands" were the headlines in *De Volkskrant* newspaper in 1965. It was hardly an exaggeration. In the first half of the 1960s, The Hague was indeed regularly the scene of battles between youths. There were basically two groups, the 'Frogs' and the 'Bulls', who could be identified by their clothes, their mopeds and the way they wore their hair. The long-haired Frogs usually rode on Puch mopeds with high handlebars. The Bulls with their greased quiffs rode on Kreidler or Zündapp mopeds. The two groups fought one another on the beach, in the Pex and Poot woods or in the city centre. The police tried to prevent these battles but with little success. The streets became more peaceful after 1966 as most of the youths went into military service, went on to college or got married.

Photo by Meyer photo agency, 1966



RADIOS AND SOLEXES

The Solex was a familiar sight on the streets in the 1960s and 1970s. This moped with the engine over the front wheel was manufactured under licence by Van der Heem, a firm in The Hague that had been founded in 1926 by the amateur radio enthusiasts P.H.J. and L.W. van der Heem and the engineer J. Bloemsma. It initially specialised in the manufacture of radios for the firm R.S. Stokvis under the name Erres. Over time, the product range expanded to include vacuum cleaners and, after the war, gramophones, TVs, various household appliances and mopeds. The company grew and flourished, but was eventually taken over by Philips in the 1960s. Van der Heem produced about 700,000 Solex mopeds in total. The company ceased production of the Solexes in July 1967.

Picture from an advertising brochure, 1960-70



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THE HAGUE, CITY OF KNOW-HOW ON PEACE AND JUSTICE

The Hague has been known as the city of peace and justice for more than a century and that reputation also extends to education and research in these fields. The city is home to renowned institutions such as The Hague Conference on Private International Law, The Hague Academy of International Law and the T.M.C. Asser Institute. One of the best-known new institutions is The Hague Institute for Global Justice on Sophialaan. This think tank was founded in 2011 and now consists of forty people with twenty-two different nationalities. The institute, chaired by the former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, aims to transfer knowledge about peace and justice to those parts of the world where a lack of such knowledge is leading to instability and inequality. The HSD Campus, part of The Hague Security Delta, is intended as the Dutch centre for expertise in the field of security.

The Hague Institute of Global Justice, Sophialaan 20, photo by Joop van Putten, 2016 (photographer's collection)



INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Since the first real international peace conference to be attended by virtually all countries, held in 1899 in The Hague, much has been done here to bring world peace closer. Countries were able to resolve their conflicts in The Hague through the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the Permanent Court of International Justice and, since 1946, the International Court of Justice. But there was no international organisation with the power to track down and punish people who were suspected of war crimes. Ever since about 1960, various members of the United Nations had been calling for an international criminal court to punish war criminals but divisions between the countries delayed its arrival. The deciding factor in its favour was the positive result from the Yugoslavia Tribunal. In 2002, a permanent court of justice was established in The Hague, the International Criminal Court (ICC). Since 2015, the ICC has been housed in a new building at Oude Waalsdorperweg 10 in The Hague.



Photo by Jurriaan Brobbel, 2015



Publisher
WBOOKS, Zwolle
info@wbooks.com
www.wbooks.com

Compilation: The Hague Municipal Archives

Texts and editing: Maarten van Doorn and Kees Stal

Image research and advice: Jan van Wandelen and Ewoud Mijnlief; *text research:* Ton van Schoten; *text contributions pp. 405-414:* Habiba Bouhalhoul, Corien Glaudemans, Cynthia Hamberg and Jan van Wandelen; *technical and administrative support for image material:* Wendy Louw and Ernst Molenaar

Translation: Tessera Translations

Design and layout: Richard Bos

Unless stated otherwise, all images are taken from the collections of The Hague Municipal Archives.

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ISBN 978 94 625 8135 7
NUR 521, 693

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The Hague Book is a useful reference work for anyone with links to The Hague. It covers everything that makes The Hague The Hague: the city as the seat of government, a place for civil servants and demos, and the home of the Dutch royal family. It is a city of top hats and cloth caps, soldiers and colonials, salted herring and hopje sweets, churches and mosques.



The stories in the 416 pages of this book — tales of Roman milestones, nunneries, politicians, German soldiers playing football and famous Hague residents — are accompanied by illustrations, in colour and black and white, taken from the Hague Municipal Archives collection. The book also contains new, modern photographs of a number of The Hague's most important buildings.

The *The Hague Book* is a must for anyone who has an interest in The Hague!



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