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## **Building the colony: Paramaribo as a case-study in analysing the presence of Dutch Colonial Architecture in South-America.**

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**Building the colony: Paramaribo as a case-study in  
analysing the presence of Dutch Colonial Architecture in  
South-America.**



**Universiteit  
Leiden**  
Geesteswetenschappen

*How did Dutch colonial architecture foster the building projects in Paramaribo, as desired by the  
Sociëteit van Suriname between 1768 and 1785?*

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## Introduction

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Dutch founded settlements, villages and towns in the Caribbean. A strong foothold of the Dutch was located in Surinam, in particular in Paramaribo. The city started as a humble settlement of the French around 1650 on the place that was later called Paramaribo. Soon Paramaribo expanded with its first streets. The settlement gained an impulse after the conquest by Dutch commander Abraham Crijnsen in 1667. During the Second Anglo-Dutch War he managed to conquer Surinam from the English colonisers. With the arrival of the first governor of the Sociëteit van Suriname in 1683, Cornelis van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck, Paramaribo had possibly scaled up to twenty-eight houses. The Sociëteit van Suriname was a collaboration between the city of Amsterdam, the WIC and the family Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck, each possessing a share of one third in the board of the Sociëteit. The board governed Surinam between 1683 and 1795. The foremost interest of the Sociëteit concerned commercial activities and expanding territory of the Dutch Republic.<sup>1</sup>

### Paramaribo's early years

Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck made surveying and mapping of the colony a great priority. For instance, in 1684 he gave orders for a new survey of all plantations and improved demarcation of the borders. New improvements to Paramaribo such as the construction of drainages, the reinforcement of the riverbanks with stones and a regular street plan on behalf of the growth of the settlements were made by Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck. The year 1683 is thus seen as the beginning of the urban development of Paramaribo. The most important aspect of the new street plan was the orientation of the oldest streets of Paramaribo, which were laid out on a grid pattern along an axis running north-west from Fort Zeelandia: Gravenstraat, Wagenwegstraat and Keizerstraat.<sup>2</sup> These main streets followed shell ridges which were suitable as a naturally drained base for building. This orientation forms the base of how Paramaribo looks today.

In fact, the historic inner city of Paramaribo has a place on the UNESCO lists of World Heritage Sites. The historic inner city is located along the left bank of the Suriname River and covers the area from the Sommelsdijk creek in the north, where Fort Zeelandia is located, to the Viottekreek in the south. Paramaribo is composed of mainly wooden buildings and according to

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<sup>1</sup> Karwan Fatah-Black, *Sociëteit van Suriname 1683 - 1795 Het bestuur van de kolonie in de achttiende eeuw*, (Walburg Pers: 2019), 9; C.L. Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname 1667 - 1930*, (Walburg Pers: Zutphen, 1973), 13

<sup>2</sup> Henk den Heijer and Bea Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie = Comprehensive Atlas of the Dutch West India Company, vol. III*, (Voorburg: Asia Maior/Atlas Maior, 2012), 268

UNESCO, the plain and symmetrical architectural style illustrates the gradual fusion of Dutch influences as well as elements from the Creole culture. The architectural style reflects the multicultural society of Suriname. Due to Dutch engineering and town planning skills, the town extended over soggy land to the north. Other important elements of Paramaribo are Fort Zeelandia and the ‘Garden of Palms’.<sup>3</sup> Fort Zeelandia has a rich history; from the first English settlers who called it Fort Willoughby in 1651 to the Decemblemurders under dictator Desi Bouterse in 1982. The inscription on a plaque placed at Fort Zeelandia by UNESCO confirms the exceptional value of a cultural site which deserves protection for the benefit of all humanity.<sup>4</sup> Therefore it is worth to examine the architectural history of the city. The Garden of Palms concerns a palm tree landscape garden and lays behind the old *gouvernement*. The royal palms were originally planted by Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck to honour his late wife. In the present time, some locals view the Garden of Palms as a place that is burdened with colonial shame.<sup>5</sup>

Paying attention to the urban heritage the Sociëteit left behind in Paramaribo is essential since the historic inner city and Fort Zeelandia are on the list of World Heritage Sites. In a wider perspective, this thesis contributes to the transatlantic past since Paramaribo and Amsterdam were inseparably connected. It must not be forgotten that the ambitious building projects of the Sociëteit, came at a human cost: the transatlantic slave trade provided the Sociëteit with slaves who were strong enough for the backbreaking work of collecting, transporting and building in favour of building Paramaribo. It came to the point that the Sociëteit and the Sociëteit’s officials categorised slaves by the type of forced labour in relation to urban development, such as painting, timbering or masonry, meaning that enslaved Africans were reduced to one task they had within the colonial system. Even though source material is scarce on this matter, I still tend to pay attention to slavery in relation to urban development because, in my view, the architectural part of transatlantic history is not complete without mentioning institutionalised slavery and the exploitation of humans. As

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “Historic Inner City of Paramaribo,” UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed December 9, 2022, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/940/>.

<sup>4</sup> R. Höfte, UNESCO World Heritage Centre Werelderfgoedplaquette bij Fort Zeelandia te Paramaribo, (Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections: 2004, KITLV 43445)

<sup>5</sup> Trouw, “Rumoer Om Plek Standbeeld Arron in Paramaribo,” *Trouw Nijmegen*, May 14, 2008, <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/rumoer-om-plek-standbeeld-arron-in-paramaribo~be9041ef/>. Some even believed that the Nationale Partij Suriname went down because of a curse roaming in the Garden of Palms. The curse supposedly had to do with the placement of a statue of Henck Arron in the Garden of Palms. Arron had an important role in the independence of Surinam and therefore placing his statue in the Garden of Palms was seen as inappropriate. Some locals believed that Arron’s spirit was seeking revenge for this action. Source: Waterkant, “Nationale Partij Suriname Ten Onder Aan Vloek,” *Waterkant Paramaribo*, June 11, 2015, <https://www.waterkant.net/suriname/2015/06/11/nationale-partij-suriname-ten-onder-aan-vloek/>.

Karwan Fatah-Black stated: “All societies around the Atlantic Ocean struggle with the legacy of trans-Atlantic slavery and colonisation”.<sup>6</sup>

### **Dutch colonial architecture in Paramaribo**

Dutch colonial architecture is a collective term for the various styles of Dutch architecture across the Dutch colonial empire designed by Dutch architects and engineers. According to UNESCO, Paramaribo proves to be an exceptional example of the gradual fusion of European architecture and the construction techniques along with the use of local South American materials. The use of these local architectural products is one of the most important characteristics of Dutch colonial architecture. Examples of architectural products are different types of local wood, stone or glass. Another important characteristic of this architectural style is the climatological adaption of the buildings to the tropical climate in Surinam. Climate even influenced certain locations of buildings in Paramaribo. For instance, the governor thought wisely about building in a narrow area because fire hazards were not uncommon in the colony. To dive deeper into the subject of Dutch colonial architecture than has ever been done so far, this thesis analyses how climate and environmental aspects affected the earlier mentioned architectural products in relation to urban development.

The third characteristic of Dutch colonial architecture concerns the uniqueness of the buildings, originated from the diverse cultural context, as was also explained by UNESCO.<sup>7</sup> Dutch colonial architecture in Surinam is barely examined, except for a case-study of Paramaribo done by C.L. Temminck Groll in ‘Dutch colonial architecture and town planning: history, preservation and present use’ (1995). His study is a survey of Dutch colonial architecture comparing eighteenth-century architecture in Jakarta, Cape Town, Paramaribo, and Willemstad. The survey shows that there were not only similarities between the cities, but also great differences and concluded that every historic building is the first place a reflection of the country in which it stands.<sup>8</sup> Besides Groll’s study, other studies mostly focus on Dutch colonial architecture in North America or in the Dutch East Indies. Therefore this thesis takes the opportunity to fill in the lacunae in the historiography concerning Dutch colonial architecture in South America.

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<sup>6</sup> Fatah-Black, *Sociëteit van Suriname*, 13

<sup>7</sup> C.L. Temminck Groll, “Dutch Colonial Architecture and Town Planning”, in: *The Low Countries: arts and society in Flanders and The Netherlands: a yearbook*, 153-162, (Rekkem: Stichting Ons Erfdeel, 1995), 153; V.A. Kumurur and D.M. Tampi, “The Dutch Colonial Architecture of Buildings in Manado’s Old City: A Response to the Coastal Tropical Climate.” *IOP Conference Series. Earth and Environmental Science* 129, no. 1 (2018): 12030. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/129/1/012030>, 1

<sup>8</sup> Temminck Groll, “Dutch Colonial Architecture and Town Planning”, 153;. Kumurur and Tampi, “The Dutch Colonial Architecture of Buildings in Manado’s Old City”, 1

## **Scope and method**

This thesis addresses the following main question: *‘How did Dutch colonial architecture foster the building projects in Paramaribo, as desired by the Sociëteit van Suriname between 1768 and 1785?’*

During this period Jan Nepveu governed Surinam from 1768 until his death in 1779. His governorship is marked by several major developments and events. Under Nepveu more efforts were made for the urbanisation of Paramaribo than under any of his predecessors. Next to that, Nepveu continuously waged war against rebellious Maroon groups. The expeditions against Maroon groups sometimes mislead him from his building projects, resulting in a delay of a project. As a ‘solution’ to protect the colony better against the Maroon groups, the Vrye Corps consisting of ‘freed’ slaves was established in 1772. Even though the slaves were free, ultimately they had little choice in participating in the Vrye Corps. Furthermore, the colony was struck by a credit crisis in 1773 which caused, for instance, the prices of wood to rise leading the Sociëteit to be reticent in spending too much on Nepveu’s ambitions. All in all, Nepveu’s governorship was characterised by ongoing turmoil in the colony. Most importantly, Nepveu and the Sociëteit’s land surveyor Frederick Lieftinck made concrete plans to expand Paramaribo and their plans forms the base of this thesis. After Nepveu’s death several building projects remained unfinished. His successor, Bernard Texier (1778-1783), took on these projects and promised the Sociëteit to finish what Nepveu had started.

To answer the main question I will firstly analyse three complementary charts produced by land surveyor Frederick Lieftinck between 1769 and 1772 as ordered by Nepveu. The charts show Nepveu’s and Lieftinck’s vision of a successful expansion of Paramaribo. The question arises whether Nepveu’s vision became reality and if it did not, what hindered him in successfully expanding Paramaribo. Therefore, the urban situation of Paramaribo under Texier’s governorship, from 1778 until 1783, is also analysed to compare with Nepveu’s desired projects. This makes Paramaribo a specific case-study for Dutch colonial architecture across the Dutch colonial empire, since Groll already showed in his survey that Paramaribo is suitable as a case for Dutch colonial architecture. Case-studies need to be placed in a wider context in order to understand the implications of Dutch colonial architecture on our view of the Dutch colonial past. Profound knowledge of this past is essential to understand the impact on transatlantic societies. To achieve this, the thesis aims to analyse the presence of Dutch colonial architecture in Paramaribo and the possible limitations that the Sociëteit had to solve before a potential successful expansion of Paramaribo.

One can assume that all maps have the same purpose: to display geographical or topographical data, providing orientation, distances and a view of a specific territory. Christian Jacobs introduced two conceptual methods into the field of the history of cartography: ‘transparent maps’ and ‘opaque maps’. For some time the disciplines historical geography and the history of geography perceived maps as purely archival devices for objective knowledge or reality. The content of the map was often used as historical evidence. The method for opaque maps considers maps as visual artefacts. It is possible to study them from graphic, aesthetic and structural points of view. Visual artefacts reflect a culturally bounded perception. That means that there is a link between what is seen on the map and what is understood from the map, which is determined by cultural perceptions. Understanding the extent and the limits of the use of maps in a society is a major need in the history of cartography. The manner of using the maps proves to be the most difficult aspect, because we can not trace back visions. Another aspect of opaque maps is that research can also be conducted through the sociology of the chart: the mapmaker, the instruments, the knowledge of the mapmaker, the users of the maps, institutions, and the intended audience for the map.<sup>9</sup>

The charts in this thesis will therefore be approached as carriers of information, whereupon the Sociëteit relied in the establishment of colonial Surinam. Besides the three complementary ground plans from Lieftinck, this thesis examines plantation charts, in particular those of Houtgrond Weltevreden and Steenpringerij Worsteling Jacobs, made by several land surveyors and engineers such as Johann Friedrich Ferdinand Wollant, Samuel Greenwald and Adrianus Helledaij. These charts help to understand the infrastructure around the acquirement of architectural products. The information depicted on the map can be used as historical evidence. The third type of chart concerns building designs made by engineers Wollant and J.C. Hurter. These charts show whether the Sociëteit’s engineers implemented Dutch influences in building projects. I tend to treat these designs as visual artefacts and study them from an aesthetic point of view. It is necessary to use supplementary primary sources, such as correspondence between the governor of Surinam and the board of the Sociëteit in Amsterdam. The correspondence helps to find out why the charts and designs were made in the first place and offers insight in difficulties involved with the situation around the charts and designs. Next to the correspondence, the thesis also uses eighteenth-century literature such as Jacob Herlein’s *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname* (1718) and Anthony Blom’s *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname* (1786). Herlein’s book

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<sup>9</sup> Christian Jacob, “Toward a Cultural History of Cartography,” in: *Imago Mundi* 48 (1996), 191-193



should be approached carefully since Nepveu made some claims that Herlein's information was not always accurate.<sup>10</sup>

### **Historiography: Atlantic History and the History of Cartography**

Gert Oostindie and Jessica Roitman claim that the historiography of the Atlantic has dismissed its importance for the Dutch Republic for a long time. Their study, to which many authors contributed, examines how and why the Atlantic was important to the Dutch and vice versa by utilizing approaches that privilege entanglement, connections, and interaction while breaking loose from the dominant Dutch empirical tradition in economic history. Within economic history, Jan de Vries' study "The Dutch Atlantic Economies," (2005) and his study with co-author Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815* (1997) are indispensable.<sup>11</sup> The most well-known work in the field of economic history comes from Piet Emmer, *The Dutch in the Atlantic economy, 1580–1880: trade, slavery and emancipation* (1998). Emmer concluded that the Dutch were not very important in the Atlantic part of the world. Oostindie's and Roitman's book *Dutch Atlantic Connections, 1680-1800: Linking Empires, Bridging Borders* (2014) proved Emmer wrong by bringing experts of the field together as they explored Dutch connections to the Atlantic on many levels, more than just economically.<sup>12</sup> Alex van Stipriaan specifically pays attention to Surinam with *Surinaams contrast. Roofbouw en overleven in een Caraïbische plantagekolonie* (1993). He provides insight in the functioning of the plantation colony by analysing internal developments of the plantations such as soil depletion instead of only focusing on external developments. Van Stipriaan conducted another research with Oostindie, 'Slavery and Slave Cultures in a Hydraulic Society: Suriname' (1995). The authors claimed that the Dutch found unique ways to deal with an abundance of water on plantations, for instance milling with tidal energy. Their study aimed to look beyond the exploitative and brutal planters and explore

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<sup>10</sup> Jan Nepveu, 'Klad-aanteekeningen van eenige van Nepveu op J. de Herlein', 1772, (Nationaal Archief (HaNa), 1.10.60 Inventaris van het archief van J. Nepveu [levensjaren 1719-1779], 1752-1777, inv. nr. 19)

<sup>11</sup> Jan de Vries, "The Dutch Atlantic Economies," in *The Atlantic Economy During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice, and Personnel*, ed. Peter A. Coclanis (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 1–29, 2; Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); P.C. Emmer, *The Dutch in the Atlantic economy, 1580–1880: trade, slavery and emancipation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Gert Oostindie and Jessica Roitman, *Dutch Atlantic Connections, 1680-1800: Linking Empires, Bridging Borders*, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1

the ecological conditions and disease environment.<sup>13</sup> Marcel Meyer and Hillebrand Ehrenburg continued to analyse Dutch ways of dealing with Surinam's environment. They have extensively examined the history of infrastructural works such as canals, polders, roads, bridges, sluices and railroads in *Bouwen aan de Wildenkust. Geschiedenis van de Civiele Infrastructuur van Suriname tot 1945* (2015). Their study, however, misses an explanation on what the Surinam landscape had to offer in terms of architectural products and how these products contributed in building projects.<sup>14</sup> Whilst some works were written about Dutch hydraulic engineering, the architectural historiography concerning Surinam is simply lacking. None of the above mentioned studies paid attention to this field. Temminck Groll's *De Architectuur van Suriname 1667-1930* (1973) is one of the few studies more closely aligned with the subject. His study does not examine eighteenth-century Paramaribo extensively, instead much attention is paid to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>15</sup>

Another hiatus in Atlantic history concerns the function of land surveyors and engineers overseas. This subject is closely related to the history of cartography. If cartographical history is discussed within the wider context of Atlantic history, it primarily concerns maritime maps.<sup>16</sup> Most of the Dutch land surveyors and engineers who surveyed and designed construction works in the overseas colonies attended training in the Dutch Republic and brought their knowledge to the colony. Over the course of the eighteenth century, schools were set up in the Dutch Republic and were referred to as the 'konstschool'.<sup>17</sup> One of the most important land surveyors of Surinam, Frederick Lieftinck, attained a PhD in surveying at the University of Groningen.<sup>18</sup> The admission in the colony became effective when the land surveyor took an oath. Being a land surveyor or an engineer was a free profession, meaning that one could work for anyone or any institution of his

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<sup>13</sup>Alex Van Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast. Roofbouw en overleven in een Caraïbische plantagekolonie 1750-1863*, (KITLV Uitgeverij: Leiden, 1993), 1-13; Gert Oostindie and Alex Van Stipriaan, 'Slavery and Slave Cultures in a Hydraulic Society: Suriname', in: S. Palmié, *Slave Cultures and the Cultures of Slavery* (Knoxville, 1995), 78-99, 78-82.

<sup>14</sup>Hillebrand Ehrenburg and Marcel Meyer, *Bouwen aan de Wildenkust. Geschiedenis van de Civiele Infrastructuur van Suriname tot 1945*, (Volendam: LM Publishers, 2015)

<sup>15</sup> Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname 1667-1930*

<sup>16</sup> Zandvliet, "Mapping the Dutch World Overseas in the Seventeenth Century", 1433

<sup>17</sup> W.A Van Ham and Kees Zandvliet, *Admissies Als Landmeter in Nederland Voor 1811 : Bronnen Voor De Geschiedenis Van De Landmeetkunde En Haar Toepassing in Administratie, Architectuur, Kartografie En Vesting- En Waterbouwkunde* (Alphen Aan Den Rijn: Canaletto, 1987), 23

<sup>18</sup> Philip .H. Dikland, *Landmeters in Suriname vanaf 1667 tot en met 1861*, (KDV Architects: Paramaribo, 2005), 21

choice, in this case, the Sociëteit.<sup>19</sup> Overseas activities of land surveyors have hardly been studied at all. The study *Admissies als landmeter in Nederland voor 1811* (1987) by W. A. van Ham and Kees Zandvliet briefly devotes one chapter to land surveying activities under the Dutch East India Company neglecting the Sociëteit.

The *History of Cartography* is a book series published by the University of Chicago Press. The series consists of seven books of which the first volume was published in 1987. Many authors such as Zandvliet, Koeman, Günter Schilder and Marco van Egmond contributed to this series. The series covers cartography from different regions in ancient times to the twentieth century. Remarkably Paramaribo is only mentioned by Zandvliet in ‘Mapping the Dutch World Overseas in the Seventeenth Century’ (2007). Zandvliet’s study analyses the role of maps and mapmakers of the VOC and WIC during the first century of Dutch overseas expansion. His study however does not elaborate on Paramaribo, because Zandvliet did not include the activities of the Sociëteit in his scope. Another study by Zandvliet, *Mapping for Money: Maps, Plans, and Topographic Paintings and Their Role in Dutch Overseas Expansion During the 16th and 17th Centuries* (2002), aims to illustrate how the Dutch companies organized the mapmaking function into their set of management tools. In this study the emphasis also lays on the VOC and the WIC leaving the Sociëteit out of the study.<sup>20</sup>

There are however a number of studies that do include the Sociëteit and their mapmaking activities. The *Comprehensive Atlas of the Dutch West India Company II* shows a broad scale of charts and plans made by land surveyors and engineers in service of the Sociëteit. However, *The Comprehensive Atlas* is not meant to provide an extensive in-depth study of every displayed chart, because of the already wide scope of the collection depicted in the *Atlas*. Instead, the *Atlas* connects the charts thematically and delivers context to the charts.<sup>21</sup> Still, the *Atlas* provides an excellent base for this thesis because it arranges the charts of Surinam orderly by theme and region. Cornelis Koeman’s *Links with the Past: the History of the Cartography of Suriname 1500-1971* (1973) is one of the few works that provides a detailed study of the development of cartography in Surinam. Koeman’s study analyses the function of several charts in the history of Surinam’s discovery and development. The aim of his study is exactly what the field history of cartography needed, however

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<sup>19</sup> Van Ham and Zandvliet, *Admissies Als Landmeter in Nederland Voor 1811*, 23

<sup>20</sup> Kees Zandvliet, *Mapping for Money: Maps, Plans and Topographic Paintings and Their Role in Dutch Overseas Expansion during the 16th and 17th Centuries*, (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 2002); Zandvliet, “Mapping the Dutch World Overseas in the Seventeenth Century”, 1433

<sup>21</sup> Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*.

there are still many charts of Surinam that deserve special attention. Koeman focused mostly on nineteenth-century charts, whilst eighteenth-century charts are also worth to take a look at.<sup>22</sup> A study that does not prioritise mapping, but does provide extensive insight in the ruling of the Sociëteit is Karwan Fatah-Black's *Sociëteit van Suriname 1683 - 1795 Het bestuur van de kolonie in de achttiende eeuw* (2019). The book explains the incentive of the Sociëteit to send thousands of Europeans on expedition to guard, build, and conquer the colony. Fatah-Black's study shows on many levels how the history of Paramaribo and the history of Amsterdam are connected to one another. This study is interesting because understanding Paramaribo as case-study for Dutch colonial architecture requires learning about Sociëteit's policy in Surinam.<sup>23</sup> Another study done by Fatah-Black concerns *Eigendomsstrijd: De Geschiedenis Van Slavernij En Emancipatie in Suriname*. According to Fatah-Black, historians have mainly focused on plantations. Many Surinamese people nowadays investigate their family history and learned that their ancestors lived in neighbourhoods outside Paramaribo's city centre.<sup>24</sup> *Eigendomsstrijd* analyses the emergence of a free, non-white community during the slavery period and shows how the neighbourhood 'Frimangron' developed in Dutch colonial Surinam.<sup>25</sup> So far, several studies have been conducted on Surinam's plantation economy, Dutch hydraulic engineering and mapmaking in Surinam. However, little focus is set on the natural environment and even less on Dutch colonial architecture in Surinam.

## Structure

Answering the following question '*How did Dutch colonial architecture foster the building projects in Paramaribo desired by the Sociëteit van Suriname between 1768 and 1785?*' is relevant for several reasons: 1) filling a lacunae in the historiography concerning the urban development fostered by the Sociëteit in Paramaribo and filling in on the hiatus in the history of cartography regarding Surinam; 2) understanding the implications of Dutch colonial architecture on our view of the Dutch colonial past; and 3) contributing to the story behind Paramaribo's heritage, since the colonial legacy still lingers in the city today. To achieve these goals, this thesis consists of three chapters leading towards a final conclusion. The first chapter explains the necessity of urban

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<sup>22</sup> C. Koeman, *Links with the Past: the History of the Cartography of Suriname 1500-1971*, (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1973)

<sup>23</sup> Fatah-Black, *Sociëteit van Suriname 1683 - 1795*

<sup>24</sup> Vincent Bongers, "Niet Alleen Maar Witte Daders," *Leids Universitair Weekblad Mare*, September 13, 2018, <https://www.mareonline.nl/achtergrond/niet-alleen-maar-witte-daders/>.

<sup>25</sup> Karwan Fatah-Black, *Eigendomsstrijd: De Geschiedenis Van Slavernij En Emancipatie in Suriname*, (Amsterdam: Ambo/Anthos, 2020)

development of Paramaribo and Fort Zeelandia. Lieftinck's three complementary charts are examined, because the charts show Nepveu's and Lieftinck's vision of the desired expansion in Paramaribo. Nepveu had to convince the Sociëteit of the importance for the expansion, since the Sociëteit was quite parsimonious in its spending on Nepveu's plans. This chapter argues that plans for the extensions originated from a continuous influx of people, increasing the demand for housing. Consequently, housing in Paramaribo became scarce and caused the rental prices to double in just a few years. Officials with little salary could barely pay for their rent and began to complain.

The second chapter analyses two of the earlier mentioned characteristics of Dutch colonial architecture: the adaption of buildings to the tropical climate of the colony and acquiring suitable architectural products from the Surinam environment. To dive deeper into the matter of Dutch colonial architecture, this chapter also analyses how climate and environmental aspects affected architectural products. Furthermore, the two most important wood and stone suppliers of Nepveu are examined through several charts: wood supplier 'Houtgrond Weltevreden C.A' and stone supplier 'Steensprengery de Worsteling Jacobs'. Finally, this chapter discusses slavery in relation to urban development. This chapter ends with arguing that Paramaribo was regularly afflicted by several natural hazards: forests fires, extreme drought, and earthquakes. These hazards caused damage to the city and rebuilding or repairing the buildings often ran into costs quickly. Secondly, collecting stone was a very slow process. Therefore the prices of stone became excessive compared to the Dutch prices. The slowness of collecting the material was caused by a lack of horses, few slaves, rough landscapes and difficult infrastructure. Thirdly, the periphery of Paramaribo consisted of nothing more than swamps, and sand and shell ridges. The Sociëteit was therefore constantly looking for wood grounds to cultivate. Long distances and transport routes through hills were slowing the cultivation down and consequently, the wood production was slowed down.

The final chapter discusses the third characteristic of Dutch colonial architecture: the gradual fusion of Dutch architectural influence with the use of local materials. To analyse the third characteristic the chapter concentrates on the Sociëteit's buildings. After all, the Sociëteit's buildings were essential in ruling the colony. I argue that the defence purpose of Fort Zeelandia became useless through the urban development of Paramaribo. Several engineers reported that the fortress was better suited as citadel. Furthermore, dilapidation of buildings was often caused by negligence by the officials or the use of unsuitable architectural products. At last, this chapter concludes that several designs of certain Sociëteit's buildings fit, to a certain extent, in the architectural style of Dutch colonial architecture. The thesis ends with a conclusion providing an answer to the main question, taking in account whether Nepveu's vision of expanding Paramaribo

as depicted on Liefstinck's chart came true. And if not, what limitations hindered Nepveu's building projects? Ultimately, this thesis provides an analysis of the three main characteristics of Dutch colonial architecture concerning Paramaribo to determine in what extend Dutch colonial architecture fostered.

## Chapter 1 The Urban Development of Paramaribo

As stated in the introduction, few map material of Paramaribo remained preserved. Part of the explanation is sought in the slow development of the city until the second half of the eighteenth century. Apart from Fort Zeelandia, Paramaribo had never known city walls or other defence works. Therefore maps of military situations and project charts were never really applicable on the city.<sup>26</sup> Instead, the focus of military defence works shifted towards the river of Saramacca, the river of Commewijne and the river of Marowijne. For example, Wollant produced a project plan 'Plan van de verdedigingswerken aan de Rio Saramacca' presumably in the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>27</sup> In addition, it was too costly to fortify entire settlements such as Paramaribo. According to Zandvliet, fortifications located on the coast or an estuary proved to be most effective. It explains why settlements like Paramaribo were organised this way.<sup>28</sup> During the second half of the eighteenth century several extensions of Paramaribo were drafted by Lieftinck in order by Nepveu and thus showing Nepveu's view on expanding the city. Nepveu's view will be used in this thesis to find out whether his vision of expanding Paramaribo came true.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, this chapter argues that the planned extensions originated from the increasing prices to rent a living area.

### De Nieuwe Uitleg van Paramaribo

Nepveu was aided in his plans by land surveyor Lieftinck, who arrived in Suriname in 1762 and the Director of fortifications and captain of Artillery A. Dirksz., who swore his oath in 1770.<sup>30</sup> Several years prior to Nepveu's death A. Dirksz. was replaced by engineer J.C. Hurter. Lieftinck's primary occupation was to set and remeasure (possible) plantation grounds. For example, he measured two lands on either side of the Boomkreek, a side stream of the Surinam River (appendix 1.1). Lieftinck used Rhineland feet, which was the most common measuring method in the Dutch Republic. The goal of this particular measurement was to determine the border between Plantation Tourtonne and Sociëteit's land as was described on the manuscript.<sup>31</sup> Such assignments either came directly from

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<sup>26</sup> Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*, 268

<sup>27</sup> Johann Friedrich Ferdinand Wollant, 'Plan van de verdedigingswerken aan de Rio Saramacca', 18e eeuw, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1995-1996A).

<sup>28</sup> Zandvliet, 'Mapping the Dutch World Overseas', 1456

<sup>29</sup> Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*, 268-271; F. Lieftinck, Plan van de Nieuwe Uitleg van Paramaribo, 1769;

<sup>30</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on January 20, 1770, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 340); Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*, 269

<sup>31</sup> F. Lieftinck, 'Kaart van twee stukken land, gelegen tusschen de Plantagie Tourtonne en de Societeits-grond by de Bomcreek', 1772 (HaNa 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1726); Dikland, *Landmeters in Suriname 1667-1861*, 21

the governor or from the Sociëteit. Nevertheless, the board frequently appealed to a land surveyor's services. For example, in 1770 the Sociëteit announced that they awaited a chart from Lief tinck concerning the assignment of wood grounds. This thesis will later elaborate on the assignment of wood grounds since some types of wood had great value and was therefore lucrative for the Sociëteit. It explains why the Sociëteit often paid attention to the assignment of wood grounds.<sup>32</sup>

During the years between 1769 and 1772 Lief tinck produced three complementary charts. These charts provide insight in the projected idea of the governor to expand Paramaribo. The first chart concerns 'Plan van de Nieuwe Uijtleg van Paramaribo' (1769, appendix 1.2A)<sup>33</sup>. The plan shows allotment designs of one of the three grand extensions of Paramaribo on the south and westside around 1770. The north points in the direction of the 'pad van Wanica'. This path served as an important land connection with the Para-area. The Sociëteit valued the path of Wanica a lot since the 'enemy' was able to use the path via the Saramacca and penetrate the colony if they wanted to. Therefore the Sociëteit was constantly seeking ways to block access on the path of Wanica.<sup>34</sup> The chart shows Paramaribo perpendicular to the river bank of the Surinam River and depicts the first phase of the allotment plans between the Drambrandersgracht (west side of the chart) and the Steenbakkersgracht (east side of the chart) to the Rust en Vredestraat (south side of the chart) and three blocks of housings between the Steenbakkersgracht and the Buurenstraat (both on the east side of the chart). There is a division of fifteen blocks shown with parcels destined for lodgements<sup>35</sup>. Almost every block contains six square and four rectangular parcels. The parcels have a regular cross numbering. Why Lief tinck chose this particular planning is not certain. Observing the chart, the explanation might lay in saving more space per block; instead of nine parcels, a block could contain ten parcels. Some parcels around the Saramaccastraat are not numbered. The destination of these parcels might have been uncertain. Apparently building bridges was not desirable by the governor. Only three bridges are found on the chart: one bridge over the Steenbakkersgracht at the crossroad with the Zwartenhovenbrugstraat (in the middle of the chart) and one bridge in the south of the Steenbakkersgracht near the crossroad with the Steenbakkerijstraat (on the east side of the

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<sup>32</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on March 20, 1770, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 101)

<sup>33</sup> F. Lief tinck, 'Plan van de Nieuwe Uijtleg van Paramaribo', 1769, HaNa 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1714)

<sup>34</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on May 4, 1768, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 101)

<sup>35</sup> Lodgements offer the opportunity to rent a room for a period of time. Source: Van Dale; Etymologisch woordenboek; NUGI 943.



plantations). The Drambrandersgracht only has one bridge above the Rust and Vreedestraat in the direction to the path of Wanica. The lack of bridges could lead to unnecessary long travel times. For instance, if someone from the west side of the Rust and Vreedestraat wanted reach the Buurenstraat, they had to walk three whole blocks before reaching a bridge to cross the Steenbakkersgracht. The chart itself does not provide an explanation for the few bridges in Paramaribo. There might be two reasons for the very few bridges: building a bridge was an expensive project and maintaining a bridge proved to be difficult. For example, a bridge was constructed over Fort New Amsterdam's moat in 1772. Nepveu was aware of the fast deterioration process of the wooden poles, where the bridge leans on, in the water. Water worms eating the wood proved to be another factor that complicated maintenance. The only reason this project went through was to save more time to collect enough stone for the bridge pillars.<sup>36</sup>

The second chart concerns 'Plan van de verder nieuwe uitleg van Paramaribo, zynde een vervolg van de nieuwe Uytleg van 1769' (1771, appendix 1.2B). This plan suggested an extension between the Rust en Vreedestraat, the Gravenstraat, the Nieuwe Weg (Wanicastraat) and the Weidestraat in the north of Paramaribo. The north points to the right corner. This chart continued where the previous one ended: at the Rust en Vreedestraat (in the south) and on the east side of the Steenbakkersgracht. Three cemeteries, absently on the 1769 chart, are shown between the Buurenstraat and the Weijdestraat. Just like the 1769 chart, the second chart shows rectangular parcels and regular numbering. The parcels are divided by eight blocks, making this a smaller extension than the 1769 chart. Another difference with the 1769 chart, is that Lieftinck did not include square parcels on the 1771 chart. Lieftinck was also quite generous with the placement of bridges in comparison to the 1769 chart: no less than nine bridges are depicted on the 1771 chart. There is no explanation for this change of heart. On the east side of the map he marked a 'way out' in the direction of 'de Buijten Grond'. This plan turned out to be very ambitious: the Fiottestraat would remain the border of Paramaribo until far in the nineteenth century.<sup>37</sup>

The third phase included 'The Schetskaart van de Verdeelinge der Erven voor het Vrye Corps' (1772). The manuscript (appendix 1.2C) shows allotments for a small part of the town on the

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<sup>36</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on July 25, 1772, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 347); F. Lieftinck, 'Plan van de Nieuwe Uijtleg van Paramaribo,' 1769 (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1714-1714A); Koeman, *Links with the Past*, 147-148

<sup>37</sup> F. Lieftinck, 'Plan van de verder nieuwe uitleg van Paramaribo, zynde een vervolg van de nieuwe Uytleg van 1769', 1771, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1715); Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*, 273

south side of the Steenbakkersgracht above the Saramaccastraat. This area was destined specially to house members of the Vrye Corps, a military division of former slaves in service of the colony. The chart shows thirteen blocks with rectangular parcels. A letter from 1769 mentions for one of the first times an idea from the Sociëteit to establish a compagnie of ‘mulattoes’ to battle against rebellious slaves hoping it would have the same effect as in the French colonies.<sup>38</sup> Nepveu had sent them in a reply the ‘plan of project wegens het optreden van een commando vrije mulatten en neegers’. The Sociëteit approved his plan to establish the compagnie, only on the condition that the Vrye Corps would not cause difficulties with the regular ‘burgercompagnie’. In addition, the Sociëteit proposed to assign a plot from the Gemene Weijde to the former slaves and mulattoes of the compagnie, if possible.<sup>39</sup> The Gemene Weijde was originally considered as a public space and was used for cattle to graze. Locals called the area ‘Koeiknie’ because the grounds were so soggy, a cow would sink into the mud until it’s knees. This area would later evolve in Paramaribo’s first quarter outside the city centre. Later, it was named the ‘Frimangron’, which means ‘land of free people’.<sup>40</sup>

Besides Lieftinck’s 1769 chart, two other similar charts were produced in the same period: ‘Kaart van den Nieuwen Uijtleg aan Paramaribo’ by Director A. Dirksz. and ‘Kaart van den Nieuwen Uijtleg aan Paramaribo’ by J. Ulrici. In 1767 Dirksz. proposed to produce a chart of the entire colony. The Sociëteit did not seem to be very interested in his proposal. Instead, they only requested a chart of the town Paramaribo depicting all the streets, creeks, intersections, exits and most importantly, the parts suitable for possible expansion.<sup>41</sup> Nepveu was not content with the quality of Dirksz.’s work on Paramaribo’s ground plan. According to the governor the chart was not accurate and would lead to inconvenience if not corrected properly. For instance, the Buurenstraat, Hofstraat, Grote Dwarsstraat en Zwartenhovenbrugstraat in de ‘nieuwe uijtleg’ were chartered too small. The distance between the Wijdestraat en Buurenstraat was set to 6,5 kettingen instead of 4 kettingen. Due to these errors Nepveu had requested Johan Ulrici, his clerk, to produce a new chart correcting the flaws in Dirksz.’s chart and ultimately presented Ulrici’s version to the directors in Amsterdam.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on July 6, 1769, inv. nr. 101

<sup>39</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on June 17, 1772, inv. nr. 101

<sup>40</sup> For more information about the community of Frimangron consult Fatah-Black, *Eigendomsstrijd: De Geschiedenis Van Slavernij En Emancipatie in Suriname*.

<sup>41</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on May 6, 1767, inv. nr. 101

<sup>42</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on October 27, 1770, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 342)

The system of long lots perpendicular to a river bank, that Lieftinck used in his 1769 and 1772 charts, already originated from the eleventh century in the Low Countries. In the seventeenth century, this system was mentioned again by scholar Hugo Grotius as a normal pattern for land distribution. During that century the allocation system underwent some changes. The system involved a matrix design showing lots, roads and ditches. It seems that Lieftinck implemented the matrix system into all of his three charts. The 1769 chart shows the Surinam River and perpendicular to its riverbank, multiple long (plantation) plots along with several moats and paths. From the Saramaccastraat the plots were extended into a matrix design. The 1771 chart retained the matrix design instead of extending the already existing long lots and the 1772 chart shows the parcels perpendicular to the Surinam River.<sup>43</sup>

Summarised, Nepveu firstly desired an extension between the Drambrandersgracht and the Steenbakkersgracht to the Rust en Vredestraat. Secondly, an extension between the Rust en Vredestraat, the Gravenstraat, the Nieuwe Weg and the Weidestraat meaning that he wanted to cultivate of the north of Paramaribo. Thirdly, he intended to use the Gemene Weijde to house the Vrye Corps, so he was forced to find other grounds for grazing cattle and to use as a public space. The new public space was ultimately depicted on a chart 'Kaart van eenige landen, gelegen Kostgrond voor de Ed. Sociëteit' (1770-1780) by an anonymous mapmaker, which will be reviewed later in this thesis.

### **The need for De Nieuwe Uitleg van Paramaribo**

In January 1769 the Sociëteit in Amsterdam received a missive from Nepveu regarding the scarcity of property grounds and rising rental prices for housing in Paramaribo. They expressed their discontent about the generosity of Nepveu's predecessor Wigbold Crommelin in assigning plots. The Sociëteit asked Nepveu whether the terrains in Paramaribo permitted more plot assignments, in such a way that Nepveu could prevent a disadvantage for the Sociëteit.<sup>44</sup> The governor stated in one of his replies that since a few years, a part of the Gemene Weijde in Paramaribo was divided in plots to built houses on. In his view, the city had grown remarkably. However, this growth went at the expense of the Gemene Weijde, which consequently became smaller. The reason for this extension laid in the fact that there was a continuous influx of people increasing the demand for housing. The

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<sup>43</sup> F. Lieftinck, 'Plan van de Nieuwe Uijtleg van Paramaribo', 1769; F. Lieftinck, 'Plan van de verder nieuwe uitleg van Paramaribo, zynde een vervolg van de nieuwe Uytleg van 1769', 1771; F. Lieftinck, 'Schetskaart van de Verdeeling der Erven voor het Vrye Corps', 1772, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1716); Zandvliet, 'Mapping the Dutch World Overseas', 1457

<sup>44</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on May 8, 1769, inv. nr. 101

influx caused housing to become scarce and therefore the rental prices doubled in just a few years. The governor expressed his worries about the tight situation that caused anguish amongst officials and others in the colony with little to spend. The appendix of Nepveu's letter contained a chart, 'Kaart van Een gedeelte van de Gemeene Weijde behoorlijk verdeelt om tot erven te worden opgenomen tot uijtlegging van Paramaribo', which is not found in the archives.<sup>45</sup> The governor indicated that the reserved grounds, as was pointed out on the aforementioned map, were build upon. Even though this chart can not be researched, the fact that this chart existed reveals that Nepveu was continuously engaged with expanding territory outside Paramaribo's city centre in favour of urban development. Unfortunately for Nepveu, one year later the problems regarding housing remained unresolved. Despite Nepveu's efforts that caused the city to 'rise from the ground' in a short period of time, the rental prices for the houses kept climbing: 'een huisje dat voor dezen 400 guilders huur deed, thans niet minder dan voor duizend guilders te bekomen is en de verleegentheijd om woningen te bekomen door de continueele toevloed van menschen word dagelijks grooter.'<sup>46</sup> Officials with little salary could barely afford to pay for their rent and the men who had families could not live off one salary anymore. Those without a family were forced to share narrow rooms, hence the request of the governor to the Sociëteit to build extra lodgings.<sup>47</sup>

Nepveu was regularly in search of suitable craftsmen from the Dutch Republic to support his building projects. Despite his efforts, he was unsuccessful in acquiring enough sufficient engineers and craftsmen. Paramaribo, and in general the entire colony struggled with a shortage of labourers, in particular craftsmen, engineers and land surveyors. Around 1769 the Sociëteit informed Nepveu that they had sent a number of engineers to Paramaribo. It turned out to be difficult to find suitable engineers because they were not very keen on the idea of going to the colony. Instead, many engineers would rather stay in the Dutch Republic, where there were plenty employment opportunities. The Society also placed vacancies in the 'newspapers' stating the shortage of craftsmen in the colony. The directors warned Nepveu that their efforts would probably not have much effect because skilled craftsmen could easily find work in the Dutch Republic. They advised Nepveu to find craftsmen in the colony and offer them a higher salary.<sup>48</sup> Concerning the land

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<sup>45</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on April 10, 1769, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 337)

<sup>46</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 30, 1770, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 341)

<sup>47</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on January 20, 1770, inv. nr. 340

<sup>48</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on May 4, 1768, inv. nr. 101

surveyors, Nepveu stated it was necessary to have at least three land surveyors in service of the Sociëteit. He hired Andries Freviran, next to Lieftinck and Helledaij.<sup>49</sup> Helledaij already arrived in Paramaribo in 1768 and his most important work was the ‘Generaale kaart van de Noordzijde der Beneden rivier Commewijne, van Braampunt af tot de laatste plantagie in de Warappe Creeque’ from 1770.<sup>50</sup> Helledaij had an important role in the distribution of wood grounds. His chart concerning the cultivation of big wood grounds in the colony will be reviewed in the second chapter.

In conclusion, the ‘Plan van de Nieuwe Uijtleg van Paramaribo’ and ‘Plan van de verder nieuwe uitleg van Paramaribo, zynde een vervolg van de nieuwe Uytleg van 1769’ made by Lieftinck were presumably made in response to the increasing rental prices for housing. An obvious conclusion would be that the ‘problem’ concerned the continuous influx of people to Paramaribo. Nonetheless, the influx was not considered as problem at all. In fact, the influx was desirable by the governor, since he continuously referred to the ‘vermeerdering van Blanken’ in his letter. In relation, he was desperately seeking craftsmen from the Dutch Republic. Clearly Nepveu worried about the maintenance of white rule and their position, number wise, against black slaves. The Sociëteit shared this worry and even considered a mandatory number of white colonists to be present on plantations: ‘weegens de groote disproportie der witten tegens de zwarten en wij hebben diensvolgens ernstig verkocht een vaste bepaling te stellen volgens welke eigenaars der plantagien verplicht zullen worden een zeker getal witten op dezelve gefixeerd te hebben’.<sup>51</sup> Their worries resulted in, amongst other measures, with the establishment of the Vrye Corps as an instrument to sustain Dutch colonial rule.<sup>52</sup> The establishment of the Vrye Corps caused Nepveu to explore the grounds outside Paramaribo’s city centre, in particular the Gemene Weijde, to build upon. Next to building on the Gemene Weijde, Nepveu was occupied with expanding Paramaribo in the north.

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<sup>49</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, 1770, inv. nr. 340. The exact date of this letter was unclear.

<sup>50</sup> Dikland, *Landmeters in Suriname*, 17

<sup>51</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on April 13, 1772, inv. nr. 101

<sup>52</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 3, 1772, inv. nr. 347

## Chapter 2 The natural environment and Architectural Products

Two characteristics of Dutch colonial architecture are analysed in this chapter: the adaption of buildings to the tropical climate of the colony and acquiring suitable architectural products from the Surinam environment. In addition, this chapter researches how climate and environmental aspects affected architectural products. After all, the architectural products were necessary to adapt the Sociëteit's buildings to Surinam's climate. The two most important architectural products concerned wood and stone. Several aspects had to be taken in account concerning the climatological adaption: the resistance of different types of wood against the humid climate and in waterenvironments, the choices between building with wood or stone, which depended on fire hazards, the availability of either wood or stone and the airiness of the materials, and lastly preserving the materials in storage facilities to slow down the spoiling process. But where did the governor actually acquire these architectural products and most importantly, what impediments were involved in the process of cultivating wood and stone? To answer that question, this chapter pays attention to Nepveu's main wood and stone suppliers: 'Houtgrond Weltevreden C.A' and 'Steensprengery de Worsteling Jacobs'. Since the wood and stone suppliers thrived on the exploitation of enslaved humans, this chapter discusses slavery in relation to urban development. The goal of this chapter is, next to discussing the applicability of Dutch colonial architecture in Paramaribo, to reveal the dark side of Dutch colonial architecture.

### Climate and Natural hazards

The climate in Surinam can be described as a tropical rainforest climate with an average temperature of 27 degrees Celcius. The seasonal division in Surinam was derived from the average rainfall in a period of several months, which are consecutively a small rainy season, a small dry season, a great rainy season and a great dry season. According to Stipriaan several sources mention shifting seasons during the eighteenth century and a structural change in climate due to alterations in the ecology of Surinam. To support his claim, Stipriaan cited physician Voegen van Engelen (1788): 'dat deeze naauwkeurige en juiste verdeeling in tijdperken [seizoenen] die geregeld wederkoomen, hoe langer hoe onzeekerer geworden is, en nog verder worden zal naarmaate het land meer bewoond en meer bebouwd wordt'. Voegen van Engelen meant that more building activities leads to climate change. However, Stipriaan mentioned that these statements were not of great value for weather changes on long-term. Contemporaries quickly jumped to the conclusion of structural climate change if, for some years in a row, the climate was dryer or wetter than usual.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 74-77

Nepveu's letters mention how he and other contemporaries experienced the climate in Surinam: they could simply not endure in the Surinam forests and swamps. The great heat sometimes led to deceases: 'in de bossen daar het arme volk versmelt als sneeuw voor de zonneshijn.' He might have been describing a heatstroke, but that is not determined with certainty.<sup>54</sup> One can imagine that this heat made it difficult to acquire wood in forests.

Throughout the eighteenth century Surinam was afflicted by several natural hazards: forests fires, due to extreme drought, and earthquakes. Hurricanes never occurred in Surinam unlike Essequibo and Demerara. Stipriaan argued that Surinam never had to suffer from earthquakes. Nevertheless, several passages from Nepveu's journals argue against Stipriaan. At least three reports of earthquakes were made by the governor in 1767. The first one occurred on April 24th with a time span of six minutes. Even though the earthquake did no noteworthy damages in Paramaribo, the governor mentioned that he was very frightened. The second one occurred on October 21th and lasted fifteen minutes: 'selfs de aarde beweegde zig als golven in de zee'. The damage was far more severe in Paramaribo than the first earthquake did: almost all buildings suffered. Nepveu was convinced the buildings would collapse because the doors and windows chattered. The stone facade on the east side of the gouvernement's house was heavily damaged. With 'grave danger' they fled barefoot out of the house. He described that even the sick had fled the Hospitaal.<sup>55</sup> Almost three years later, in 1769, Nepveu complained that the gouvernement was still not repaired. This indicates that Suriname actually did suffer from earthquakes, unlike Stipriaan's argument.<sup>56</sup>

Next to earthquakes, the colony was afflicted by severe drought. In 1766 the governor mentioned that extreme drought caused daily fires in forested areas, so heavily that they could not even see the sun through the tight damps in Paramaribo. Skippers who arrived at the colony declared that the entire coast above the Marowijne river was polluted with damps and smoke. That same year a great fire raged through Paramaribo and burnt down at least four houses. The fire was contained quickly due to the early reactions of the habitants. To aid the governor, the Sociëteit had sent two fire hoses and multiple fire buckets from Amsterdam to the colony. Even though the fire hoses were indispensable in the colony, the Sociëteit was disgruntled by the costs of the precious material and the shipping of it to the colony. Even more so, the Sociëteit asked the Brandmeester

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<sup>54</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 3, 1772, inv. nr. 347

<sup>55</sup> Jan Nepveu, Gouverneursjournaal 1765 december 29 - 1771 januari 21, December 1, 1766, July 6, 1766, April 24, 1767, April 27, 1767, October 21, 1767, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 206)

<sup>56</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on January 21, 1769, inv. nr. 337

generaal to send two craftsmen, specialised in handling and maintaining the fire hoses, over to Suriname to pass on their knowledge and return to the Dutch Republic once they were sure that the craftsmen in the colony could take good care of the fire hoses. More than ten years later, it became clear that fire houses were not well maintained at all, resulting in less adequate response to fire hazards.<sup>57</sup> To survive the extreme periods of drought and the additional massive water shortage, the Sociëteit suggested projects to build more ‘regenbakken’ to store freshwater to avoid suffering in dry periods.<sup>58</sup>

### **Materials**

Suriname is covered with 80% of tropical rainforest without access roads. Broad rivers like the Surinam River, the Saramacca and the Commewijne become difficult to navigate on from 100-150 kilometres off the coast due to wild waterfalls and rapid currents. For this reason, until the end of the nineteenth century land surveyors and geographers were limited to the coastal area; in particular Paramaribo and plantations along the lower riverbanks.<sup>59</sup> The coastal line began to form several million years ago by on the one hand the rivers, which brought sand and gravel from the inland mountains to the coastal line and on the other hand, the silt from the sea. That is how the savanna area, the old and the young coastal areas were formed. The elongated sand and shell ridges crossing along the landscape are characteristic to the coastal area. The swamps cover approximately 80% of the young coastal area. It consists of heavy clay, vegetation and water.<sup>60</sup> Nepveu described the swamps as ‘soup’. As soon as anyone stood in the swamp and made one small movement he could sink until his throat.<sup>61</sup> Because of the rough landscape it can be assumed that gaining raw materials necessary for buildings and maintenance near Paramaribo in the eighteenth century was challenging. Hence, the following paragraphs focus on acquiring two main raw materials for building purposes: stone and wood.

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<sup>57</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on October 7, 1767, inv. nr. 101

<sup>58</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on May 4, 1768, inv. nr. 101; Raad en Boekhouder generaal, ‘Copie Journaal van den Raad en Boekhouder generaal’, December 12, 1777, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 364)

<sup>59</sup> J.B. Wekker, ‘De Kaartering van Suriname’, in: *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap, Tweede Reeks Deel LXXXIII*, (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 191

<sup>60</sup> Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 74

<sup>61</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on May 20, 1772, inv. nr. 347



## Stone

In de Boven-rivieren heeft men steenklippen, sommigen bedekt met eene foort van aarde, zynde zeer smeurig en leemig; anderen zyn kaale rotsen; maar vermits dezelve thans onbebouwd zyn, zal men hier alleen maar aanmerken dat men tot nog toe geen steen gevonden heeft, die geschikt is om tot kalk gebrand te worden; het welk anders een groot voordeel voor deeze Colonie zoude zyn.<sup>62</sup>

The citation above comes from *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname* by agronomist Anthony Blom. Blom's book contains detailed information about agriculture in Suriname and daily life on plantations. Nevertheless, it is important to note that not everything in his book is reliable information. For instance his explanation on 'negerhuizen' comes forward from the ideological view of white supremacy imbedded in his book. According to him these 'houses' were built on a distance from the rest of the residences and buildings for two reasons: in case of fire, it would not pass onto other buildings and secondly 'het geraas dat zulk een menigte volks 'snachts maakt, de blanken ongelooflyk hinderlyk zoude zyn'.<sup>63</sup> Because of this ideological view, this source needs to be approached carefully.

In the first citation Blom refers to the stone cliffs along the river beddings. At the end of this section it becomes clear how these cliffs were valued by the Sociëteit and what limitations hindered the production of stone as an architectural product. Another element Blom refers to concerns chalk. The Sociëteit was presumably in search for an element similar to limestone. To produce chalk, normally limestone had to be burnt into powder form. Chalk was, and still is a primary element in the production of cement. Considering the importance of these two elements, it is remarkable that chalk and cement were not mentioned often in correspondence between the governor and the Sociëteit. Taking in account the scarcity of source material, chalk and cement are not discussed extensively in this thesis. Apparently, the two elements were often imported from the Dutch Republic. For instance, to rebuild the commandement 250 barrels of chalk and 90 barrels of cement needed to be shipped from the Dutch Republic to the colony. The received materials from the Dutch Republic and the usage of the materials were administered by an engineer in 'inspectieboeken'.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 12

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem, 108

<sup>64</sup> J.C. Hurter, Rapport der fortificatie werken en gebouwd in de Colonie Suriname van Primo July tot Ultimo December 1779, 1780 (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 372)

Nepveu frequently requested the Sociëteit to send over chalk, cement and cobblestones to, for instance, built the earlier mentioned ‘regenbakken’. The ratio between chalk and cement was often one-third of cement against two-third of chalk. It is therefore assumable that the demand for chalk was always high.<sup>65</sup> Besides, the production of chalk required a specific quality of stone which was, according to Blom, hard to find.

Worsteling Jacobs was one of the biggest cliff stone suppliers in the colony. Cliff stone is a natural stone called ‘klipsteen’ in Surinam. Worsteling Jacobs’ stone was used to maintain several of the Sociëteit’s most important locations: Fortress New Amsterdam, Fortress Zeelandia and the Sociëteits cost ground Voorburg, since many buildings there were built out of cliff stone. In 1770 stonemill<sup>66</sup> Worsteling Jacobs and wood sawmill Weltevreden underwent an inspection by bookkeeper Bernard Feijer by Nepveu’s order. According to Feijer, Worsteling Jacobs’ condition was not as well as that of Weltevreden. For instance, the residence on Worsteling Jacobs needed reparations. Feijer mentioned wittily that the wood required for the restoration could be produced at Weltevreden and delivered at Worsteling Jacobs. Furthermore, his report stated that Worsteling Jacobs did not own as many slaves as Weltevreden; a total of twenty-six of whom ‘only’ six were fit enough for the backbreaking work of producing stone. The shortage of slaves on Weltevreden and Worsteling Jacobs continued for several years. In 1773 the Sociëteit gave permission to acquire twelve more slaves to conduct the heavy work on both plantations. Their decision was mainly based on the low prices for the acquirement of slaves rather than upgrading production activities.<sup>67</sup> Next to the few suitable slaves another aspect slowed down the production activities. Whereas Weltevreden had enough cattle and in particular horses, Worsteling Jacobs only had eight horses available. Those eight horses were not enough to drag the stone from one location to another. Thus Feijer advised bringing over a stallion to breed more horses.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on January 19, 1771, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 343); Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 3, 1772, inv. nr. 347

<sup>66</sup> The letters mention this as the ‘Steenspringerij’. There is no English translation for this term available.

<sup>67</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on July 7, 1773, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 102); Bernard Feijer, Rapport gedaan maken aan den Weledele gestrenge Heer Jan Nepveu, Gouverneur Generaal over de Colonie van Surinamen, Rivieren en Districten bij ende van wegen Bernard Feijer, Boekhouder generaal van de bevinding der Houtzagerij Weltevreden en steenspringerij Worsteling Jacobs aan koomende de Edele Sociëteit deser Colonie, May 3, 1770, inv. nr. 341

<sup>68</sup> Feijer, ‘Rapport gedaan maken aan den Weledele gestrenge Heer Jan Nepveu’, inv. nr. 341; Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on October 27, 1770, inv. nr. 342

As far as known, Worsteling Jacobs was mapped by at least two land surveyors and engineers. Wollant produced the chart ‘Situatie Plan van de Steensprengery de Worsteling Jacobs enz.’ (appendix 2.1) around 1780. This chart provides essential information in understanding the production and the collecting of stone and is therefore relevant to discuss. For example, it mentions different kinds of stone and where to acquire it. The chart also shows the projected infrastructure to transport the materials. Eventually, this chart supports Nepveu’s claim that collecting stone was a very slow process causing the prices of stone in the colony to be ‘excessive’ compared to Dutch prices.<sup>69</sup> The first cross-section above shows the sand savanna which consisted of rough white sand. The landscape shifts to wood grounds consisted of red clay and iron ore. As the landscapes shifts more to the right, the ground consisted of white alabaster, stone and iron ore. The second cross-section shows more clay ground with stone and peatlands. Furthermore, the cross-sections tells the height of the river during the heaviest rain season and the driest season. The right side of the chart shows landing sites along the river bank, marked by ‘steenpounten’. ‘Steenpounten’ were presumably ferries specially to transport the stone. Wollant depicted several drawings of stones near de landing site with the caption ‘klipstenen die gesprongen worden’. The chart ‘Kaart van Plantagie de Worsteling Jacobs enz.’ from land surveyor Greenwald (appendix 2.2), shows more details of this particular area. His chart was meant as a measurement of Worsteling Jacobs. Greenwald explained that the landing sites were used to load stones onto ferries and he even marked the precise location of cliff stone in the Surinam River with ‘\*c’. These marked cliff stones were not meant for the production, but probably as a warning for approaching ferries. The letters ‘dd’ indicates the sites were the stone was cultivated. At the bottom of Wollant’s chart several houses, the warehouse and the stables are shown in a separate frame. The real location was near the cliff stone production site. The final important feature of this chart concerns the depicted infrastructure. For instance, ‘Padt van den Ingenieur Wollant oover Para na Serameca’ connected two regions the Sociëteit wanted to cultivate further. Another important path was the ‘groot padt gaande na de huijsen van Worsteling Jacobs’, which would eventually be the main path leading to the landing sites.<sup>70</sup> Examining the two charts of Wollant and Greenwald leads to the conclusion that access roads on land was scarce: stone was mainly transported over water. The production sites had to be close by landing sites, restricting the Sociëteit to go further inland to collect stone. Besides, there were not enough horses and slaves

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<sup>69</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 3, 1772, inv. nr. 347

<sup>70</sup> Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname*, 20; J.F.F. Wollant, ‘Situatie Plan van de Steensprengery de Worsteling Jacobs enz.’, around 1780, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1700); S. Greenwald, ‘Kaart van Plantagie de Worsteling Jacobs enz.’, 1779, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1699); Herlein, *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname*, 47-48

available to drag the stone over a longer distance. Even though acquiring stone farther away from the landing sites proved to be difficult, the Sociëteit still wanted to inventorize the possibilities of unassigned lands and therefore appealed to Greenwald's services.

### Wood

Many houses and buildings in Paramaribo and Fort Zeelandia consisted of wood. Wood possesses the quality of being airier than stone, especially when temperatures reached great heat. Suitable wood as an architectural product concerned Hollandsch hout, Bolletrie, Bruinhard, Cederhout, Wanen, Locus, Groenhard, Bijlhout, geel Spikkelhout, Kraphout, Ijzer- en Zinkhout.<sup>71</sup> The wood was mainly acquired in the forests of Surinam. Plantations specialised in wood were called 'houtgronden'. The houtgronden were located at a long distance from Paramaribo since the environment of Paramaribo consisted of nothing more than swamps and sand- and shell ridges. From Paramaribo to the Para creek (and also the lands along the path of Wanica), the grounds consisted of, next to the sand- and shell ridges, hard clay. The wood that grew on these lands was often tough and therefore not easily workable. The governor even struggled to obtain firewood in the periphery of Paramaribo for the bakery, let alone suitable building material.<sup>72</sup> Every type of the aforementioned wood has its own quality, making one type better suitable for building purposes than other types. This knowledge mostly resulted from experience. For instance, at first many houses and water constructions in Paramaribo were made out of Bijlhout. Bijlhout was very durable in waterenvironments and was better resistant against waterworms, compared to other woods. Some men noticed however that houses made out of Bijlhout were regularly struck by lightning. The presumption arose that this type of wood contained iron parts resulting in the attraction of lightning. Consequently, many construction workers refused to use the wood in future projects.<sup>73</sup>

In *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname* Herlein described condition of planters' residences and slave lodgings. Even though planters' residences differ from houses in Paramaribo, the basics were still the same. All 'good' living residences were made out cedar and wanen wood which was resistant to 'viper' animals and small snakes. Some houses were divided by 'Zingels van hout'; zingels were and are still used as natural enclosure or as marking of property land. The land

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<sup>71</sup> Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 336

<sup>72</sup> The international term for sand- and shell ridges is 'cheniers'. These are beach walls filled with clay and sand in the coastal area of Surinam. Source: H. Cappelle, De zand- en schulpritsen in het kustgebied van Suriname in: *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids*, 1(1919), 311-313. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134360-90001964>; Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on April 7, 1770, inv. nr. 341; Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 17

<sup>73</sup> Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 336

could be divided by a line of trees or a wooden wall consisting of long planks. As for the interior, closets and cabinets were occasionally made out of Mancenillie wood. Herlein noted that this tree was very poisonous and needed to be burnt first before use. On small scale Surinam wood was sometimes sent to the Republic to make furniture of. It was considered more like a hobby than a lucrative market.<sup>74</sup> The slaves on a plantation lived in small ‘houses’ made out of lesser quality wood; the walls consisted of cloven wood in the form of thin lats. Instead of marking their space by singels, they used palisades. Sometimes slaves were handed out old wood coming from demolished buildings in Paramaribo to improve their shelter, meaning that recycling material was a common practise. Their lodgings were not resistant to wood-lice. According to Herlein, the lice lived underneath floors and live off eating wood. He called them the most ‘harmful’ vermin in the entire colony. During the rainy season, the wood-lice crawled out of the wet ground eating all the wood it could find. Wood-lice once ate through a chest leaving Nepveu with damage amount of 16,000 guilders.<sup>75</sup>

Wood ground Weltevreden was one of the biggest wood suppliers in the colony. It was located in the south of the colony near the confluence between Surinam River and the Marchalskreek. Weltevreden was very suitable to supply square planks and singels necessary for buildings.<sup>76</sup> One of Nepveu’s letters shows the importance of Weltevreden to the colony. The wood necessary for the artillery of the colony was namely produced at Weltevreden. For instance, gun carriages were made of Wanen wood. Wanen wood might have been not as sustainable in heavy weather as Bruinhard, but proved to be very durable against oxygen. In general, Wanen wood was used for the best doors and windows and could last for fifteen years. If the door or the window was maintained with paint, the wood could even sustain more than twenty years. Besides, the wood was easily workable because it was less tough than Bruinhard. To protect the artillery woodwork against water damage it was often varnished with North American turpentine, yellow resin, oil mixed with paint.<sup>77</sup> Varnishing wood was not an uncommon practise considering the benefits; firstly, the

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<sup>74</sup> Herlein, *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname*, 46-50, 81-82, 206, 227; Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 335

<sup>75</sup> Jan Nepveu, ‘Lijste van het benodigd Hout en Planken tot Reparatie voor het Edele Sociëtijs Gouvernement aan Paramaribo’, 1769, inv. nr. 337; Herlein, *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname*, 46-50, 81-82, 206, 227; J.C. Hurter, ‘Rapport der fortificaties werken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname juni 1773’, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 350); Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 30, 1770, inv. nr. 341; Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 335

<sup>76</sup> Feijer, ‘Rapport gedaan maken aan den Weledele gestrenge Heer Jan Nepveu’, inv. nr. 341

<sup>77</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, 1773, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 351)

woodwork suffered less from the humid Surinam climate and secondly, the wood was better protected against parasitic water worms. To avoid damage, wood was often varnished with a mix of tar, asphalt, crushed glass, aloe juice, talc and turpentine.<sup>78</sup> Nepveu once addressed the infestation of a parasite called 'paalworm'. Revising the example of the bridge for Fort Nieuw Amsterdam in 1772 again, Nepveu had some main concerns: the fast deterioration process due to water exposure and the 'paalworm' nibbling wooden pillars. Nevertheless, as always Nepveu was very satisfied of the good quality 'Hollandsch Hout' Weltevreden delivered.<sup>79</sup>

Apparently, around 1773 the Sociëteit had lost interest in Weltevreden and the uncultivated lands near the plantation. In a stringent letter the governor stated that he could not understand Sociëteit's loss of interest, especially since the 1773's creditcrisis.<sup>80</sup> In 1773, the investment funds of the Sociëteit did not look very well. They discovered that a great part of invested funds in plantations would not be refunded to them. The funded expansion of plantations were not in equal proportion to the development opportunities and the demanding market in the Dutch Republic. The surplus of funds were often invested in building bigger plantation residences or festivities. This situation could not endure forever. Consequently, many enterprises went bankrupt.<sup>81</sup> Nepveu continued to complain about the expensiveness of wood and that many wood producers could not keep their heads above water. He was forced to buy wood for the buildings at the expensive of six to seven nickels, while before 1773, he could have gotten double the quantity of wood for that price. To store as much wood as was needed for his upcoming building projects, Nepveu built an extra warehouse since the few storage houses in Fort Zeelandia were always fully stacked. Wood could be stored for many years without the concern of the deterioration process.<sup>82</sup> The lack of storage facilities in Paramaribo often caused building material to spoil after laying in the open air for a period of time. The humid climate ensured the rotting of wood. A temporary solution concerned small barns covered with Pien leaves to keep the materials at a colder temperature.<sup>83</sup>

Even though Weltevreden proved to be an excellent wood supplier for wooden architectural products, transport costs were constantly high due to the difficulty of transporting wood by horses

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<sup>78</sup> Stipriaan, *Surinaams contrast*, 89

<sup>79</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on July 25, 1772, inv. nr. 347

<sup>80</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, 1773, inv. nr. 351

<sup>81</sup> Fatah-Black, *De Sociëteit van Suriname*, 141

<sup>82</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, 1773, inv. nr. 351

<sup>83</sup> Ingenieur van Straaten, 'Rapport der fortificatiewerken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname', December 1772, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 349)

and wagons through hills and valleys. Forty-seven slaves were present at the wood ground, however 'only' twelve slaves were suitable for the heavy labor concerning the transport, the sawing and the polishing of wood. The rest of the slaves were old, mutilated or suffered from illness. To keep up with the demand for wood Feijer advised the Sociëteit to buy up to eight more slaves for the preparation and delivery of wood. Location wise, Groenhard, used for Artillery, was not difficult to acquire since it grew not too far from the sawmill. Bruinhard was suitable to all kinds of square planks, balks and walls due to the hardness. However, Bruinhard grew at least three hours inwards the tropical forest. It was very laboriously and dangerously to cut Bruinhard down. The additional costs and efforts to cultivate Bruinhard were not worth the profit anymore. Feijer advised the Sociëteit to find another sawmill closer to the location of Bruinhard. Another replacement for Bruinhard concerned Bolletrie. Even though Bolletrie was not as durable as Bruinhard, it was commonly produced in the form of singels, beams and planks for rooftops since Bruinhard was difficult to acquire. Because of the increasing demand for Bolletrie, people feared that it would soon become just as scarce as Bruinhard and Groenhard.<sup>84</sup>

For this reason, the Sociëteit was constantly looking for other wood grounds around Weltevreden to cultivate. Wood was very costly, so the Sociëteit was not generous in assigning lands. Several charts in relation to the Sociëteit's ambition to expand their cultivation activities remained preserved. Few remaining charts show the divisions of wood grounds upstream near the confluence between Surinam River and the Marchalskreek. It was easier to chop down wood near the lower reaches of the Surinam River than in the swamp or jungle around Paramaribo. The travel distance had to be taken for granted. The yet to be mined locations along the Marchalskreek were charted by several land surveyors: Lieftinck (1770), Greenwald (1777), Johan Christoph von Heneman (1784) and Helledaij (1785). Lieftinck's chart, 'Kaat van de Plantagen gelegen in de Marchals Kreek, zoo mede van de nog te begeven gronden' was made by Nepveu's orders. The parcels are coloured and mention the names of the owners, the extend (commonly 500 akkers) and the date of assignment.<sup>85</sup> Greenwald charted 'Kaat van landen leggende in de Rivier Suriname, stuytende aan de Marchals Creeq' for P. Stolting and Q.J. Berlon. According to the chart, Stolting and Berlon were two parcel owners. Greenwald's chart was made in relation to the assignment of

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<sup>84</sup> Feijer, 'Rapport gedaan maken aan den Weledele gestreng Heer Jan Nepveu', inv. nr. 341; Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on August 25, 1770, inv. nr. 341; Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 335-337

<sup>85</sup> Frederick Lieftinck, 'Kaat van de Marchals Kreek met derzelve plantagen en gronden gekarteert volgens de gedaane meetingen', July 5, 1770, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1728); Lieftinck, "Kaat Van Percelen Nabij De Marchalskreek," *Atlas of mutual heritage*, 2014, <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/page/9841/kaart-van-percelen-nabij-de-marchalskreek>.

new wood ground along the Marchalskreek.<sup>86</sup> Heneman produced ‘Kaart van de Marchals Kreek met derzelver plantagien en gronden gekarteert volgens de gedaane meetingen’ by order of G. Luijcken en P. Dadel from the West Indian Company. The yet to be assigned lands are outlined, but contain little information. The West Indian Company had a right to interfere in the assignment of wood grounds, since they held a share in the Sociëteit.<sup>87</sup>

Helledaij’s ‘Naadere kaart en rapport, specterende de nieuw te begeeven landeryen in de Marchals kreek en of dezelve tot nadeel konde strekken voor de Houtgrond Weltevreden C.A.’ (appendix 2.3), made in order by governor M. Wichers, is the only chart that specifically pays attention to Weltevreden. The chart supports Nepveu’s claim that long distances and transportroutes through hills were continuously slowing the cultivation down.<sup>88</sup> The north points to the right bottom. Wood ground Weltevreden is centred in the chart. The chart shows that Weltevreden was, along with Victoria and Bergendahl, one of the biggest wood grounds. The small letters ‘a’ indicate workplaces of Weltevreden around the Mama creek (near the top). On these workplaces the slaves sawed the wood by hand. This laborious process made the wood expensive. Using a sawmill proved to be pointless because the land was full of trees which did not let enough wind through to drive the sawmill.<sup>89</sup> On the chart itself, Helledaij noted that the workplaces were very important for the Sociëteit and should not be assigned: ‘Deese landerijen in en omtrent de Mama Creecq dienen te blijven ten dienste der Ed Directie alzo aldaar de meeste werkplaatsen en ook de meeste werkbare Houtwaaren zijn, welke in de groote Regentijd door de Mama Creecq met vaartuigen getransporteerd worden, om dat de weg over Land door Bergen & Moerassen te moeilijk is.’ Additionally, the legend on the chart mentions that slaves had to stay at the workplace during the week only to return ‘home’ on Saturday. This arrangement was necessary due to the long distances between their lodgings and the production site.<sup>90</sup> Double ‘a’ marks a line of Weltevreden along the new projected lands. All of the wood on the right side of that line was impossible to transport.

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<sup>86</sup> Samuel Greenwald, ‘Kaart van landen leggende in de Rivier Suriname, stuytende aan de Marchals Creeq’, May 31, 1777, (“Kaart Van Nieuwe Percelen Aan De Marscallkreek,” Atlas of Mutual Heritage, 2014, <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/page/9825/kaart-van-nieuwe-percelen-aan-de-marscallkreek>)

<sup>87</sup> Johan Christoph von Heneman, ‘Kaart van de Marchals Kreek met derzelver plantagien en gronden gekarteert volgens de gedaane meetingen’, October 6, 1784, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1729)

<sup>88</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on June 30, 1770, inv. nr. 341

<sup>89</sup> Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 337-340

<sup>90</sup> A.H. Helledaij, ‘Naadere kaart en rapport, specterende de nieuw te begeeven landeryen in de Marchals kreek en of dezelve tot nadeel konde strekken voor de Houtgrond Weltevreden C.A.’, 1785, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1696)



According to the legend, that area was impenetrable because of the hills and valleys. It was considered as a loss because the wood in that area was very good workable. The capital letters LA on the right side of Weltevreden marks the territory between Weltevreden and the Marchalskreek that should remain uncultivated. The purpose of this land was to use it as a landing and storage site for wood. Furthermore, the chart suggests that the Sociëteit considered to assign more land to Bergendahl (on the left side of the chart). It is likely the Sociëteit wanted to use this a chart merely as an indication of how many lands they could assign before it became a disadvantage for the Sociëteit and keep the best workplaces for themselves.<sup>91</sup>

### **Slavery in relation to urban development**

Between 1751 and 1780 more than 80,000 African people were transported to the colony. Despite this enormous transatlantic deportation, the number of enslaved Africans probably only increased by 20,000 people during this period. The mortality on plantations was unimaginable.<sup>92</sup> Weltevreden and Worsteling Jacobs are examples of plantations that relied on slaves to conduct the backbreaking work of acquiring architectural products that benefitted the urban development of Paramaribo. Not only were they forced to assemble wood and saw it by hand or drag stone on the plantations, slaves had carry out many other forms of forced labour in favour of Dutch colonial architecture. Both the Sociëteit's engineer J.C. Hurter and Blom 'categorised' enslaved people in relation to their 'task' within the colonial system. By Blom's and Hurter's non-human approach enslaved people were represented as demoted subjects and only characterised by what, according to Hurter, was their sole purpose. For instance, according to Blom, African children were trained from an early age in the colony to become a carpenter. Their task was only to repair or build buildings and vessels. African masons fabricated cement or conducted small reparations to buildings. From an early age, their destiny was already determined by the colonial system.<sup>93</sup>

In various letters Nepveu frequently used disdainful terms such as 'Schilderneegers', 'Timmerneegers' and 'Metzelneegers', pointing out their sole purpose in his building projects. Like Blom's book, the ideological view of white supremacy was expressed in Nepveu's letters and the aforementioned terms are one of the many examples of it. The Sociëteit acknowledged the indispensability of slaves in the projects Nepveu planned: 'Onder opzicht van Cap. Dirks. en

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<sup>91</sup> A.H. Helledaij, 'Naadere kaart en rapport, specterende de nieuw te begeeven landeryen in de Marchals kreek en of dezelve tot nadeel konde strekken voor de Houtgrond Weltevreden C.A., 1785, (HaNa, 4.VEL Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813, inv. nr. 1696)

<sup>92</sup> Fatah-Black, *Sociëteit van Suriname*, 130

<sup>93</sup> Blom, *Verhandeling over den landbouw, in de colony Suriname*, 113

vervolgens van tijd tot tijd zal moeten doen inkopen zoveel slaven als de occasie zich daartoe zal kunnen supporteren omme tot ambagtsnegers te worden aangezet en de geprojecteerde werken met te meer spoed opgebouwd en in orde gebracht werden.’<sup>94</sup> At last, several passages of Hurter’s letter from January 31, 1780 demonstrates their Eurocentric vision on enslaved humans:

“Botennegers: om met de boot, ofte andere kleine vaartuigen ten dienst benodigde orders ofte rapports der plaatsen van haar bestemming te brengen.

Veld slaven: om ponten met vierkant hout, planken, klipsteen, baksteen, tichels, singels en anderen meer van dese materialen te loosen. [...] Onmogelijk om de groote reparatien aan ’t gouvernement als mede een nieuw achter gebouw te maken als de nodige hulp der veld slaven ontbreekt.

Handlangers der Timmerlieden en Metzelaars: den eersten het vierkant hout, planken, singels te doen brengen der plaatsen, waar ’t zelve moet verwerkt worden. Den Metzelaars om kalk en cement te bewerken, steen en kalk aan te brengen als mede andere benodigde materialen meer.”<sup>95</sup>

By analysing the passages from Hurter, Nepveu and the Sociëteit the obscurity of Dutch colonial architecture is revealed. Whilst colonial officials used architectural products, such as cliff stone or Bruinhard to adapt their buildings to Surinam’s environment, it was inseparably connected to the exploitation of many human souls. Even though source material is relatively scarce on this matter, it is worth to examine this subject closer.

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<sup>94</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on October 7, 1767, inv. nr. 101

<sup>95</sup> J.C. Hurter, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, January 31, 1780, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 370)

### Chapter 3 Sociëteit's buildings in Paramaribo

To determine how Dutch colonial architecture fostered building projects in Paramaribo, this chapter discusses the third characteristic of Dutch colonial architecture: the gradual fusion of Dutch architectural influence with local materials. To analyse this aspect, the chapter concentrates on the Sociëteit's buildings. These buildings were property of the Sociëteit and were essential in the process of ruling the colony. The governor and the director of fortifications, who was often an engineer, were responsible for the maintenance of these buildings. If a building was in a severe condition of decay, the Sociëteit held the governor and the director accountable. In 1765 the Sociëteit was shocked by the severe condition of Fort Zeelandia and other defence works (called 'redoutes') in the colony. This condition was the result of negligence by the officials. Since then the Sociëteit demanded a yearly report containing a close inspection by a proficient official of the fortifications, the redoutes, the Sociëteit's buildings and the Sociëteit's costgrounds. The reports, written by an engineer, had to contain every defect and especially what defaults emerged since the last inspection.<sup>96</sup> Because these reports are very elaborate, it makes a valuable source. Despite the new protocol, the situation was not improving due to the severe sickness of director Dirksz around 1770.<sup>97</sup>

After Nepveu's passing in 1779, Bernard Texier took over Nepveu's position as the governor. Texier promised to continue the building projects Nepveu had already set up: 'Ik zal alle mogelijke attentie en toezicht gebruiken om de bouw werken met alle spoed te doen voortgaan ten zijnde U voor deze extraordinaire kosten te bevrijden'. Texier was accompanied by the Sociëteit's engineer Hurter. He was commissioned to observe and control all the expenses of the projects. This chapter argues that the defence purpose of Fort Zeelandia became useless through the urban development of Paramaribo. Several engineers reported that the fortress was better suited as citadel. Furthermore, dilapidation of buildings was often caused by negligence by the officials or the use of unsuitable architectural products. At last, several designs of the commandement, the gouvernement and the hospitaal fit, to a certain extend, in the style of Dutch colonial architecture.

#### **Fort Zeelandia**

In 1775 J.C. Hurter produced 'Carte van het Fort Zeelandia benevens het Gouvernement, Commandement en verdere Sociëteitsgebouwen' (appendix 3.1). The capital letters A, B, C, and D

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<sup>96</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on June 4, 1767, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 101)

<sup>97</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, June 30, 1770, inv. nr. 341

indicate consecutively, the most important buildings: Fort Zeelandia, the Binnenfort, the Gouvernement and the Commandement. The chart shows that Fort Zeelandia was already quite urbanised around 1775. It had many storage facilities, a prison, a bakery, a blacksmith, barracks, lodgements and more. However, one aspect stands out: the hospital near the Sommelsdijk kreek is missing. It should be depicted next to D, since the hospital was also a Sociëteit's building. There is no explanation as to why Hurter decided to leave the hospital out of the chart. This paragraph explains the process of how Fort Zeelandia expanded into what Hurter's chart shows. The most important conclusion is that the fortress was not really used as a defence work any longer.

At the time of Hurter's chart the complex was surrounded by a moat and consisted of several elements. The pentagonal structure was provided with bastions and was built out of cliff stone. There were a number of officer's residences, offices, warehouses, artillery, weaponry and guard houses, which are also depicted on Hurter's chart.<sup>98</sup> As stated earlier, in 1766 the Sociëteit was very disappointed with the maintenance of the Fortress and held the director of fortifications accountable for its decay. The barracks, the commandement and the timber shed were old and in dilapidated state. Around the year 1770 the finances of the Sociëteit were not doing well and is presumably the reason why they were hesitant in building more barracks for the military.<sup>99</sup> The Sociëteit was indignant about the fact that the director was in the process of building another officer's residence without even reflecting on the existing defects. They blamed officials in Paramaribo for the 'verzuim van behoorlijke toezicht' and the taciturnity about it, as the Fortress had cost the Sociëteit so many tons of gold in the first place.<sup>100</sup> Their outrage was presumably a reaction to the report made in 1765 by G. Schilling. He reported about the bad conditions of the warehouses and that the walls of the Fortress were watered through. The hollow bastions were used as garbage bins. Consequently, at times of pouring rain the water stayed and seeped through the walls of the warehouses which caused them to be unusable because of the penetrating garbage water smell.<sup>101</sup>

After the stringent letter the Sociëteit had sent to the governor, years of breaking buildings down and rebuilding them followed. There was a reason for tearing down the buildings instead of repairing them. Nepveu messaged the Sociëteit in 1772 that repairing the inner part of Zeelandia

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<sup>98</sup> Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname*, 17; Herlein, *Beschryvinge van de volk-plantinge Zuriname*, 50

<sup>99</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, outgoing letter to the governor Jan Nepveu on March 20, 1770, inv. nr. 101

<sup>100</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, 'Rapport van de fortificatien ontvangen van den generaalen Staat der Artillerije in Suriname 26 augustus 1765 tot 3 september 1765', June 4, 1766, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 101)

<sup>101</sup> Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname*, 20

was not beneficial. It would actually cost less to demolish the irreparable parts. He hoped that as parts of the fortress continued to be demolished, the necessary buildings would be built. This was a simultaneous process.<sup>102</sup> The director of fortifications Van Straaten made an opposite claim in that same year:

‘de magazijne en de gevangenhuizen in hetzelfde zijn sodanig in een vijfhoekige gestalte tegens de muuren van het fort geplaatst, dat als het fort wierd afgebroken men deselve op het eigenste terrein niet so wel in ordre soude kunnen plaatsen, en absoluut altijd meerder kosten sullen, vermits ieder gordijn van het fort tot een agtermuur van een gebouw dient. Ook is er geen ander plaats om alle deze onontbeerlijke gebouwen enigszins bij de hand en veilig te plaatsen voorhanden. Ten derde zo is het onnodig alle de gebouwen geheel te vernieuwen.’

Thus, according to Van Straaten it did cost a lot to break down certain buildings because their back wall was also the wall of the fortress. Furthermore, the warehouse where rye was stored was turned into a lodge for soldiers. The state of the lodge was beyond repairing. This is one of the multiple examples of using a building for a purpose it was not initially built for. Therefore Van Straaten advised to build a new row of barracks as soon as possible.<sup>103</sup> Next to the new barracks, a blacksmith was built and a new warehouse was designed. In the following years building projects in Fort Zeelandia got an impulse. In the table below the projects are mentioned. It is possible that some projects are missing because it was not mentioned in the reports of the fortifications and buildings. Nevertheless, the table provides an overview from which can be derived that storage facilities were constantly necessary. The lack of storage facilities and warehouses correlates to a limitation mentioned in the second chapter, namely the spoilage of building materials in the open air.

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<sup>102</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, July 25, 1772, inv. nr. 347

<sup>103</sup> Van Straaten, ‘Rapport der fortificatiewerken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname December 1772’, 1773, inv. nr. 349

Year	Project
1773*	Second accommodation building, new lodgement for military, new timber lodge (military resides on the first floor), stone fundament masoned for storage facility (rye, barley, meat, oats, cheese and soap) and another storage facility (for building materials).
1774	A storage facility, a boathouse, a residence for warehouse-assistants, small kitchen buildings complementary to the new barracks of 1773 and a residence behind the renewed bakery for workers. At last a 'gemakshuis'.
1776	A second wooden vivres-warehouse. The old artillerymen lodge was demolished and replaced by new building, the first floor was used as storage. Also an artillery laboratory.
1777**	Main stone guard house renewed.
1779	New warden residences and a new tailoring building.
1780***	New jailhouse, and the 'inspectiemagazijn' for chalk, cement and wood was renewed. An extra commandement with a basement, an office and a storage unit was necessary. Furthermore, four two-story brick buildings were build against the walls of the fortress.
1783	Mostly renovations; some wooden buildings were renewed with stone. On the outer terrain of the fortress a wooden lodgement building was built.

\* 1773 The old timber lodge and bakery were demolished. The wood of the timber lodge was re-used for the storage facility to store chalk and cement, an extra wash-house in the hospitaal, a kitchen for the military and improvement of the slave's houses. The old stone of the bakery was also recycled.<sup>104</sup>

\*\*1777: Due to a heavy storm many repairs had to be done at rooftops. The roof of the 'regenbak' also collapsed, but reparations were not necessary considering the water wells provided sufficient water. This storm also destroyed the wardens' residence, a new one was built in 1779.

\*\*\*1780: The commandement had no space for an office. That is why an extra house was built.

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<sup>104</sup> Hurter, 'Rapport der fortifications werken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname Juni 1773', 1773, inv. nr. 350; J.C. Hurter, 'Rapport der fortifications werken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname December 1773', 1774, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 351)

At some point in 1780 Texier was forced to consider other locations, such as Fort New Amsterdam, to house the military, in particular married military men. He stated that there was no room in Paramaribo anymore to house married military men with their family.<sup>105</sup> Several months later he worried again about the urban development near the fortress, but this time in relation to fire hazards:

‘ik neem de vrijheid uwe edele achtbare grootheid in bedenkinge te geven of het niet nodig zoude zijn een goede brandspuit aan te schaffen voor het fort zeelandia: de gebouwen zijn aldaar zo vermenigvuldigd dat men geen zorg genoeg kan hebben om dezelve voor ongelukken en vooral van brand te bewaren; de aanzienlijke kapitalen die in de omtrek van het fort opgeslagen leggen in differente magazijnen [...] dat een goede brandspuit met toebehoren aldaar aller noodzakelijkst zoude zijn.’

Because buildings in Paramaribo would easily pass on fires, Texier requested fire hoses from the Sociëteit as a precaution. Since the number of buildings in Fort Zeelandia increased over the years, fire hazards also continued to increase. The next disadvantage of the urban development concerned the defence purpose of Fort Zeelandia. In 1782, Wollant stated that the view of the fortress was entirely blocked by the many buildings. The defense purpose of the fortress had become useless. Instead, he argued that the fortress was better suited as citadel. A citadel is a fortification to rule a city from. In case of attacks, residences of the city were able to flee to the citadel to find shelter.<sup>106</sup> Van Straaten already concluded that in 1772:

‘kan het fort het self voorrecht geven aan de opperregering alhier als de citadelle [...] om in geval van revolte sig met het garnizoen veilig daar terug te trekken en muitelingen met geweld tot reden brengen.’<sup>107</sup>

The building projects Nepveu and his successor Bernard Texier had set up solved many problems such as the lack of storage for building materials and barracks to house military, however it caused the fortress to lose its initial purpose. With the loss of the defense purpose the fortress gained a new purpose: to be used as citadel. This chapter continues to examine the presence of Dutch colonial

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<sup>105</sup> Bernard Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, February 8, 1780, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 370)

<sup>106</sup> Bron: encyclo.nl

<sup>107</sup> Ingenieur van Straaten, ‘Rapport der fortificatiewerken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname December 1772, 1773, inv. nr. 349; Bernard Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam’, July 26, 1780, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 372)

architecture in several projects such as the prison, the commandement, the gouvernement and the hospitaal.

### **The prison**

Paramaribo's prison was located in Fort Zeelandia. In 1772 the 'gevangenhuisen' were built against the walls of the fortress. It meant that the back wall of the prison was also the wall of the fortress. In a short period of time the building started to decay. Only two years later, in 1774 an old storage facility for materials was rebuilt as a prison with eight chambers. On the first floor, the 'geweerkamer' and the arsenal remained intact. The attic was used to house craftsmen specialised in artillery. Rebuilding the storage into a prison had saved the Sociëteit a lot of costs and Paramaribo finally had a sufficient prison.<sup>108</sup> For several years the prison lasted without major reparations until 1779. Rebuilding the storage into a prison only turned out to be a temporary solution to the deterioration process and the increasing number of prisoners. One of Hurter's reports stated that the governor was charged by the Sociëteit to set up a new project for a real prison. This time, the plan was to rebuild the prison on its former location. Thus, in 1780 Texier set up a project to rebuild multiple ruinous quarters of the fortress into chambers for civil prisoners and separate chambers for military delinquents. The military delinquents currently remained in the guard houses, however the number of military delinquents increased that year in a short period of time causing the prisons to be overcrowded. The prison for citizens was in such a bad state that Texier even pitied them: 'dat ze aan alle de ongemakken van lugt en weer geexposeert zijn en dus een aller droevigste noodlot moeten ondergaan'.

Texier's plans were based on Nepveu's project to build a completely new prison. Due to Nepveu's illness and eventually his death the project never came through. The Hof van Politie en Criminele Justitie, concerned with a.o. administration of justice, requested Texier to resume Nepveu's project. Hurter was in charge of the cost calculations, plans and reports.<sup>109</sup> These plans eventually resulted in "Project van een Gevangen Huis binnen de Fortres Zeelandia" (1780). The plan was not signed, so the author remains anonymous (appendix 3.2). Many authors claim that this chart was made by Johann Gottfried Rabanus Böhm because of the style. However, evidence suggests that this plan was actually made by J.C. Hurter. Not only was he given the task to manage this project, he had also written the complementary document 'Bestek der onkosten van bijgaande

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<sup>108</sup> Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname*, 21; Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, 1775 (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 355)

<sup>109</sup> Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, February 8, 1780, inv. nr. 370



tekening tot een gebouw binnen 't steene binnenfort Zeelandia, 't welk zal dienen tot civiele & criminele gevangenissen. Ingevolge ordre door zijn excellentie den heere gouverneur generaal B. Texier aan den ondergetekende om deselve op te maken.' This document suggests that Hurter had drawn the plan and sent it along with the budget to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam. Johann Böhm was not mentioned once in either Texier's or Hurter's letters and documents. The aforementioned source provides insight in the building process of the prison. It would take eighteen days to demolish the old prison and another eighteen days to clear away the rubble. This heavy labour was performed by the Sociëteit's slaves. After clearing out the area, it took forty-eight days to mason the prison. This was done by six slaves and twelve workers. The costs of demolishing the old prison and masoning a new one did not differ much from each other. The last step was to attach the beams, timber the roof and insert doors and windows. The use of local building materials in the form of square planks, laths, tiggels and riechels is one of the aspects of Dutch colonial architecture. The prison was built entirely out of local products, including the Hollandsch wood. The last step would take twenty-four days to finish. The entire project would almost take one-third year to finish. The total sum of this project was estimated on 8.105 gulden, whereof 1.200 gulden was reserved for the transport of materials. With almost 15% of the budget, the transport remained the biggest item in the budget.<sup>110</sup> The prison was presumably realised in 1780. Apparently, Texier's answer to the growing number of military delinquents was to build more prisons instead of addressing the root of the problem.

### **The commandement**

Between 1743 en 1777 the commandement was established on a parcel on the west side of the gouvernement. On Hurter's 'Carte van het Fort Zeelandia benevens het Gouvernement, Commandement en verdere Sociëteitsgebouwen' the commandement is indicated by the capital letter D. It was the residence of the commander. The parcel was acquired by the Sociëteit in 1758.<sup>111</sup> In 1766 the Sociëteit complained about the old and ruinous state of the commandement. They ordered Captain Dirksz. to improve the building as quickly as possible. Concerning the renovation of the commandement the Sociëteit requested multiple drawings, a calculation of costs and a list of materials needed for the renovation. Behind the commandement they ordered the construction of two storage facilities to keep materials and artillery at one place. They understood that the

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<sup>110</sup> J.C. Hurter, 'Bestek der onkosten van bijgaande tekening tot een gebouw binnen 't steene binnenfort Zeelandia, 't welk zal dienen tot civiele & criminele gevangenissen. Ingevolge ordre door zijn excellentie den heere gouverneur generaal B. Texier aan den ondergetekende om deselve op te maken', December 12, 1779, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 370)

<sup>111</sup> Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*, 277; J.C. Hurter, 'Carte van het Fort Zeelandia benevens het Gouvernement, Commandement en verdere Sociëteitsgebouwen', 1775 in Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname*, 15.

dilapidation of the commandement came forward from the lack of good quality of wood and advised to explore the wood in Sociëteit's forests and the wilderness to find IJzerhard wood.<sup>112</sup>

For several years the commandement remained in quite good state and around 1775 the commandement was even extended. Two years later, for unknown reasons, the commandement had been burnt down to the ground. Paramaribo suffered from several fatal fire outbreaks that, amongst others, afflicted the commandement and all other buildings on the complex. Nepveu expressed his concern about the costs and capacity of rebuilding the commandement. He also referred to his own fire encounter; 'mijn eigen huis dat had mede groot gevaar heeft gelopen doordien er reeds brand in de kelder was ontstaan doch 't geen nog gelukkig geblust is.' His house was not destroyed, but if the fire would pass onto other buildings in the street, Paramaribo would be in grave danger. Out of pity Nepveu allowed the commander and his wife to stay at the gouvernement and store their remaining furniture. The commander had suffered enough the past year with the loss of his plantation to moneylenders and the passing of their only child. As soon as the plans for the new commandement and the overview of estimated costs were finished Nepveu sent them to the Sociëteit for approval.<sup>113</sup>

Making a plan to rebuild the commandement was a task reserved for engineer Hurter (appendix 3.3A). Complementary to 'Situatieplan voor de herbouw van het commandement' he made a detailed ground plan 'Ontwerp voor de herbouw van het commandement' in 1778. The first chart shows the whole complex which included the residence, the kitchen, a wash house, a 'koetschhuis', horse stables, slaves' houses and the 'gemak huis'. The second chart shows the ground plan for the residence (appendix 3.3B).<sup>114</sup> Wollant seemed to have made his own plan 'Schets voor de herbouw van het commandement' (appendix 3.4) apart from Hurter. The difference between the charts is the 'nieuw aan te brengen gallerij' on Wollant's sketch. It is possible that Wollant added the gallery to make the commandement look more imposing. Both sketches have symmetrical roofs and a stone foundation with a wooden structure, which was a common design. The symmetrical architectural style illustrates the gradual fusion of Dutch influences. Even though the two engineers made an effort to rebuild the commandement, the plans were for unknown reasons never executed. Instead, somewhat more to the east of the original commandement a

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<sup>112</sup> Sociëteit van Suriname, 'Rapport van de fortificatien ontvangen van den generaal Staat der Artillerije in Suriname', June 4, 1766, inv. nr. 101

<sup>113</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, January 17, 1778, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 364)

<sup>114</sup> Hurter, 'Rapport der fortificatie werken en gebouwd in de Colonie Suriname van Primo July tot Ultimo December 1779', 1780, inv. nr. 372

gouvernement secretariat was built by the design of Hurter (3.5) in 1785: ‘ontwerp van een gebouw voor de gouvernementssecretarie’. Dutch influences in this design concern the overhanging eaves and the narrow dormer window built into the roofline.<sup>115</sup>

The reason why the rebuilding of the commandement was cancelled might have had something to do with a small rearrangement in Paramaribo. Instead of rebuilding the commandement, Texier considered to buy a house. Nepveu’s former house was shortly considered, but that seemed too expensive for the price of 38.000 guilders. Another option was the house of Mrs. Godefroij, that could be acquired for 20.000 guilders. After brooding for a while, Texier found a perfect solution: the house of his bookkeeper Mr. Milly for a neat 13.000 guilders. He was the owner of a well maintained and almost brand new house diagonally opposite to the gouvernement. Texier stated that it would cost little to enlarge the property: ‘om met weinige kosten tot vergroting der achter gebouw wordt, zal hetzelfde aangenamer zijn dan het afgebrande commandement. Dus zoude ik wel durven aanraden deze resquisitiez te doen waardoor een aanzienlijke somma zoude gespaard worden.’ Texier planned to place a logement for carpenters and kuipers<sup>116</sup>, a blacksmith, and barracks on the land where the old commandement used to be. These buildings ‘hindered’ fort Zeelandia and were extremely incendiary, so relocating the buildings seemed to be suitable a solution.<sup>117</sup> This rearrangement shows that environmental aspects weighed in on the decision to relocate buildings.

### **The gouvernement**

In the aftermath of the earthquake from 1767, the damage to the gouvernementshuis was still visible almost three years later. The wood in Paramaribo was not sufficient enough and there was a shortage of ‘ambacht-slaven’ to conduct the reparations. To repair the residence Nepveu needed to order wood in the Dutch Republic because ‘het soude het jaar en dag duuren’ before the very few slaves were able to produce enough wood. According to the previous governor Crommelin, who lived in the house for six years, the gouvernementshuis was already in a bad shape for a long time

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<sup>115</sup> Heijer and Brommer, *Grote Atlas Van De West-Indische Compagnie*, 277; J.C. Hurter, ‘Plan van een nieuw kommandementshuis in Suriname’, 1778, (4.VELH Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, supplement, 1621-1813 (1925), inv. nr. 608A); J.C. Hurter, ‘Plan van een nieuw kommandementshuis in Suriname’, 1778, (4.VELH Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, supplement, 1621-1813 (1925), inv. nr. 608B); J.F.F. Wollant, ‘Schetstekening van een commandantswooning in Suriname’, 1778 (4.VELH Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, supplement, 1621-1813 (1925), inv. nr. 607)

<sup>116</sup> Kuipers are craftsmen specialised in making barrels, tons and containers.

<sup>117</sup> Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam’, July 26, 1780, inv. nr. 372

due to rotting wood.<sup>118</sup> Everything was in such a neglected state that the residence was not liveable any longer. Even the glass windows were so polluted that one could not see through. Nepveu feared for his health and hoped that with the improvements he would not get sick. Not only did he complain about the state of the house, view from the window was ‘horrific’: ‘gelijk het achter de laan door den heer Mauricius is aangelegd, uitgezonderd een volkomen wildernissen geleek. Ja, zelfs het plein voor ’t gouvernement is op afzichtelijke wijze met diepe en grote kuilen weggegraven aan de zijde van de gracht van Zeelandia’.<sup>119</sup> The gouvernementshuis was finally fully renovated in 1770. The stone walls were newly flushed, whitewashed and repaired. Two years later, another renovation took place in the gouvernementshuis. The residence needed to be washed and cleaned regularly, so the floor planks did not last long. The governor covered the floor with a ‘geschilderde zeijlboek’, which was of great utility. The zeijlboek he bought in Paramaribo was of poor quality and raveled out quickly. He had made a ground plan of his residence with measurements and sent it to the Republic to order a customised zeijlboek (appendix 3.6). This source is excellent to research how residences were originally arranged. Apart from the floor, the gouvernementshuis was in a good state and continued to be until 1775. The report of 1775 regarding the fortifications and buildings in Surinam mentions that reparations were needed, but did not specify exactly what needed to be repaired.<sup>120</sup>

Thus, after the extensive repairs of 1770 little maintenance was necessary until 1779, when Texier experienced a leakage due to the bad state of the roofs and attics: ‘dat ook het gouvernementshuis ’t welk ik thans bewoon zodanig bouwvallig is dat [...] bij de regentijd niet droog in kan huisvesten en ik nog van geen ander huis voorzien was’. Eventually he took up residence in Nepveu’s house on the Gravenstraat, because it was the only suitable option. He rented the place for one year and paid 1.500 guilders. Hurter inspected the building along with a carpenter and a mason.<sup>121</sup> The first floor was built out of local stone and the second floor was built from local

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<sup>118</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, January 21, 1769, inv. nr. 337

<sup>119</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, August 25, 1770, inv. nr. 341

<sup>120</sup> Anonymous, ‘Petitie van 5 stuks geschilderde vloerzeilen voor ’t Gouvernementshuis’, 1772, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 347); Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, May 16, 1772, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 347); Van Straaten, Rapport der fortificatiewerken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname December 1772, inv. nr. 349; J.C. Hurter, ‘Rapport der fortificatiewerken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname December 1775’, 1776, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv nr 358)

<sup>121</sup> Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, February 8, 1780, inv. nr. 370; Temminck Groll, *De Architectuur van Suriname*, 44

wood. The walls were cracking and needed to be repaired and whitewashed. In order to complete this, the whole gouvernement needed to be added with sealant. The bottom floor was divided in eight sections; a porch, two chambers, a secretary, another small chamber with a back house, a ‘bottelarij’ and another back house. Summarized, the floors, the beams and the wooden windows had to be replaced. The stairs and the roof had to be repaired. The carriage house and the horse stables were in such a dilapidated state, that it was not repairable.<sup>122</sup> For the reparations some products had to be shipped from the Dutch Republic; flat lead, glass pans, vane window cords, copper pulleys, Hollandse laths and tilings. Even though some of the mentioned materials were in stock, Texier still chose to import the materials so that he would have an abundance of building materials in times of need.<sup>123</sup> The total costs for the restorations were estimated on 23.028 guilders. Sixteen slaves were burdened with the reparation of the gouvernement.<sup>124</sup> Texier expressed his incomprehension about the outcome from Hurter’s inspection. He was convinced that the fast decay had to do with the imprudence of the first construction. The foundation did not lay high enough above the ground. This could not be restored because the entire masonry and the entire building had to be demolished. Ideally, ground beams of Groenhard or Bruinhard should be used because it is resistant against humidity for many years.

### **The Hospitaal**

The Hospitaal was frequently on the Sociëteit’s agenda. From 1769 the building process of the Hospitaal in Paramaribo had a rocky start. Nepveu announced to the board in Amsterdam that they were building a carpentry shed for the projected Hospitaal. The building that was currently used as a Hospitaal, was not intended to be used as such. Instead, it was meant as a lodging house for servants. The inconvenience of this building is partly the reason of the mortality rates amongst the sick and especially the infected ones. However, there were not enough resources and material available to build the Hospitaal. Again, Nepveu addressed the colony’s ‘problem’ of not having enough ‘ambachtsslaven’ and craftsmen from the Dutch Republic. The lack of knowledge became clear at this point: they did not even know where and how to start building. Besides the shortage of

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<sup>122</sup> Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam’, July 26, 1780, inv. nr. 372; Hurter, ‘Rapport der fortificatie werken en gebouwd in de Colonie Suriname van Primo July tot Ultimo December 1779’, 1780, inv. nr. 372; J.C. Hurter, ‘Over ’t examineren van t gouvernement in gevolg hooge beveelen; wat noodige reparatien de selve vereischt en hoe dat den ondergeteekende hetzelve na nauwkeurige visitatie met timmer en metzelbaas bevonden heeft’, November 20, 1779, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 372)

<sup>123</sup> Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam’, July 26, 1780, inv. nr. 372; Texier, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, February 8, 1780, inv. nr. 370

<sup>124</sup> J.C. Hurter, Rapport der fortificatie werken en gebouwen in de Colonie van Surinamen van Primo July tot Ultimo december 1780, Januari 1, 1781, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 373)

labour and knowledge, this project was also very costly. In typically Dutch fashion, Nepveu warned for a delay in the start of building the Hospitaal.<sup>125</sup> The most important task was drafting up a ‘Plan vervolgende een gebouw voor de zieke’. A location near the Sommelsdijk kreek, which lays in the northeast of Paramaribo, was suggested. The location of the Hospitaal is depicted on the chart ‘Kaart van eenige landen, gelegen Kostgrond voor de Ed. Societeit.’ made by an anonymous mapmaker around 1773-1780 (appendix 3.7). The estimation of the year 1773 is based on the fact that the Hospitaal is already visible on the bottom of this chart along the Gravenstraat. Next to the Hospitaal, both the commandement and the gouvernement are depicted. The chart shows the ‘pad van het gouvernement’ departing from the Sommelsdijk kreek. This path was already mentioned by Nepveu in 1770 as the ‘voet en rijpad van het erf dat ik in de Graave Straat gekocht heb’. Complementary to this letter Nepveu sent a ‘Schetskaart der Landen agter Paramaribo door den Landmeter F. Lieftinck’ to the Sociëteit on which this path is visible.<sup>126</sup> It is highly possible that the ‘Kaart van eenige landen, gelegen Kostgrond voor de Ed. Societeit.’ is a continuation of Lieftinck’s chart because it also shows several extensions: parcels 1 and 2 could be cultivated and parcel 4 was in particular suitable as meadow land since the original Gemene Weijde was divided in plots for the Vrye Corps and build upon several years earlier.

Nepveu’s plan was to firstly construct a stone foundation for the Hospitaal. The rest of the Hospitaal was made out of wood. This construction was actually not uncommon for many important buildings in Paramaribo. The length was set out between 130 and 140 feet long and around 20 feet wide. The estimated costs laid between 12.000 and 15.000 guildens.<sup>127</sup> This was quite expensive for just one building considering two buildings of 160 feet together only costed 11.225 guilders in that same period (appendix 3.8).<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, the project was almost finished in 1773 albeit smaller than projected: 65 feet long and 34 feet wide. The only chore left was to paint the Hospitaal, but that could not be done due to the shortage of oil. Thanks to the new Hospitaal the sick had more room to recover. Even though the project had cost the Sociëteit a substantial sum of money, Nepveu felt he was not finished. He suggested to build another compartiment of 120 - 150 feet and move the

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<sup>125</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam, January 21, 1769, inv. nr. 337; Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on October 27, 1770, inv. nr. 342

<sup>126</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on April 7, 1770, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 340)

<sup>127</sup> Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on October 27, 1770, inv. nr. 342

<sup>128</sup> Anonymous, ‘Twee geprojecteerde gebouwen in Paramaribo’, 1772, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 347)

patients from the front building to the newly projected compartment. The front building would then have a new purpose: to be used as an Apothecary, lodgements for the surgeon and other servants and one or two chambers for sick officers. Weltevreden would supply the necessary wood and Nepveu still had enough chalk, cement and stone in stock. Including labor wages this projected compartment came down to an estimated sum of 7.000 guilders. He ordered Hurter to produce a ‘Kaart van ’t Land met een uitvoerig plan van de gebouwen die er reeds zijn en die nog geprojecteerd zijn’ to show the Sociëteit town planning around the Hospitaal.<sup>129</sup> This chart is not found in the archives and therefore not displayed. In the report of fortifications and buildings Hurter mentioned another project Nepveu desired, however it is unclear for what purposes: ‘Op approbatie van de gouverneur zal nog een nieuw gebouw gezet worden van 100 voet lang en 30 voet breed in 2 verdiepingen, de ene van 11 en de andere van 9 voet hoog waarna het hujs staande aan de face van het erf dat tot een Hospitaal geworden is zal tot een woning der officianten kunnen verstrekken.’ It seems that Nepveu was continuously changing the destinations of the buildings in Paramaribo.<sup>130</sup>

In 1780, projected plans for the expansion of the Hospitaal continued under Texier: ‘Plan van een hospital en woning voor sieke directie en landsneegers’ (appendix 3.9) was made by an anonymous mapmaker. This was a projected plan of a separate infirmary for the Sociëteits’ slaves in the Hospitaal Nepveu had built.<sup>131</sup> The infirmary is oddly enough not mentioned in the letters nor the inventories from 1780. The renovation and rebuilding of the Hospitaal in de Gravenstraat between 1758 and 1773 are shown on a plan, made in 1793, with a few additions (appendix 3.10).<sup>132</sup> In the middle of the plan, a tree line is depicted. This could indicate a typical Dutch ‘singel’, which is a tree line to indicate a boarder between meadows or other grounds. The tree lines are also present around the vegetable gardens, letter S on the map, to divide them. Furthermore, the letter G could indicate Texier’s infirmary but that remains uncertain; there is no other ground plan concerning the Hospitaal before 1780 available to compare with.

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<sup>129</sup> Jan Nepveu, outgoing letter to the Sociëteit in Amsterdam on March 24, 1773, (HaNa, 1.05.03 Inventaris van het archief van de Sociëteit van Suriname, (1650) 1682-1795 (1796), inv. nr. 349); Hurter, ‘Rapport der fortificaties werken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname Juny 1773’, inv. nr. 350

<sup>130</sup> Hurter, ‘Rapport der fortificaties werken en gebouwen in de colonie Suriname Juny 1773’, inv. nr. 350

<sup>131</sup> Atlas of Mutual Heritage, ‘Plattegrond van een ziekenhuis en woning voor zieke slaven’, <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/page/7731/plattegrond-van-een-ziekenhuis-en-woning-voor-zieke-slaven>; Anonymous, ‘Plan van een hospital en woning voor sieke directie- en landsneegers’, 1780, (4.VELH Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, supplement, 1621-1813 (1925), inv. nr. 609)

<sup>132</sup> Atlas of Mutual Heritage, ‘Plan of the hospital at Paramaribo’, <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/en/page/7725/plan-of-the-hospital-at-paramaribo>; J.H. Rothe, ‘Plaan van het hospitaal à Paramaribo in Surinamen’, 1793, (4.VELH Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, supplement, 1621-1813 (1925), inv. nr. 614)

## Conclusion

To answer the main question ‘how did Dutch colonial architecture foster the building projects in Paramaribo, as desired by the Sociëteit van Suriname between 1768 and 1785?’ three characteristics of Dutch colonial architecture with Paramaribo as a case-study were analysed: 1) the gradual fusion of European architecture with the use of local South American materials, 2) the climatological adaption of buildings to the tropical climate and 3) concerns the uniqueness of the buildings, originated from the diverse cultural context. To dive deeper into Dutch colonial architecture than has ever been done before, I also analysed how climate and environmental aspects affected the architectural products wood and stone in relation to urban development.

To start with the first characteristic, it can be concluded that gradual fusion of European architecture with the use of local South American materials was present in Paramaribo. The pentagonal structure of Fort Zeelandia was built out of the local stone ‘klipsteen’. Many other buildings were had a stone foundation and a wooden structure, which was a common design. Architectural products often concerned Groenhard, Bruinhard, Hollandsch wood, Bolletrie, Bijlwood or Ijzerwood in the form of square planks, laths and singels. These products were used for the prison, the commandement, the gouvernement and the hospital. The architectural products were however a challenge to obtain. The chart of Helledaij concerning wood ground Weltevreden show that long distances and transportroutes through hills and valleys were continuously slowing the cultivation of the wood ground down. Another aspect of the slow cultivation was the shortage of slave-labour to transport, saw and polish the wood. Even though Weltevreden owned forty-seven slaves, the major part was old, mutilated or suffered from illness. Just as wood was a challenge to obtain, so was stone. In particular stone necessary to produce chalk, an important element for cement. By examining the two charts of Wollant and Greenwald concerning Worsteling Jacobs it became clear that access roads on land was scarce: stone was mainly transported over water. Because there were not enough horses and slaves available to drag the stone over a longer distance, the production sites of stone had to be close by landing sites, restricting the Sociëteit to go further inland to collect stone.

The second characteristic, the climatological adaption of buildings to the tropical climate, resulted in varnishing wood; firstly, the woodwork suffered less from the humid Surinam climate and secondly, the wood was better protected against parasitic water worms. To avoid damage, wood was often varnished with a mix of tar, asphalt, crushed glass, aloe juice, talc and turpentine. Still, throughout the eighteenth century officials were struggling with rotten wood and termites.



Important construction works such as the fortress were made out of stone, to avoid rotting. However, stone was not as airy as wood, which proved to be an inconvenience if temperatures rose to great heat. To protect building materials storage facilities were essential to slow down the deterioration process. That is why, between 1770 and 1780, projects often concerned new storage facilities. Throughout the eighteenth century Surinam was afflicted by several natural hazards such as forests fires, due to extreme drought, and earthquakes. Especially the earthquakes and fires did regularly damage to the Sociëteit's buildings. The commandement did not survive one of the fires at all. Due to the natural hazards maintenance often proved to be difficult. Even if the governor wanted to repair the damage, they were often short of wood and other materials to maintain the buildings. Since the number of buildings in Fort Zeelandia increased, fire hazards continued to increase. Texier proposed a solution to relocate several building as a precaution. The increasing number of buildings also affected the original defence purpose of Fort Zeelandia: it had become useless. Instead, contemporaries argued that the fortress was better suited as citadel.

The third characteristic concerned the uniqueness of the buildings that originated from the diverse cultural context. Hurter's and Wollant's sketches show a gradual Dutch influence: symmetrical roofs and a stone foundation with a wooden structure. Galleries were intended to make the residence look more imposing. Hurter's design of the *gouvernementssecretie* shows overhanging eaves and a narrow dormer window built into the roofline. Their designs were based on the use of local South American materials, except for the chalk and cement since that was relatively scarce and were often imported. To maintain the *gouvernement* some materials were imported from the Dutch Republic, however materials necessary for rooftops, door and windows were acquired in the colony. The uniqueness concerns the Dutch influence in the designs while making use of the local architectural products. However, building Paramaribo was inseparably connected to the exploitation of many human souls. This was illustrated by several passages from Hurter, Nepveu and the Sociëteit that reveal the obscurity behind Dutch colonial architecture: enslaved humans were 'simply' reduced by their task in the colonial system concerning urban development. In their Eurocentric view, slaves were categorised by the type of forced labour in relation to urban development, such as painting, timbering or masoning. Since the transatlantic slave trade is often researched in relation to the plantation system, in my opinion more research can be conducted to slavery in relation to urban development. I am however aware of the scarceness regarding source material and the fact that sources were written in Dutch ensures a language barrier.

Did Nepveu's vision came true regarding the extension of Paramaribo as depicted by Lieftinck's charts? The answer is simply 'no'. He did not expand Paramaribo during his

governorship the way he wanted to. Meanwhile rental prices for housing continued to increase. Several explanations support this claim. As concluded, acquiring architectural products was difficult. The challenge caused prices of the building material to rise. The Sociëteit was sometimes reluctant when learning about the costs that came with Nepveu's ambitious projects, since finances were not always going well. Because of the scarcity in some architectural products, projects were sometimes delayed. Nepveu was also regularly in search of suitable craftsmen from the Dutch Republic to support his building projects. The lack of knowledge in the colony was proved by the example of the Hospitaal, one of the projects that was delayed. Skilled craftsmen had to come over from the Dutch Republic to pass on their knowledge regarding fire fighting. Despite Nepveu's efforts, he was unsuccessful in acquiring sufficient engineers and craftsmen. Because of Nepveu's illness and eventually his death some projects, such as the prison, were never executed by him at all. Texier continued the projects Nepveu started before his death.

Under Texier, Paramaribo got an impulse concerning the building projects. He did mainly focused on existing buildings. An explanation for the impulse concerns the maintenance of existing buildings. The maintenance under Nepveu was lacking due to negligence by officials. The sickness of director Dirks<sup>z</sup> worsened the situation by 1770. Under Texier's governorship it seemed to be on the better hand, since the reports of fortifications and buildings contained less defaults and were more elaborate. Even though the two governors made lots of effort to expand Paramaribo, the Fiottestraat mentioned on Lieftinck's 1771 chart, would remain the border of Paramaribo until far in the nineteenth century. Lieftinck's 1772 chart developed into the Frimangron, one of Paramaribo's first neighbourhoods outside the inner city. The north side of the Sommelsdijk kreek, known as voorstad Combé, was not developed until the end of the eighteenth century. In the end, Dutch colonial architecture fostered the building projects in Paramaribo through the three characteristics. It was not always in the way the Sociëteit desired because of the earlier mentioned limitations.

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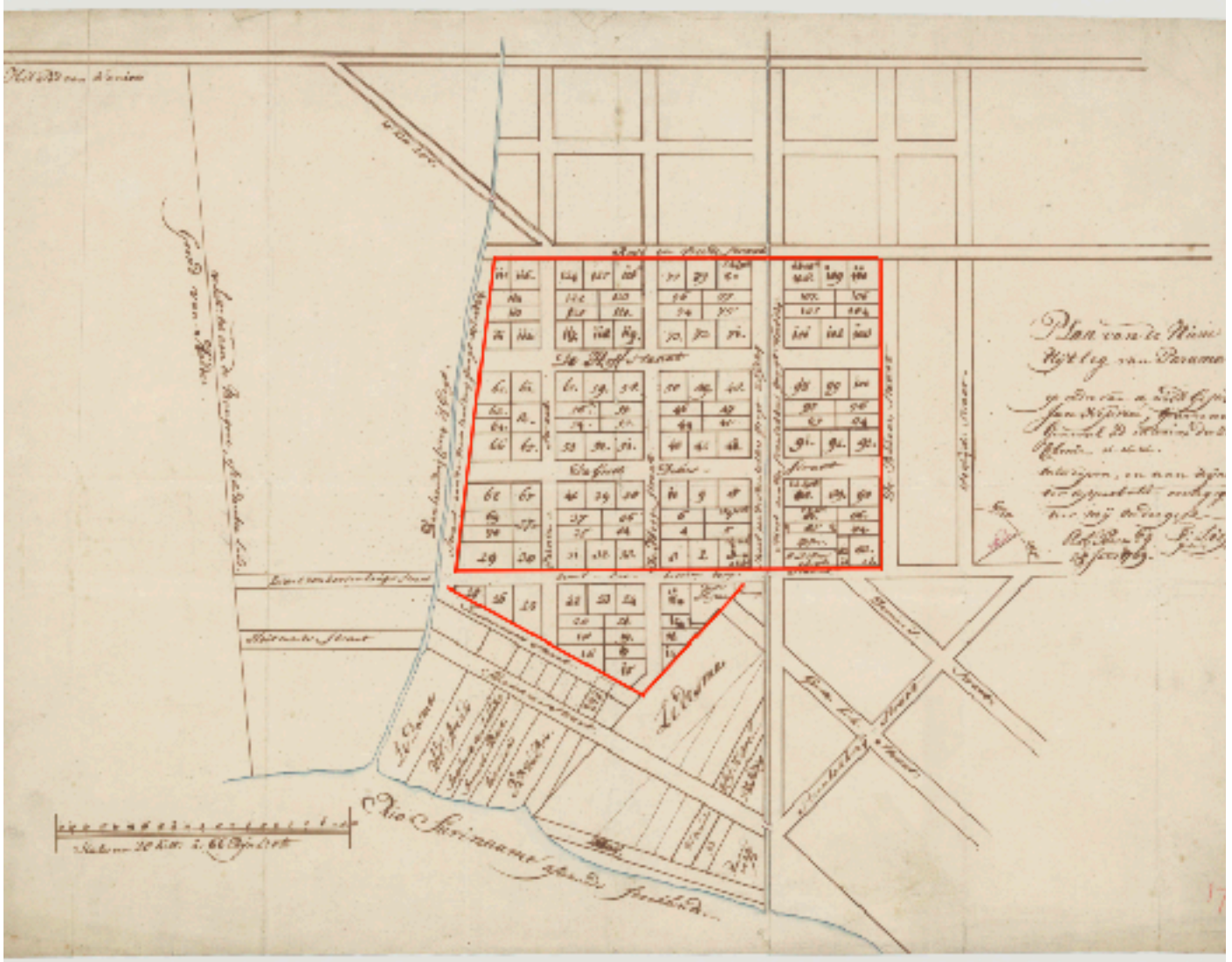
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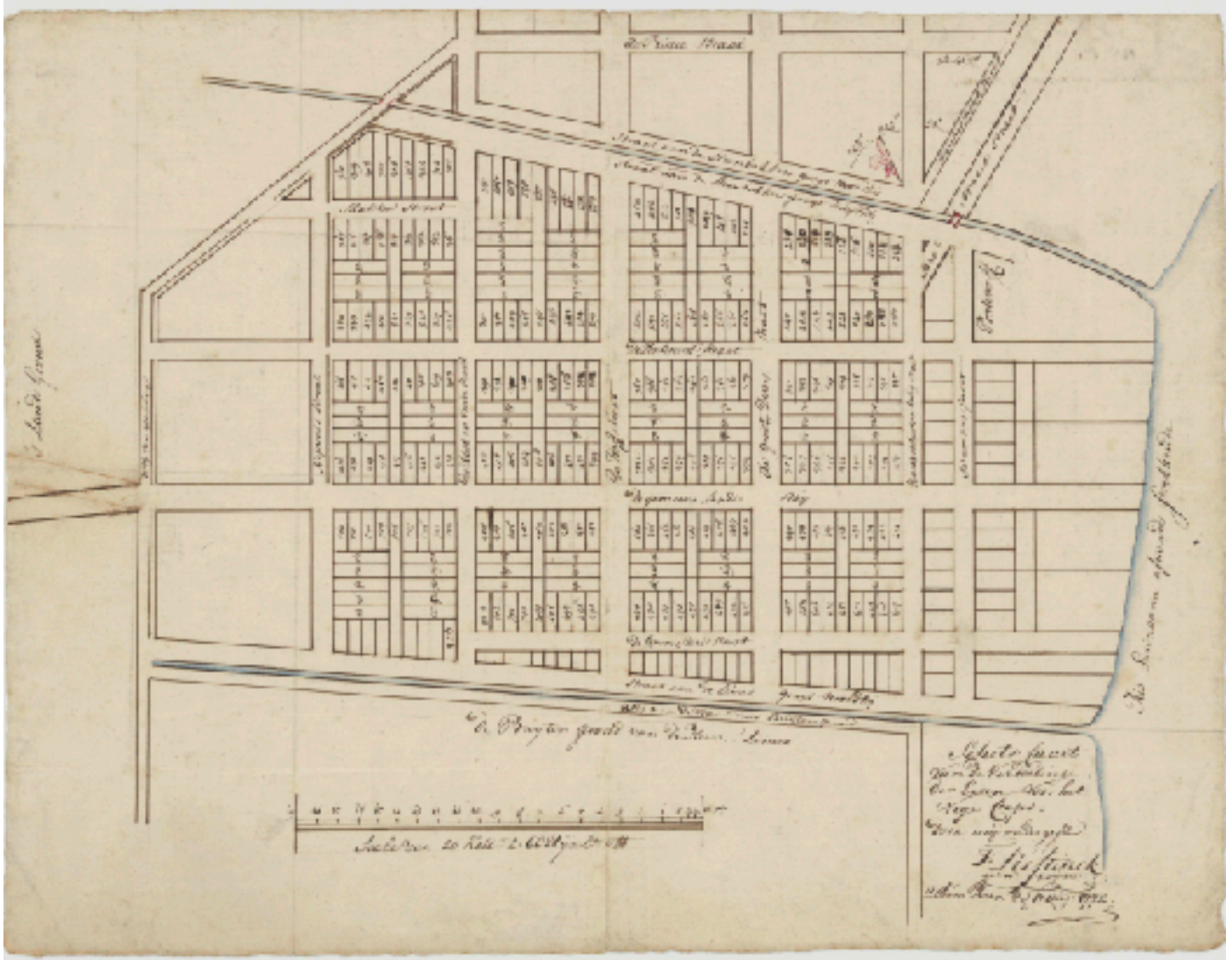




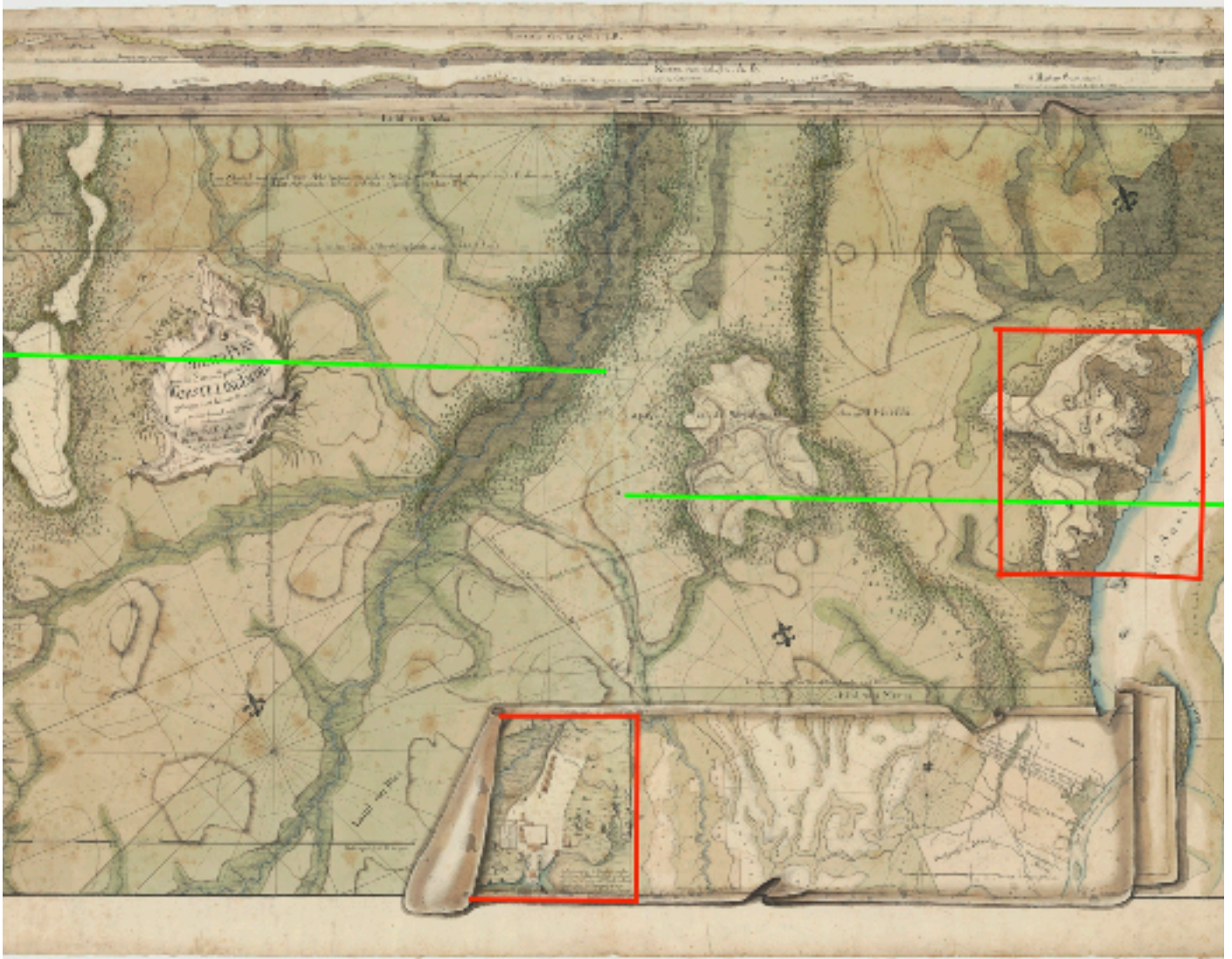


1.2A F. LIEFTINCK, 'PLAN VAN DE NIEUWE UIJTLEG VAN PARAMARIBO', 1769.



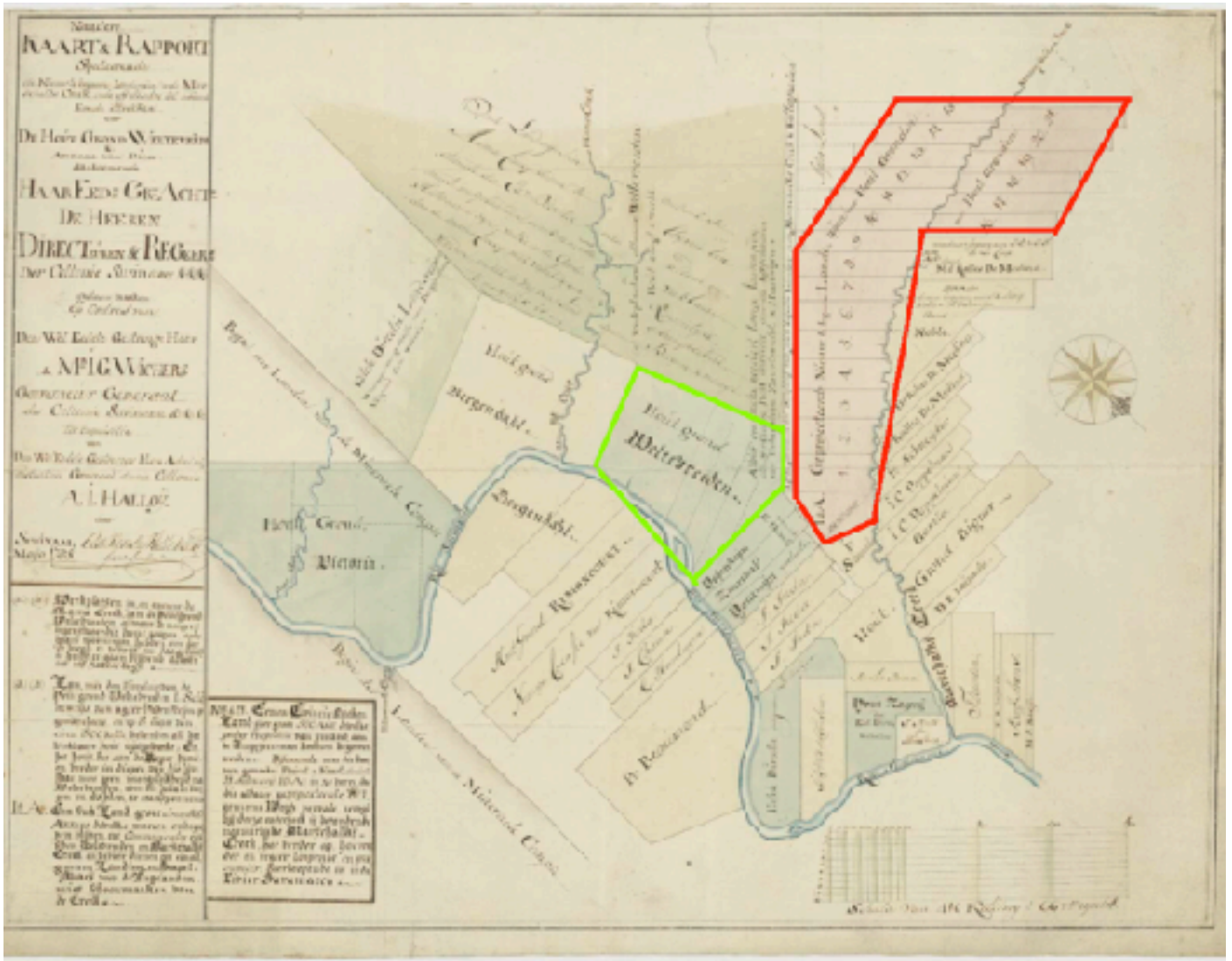


1.2C F. LIEFTINCK, 'SCHETSKAART VAN DE VERDELINGE DER ERVEN VOOR HET VRYE CORPS', 1772,

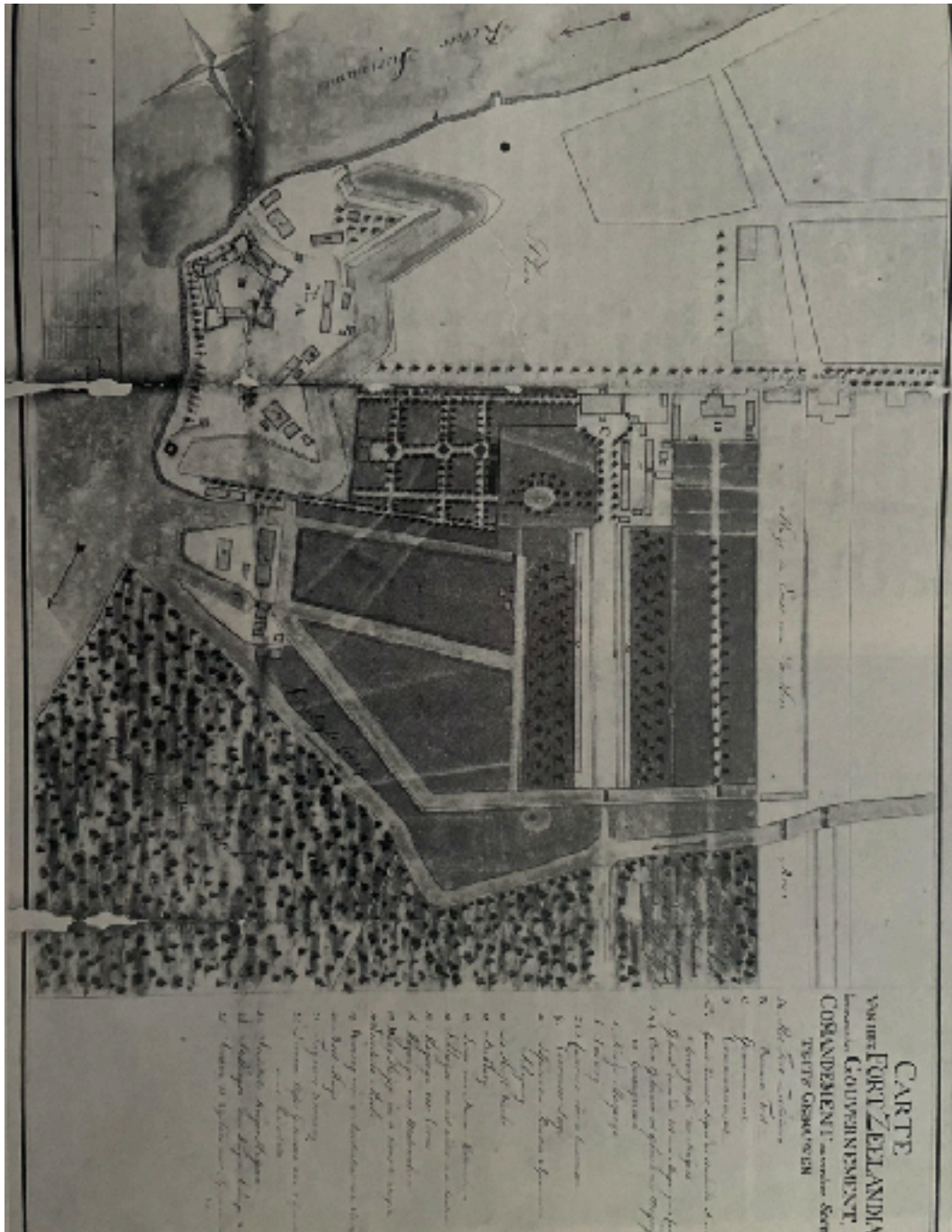


2.1 J.F.F. WOLLANT, SITUATIE PLAN VAN DE STEENSPRENGERY DE WORSTELING JACOBS, +/- 1780



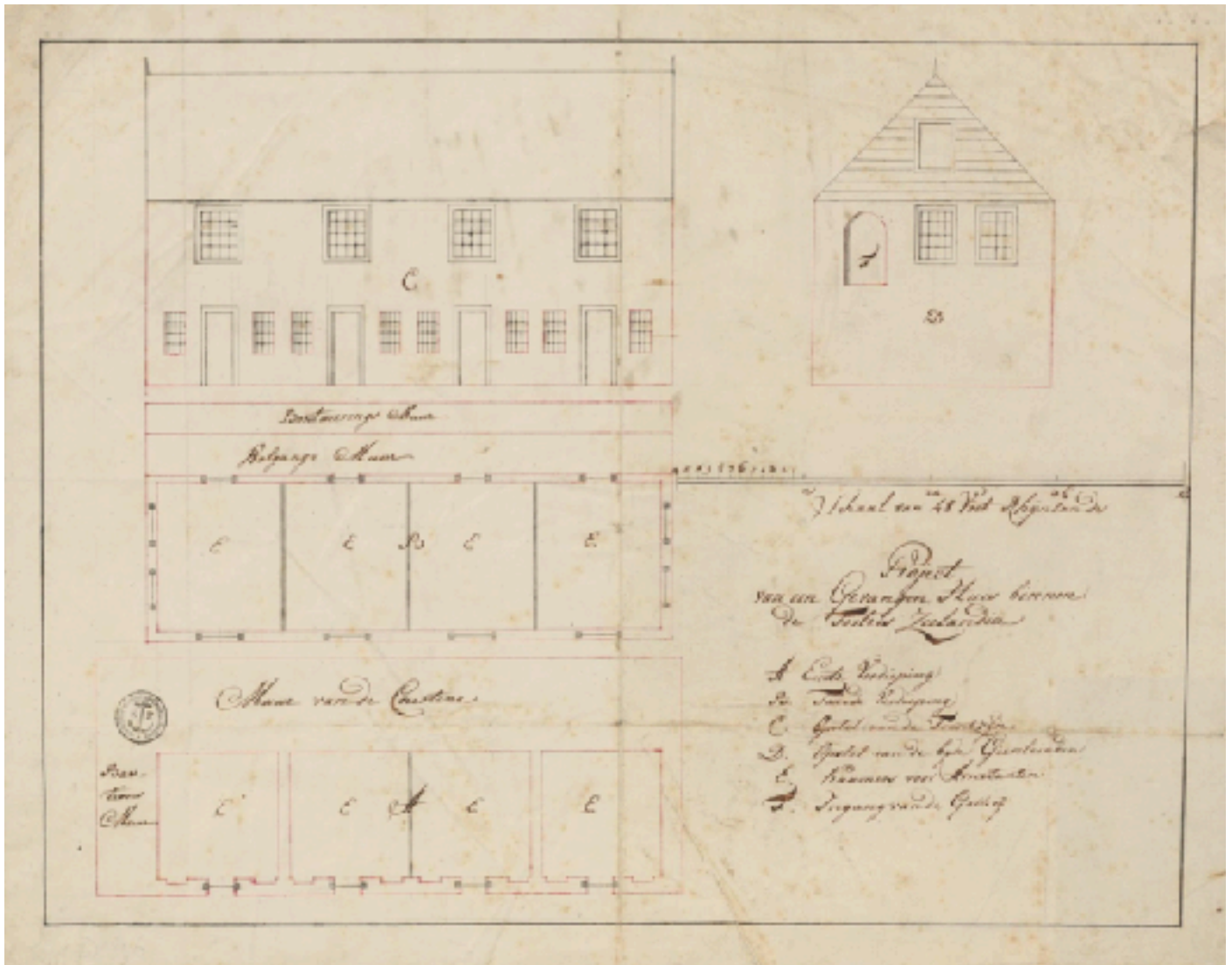


2.3 A.H. HELLEDIJ, NAADERE KAART EN RAPPORT, SPECTERENDE DE NIEUW TE BEGEEVEN LANDERYEN IN DE MARCHALS KREEK EN OF DEZELVE TOT NADEEL KONDE STREKKEN VOOR DE HOUTGROND WELTEVREDEN C.A., 1785

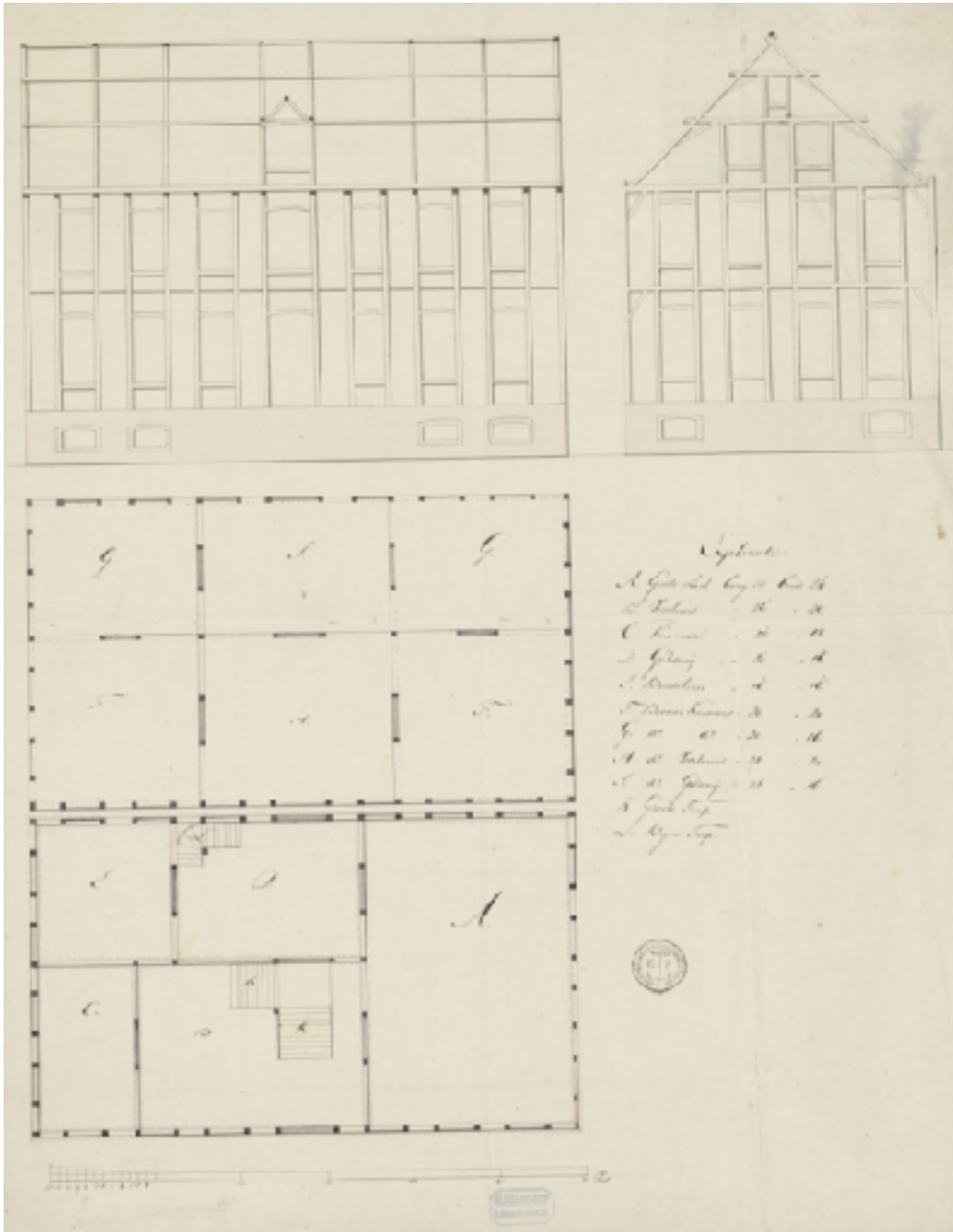


3.1 J.C. HURTER, CARTE VAN HET FORT ZEELANDIA BENEVENS HET GOUVERNEMENT, COMMANDEMENT EN VERDERE SOCIËTEITSGEBOUWEN, 1775. BRON: TEMMINCK GROLL, *DE ARCHITEKTUUR VAN SURINAME*, 15





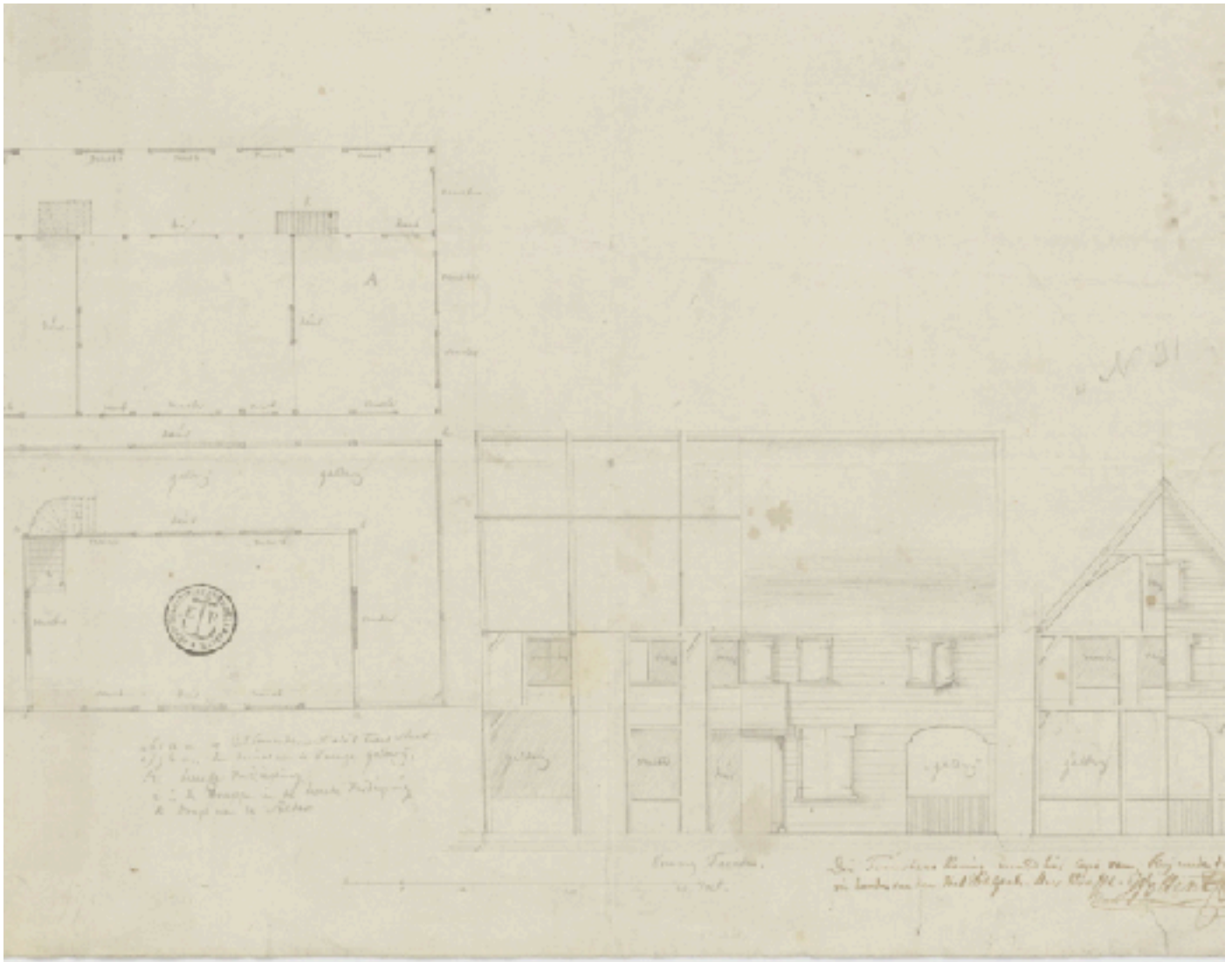
3.2 ANONYMOUS, 'PLAN VAN EEN HOSPITAL EN WONING VOOR SIEKE DIRECTIE EN LANDSNEEGERS', 1780



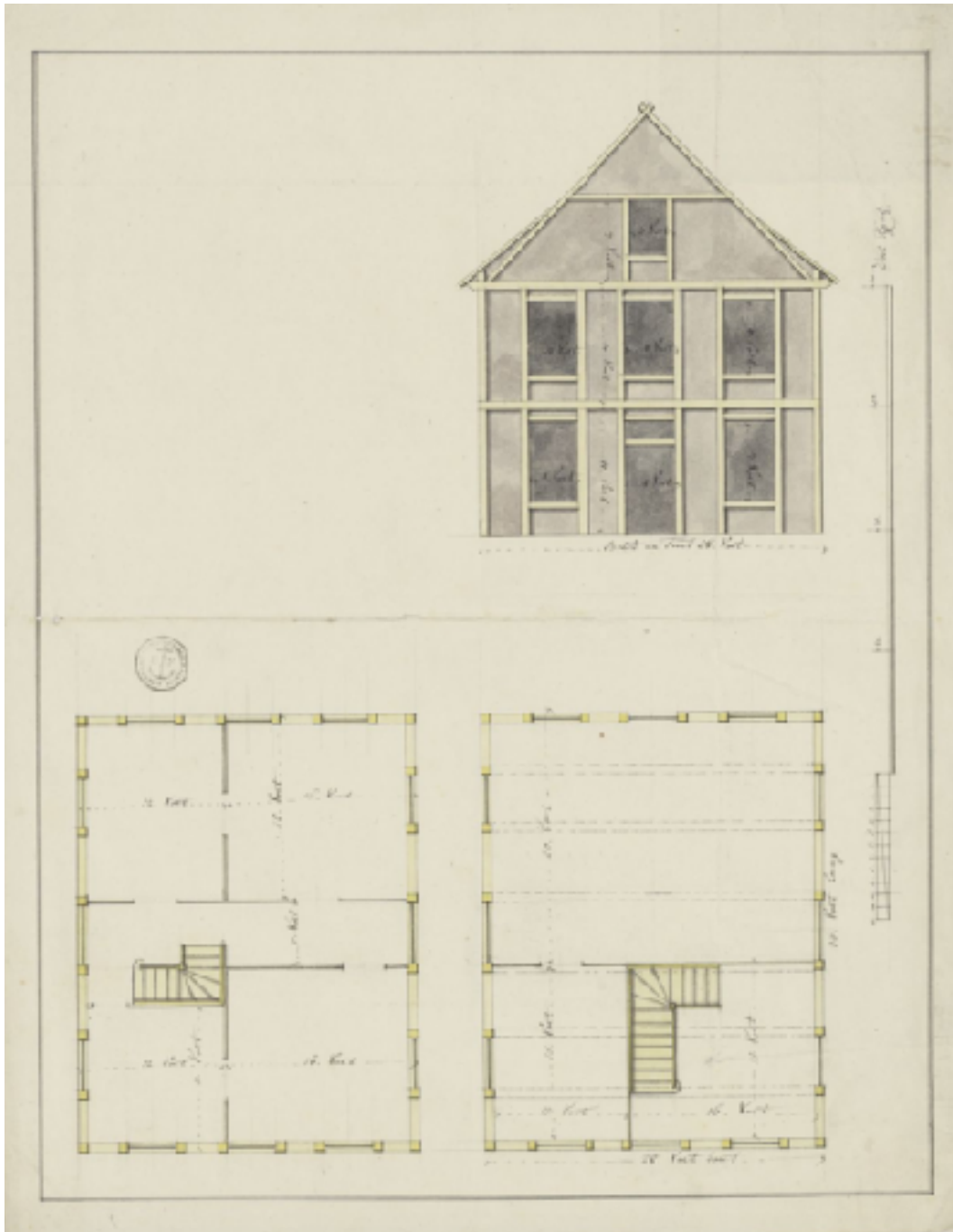
3.3A J.C. HURTER, ONTWERP VOOR DE HERBOUW VAN HET COMMANDEMENT, 1778



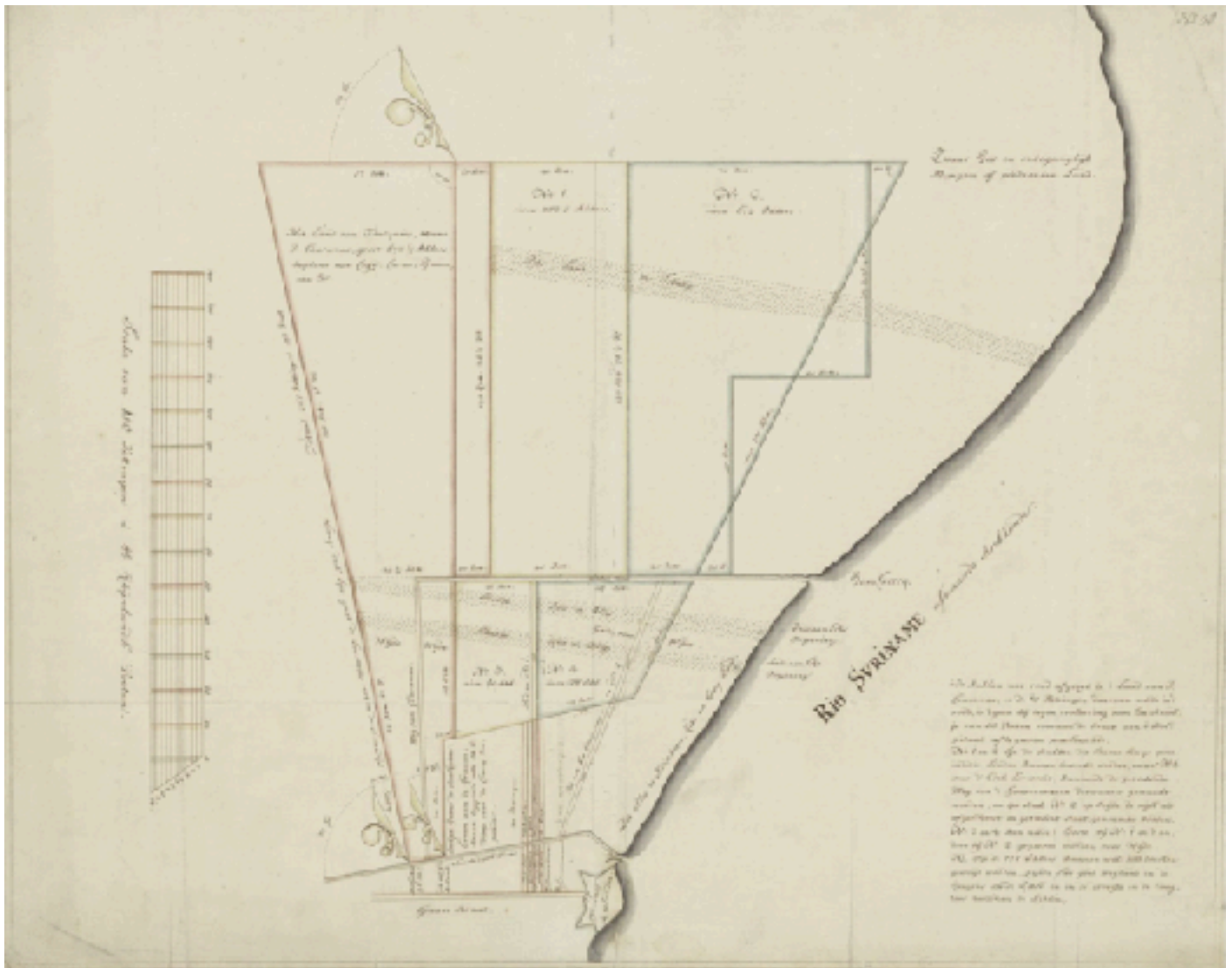
3.3B J.C. HURTER, 'SITUATIEPLAN VOOR DE HERBOUW VAN HET COMMANDEMENT', 1778



3.4 J.J.F. WOLLANT, SCHETS VOOR DE HERBOUW VAN HET COMMANDEMENT, 1778



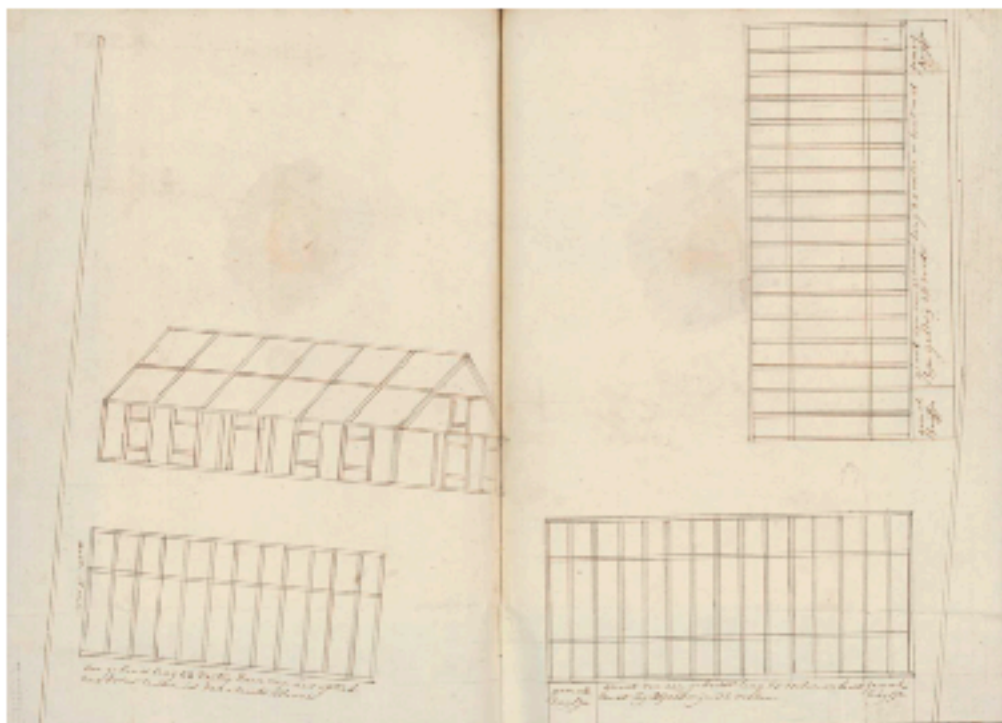
3.5 J.C. HURTER, ONTWERP VAN EEN GEBOUW VOOR DE  
GOUVERNEMENTSSECRETARIE, 1785



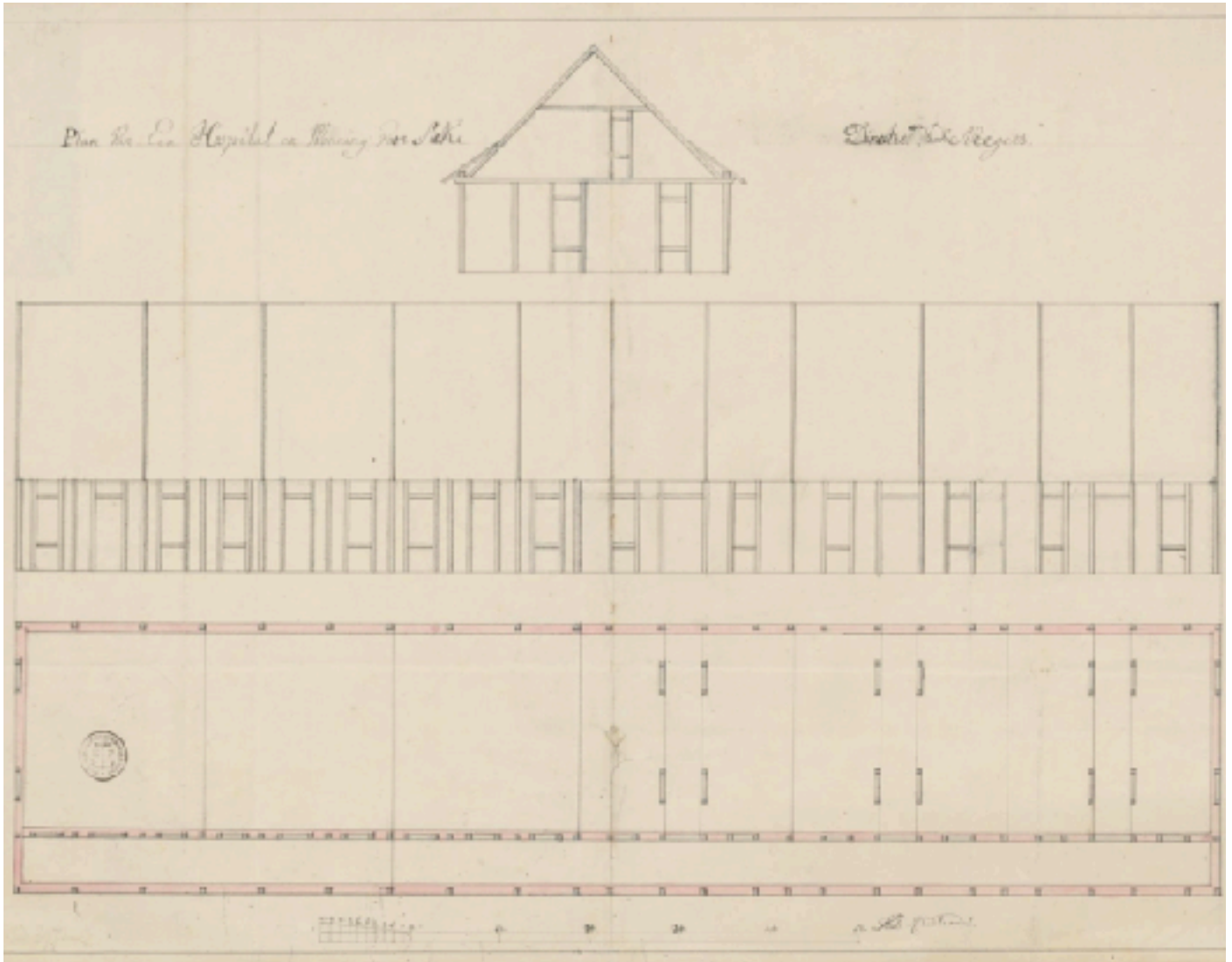
3.7 ANONYMOUS, 'KAART VAN EENIGE LANDEN, GELEGEN KOSTGROND VOOR DE ED. SOCIETEIT', UNKNOWN

Calculatie van de Gebouwen en alle andere toebehooren van het  
 Nieuw Societijts Hospitaal, twee Gebouwen te Paramaribo

aan Dierkant hout	266	—
aan Capri Reolag planken	900	—
aan Hollandse planken	600	—
aan Engelse ij	300	—
aan Haags ij	150	—
aan Engels	1400	—
aan Spaans	300	—
aan Hollandse Latten	200	—
aan Yfher's Merk	150	—
aan 1000 planken	1258	—
aan 1000 Timmeren Ruggen	3100	—
		Totaal 11225

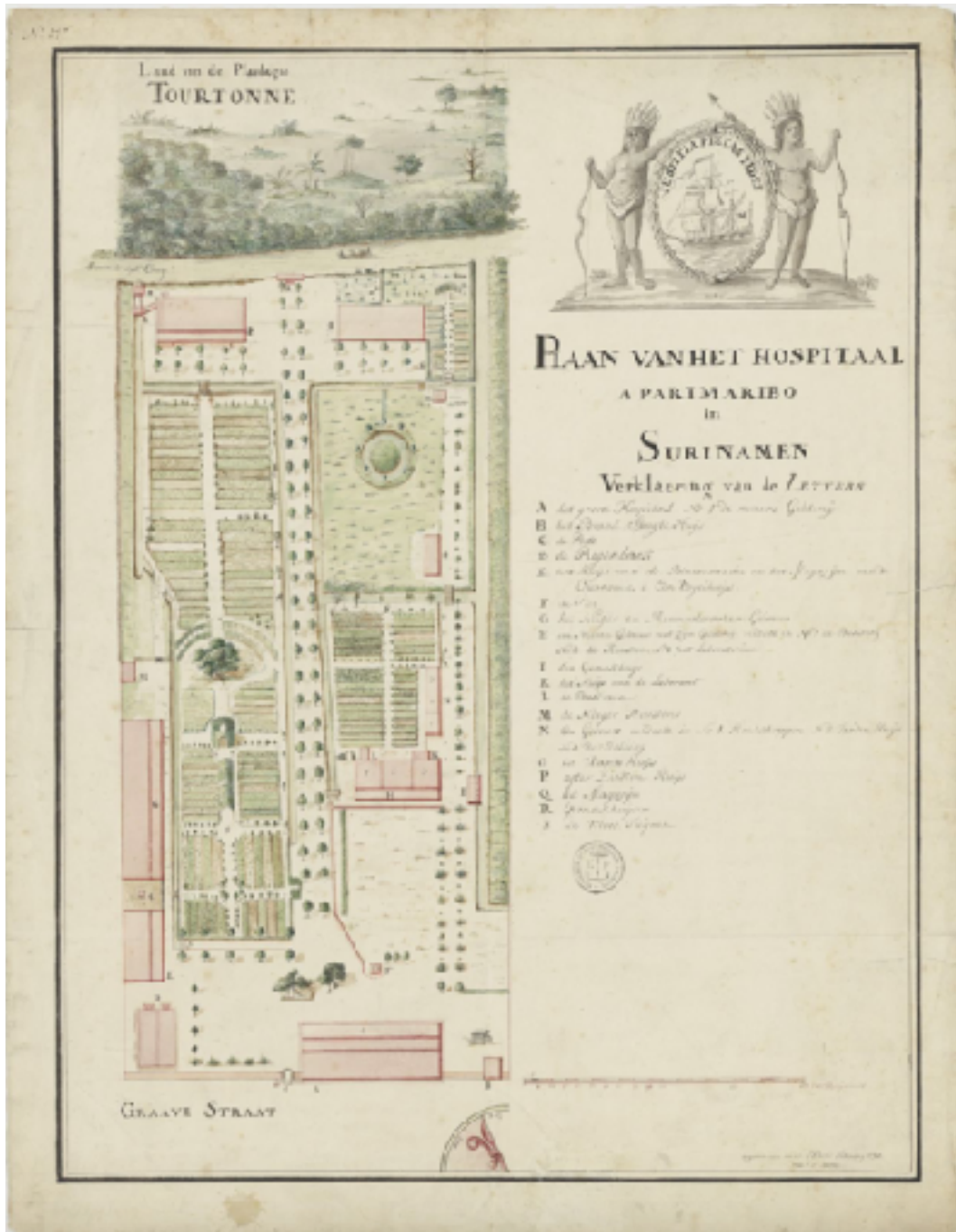


3.8 ANONYMOUS, TWO PROJECTED BUILDINGS IN PARAMARIBO, 1772



3.9 ANONYMOUS, 'PLAN VAN EEN HOSPITAL EN WONING VOOR SIEKE DIRECTIE EN LANDSNEEGERS', 1780





3.10 J.H. ROTHE, 'PLAAN VAN HET HOSPITAAL A PARAMARIBO IN SURINAMEN', 1793