

1566-1648 Dutch Revolt and the Rise of the Dutch Republic



1566 Miracle Year



1572-1574 War in the Netherlands

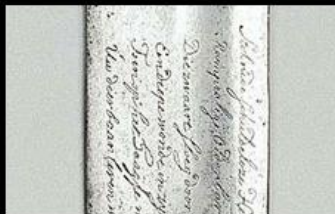
The Dutch Revolt, or Eighty Years War, is the term given to the armed struggle of the Northern Netherlands to shake off Spanish rule. In addition to fighting against foreign dominion, the revolt was also a desperate civil war between two key sections of the Dutch population. The Dutch Republic emerged from the conflagration as a robust sovereign state and the economic powerhouse of Europe.



1568-1584 William of Orange



1585-1610 Maurice



1609-1621 Truce and turmoil



1648 Treaty of Munster

1600-1690 Golden Age of the Dutch Republic



1600-1665 Amsterdam's Prosperity



1637 Tulipmania

Where else in the world can one enjoy all the comforts of life and all the interesting things that a person might wish to find? What other country is there in which one can enjoy such perfect freedom ...?

That is what French philosopher René Descartes wrote in 1631. He often visited the Dutch Republic and his words speak for themselves.



1670-1680 Tolerance



1660-1680 Scholarship in the Republic



1688 Stadholder William III becomes king of England

1650-1715 Republic at war with its neighbours



1652-1674 Anglo-Dutch wars




1672 Disaster Year

The Dutch Republic often found itself at loggerheads with surrounding countries. Maritime wars with England were not a great problem for the Dutch: Holland had its naval heroes. But the Republic was also drawn into major European land wars, and often against the French.



1701-1713 The War of the Spanish Succession

1701-1713 The War of the Spanish Succession



In 1700, Spain's king Charles II died. Having no children, he had stated that the French king Louis XIV's grandson should inherit the throne, as long as Spain remained sovereign. Britain and the Dutch Republic opposed the idea of a Franco-Spanish power block. And they went to war to prevent it.

[Timeline Dutch History](#)

Hesitant start



Battle of Vigo Bay, 23 October 1702. Netherlands, c. 1705

When war broke out, the Republic's stadholder, William III, was also king of England. Naturally, the two countries would be expected to pursue a joint political and military policy. They concluded a Grand Alliance with the Habsburg empire, Prussia and various German principalities. Gradually, a military force was assembled and in 1702 the army was ready to fight its first battle. In that same year, William III suddenly died following a riding accident. He left no children. The States of Holland took the opportunity to leave the position of stadholder vacant, and it remained vacant for many years.

In the first year of the war the Grand Alliance won a significant victory. An Anglo-Dutch fleet cornered the Franco-Spanish fleet in the bay of Vigo and captured a huge amount of gold, silver and treasure.

War of attrition



Fireworks celebrating the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713. Daniël Stopendael after Daniël Marot I, 1713

Although only a small country, the Republic found itself in a major war. At its height, the Republic had 120,000 troops in the field. An unprecedented number. The Grand Alliance proved successful, but the battles were hard fought and bloody. When it became clear that the union of France and Spain would be averted, the British began to look for ways to end the war. They had achieved their aim. At the negotiations for the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and later the Treaty of Rastatt, the British got what they wanted. For the Republic, the results were meagre. The Dutch gained the fortress town of Venlo. The exhausting war had left the country bankrupt. It was the last time that the Dutch Republic played a leading role in a European conflict.

1780-1810 Patriots, Batavian Republic and the French



1781-1795 Patriots vs Orangists



1795-1806 Batavian Republic

In the late 18th century, economic crises raised tensions in the Republic to new heights. Political movements such as the Patriots questioned the ability of Stadholder William V to govern. Unrest culminated in 1786 in civil war, revolution, coups, foreign intervention and eventually in 1810 in annexation by France. These turbulent years laid the foundations for a fresh start for the country, with a centralised state and a monarchy.



1806-1813 French Period

1781-1795 Patriots vs Orangists



In 1781, a new political movement of discontented burghers became increasingly vociferous in the Republic. They called themselves Patriots, to show their love of country, and aimed to restore the Republic to its former power and glory. Their concerns were greater individual freedom and the rights of man. Power, which had accrued to the stadholder and aristocracy, should lie with the burghers. The Patriots armed themselves, joined civic guard corps and societies. This brought them into conflict with supporters of the prince of Orange, the Orangists. De patriotten gingen zich bewapenen en verenigen in schutterijen en genootschappen. Hiermee kwamen zij tegenover de aanhangers van de prins te staan: de prins- of Oranjegezinden.

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Timeline Dutch History

William V

Revolution



Silver plaque with keeshond, Netherlands, c. 1784-1787

In the night of 25 to 26 September 1781, an anonymous pamphlet was distributed around the country. It was addressed 'To the People of the Netherlands' and called on burghers to demand their rightful part in the government of town and country. Later, it emerged that it had been written by a nobleman in Overijssel, Joan Derk van der Capellen tot den Pol. The call signalled the start of a Patriot revolution against corruption, cronyism and other abuses. One of the leaders was Cornelis (Kees) de Gijsselaar of Dordrecht and this gave rise to a pejorative for the Patriots - 'kezen' - while they in turn proudly wore badges showing a keeshond (barge dog). Opponents chided 'In this century of mad dogs, it's an honour to be crazy.'

Unloved



Portrait of Prince William V. Johann Friedrich August Tischbein, 1789



Portrait of Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia, wife of Prince William V. Johann Friedrich August Tischbein, c. 1789

'Prince William, it is all your fault,' Joan Derk van de Capellen tot den Pol concluded in his pamphlet *To the People of the Netherlands*, summarising the Patriot criticism of William V. The stadholder was notoriously weak and indecisive; indeed he had no response to the accusation. His wife, Wilhelmina was also unpopular, although cut from a different cloth. She was a proud princess - her brother William Frederick II was king of Prussia. Yet even she could not avoid her husband and herself having to flee The Hague in September 1785, as the Patriots grew in strength. William and Wilhelmina and their children found refuge in Nijmegen in Gelderland.

Conflict and cartoons



Cartoon showing Prince William V and his wife and children, Netherlands, 1787

The Patriots and Orangists lampooned each other in pamphlets and other publications. William and Wilhelmina were depicted with their children as wild pigs, trampling over the rights of the Dutch people. Meanwhile, the Orangists called the rebels mad dogs and madmen.

Every medium available was used in the struggle, including violence. The Patriots formed armed free corps and seized power in much of Holland, Utrecht and Overijssel. The Orangists managed to hold on to a few towns in Gelderland, with a show of force. Elsewhere in the country they fermented riots and incidents. Tension mounted and in the course of 1787 events took a turn for the worse.

Piqued princess



Het gevangens houden van haar Koningl. Hoogheid Mevrouw de Prinsesse van Oranje enz. in het huis van A. Leuwenhoek, aan de goejan vervelle Daix den 28^{en} Janij 1787.

Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia arrested in the house of Goejanvervellesluis in 1787. Gottfried Arnold Lehman, c. 1787-1790

On 28 June 1787, Adriaan van Leeuwenhoek, a farmer, was visited by Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia. But Stadholder William V's wife was not a guest in the best room of his Goejanvervellesluis farmhouse of her own volition. She had been stopped on her way from Nijmegen by armed Patriots who feared that she would spark a rising of Orangists if she were allowed to appear in The Hague.

The princess was unharmed and was released two days later. Yet Prussia's king Frederick William II felt unable to allow this insult to his sister to go unpunished. In the autumn of 1787, Prussian troops moved in and restored Orange control over the entire country. Some 40,000 Patriots fled the country, most to France.

Frozen rivers



Bombardment of 's-Hertogenbosch by French troops during the siege of 1794. Josephus Augustus Knip, 1800

On 4 October 1794, following heavy bombardment and a siege lasting several weeks, Den Bosch surrendered to a French army under General Jean-Charles Pichegru. Troops of the French Revolutionary army had invaded the Republic in August of that year, yet had stopped at the principal rivers until winter. A severe frost enabled them to cross the water with comparative ease and march north. Stadholder William V fled with his family from Scheveningen to England. In the wake of the French army came the returning Patriots who had sought refuge in France in 1787. They now took over the reins of power.