

**Provisional shelf list of the records of the Dutch
Reformed Church in Malacca at the National
Archives of Malaysia,
1642-1825**

N.N.

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This inventory is written in English.

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FONDS SPECIFICATIONS

Title:

Records of the Dutch Reformed Church in Malacca at the National Archives of Malaysia

Period:

1642-1825

Extent:

ca. 0.1 lin. m

Repository:

Arkib Negara Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia), Kuala Lumpur

Record Creator (origination):

Dutch Reformed Church in Malacca

Abstract:

The records comprise the remnants of the administration of the Dutch Reformed Church in Malacca (Melaka, in present-day peninsular Malaysia). They cover the period 1642-1825 and consist of baptismal registers, proceedings of the church council, financial records, church membership lists and miscellaneous documents.

CONTEXT

BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

The Dutch presence in the region presently covered by the Federation of Malaysia began in January 1641 when the Dutch East India Company (VOC) conquered the town of Malacca (Melaka) from the Portuguese. Including Perak and Kedah on the Malay peninsula, Andragiri and Siak on Sumatra and (after 1787) the Riau archipelago, the VOC *kantoor* (regional establishment) of Malacca was headed by a Governor. Occupied by the British between August 1795 and September 1818, the settlements were definitely transferred to them in April 1825.

For more than a century after the Dutch conquest of Malacca, the Dutch Reformed Church used the former Catholic church building on St. Paul Hill to conduct its religious services. Only in 1753 a special protestant church was built, now referred to as Christ Church and situated next to the 'Stadthuys', the former Dutch town hall, in the city centre. The Church organized religious services, took care of the poor, widows and orphans, and performed baptisms, marriages and burials. The headquarters of the Dutch Reformed Church in Asia was located at Batavia (present-day Jakarta), the administrative centre of the VOC in Asia. Here, the Church was placed under the central government (*Hoge Regering*) of the Company. The Church at Batavia and its branches at VOC settlements in Asia maintained close contacts with the Synod and various Classes of the Church in the Dutch Republic.

CUSTODIAL HISTORY

The Dutch records currently kept at the National Archives of Malaysia are all originating from the Dutch Reformed Church at Malacca. In 1899, these church records were catalogued by T.J. Hardy, whose findings were published by the Government Printing Office at Singapore. A reprint of this catalogue appeared in 1937 as 'Catalogue of Church Records, Malacca 1642-1898' in the *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Vol. 15, no. 1). At the time of Hardy's research, the church records comprised 35 volumes, covered the period 1642-1898 and were kept at the 'Stadthuys' in Malacca.

At their current location in the National Archives at Kuala Lumpur, the records of the Dutch Reformed Church at Malacca number only 14 volumes, covering the period 1642-1825. They consist of:

1. *doopboeken* (baptismal registers), 5 volumes, 1642-1790, 1800-1825;
2. *resolutien* (proceedings of the Church Council), 4 volumes, 1694-1825;
3. *kerkboeken* (financial records), 4 volumes, 1782-1822;
4. miscellaneous, including *lidmatenboeken* (church membership lists), 1 volume, 18th century (there are also some volumes dating from the British period containing church membership lists, which start in 1824).

These volumes (or at least most of them) appear to be described under the following numbers in the catalogue of Hardy: 2, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29 (?), 30 (?), 31, 33 and 34. In addition, there are two items originating from the Roman Catholic St. Peter's Church in Malacca: marriage registers (1768-1838) and burial registers (1787-1827). All aforementioned records have been put on microfilm (see the survey in *Katalog Mikro Arkib Negara Malaysia*, which is available at the Archives).

ALLIED MATERIALS

RELATED MATERIALS

The church records that still remain are obviously incomplete. In 1919, however, copies were made of part of the documents, which are now kept in the National Archives of the Netherlands at The Hague in three volumes in the collection of *Aanwinsten* (acquisitions, finding aid code 1.11.01.01):

1. inv. no. 1376:
2. 1. copies of *resoluties* (proceedings) of the church council of the Reformed Church at Malacca, 1712-1740.
3. inv. no. 1378:
4. 1. copies of *resoluties* of the council of justice for the churches of Malacca, 1711-1808;
2. copies of correspondence of the church council at Malacca, 1648-1669.
5. inv. no. 1380:
6. 1. copies of correspondence of the church council of the Reformed Church at Malacca, 1752-1796, 1806-1825;
2. copies of *lidmatenboeken*, 1709-1825;
3. copies of reports concerning the various churches in Malacca, 1713-1793;
4. copy of an ordinance concerning funeral registers, 1766;
5. copy of a regulation concerning funerals, 1716;
6. copy of a survey of receipts and expenditures, 1781-1820;
7. copies of inventories of church possessions, 1808-1824;
8. copies of marriage registers;
9. copies of burial registers, 1788-1852.

Besides, inv. no. 1665 consists of seven volumes with nineteenth-century copies of various documents belonging to the archives of the reformed community at Malacca including an index to personal names. In addition, inv. nos. 1372-1375, 1377 and 1379 comprise original papers dating from the period 1642-1892 deriving from or concerning the Dutch Reformed Church in Malacca.

Related materials may also be found in various archives of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Netherlands, which corresponded with its representatives in Asia. These include the following:

1. Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, kept at the National Archives in The Hague (finding aid code: 2.19.064);
2. Loose manuscripts of the Dutch Reformed Church, kept at the National Archives in The Hague (finding aid code: 2.19.082);
3. Amsterdam Classis, kept at the Municipal Archives of Amsterdam (finding aid code: 379);
4. Schieland / Rotterdam Classis, kept at the Municipal Archives of Rotterdam (finding aid code: 24);
5. Walcheren / Middelburg Classis, kept at the Zeeland Archives in Middelburg (finding aid code: 28.1);
6. Delft / Delfland Classis, kept in the Municipal Archives of Delft (finding aid code: 518).

The remaining archives of the actual VOC government of Malacca are not kept in Malaysia

anymore. A part has been transferred to London in 1927 and can now be consulted at the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library (reference code: R/9). Other papers originating from these archives are stored in the National Archives of Indonesia at Jakarta and the National Archives of the Netherlands at The Hague.

Documents deriving from or concerning the Dutch Reformed Church in Malacca may also be found in the *Archieven van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* kept at the National Archives at The Hague (finding aid code: 1.04.02) These are the archives of the VOC's board of directors, the *Heren XVII*, and the Company's six *kamers* (offices) in the Dutch Republic. The archives include numerous papers concerning the *kantoor* of Malacca, especially in the series of the *overgekomen brieven en papieren* (letters and papers received from Asia, either directly from the regional establishments or via Batavia). The collection of the *Hoge Regering te Batavia* (National Archives at The Hague, finding aid code: 1.04.17) and the archives of the *Gouverneur-Generaal en Raden van Indië (Hoge Regering)* (Arsip Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia) may also be

APPENDICES
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DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBORDINATE COMPONENTS

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 1 | Doopboeken (baptismal registers), 1642-1825 | 5 volumes |
| - | 1642-1688 | |
| - | 1689-1709 | |
| - | 1709-1742 | |
| - | 1742-1790 | |
| - | 1800-1825 | |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 2 | Resoluzioni (proceedings of the Church Council), 1694-1825 | 4 volumes |
| | - 1694-1717 | |
| | - 1718-1740 | |
| | - 1740-1772 | |
| | - 1773-1825 | |

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|----------|--|-----------|
| 3 | Kerkboeken (financial records), 1782-1822 | 4 volumes |
| - | 1782-1799 | |
| - | 1799-1808 | |
| - | 1809-1819 | |
| - | 1820-1822 | |

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- 4 Miscellaneous,
 18th century 1 volume
 N.B.: includes lidmatenboeken (church membership registers). Some volumes
 from the British period also include lidmatenboeken, starting in 1824.