

walking route Leeuwarden

- 1 Wilhelminaplein 92: Fries Museum
- 2 Blokhuisplein 18: residence of the Tadema family 1843-1848
- 3 Weaze 29: residence of the Tadema family 1848-1859
- 4 Uniabuurt 8: residence of the Tadema family 1838-1843
(Café De Ossekop)
- 5 Voorstreek 80: residence of the HaverSchmidt family
- 6 Breedstraat 48: Zalen van der Wielen (Zalen Schaaf)
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- 8 Sint Anthonystraat 5: Stadsburgerschool (OBS Oldenije)
- 9a Bagijnestraat 55a: Stedelijk Gymnasium
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city and village walk

LEEUWARDEN

Traces of Alma Tadema
in Dronrijp and Leeuwarden



Self-portrait of Lourens Alma Tadema, drawing, 1858. TRESOAR COLLECTION



Portrait photo of Lourens Alma Tadema, circa 1875.

INTRODUCTION

In 2016 the Fries Museum featured on a grand scale the person and work of Lawrence Alma-Tadema (as the painter styled himself after moving to London in 1870). Friesland may have never produced a more famous artist, even though the painter of Greek and Roman life was quickly forgotten after the late Victorian period. He was knighted in England in 1899 and was buried, after his death in 1912, in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. His roots, however, lie in the Dutch province of Friesland. He was born in Dronrijp and grew up in Leeuwarden.

This edition of *City walks through Leeuwarden* follows the traces of Alma Tadema's Frisian roots, the places where he lived and where he (likely) set foot during his time in Friesland. Attention is also given to the people with whom he interacted in his youth. Naturally we first take the walker, after a general introduction, on an excursion to the village in which he was born: Dronrijp.

Alma Tadema and Friesland

There was great interest in Alma Tadema in Friesland during his own lifetime. The *Leeuwarder Courant* regularly kept its readers informed of the ups and downs of their former townsman. On June 12 1870 the paper announced the sale at a London auction of the artist's painting *My studio* for 450 guineas, which was a great sum at the time. On August 25 1872 the paper reported: *The English papers mention with praise a painting completed recently by our fellow town- and countryman, Mr Alma Tadema. The canvas depicts the death of the first-born son of the King of Egypt. It is intended for the exhibition in Berlin.* This painting is now part of the Rijksmuseum collection in Amsterdam, bequeathed to the museum by the artist himself.

There are repeated reports in the *Leeuwarder Courant* of exhibitions at home and abroad in which works by Alma Tadema and his (second) wife, Laura Epps, could be seen. The paper also makes note of the fact that in 1874 the painter's house was heavily damaged by the explosion of a ship containing gunpowder. It wrote of his appointment in 1876 as member of the Royal Academy in London and of his elevation to the peerage in 1899 (Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema). In 1878 the *Leeuwarder Courant* featured a large article about Alma Tadema penned by the local publisher Hugo Suringar, a former classmate of Tadema's.

In the period 1878-1904 his works were regularly displayed in the Fine Art Gallery, owned by Miss G.H. Matthijssen, located on the Ruiterskwartier in Leeuwarden.

The appreciation for Alma Tadema's work was also expressed in its frequent use for performances in the form of a tableau vivant, for instance in the Harmonie City Theatre in Leeuwarden. The newspaper mentioned this as well.

Naturally, the *Leeuwarder Courant* reported the death of Lourens Alma Tadema in 1912. In July 4th's paper Hugo van Schaik (1872-1946), himself a painter, wrote: *Tadema's paintings had dropped in price in his own lifetime*. Appreciation for his work had already lessened, and after his death it would quickly decline even further. Still, on April 17 1914 the paper made an elaborate report of the unveiling, in the presence of a host of Frisian leaders, of the commemorative plaque at Alma Tadema's birthplace in Dronrijp.



Triptych with the portraits of Lourens and his wife, Laura Epps, 1871.

OIL PAINT ON PANEL: LOURENS ALMA TADEMA
FRIES MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

Gerharda Henriette Matthijssen

Miss Gerharda Henriette Matthijssen (1830-1907) is best known as a photographer. She had an *atelier de photographie pour dames* at Sint Jacobstraat 2 and later at Naauw 7, plus a gallery at Ruiterskwartier 95. In 1877 she captured a view of Leeuwarden from the Nieuwe Toren (New Tower) on her photographic plate. She also painted. She was the daughter of painter Jan Hendrik Matthijssen, who in the 1840s lived on Zuidvliet 32. Around 1850 Gerharda lived with the widow Ms Buis, 'innkeeper', on the Wortelhaven (I 37).



Gerharda Henriette Matthijssen (1830-1907)

PAINTING: GERHARDA HENRIETTE MATHIJSSSEN CA 1890 FRIES MUSEUM

Wopke Eekhoff (1809-1880), bookseller, publisher and the first municipal archivist of Leeuwarden (and The Netherlands), had his residence and bookstore on the Keizerskroon (which was torn down circa 1930). Eekhoff gave a favourable description of Alma Tadema and his work in his catalogue of Leeuwarden's municipal art collection (1875).



View of the Waag (weigh house), with on the right the Keizerskroon (on the corner of the Peperstraat), 1838.

DRAWING IN COLOUR: S. BONGA

The Frisian Society

Not until 1928 (!) did the Frisian Society mention that Alma Tadema had bequeathed it a number of silver objects, including a piece with an inscription honoring Mr Tadema for his organ playing in Akkrum. This 'Mr Tadema' must have been Lourens' father, Pieter Tadema, who in the 1820s was a notary in Akkrum for a short time before establishing himself in Makkum. After this, there is relatively little news of their once famous fellow town- and countryman. In the newspaper of 19 November 1932 there is, charmingly, an appeal

made by the painter's daughter, Laurence Alma Tadema (1844-1940), novelist and poet, asking for particularities about her father's youth.

Lourens Alma Tadema cherished his memories of Friesland. He returned several times to travel around his *Heitelân*, his Fatherland, as for instance in 1871. He made sketches of various places and parts of buildings, for example of the City Hall of Bolsward and of a fireplace in a house in Leeuwarden. These drawings were part of his legacy and are now in the Cadbury Research Library's collection in the University of Birmingham. His own collection included the family's silver birth spoons. These personal objects were part of the donation to the Fries Museum made by himself and his daughters, Laurence and Anna.

Influence on later artists

Lourens Alma Tadema exercised almost no influence on the work of other artists in Friesland, even though he was considered a great painter, and his success in far away London made a great impression. News coverage placed more emphasis on the fact that he was a famous fellow Frisian and/or townsman.

The generation of Frisian artists after him no longer studied in Antwerp but in The Hague or Amsterdam. They were mainly influenced by the painters of the Haagse School (Hague School). There was great interest in the Frisian landscape and in Frisian villages and cities. There was no longer a place for exalted, classical themes. There is possibly a slight similarity to the work of Johannes Hendricus Jurres (Leeuwarden, 1875-Amsterdam, 1946). Like Alma Tadema, Jurres was a romantic painter with a penchant for the past: for Tadema it was classical Rome, for Jurres biblical scenes or highlights in world literature, such as *Don Quixote* by Miguel Cervantes (1547-1616). Jurres, however, painted in a dramatic, expressive manner that was very different to the precise, well-documented work of Alma Tadema.

The so highly-praised painter had no other followers in Friesland.



De Prinsentuin te Leeuwarden, omstreeks 1820.

WATERCOLOUR: E. J. EELKEMA (1788-1939)
FRIS MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

DRONRIJP WALK

'It is long ago since I was there. I was born in 1836 and left there in 1838 to go to Leeuwarden, where my father had been appointed notary and where my sister, the late Mrs R[odeck], who passed away in 1875 in Puerto-Rico [Alma Tadema wrote Port-Rico], was born the year we arrived. I remember the place, because I showed it to my wife in 1871, perhaps the first time that I had seen it again since 1838... I am quite proud you have been there. I remember the 13th-century church and the grey colour in which it was painted, because in 1871 I made a sketch of it. The bricks with which the church was built were extra large, which was common at that time, with straw on them, like in Egypt... You will notice that I do not know much of my beloved Dronrijp. How the time goes by and how the transient memory becomes muddled. I am quite certain that I would no longer know my way now even in Leeuwarden, for it has changed greatly in 73 years, as have I.'

Lourens Alma Tadema was still a toddler when he moved with his parents from Dronrijp to Leeuwarden in 1838. He therefore had hardly any recollections of the village in which he was born in 1836, and those he did have were based on a later visit. This is apparent in a letter from 1911 to a good friend of his, the singer, pianist, conductor and composer Georg Henschel (1850-1934). Georg had enthusiastically recounted his visit to Dronrijp to Lourens to which the latter, in English naturally, answered that he had been there in 1871 with his second wife, Laura Epps (1852-1909). The text above is a fragment of the letter. Unfortunately, the current whereabouts of Lourens' drawing of the church is unknown.



« The map of the municipality of Menaldumadeel in 1851 from Eekhoff's *Nieuwe Atlas van Friesland* gives a good idea of the town planning of Dronrijp's two centers and along the connecting road (Skilpaed). Most of the houses stood near the church and along the road that crossed the waterway. A few of the most important ones were either on this road or the one running parallel to it, the Hearewei. Of these prominent houses, only Schatzenburg, north of the village, remains. Today a number of fine villas and farms stand on the Hearewei. Some of these have names like Osinga State and Dotinga State (*state* is a stately home). They are reminders of the former glory of the noble residences that once stood here. By the time Alma Tadema was born, only Schatzenburg still remained.

1 Dûbeleestreek 2/corner of Brêgebuorren Alma Tadema's birthplace

Around 1835 the village of Dronrijp was made up of two centres. The oldest, the Tsjerkebuorren, lay on the north side around the old Sint Salviuskerk (church). Later, in the 16th and 17th centuries, a second centre, the Brêgebuorren, developed around the crossing between the road south to Hatsum and the tow-canal, dug in 1507, between Harlingen and Leeuwarden. At the time, this crossing was a bustling transit hub. All water traffic between Franeker and Leeuwarden passed through here, including the tow-boats to and from Bolsward. Pedestrians, horse riders, carriages and farmers' wagons crossed the bridge here.

The house Alma Tadema was born in was probably built in the 18th century. On the side facing the tow-canal, it has a striking bay window on the first floor. From here the family had a good view of all the activity that went on below. Johannes Lambertus Huber bought



The birthplace of Alma Tadema in Dronrijp, with the bridge over the Harlinger Trekvaart (tow-canal) in the foreground, circa 1900.

JURJEN KURSTRA COLLECTION

the large building in 1810 or 1811. It is unclear why Huber bought it, since his residence was the country house Schatzenburg. In 1818 he sold it to a notary, Wijtze Keimpes Hoekstra, who in turn sold it in 1820 to Feike Ydes de Boer. The latter sold it to Pieter Tadema in 1832. After Pieter Tadema sold it in 1837, it remained a notary's house for many years.

In 1997 a statue commemorating Lourens Alma Tadema was erected on the square in front of the house in which he had been born in 1836. The bronze figure was made by Ben van der Geest. Lourens is depicted with his right hand in his jacket pocket, while in his left he holds a palette with paintbrushes. A plaque on the façade of the house in which he was born, placed in 1914 by the Royal Academy of Arts in London, is another reminder of the artist.



The birthplace of Alma Tadema, with his statue in the foreground.

PHOTO: GERRIT BRUIN. JURJEN KURSTRA COLLECTION



The unveiling of the bronze plaque (made by the sculptor Sir George Frampton) on the house in which Alma Tadema was born in Dronrijp. From: *Geïllustreerd zondagsblad voor Katholieken*, April 26 1914. The paper reports further that 'The ceremony was performed by the English Ambassador in The Hague, who sketched the merits of the great artist in a splendid speech, after which Mr R. A. Fockema, in the name of the Frisian Society, gladly accepted the plaque, which was mounted as an homage by the Royal Academy in London.'

JURJEN KURSTRA COLLECTION

The Tadema Family

Lourens Alma Tadema was born in Dronrijp on 8 January 1836. His father, Pieter Jiltes Tadema (Bolsward, 1797-Leeuwarden, 1840) was a village notary there. In 1832 Pieter established himself in Dronrijp with his second wife, Hinke Dirks Brouwer (Bolsward, 1809-Antwerp, 1863), who was stepsister to his first wife, Artje Dirks Brouwer (Workum, 1798-Makkum, 1831). He had come from Makkum, where he had lived with his first wife. Pieter Tadema probably had less than pleasant memories of Makkum. Artje died there in 1831, as did their fourth child, a girl named Marijke Bouma Tadema (born in 1831), in 1832. The remaining three children from his first marriage, Dirk (born in 1825), Jelte Zacharias (born in 1827) and Wopke Brouwer (born 1829) Tadema, moved with their

father to Dronrijp. He married for the second time in Menaldum; one of the witnesses was his younger brother, Klaas Tadema. The latter would live for a number of years, as candidate notary, with his brother in Dronrijp. Several of Pieter Tadema's children used the surname of a family member as their second name. Wopke took the name Brouwer from his mother's family, and Henricus, the name Van Ringh from his father's brother-in-law, who was a doctor. Lourens took the name Alma from his mother's brother-in-law, Laurens Alma (1802-1876), who was a pharmacist in Amsterdam and married to Hinke Dirks' sister, Engeltje Dirks. Henricus died the same year Lourens was born, at the age of three. In 1838 Pieter Tadema moved his family to Leeuwarden after he was named district notary there. In 1839 Lourens' only sister, Artje, was born in Leeuwarden. Like her step-brother Wopke, she took her mother's maiden name, Brouwer, as a second name. She had a very close tie with her brother Lourens her whole life. She lived with him in Antwerp (with their mother), in Brussels and in London until her marriage. In Brussels and London she assumed the care of Alma Tadema's two daughters after the death of his first wife. The Tademas belonged to the better class. They were not rich, but owned land from which income could be enjoyed.



Group portrait with, from left to right, Lourens, his brother Jelte, his mother Hinke Dirks Brouwer, and his sister, Artje, 1859.

DRAWING: LOURENS ALMA TADEMA, 1859
FRIES MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

2 Brêgebuorren 10 Café De Posthoorn

Still standing on the opposite corner of the house in which Alma Tadema was born is the village's most prominent café, *De Posthoorn* (formerly the inn De Groote Posthoorn), 'with the finest upper hall in Friesland.' The property was built in the 18th century, but in 1838 it was pushed back so that the tow-canal could be widened. There were more inns on the tow-canal to oblige skippers and others who used this waterway. There were also warehouses along this canal to store goods transported mainly by water. Alongside it was a towpath: not only horses but also men, women and children pulled the ships to their various destinations. The Molenpôle, a flour mill built around 1700, stood along the canal leading to Leeuwarden. A small memorial tablet from 1832 placed in the façade of Brêgebuorren 22 is a reminder of the construction of A.M. Feitsma's grocery store. It also recounts the industry in the village at that time, especially along the tow-canal. The tow-canal was filled in the forties of the twentieth century, when the new Van Harinxma Canal made the old connection superfluous.

3 Dûbelestreek 19-29 Gasthuis (hospice) Vredenhof

Not far from Alma Tadema's birthplace stands a little hospice for poor women, founded in 1745 by Agnes Alida Huber (1702-1774), who owned Schatzenburg. The original row of six simple, one-room homes was expanded in 1845 with another row of six similar houses. These buildings have since been combined into six houses. The hospice has two clock gables on its street side. To the south, on the road It Heech, the Huber family commissioned the building of the Nieuw (New) Vredenhof between 1872 and 1876. The first stone was laid by Lambertus Johannes Huber, who was nine years old at the time. The row of houses, built in the Neo-Classical style, was designed by the architect-contractor C.S. Reitsma from Leeuwarden.

4 Tsjerkebuorren 1 Sint Salviuskerk

The tower of the Sint Salviuskerk (St. Salvius church), informally called "*d'Alde Wite*" (Old White Church)) dominated the skyline then as it does now. It was built in the 12th century but received its present exterior in 1504, when the building was expanded and the choir and south wall were given Gothic characteristics, like pointed arch windows. The tower, built in 1544, has a square substructure with a staircase tower inside and above that a six-sided lantern with a crowning. The church has a beautiful interior, including pew boxes,



View of the Tsjerkebuorren in Dronrijp, Sjoerd Bonga, watercolour, 1853.

a pulpit, a large organ and numerous tombstones, reminders of the earlier inhabitants of the many *states* (stately homes) in the village. In the church's southern wall, close to his grave, is a memorial tablet for Eise Eisinga (1744-1828), builder of the planetarium in Franeker and another famous son of Dronrijp. His birthplace can be found at Tsjerkebuorren 13.

The Tademas, however, probably saw little of the inside of the Sint Salviuskerk. Their family was traditionally Mennonite. When Pieter Tadema and his wife moved from Makkum to Dronrijp in 1832, they registered themselves as members of Leeuwarden's Mennonite community. They must have attended the church on the Wirdumerdijk there.

The Tsjerkebuorren meanders south of the church and the churchyard. It probably does not look much different now than it did in Lourens Alma Tadema's time: small, mostly 18th and 19th century houses in which little stores and other forms of industry were established. There were also some small croft farms and, of course, *Het Wapen van Dronrijp*, an inn with a café and upper hall. It was a counterpart to *De Grootte Posthoorn* on the Brêgebuorren. In December 1837 Pieter Tadema, as village notary, was responsible for leasing *Het Wapen van Dronrijp* for a period of three years. Today, the church surroundings are a protected landscape. When the Tademas lived in Dronrijp, the roads, like most back then, were probably almost or completely unpaved. That must have been one muddy mess when it rained.

5 Tsjerkebuorren 12 notary's office/cantonal court

One of the prettiest properties in the village is Tsjerkebuorren 12. The house was built in the 18th century with a look-out basement, in the center of which a stoop leads to a double door.

In 1809 this building housed Mr Lambertus Johannes Huber's (1780-1843) legal practice. He resigned in 1817 and took over the office of his father, Johannes Lambertus Huber (1750-1826), as justice of the peace. He had his house rebuilt to make it suitable as a cantonal

court. The house is still known as such, even though the office only lasted until 1824. A bakery established itself here in 1838, the year in which the Tademas moved to Leeuwarden, remaining in business for almost a century. The property is currently owned by the Vereniging Hendrick de Keyser (a historical association for old buildings).

6 Eastryp 2 Schatzenburg

For centuries *Schatzenburg*, now located on the opposite side of the viaduct of the A7 motorway, was the Huber family's country residence. In 1725-1727 Hermanus Huber (1663-1730) and his wife Elisabeth de Hertoghe (1667-1751) commissioned the present house, built on the foundations of an earlier predecessor. Master carpenter Wybe Saagmans and the sculptors and stonemasons Berend Storm and Jacob Sydses Bruinsma were involved in its construction;



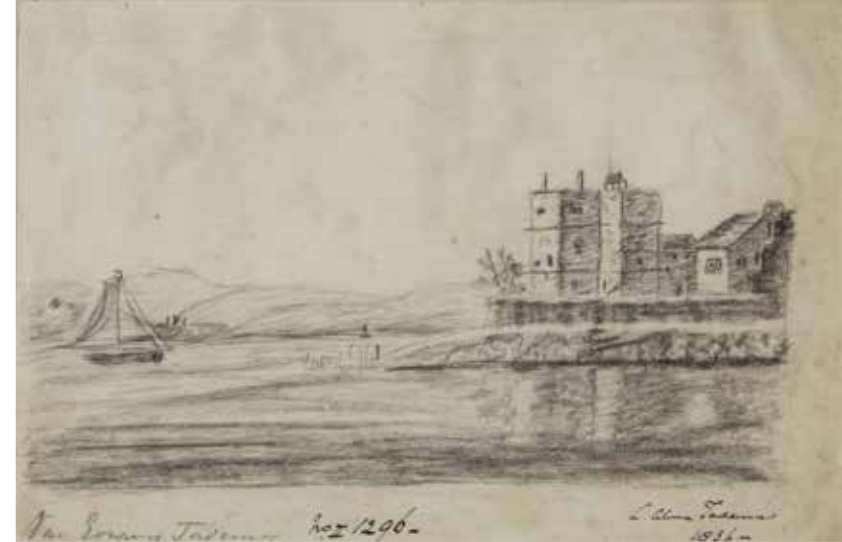
Schatzenburg at Dronrijp, Sjoerd Bonga, watercolour, circa 1855.

they were both known for, among other things, the building of Leeuwarden's Town Hall in 1715. Huber was a jurist, like so many members of his family, and also Secretary of the States of Friesland. The house has a look-out basement and is seven bays wide. In the middle is a soberly framed entrance crowned by a Flemish gable decorated with the arms of alliance of the Huber and De Hertoghe families. The interior still has numerous original components, such as an historic staircase and a great hall with double doors, pilasters and a red marble fireplace with an over mantel.

The Huber family used this country house mainly as a summer residence. In 1813 Johannes Lambertus Huber sold the house to Lady Frederica Aurelia Maria Vegelin van Claerbergen (1779-1836), a member of an old Frisian family that had lived in the Herema State in Joure for centuries. Lady Vegelin van Claerbergen never married and on her death (in 1836) left *Schatzenburg* to her nephew Assuerus Quaestius.

Assuerus Quaestius

Assuerus Quaestius (1815-1887) was a great collector of coins and medals, prints, watercolours and drawings. His collections included contemporary reproductions of Lourens Alma Tadema's paintings, such as a colour lithograph of *Boating* and a wood carving of *The Parting Kiss*. He also had a number of drawings, including *A Farm in a Landscape*, *A Girl in an Italian Costume* and *A Branch with Berries*. The artist and the collector corresponded with each other; the Fries Museum has two postcards Alma Tadema had written him. Assuerus Quaestius bequeathed *Schatzenburg* to the *Vredenhof* (hospice) and his art collections to the Frisian Society, which a few years before (1881) had founded the Fries Museum.



Landscape with castle and sailboat, circa 1847.

DRAWING: LOURENS ALMA TADEMA
FRIES MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

LEEUWARDEN WALK

1 **Wilhelminaplein 92** Fries Museum

In 2016 the Fries Museum organized a large retrospective of Lourens Alma Tadema's work. Naturally, this is not the first time the museum has shone a spotlight on the artist. There has always been a connection with Alma Tadema, especially since the 1930s, when his daughter Laurence pledged the Frisian Society a gift "made up of antiquities, paintings, etc". As thanks, the Frisian Society named her an extraordinary member in 1935. The Fries Museum received the gift shortly afterwards, and it came to form the heart of the extensive collection of Lourens Alma Tadema's work in The Netherlands.

New interest was generated in the painter in 1936, when the Fries Museum designed an Alma Tadema Room in the Stania State, the museum's former branch in Oenkerk. The room was furnished with the objects his daughter Laurence had donated. At one point there was a discussion about moving the room to Alma Tadema's birthplace in Dronrijp, but this proved impossible due to the house's dilapidated condition. Restoration of the house in Dronrijp was finally begun in 1951, but the room was never moved there. Not until 1974 was there any renewed interest in Friesland, or even in The Netherlands, in the great artist's work: the Keramiekmuseum (ceramics museum) Princessehof in Leeuwarden organized an extremely well-received retrospective. In 1978 a thick book written by the American art historian Vern Grosvenor Swanson was published in The Netherlands. It contains an exhaustive biography of the artist and a list of all his paintings.

After the abuse in the decades after his death there followed a re-evaluation of the work of the once-so-famous painter. In the succeeding years the Fries Museum drew attention to his work in various smaller exhibits or as part of a larger one, naturally emphasizing the works in its own collection. In 1997 the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam held a large retrospective which received a lot of attention. The Van Gogh Museum purchased work by Tadema, as did the Fries Museum. Prices slowly began to climb to dazzling heights: the latest acquisition of his work, made by the Fries Museum in 2015, easily cost 1.5 million euros.

2 Blokhuisplein 18 residence of the Tadema family (1843-1848)

In 1843 the widowed Hinke Dirks moved with her children and a domestic servant from the Uniabuurt to a property close by. This old, partly 17th century house was somewhat more cramped than their former home. Its gable stone, depicting a slater's hammer with the inscription *In de leyhamer*, was probably originally from a building in the neighbourhood. At the time Blokhuisplein 18 was known as *Onder de Boompjes* C 259. The old prison stood across the square from the house; in 1876 the current building (*Blokhuispoort*) was constructed. In 1841 a new hospital was built on the Blokhuisplein (square). The Tadema's neighbours on their street included a composer, a labourer, a skipper and their families.



Blokhuisplein 18.

PHOTO: HARRIE MUIS



The main building of the old prison (where the *Blokhuispoort* now stands), as seen from nearby the Tadema family's second residence, circa 1868.

PHOTO: J.F. LOMANS

3 Weaze 29 residence of the Tadema family (1848-1859)

Their last move within Leeuwarden brought the Tademas in 1848 to a neighbouring property on the corner of the Zwitserswaltje and the Weaze (C 277). Officially, Hinke Dirks Brouwer, her two stepsons and her own two children resided there until 1859, when they were all deregistered from the city of Leeuwarden. Her stepsons, however, had by then already left home to pursue studies elsewhere. Jelte Zacharias, at least in 1859, studied in Utrecht and Wopke in Groningen. The eldest, Dirk, who had never lived with the family in Leeuwarden, had by this time married a farmer's daughter and moved to Oosterwolde. Hinke Dirks, her daughter, Artje, and her son Lourens moved to Antwerp in 1859.

Their neighbours here in this row of houses on the Weaze, between the Zwitserswaltje and the Uniabuurt, included a Jewish merchant, a Baptist private teacher and a dyer. The most notable neighbour (at no. 27) was Johannes J. Ras, the last executioner to reside in

Leeuwarden. By this time Johannes had so little work anymore he had to become a dyer to earn his bread. His last large job was on 15 October 1846 when he had to hang the murderer Ruurd Paschiers van Dijk on the Hofplein. This event drew a large crowd. Executioner Ras was himself a remarkable appearance, 'dressed in short pants and jacket, with a cocked hat on and a sword at his side'. The young Lourens was probably not present at this execution, but surely he had heard a thing or two about his neighbour's work.



Weaze 29.

PHOTO: HARRIE MUIS



Portrait of Hinke Dirks Brouwer, mother of Lourens, 1852.

OIL PAINT ON PANEL: LOURENS ALMA TADEMA
FRIES MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

4 Uniabuurt 8 residence of the Tadema family 1838-1843 (Café De Ossekop)

In 1838 the Tadema family moved from Dronrijp to Uniabuurt 8 (then C270) in Leeuwarden. Dirk Tadema, the eldest son, had left home already. He had most likely gone to live with a family member, which was common at the time. In 1839 the youngest child, Artje Brouwer Tadema, was born. She was named after Pieter Tadema's first wife. According to the census of 1839, Pieter Tadema and his family, six people in total, had two domestic servants living with them. When Pieter died the following year at the young age of 43, Lourens was only four years old. His father was buried in the Algemene Begraafplaats (General Cemetery) on the Spanjaardslaan, in the more costly section near the entrance (section I, line 12, no. 14). As a widow with four children, Hinke Dirks Brouwer would not have had it very easy.



Uniabuurt 8, 1995.

PHOTO: WIETZE LANDMAN

People of a certain notability lived at this address both before and after the Tademas. In 1776, for instance, the property was bought by dr. Thomas Wielandt (1742-1823), solicitor for the Court of Friesland and pensionary of Leeuwarden. Later Johannes van Marcke de Lummen, a controller of the grade of gold- and silverworks, and his family moved here from Antwerp. They were succeeded by the Tademas, who rented the essentially still-17th century house for five years. After them, the Marcus family lived here, one of whom, Tine Marcus (1861-1949), advocate for the hearing-impaired, had a school for the deaf named after her in Groningen.

The Uniabuurt was a respectable neighbourhood with a rich history. In 1839 the inhabitants in this row were: a Jewish merchant (no. 14), a silversmith (no. 12), a doctor (no. 10), a tax collector (no. 6) and an otherwise unspecified civil servant (no. 2). Across from them lived a composer, a shoemaker and a merchant.

Uniabuurt 8 is a well-known address to the people of Leeuwarden: the De Ossekop Café (formerly the Eygelaar Café) has stood here for over 100 years.



The Zwitserwiltje, with to the left the gardens and annexes of the Uniabuurt, 1840. WATERCOLOUR: S. BONGA

This part of the canal was filled in 1894.



View of winter from the Groentemarkt on the Brol (bridge) and the Grote Hoogstraat, with the Nieuwe Toren (tower) in the background, circa 1850.

PENCIL DRAWING IN COLOURS: S. BONGA

5 Voorstreek 80 residence of the HaverSchmidt family

In primary school Lourens was friends with François HaverSchmidt (1835-1894), better known as the poet Piet Paaltjens. He is The Netherlands' most well-known romantic writer, especially famous for his collection of poems *Snikken en Grimlachjes* from 1867. HaverSchmidt was the son of a pharmacist and wine dealer on the Voorstreek (A 69). After attending grammar school, he studied theology at the University of Leiden, where he graduated summa cum laude. He then returned to Friesland, where in 1859 he became a preacher in Foudgum and Raard. He and Lourens kept in contact after

their time together at school. François came to Leeuwarden in 1871 to give a lecture for the local *afdeling van het Nut* (Society for Public Welfare). On this occasion he praised the new railway connection and was pleased that the old city dialect was still very much alive.



François HaverSchmidt, circa 1865.

6 Breedstraat 48 Zalen van der Wielen (Zalen Schaaf)

The club founded by Gerrit van der Wielen on the corner of the Breedstraat and the Sacramentsstraat continued to expand during the 19th century. The large concert hall was used intensively for musical performances, dance parties and other amusement. On 10 March 1848 *The well-known Frisian Ventriloquist and Changer of Countenances, Lantinga...* showed proofs of his skills in the depictions of the *Old Jew, the Poor Man, Theunis den Groningerlander and the Dwarf*. The hall complex was also used for meetings, for instance by the Nut (Society for Public Welfare), the Frisian Society and the Natuurkundig Genootschap (Physics Society). Between 1848 and 1853 the Frisian Society also displayed their collections here. From 1881 this historical and cultural society concentrated its activities in the new Fries Museum on the Turfmarkt. Alma Tadema knew many members of the Frisian Society from his time in grammar school: his schoolmate Wilco Julius van Welderen baron Rengers was chairman for a time. It was of considerable importance to this generation of collectors and art lovers and they bequeathed it collections and objects. In 1875 Alma Tadema was appointed an extraordinary member.



Gerrit van der Wielen (1767-1858),
circa 1835.

OIL PAINT ON CANVAS: TJEERD EERNSTMAN

As city architect, Gerrit van der Wielen was responsible for a large number of the new buildings constructed in Leeuwarden. He is known mainly as the founder of his eponymous hall complex. In 1843 Van der Wielen was succeeded as city architect by Thomas Romein.

7 Bollemanssteeg 64 residence of the rector (Grietmanshuis or house of the district's mayor)

The Latinist Johannes Cornelius Gerardus Boot (1811-1901) was rector of Alma Tadema's grammar school when he attended it. Boot left for Amsterdam in 1851 to become professor of Greek and Latin at the Athenaeum there. He and his family lived for a several years in this prominent building on the corner of the Bollemanssteeg and the Grote Kerkstraat, which he rented from the Thoe Schwartzenburg en Hohenlansberg family. Cornelis Marinus Francken (1820-1900), who succeeded Boot as rector, lived here for a few years as well.



Johannes Cornelius Gerardus Boot (1811-1901), 1871.

PHOTO: G. BRODI



The Grote Kerkstraat circa 1890, with on the right the residence of rector Boot and later his successor. The Van Welderen Rengers family lived in the 4th house on the left around the middle of the 19th century.

8

Sint Anthonystraat 5 Stadsburgerschool (OBS Oldenije)

The first school Alma Tadema attended in Leeuwarden was the Stadsburgerschool (a primary school) for boys on De Zak. The school's entrance was on the Hofstraatje. The building before you is currently the only primary school in Leeuwarden's inner city.

The Stadsburgerschool, founded in 1834, was intended for children from the *burgerstand* (bourgeoisie) according to Wopke Eekhoff in his *Geschiedkundige Beschrijving van Leeuwarden (Historical Description of Leeuwarden)*. The headmaster of the school was Engbert Boschloo (1788-1863), who lived almost next to the school at house F 261. Parents had to pay for their children to attend this school, which meant its students were mainly the sons of the more affluent. A contemporary wrote in his diary that to fill the position of schoolteacher in the Frisian village of Wirdum one must be proficient in "singing, conjugating parts of speech, solving arithmetic proposals and essays about winter, writing well, conjugating, calculating, etc., everything in writing and signed by them." This must be what Lourens learned at the Stadsburgerschool as well, along with French.



The Sint Anthonystraat, on the corner of *De Zak*, circa 1920, about where the Stadsburgerschool once stood. PHOTO: J. DWINGER



Page with two drawings of ruins, 1847.

9A Bagijnestraat 55a Stedelijk Gymnasium

After primary school, Lourens attended the nearby Stedelijk Gymnasium (a *gymnasium* is a Greek and Latin grammar school) on the corner of the Bollemansteeg and the Bagijnestraat. In 1830-31 a new building had been constructed here: a Latin School with several classrooms, a room for the administrators on the ground floor, and on the first floor two rooms for the Stadstekenschool (City Drawing School). When the curriculum was expanded with new subjects in 1846, the school was given the name *Stedelijk Gymnasium*. Emphasis was placed on the classical languages Latin and Greek. Instruction was given in rooms lit by oil lamps. The gymnasium classes were small: the number of students per class was almost never more than six or eight boys. On 16 August 1850 a notice was put in the *Leeuwarder Courant* by the rector of the gymnasium that new students could sign up for the upcoming school year on Monday 19 August 'in the afternoon at one o'clock.' They were asked 'to bring a birth certificate and proof of cowpox vaccination.' Lourens was registered, and he remained a student at this elite school until the summer of 1852. He did not finish



The current situation on the corner of the Bollemansteeg and the Bagijnestraat, where the Stedelijk Gymnasium was formerly located.

PHOTO: HARRIE MUIS

his education here, however, leaving for Antwerp to study at the art academy there.

His brothers Jelte Zacharias and Wopke had preceded him at this gymnasium. They did finish their schooling and went on to study, respectively, at Amsterdam/Utrecht and Groningen. Jelte Zacharias studied theology and law, while Wopke chose only law. The sons of the elite were groomed at the gymnasium for a bright future. The school also offered an important network.

In September 1850 Lourens' classmates in the 6th class were: G. Wigersma, J. Loyenga, R. Harkema and J.C. Singels. As in the Tadema family, Loyenga and Wigersma had their mothers' surnames added as first names, a trend at the time. Later classmates were C. van Wicheren, V.L. Vegelin van Claerbergen, C. Mispelblom and S. Brinkhuis. Lourens Alma Tadema's most well-known schoolmates from other classes at the gymnasium were François HaverSchmidt, Petrus Wierdsma Schik, Pieter Harmanus Asman, Wilco Julius van Welderen baron Rengers, Willem Augustinus van Sloterdijck, the Suringar brothers, Age Looxma Ypey and Auke Bloembergen, all later prominent scientists, governors and artists.



The Sculpture Gallery, 1871.

LITHOGRAPH: A. BLANCHARD
AFTER ALMA TADEMA, FRIES
MUSEUM (GIFT OF THE STEDELIJK
GYMNASIUM IN LEEUWARDEN)

Not every student reached old age. Christiaan Albertus Mispelblom Beijer died in 1852 when he was only 16 years old. Lourens was surely shocked at the death of his classmate.

Once the new gymnasium on the Noorderweg was finished in 1881, the old school was torn down. When Alma Tadema was famous, the board of his previous school also showed interest in the artist. In 1883 the curators bought three engravings made by their former student to decorate their meeting room in the new location on the Noorderbrug. They were reproductions of *The Picture Gallery*, *The Vintage Festival*, and *The Sculpture Gallery*. Lourens Alma Tadema himself had not forgotten his old school: he bestowed to the gymnasium a signed reproduction of one of his other works, *Under the Roof of the Blue Ionian Weather*.

Suringar Family

Lourens Alma Tadema's classmates at the gymnasium all went on to make something of themselves. Both the Suringar brothers, for instance, played a large role in their fields. Their father, Gerard Tjaard Nicolaas Suringar, was a bookseller-publisher established on the Kelders (L 181). His son Willem Frederik Reinier Suringar (1832-1898) became a well-known botanist, a professor at the University of Leiden and director of the Hortus Botanicus (botanical garden) there. His other son, Rinse Willem Hugo Suringar (1834-1911), expanded his father's bookshop, publishing house and printing office. The printing office, with the most modern press in Friesland, was on the Galileërkerkstraat.



Willem Frederik Reinier Suringar
(1832-1898), 1868.

ENGRAVING: D.J. SLUYTER



The Kelders, Naauw and Bierkade, with the chimneys
of the hat factory, circa 1830.

DRAWING IN COLOURS: ANONYMOUS

This was also where the Suringar family lived around 1850. Suringar published many and also important works, such as the well-known *Gemeente-atlas van Nederland (Atlas of Municipalities in The Netherlands)* in 1871. Hugo Suringar visited Lourens Alma Tadema in 1878 in his house in London, and wrote an article that was published in the *Leeuwarder Courant* of 26 May 1878. He poetically recounted: '*marble blocks, painted with the talent for which Tadema is famous... are the fruit of lengthy and serious study under various lighting; that of the bright midday sun in Naples, when the reflection of its beams almost makes the shadows disappear, to the purplish grey of the sun when it sets between the Albanian hills. Marble has never been painted like this before...*'

Lourens clearly kept in contact with various former classmates after definitively leaving Leeuwarden in 1859.

Van Wicheren Family

The painter Johan Joeke Gabriel van Wicheren (1808-1897) is called the 'portraitist of the Frisian elite'. He was part of a family with many branches: one of his relatives was Rika Reynders, painted by Lourens during his time at the gymnasium. A cousin, Christian van Wicheren (1836-1898), was a classmate of Lourens'. After the death of his father, Christian and his family lived in the Poststraat, while his uncle Johan lived on Nieuwestad 158. Christian later became a doctor in Arnhem. Is it far-fetched to suppose that the painters Lourens and Johan met each other through Christian?



View of the Sint Jacobstraat and the Naauw (probably from the artist's living room), circa 1860.

DRAWING: J.J.G. VAN WICHEREN

Pieter Harmanus Asman

The physician Pieter Harmanus Asman (1832-1870) went to grammar school the same time Alma Tadema did. In the 1840s he lived on the Tuinen, where his parents had their pharmacy. Asman established his doctor's practice at Tweebaksmarkt 38 around 1860. He wrote in a dissertation in 1870 at length about the city of Leeuwarden and its inhabitants between the years 1840 and 1865, exactly the period in which Lourens and his family lived there. He calculated that there were circa 4.5 people per household and around 500 residences to be found in the more than 150 alleys. Dung heaps could still be found in the city, especially in the side streets. All the sewers discharged into the city's canals, most of

which flowed poorly. These canals were a source of diseases (and stench); it was not until the second half of the 19th century that a number were filled for hygienic reasons. Asman paints a somewhat less romantic picture than the city's visual artists.

Wilco Julius van Welderen Rengers

Wilco Julius van Welderen baron Rengers (1834-1916) attended grammar school with Lourens Alma Tadema. Wilco Julius went on to study law in Utrecht before returning to Leeuwarden to eventually become its mayor. He gave his name to Leeuwarden's beautiful Rengerspark. He, his family and their personnel lived at Kerkstraat 29 around 1850 and at Ossekop 13 around 1870. They spent their summers at their stately home Stania State in Oenkerk.



Wilco Julius van Welderen baron Rengers and his wife Catharina Theresia Looxma, circa 1864.

Childhood memories

Hendrik Burger, in his *Jeugdherinneringen (Childhood memories)*, lets his brother have a say. He gives the following (not very flattering) description of the Stedelijk Gymnasium around 1870: 'An establishment like this one can hardly be imagined anymore. On the Hofstraatje, a scary dead-end street off the Bollemansteeg, stood an old school building made up of three rooms with whitewashed walls, with as few school desks as were needed for twenty students, and in every room a stove and a chair. The three rooms had the fine names of Rectorschool, Conrectorschool and Praeceptorschool. In the morning at 9 o'clock the claviger [caretaker] came, a pockmarked old man, who, I believe, had a

hot water trade. He heated up the stoves in the winter and posted himself with the key in his hand, in accordance with his title [claviger is Latin for keybearer], in the open doorway. Then came the students and after them the teachers; towards 9:30 everyone was pretty much present, and the lessons began. One attended the Praeceptorschool and the Conrectorschool for one-and-a-half years and the Rectorschool for two years. In total there were ten half-yearly sessions which, however, were not all occupied and each of which had no more than three students.'

9B Bagijnestraat 55a Stadstekenschool (above the Stedelijk Gymnasium)

The Stadstekenschool (City Drawing School) on the top floor of the grammar school had two departments. In the most important one, architect Jaane van der Wielen (1797-1872), son of Gerrit van der Wielen, gave architectural drawing lessons. In the other department freehand drawing lessons were given by Tjeerd Ernstman, a student of Willem Bartel van der Kooi, who in turn was one of the founders of the Stadstekenschool. For the freehand drawing lessons students had to pay a contribution of ten guilders, a not inconsiderable sum for the time. This department was clearly intended for those better situated. Although it seems self-evident, it is not absolutely certain that Lourens Alma Tadema took lessons here. The only indication is the fact that he painted a portrait of the three children of Watze Hamstra, secretary of the Stadstekenschool. The drawings, which have survived and are now in the Fries Museum, reveal that Alma Tadema began drawing at an early age. According to Lourens himself, he followed further training under another one of Van der Kooi's students, Cornelis Wester (1809-1870). Wester also owned a painting by his later famous pupil.

It is more than likely that Lourens also had contact with the merchant and amateur painter Izaäk Reynders (1798-1875). Around 1850 Lourens painted a portrait of Reynders' daughter, Rika (Frederika). The influence of Van der Kooi's pupils is visible in Alma Tadema's

youthful works: the portraits of Rika Reynders and those of the Hamstra children, but also the self-portrait from 1852 (on the cover). They are the early testimony of a great talent. All these portraits were made during his time at the Stedelijk Gymnasium.

Lourens' time at the Stedelijk Gymnasium ended in 1852, when he left for Antwerp to study at the Academie voor Schone Kunsten (Academy of Fine Arts). This was also the end of his residence in Leeuwarden, although he returned numerous times to visit family and to be baptized in the Mennonite Church. He was in Leeuwarden for a short time after his studies in Antwerp ended in 1858. The next year he left with his mother and sister for Antwerp, to live and work with Baron Henri Leys (1815-1869), the famous Flemish painter of historical scenes. In the middle of the 19th century there were quite a number of art painters and draughts men in Leeuwarden. Alma Tadema will have known most of them, but in only a few cases is it clear with whom he had any actual contact.

Tjeerd Ernstman

Tjeerd Ernstman (1801-1886) was a student of Willem Bartel van der Kooi, a Frisian painter. From 1829 to 1842 Ernstman was lector in drawing at the 's Rijks Atheneum (the former university) in Franeker and later a teacher at the Stadstekenschool (City Drawing School) in Leeuwarden, where most likely Lourens attended his lessons. Ernstman was listed in the civil registry as 'portrait painter.' He lived for a long time in the large building at Breedstraat 52. Note the similarity of pose in this picture to the self-portrait by Alma Tadema on the cover.



Tjeerd Ernstman (1801-1886), 1873.
Self-portrait.



Portrait of Johannes Kaemerer, former Messenger of the States of Friesland, 1838.

CHALK DRAWING: C. WESTER

Lourens himself once titled Cornelis Wester (1809-1870) his tutor. Wester, born in Bergum, is listed in the civil registry of 1839 as 'portrait painter'. In the 1850s-60s he lived at Nieuweburen 117 in Leeuwarden.



Portrait of Frederika (Rika) Reynders, circa 1850.

OIL PAINT ON CANVAS:
LOURENS ALMA TADEMA
FRIES MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN
SOCIETY COLLECTION

Lourens very likely had contact with Rika's father, the merchant and amateur painter Izaäk Reynders (1798-1875). In the 1840s the Reynders family lived at Voorstreek 26 (B11).

Jan Gerhardus Ottema

Jan Gerhardus Ottema was born in Doetinchem in 1804. In 1834 he came from the Latin School in Harlingen to be preceptor at the Latin School (later the Stedelijk Gymnasium) in Leeuwarden. Ottema taught classical languages to Alma Tadema and his fellow students. Around 1850 he lived at Nieuwestad 69 and later in the Muntenburg House (Weaze 43). He was a social man and a decided lover of the arts. He was a member of the Frisian Society and was on the board of the Nut (Society for Public Welfare). As such, he was involved in the subsidy the Nut gave to the Stadstekenschool (City Drawing School) established above the gymnasium. Ottema had a great interest in Frisian history. He firmly believed in the authenticity of *the Oera Linda Boek*; he transcribed it in 1872, adding an introduction in Dutch. The *Oera Linda Boek* is the name of a manuscript in pseudo-rune script that was brought to the public eye by Cornelis van der Linden in 1867. It is a forgery over which quite a lot has been published since then, especially about its authenticity and its possible author. Some suspected it was François HaverSchmidt, who, like Alma Tadema, was a student of Ottema's. Lourens painted a copy of a 16th century painting depicting the martyrdom of Abbot Eelco van Liauckema for Ottema.



Portrait of Eelco van Liauckema, 1855. Copy of the 16th century portrait in the collection of the Frisian Society.

OIL PAINT ON CANVAS:
LOURENS ALMA TADEMA,
FRIES MUSEUM-ROYAL
FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

Eelco van Liauckema, born in Liauckema State in Sexbierum, was abbot of the cloister in Lidlum. He was killed in 1332 and not much later venerated as a martyr. He is depicted here in the same manner as in the original painting that had hung in Liauckema State.

Through his contacts in the Frisian Society, Ottema may have given the young Lourens the chance to view the collections of the Antiquarian Cabinet of Antiquities, the predecessor to the Fries Museum. Lourens sketched a number of objects from this collection. These sketches are now in the Cadbury College collection in Birmingham.



Jan Gerhardus Ottema
(1804-1879), circa 1870.

PHOTO: G.H. MATTHIJSEN

10 Heerenwaltje 4 Nutsgebouw

From 27 September 1838 until his death in 1840, Lourens' father was a member of the *Maatschappij tot Nut van't Algemeen* (Society for Public Welfare), which focused on using education to advance society. The Nut offered reading pleasure in four 'excellent Reading Libraries: for the Elderly, for the Youth, for Children and for Teachers.' There is a very good chance that Alma Tadema borrowed books from here.

The Nut bought the former Walta House, in the center of Leeuwarden, in 1825. It was used by the Nut until 1903, when the Joosten firm bought it and had it torn down to make room for the expansion of its drapery shop on the Nieuwestad. Zeeman Textiles is currently located here.



The Nut Building, Heerenwaltje 4, 1903.

11 Wirdumerdijk 18 Doopsgezinde kerk (Mennonite Church)

The Tadema family had become a member of the Mennonite parish in Leeuwarden when they lived in Dronrijp. They attended this church on the Wirdumerdijk. Built in 1760, this building, like many in Leeuwarden, underwent a number of large changes in the 19th century. In 1832 it was given a Neo-Classical portal and the property between it and the Wirdumerdijk was torn down, allowing an unimpeded view of the church from the street. In 1837 the church was given a new pew arrangement and an oak wood wainscoting, and in 1850 the building was enlarged once again. Alma Tadema was baptized here.



Doopsgezinde kerk (Mennonite church) on the Wirdumerdijk.

PHOTO: HARRIE MUIS

Sociëteit Amicitia

A *sociëteit* was an exclusive social club or the building in which such a club gathered. In 1840 a stately new building, designed by the city architect Thomas Romein, arose on the corner of the Wirdumerdijk and the Nieuweweg: Amicitia. The Sociëteit Amicitia was somewhat more accessible than the older Grote Sociëteit: it welcomed women as well to come enjoy music and theatre. During the annual fun fair and on holidays the doors were continually open to everyone. Chances are good that the Tadema family visited this social club.



View of the Wirdumerdijk, with in the middle the Sociëteit Amicitia, 1854.

OIL PAINT ON CANVAS: E. P. VAN BOMMEL

FRIES MUSEUM - ROYAL FRISIAN SOCIETY COLLECTION

colophon

Traces of Alma Tadema in Dronrijp and Leeuwarden. City and Village Walk is the 22nd publication in a series of city and village walks, bicycle tours and monument descriptions published by the Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden and its partners.

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