SEA-RELATED WORDS

The origin of the names of sandbanks, channels and other ‘sea-related words’

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Have you ever wondered what the origin of the toponym Trapegeer is, or how cod got its name? Or are you interested in the person behind Thornton Bank or the genesis of the maritime term ‘crow’s nest’? Then you’re in luck, since a team of experts explains the meaning of some of the most intriguing sea-related words in every issue of De Grote Rede.

In this special issue of De Grote Rede, we focus on the etymology of the toponym Flanders and other place names from the front area of the First World War. Due to limited space, we had to make a selection from the extensive list of cities, towns and villages in the Belgian Westhoek area that were part of the war zone. In case of places that are not (longer) independent municipalities, we always mention the amalgamated municipality of which they are part. Then we state a few attested forms of the place name, including the oldest one. This information was mainly extracted from the work by F. Debrabanderen, M. Devos et al. (2020), De Vlaamse gemeentenaam, verklarend woordenboek. The etymological explanation is also based on this publication, to which we refer the reader for extensive bibliographical references. Some name forms are preceded by an asterisk (*) in the text. This is to indicate that the form in question is not attested as such in a historical source, but has been reconstructed by linguists from derived forms found in more recent language development stages.

FLANDERS

Latin sources: 1st quarter of the 8th C. Flandrensis, Flandrenses, in Flandr., 745, in pago Flandrinsce, 854 (copy from circa 1175) in Flandrense pago, in pago Flandrensi, 1014 (copy from circa 1050) Flandria

Anglo-Saxon sources: 1075 (copy from 1121) to Flandran, 1079 (copy from circa 1100) on Flandron, 1085 (copy from 1121) of Flandran

Dutch sources: 1237 Vlandern, 1277 Vlaendre, 1295 Vlaendren, 1281 Vlaendren

Currently, Flanders is the official name of the Dutch-speaking northern part of Belgium. Within the Belgian federal structure, Flanders is one of the three “regions”, besides the Walloon Region and Brussels-Capital Region. The name comes from the historical County of Flanders, which encompassed the current Belgian provinces of West and East Flanders, Zeelandic Flanders (in the Dutch province of Zeeland) and French Flanders, located in the Nord department of France (map p.105).

FLANDERS, A FLOODED AREA

The most commonly accepted etymology of the name Flanders was developed by Ghent toponymist Maurits Gysseling in an article he published together with historian Jan Dhondt in 1948. According to Gysseling, the root of Flanders is the Germanic noun *flauma, which means ‘flood’ and hence ‘flooded area’. This word does not appear to have any direct descendants in Dutch, but it does have derivatives in other Germanic languages. For instance, current English dialects still have the word *flam for a waterlogged area near a stream, as well as *fleam for a drainage ditch or leat. *Flauma meant ‘torrent, eddy’ in Old Norse, from which Norwegian *flaum and Danish *flom are derived, meaning ‘flood, high tide’.

As a rule, the Germanic diphthong au became the close-mid vowel /oo/ in Dutch, e.g. Dutch rood (red) from Germanic *raudu. But in North Sea Germanic or Ingvaeanic languages – which include Frisian and English as well as the oldest stratum of Flemish and Hollandic – this phoneme has sometimes developed into aa, e.g. in case of the toponym Adinkerke (see below). Other examples of an Ingvaeanic aa derived from au or oo are Middle Dutch sade (sod) (from Germanic *sauza) and toponymic forms such as Zeelandic Flemish Aardenburg (metathesis of Rodenburg, which goes back to Rodenburg, the first part of which probably stems from Celtic water name *Rodana), the historical name Radenburg of the Leiden neighbourhood of Roomburg (from Germanic rauda ‘red’ and burg ‘fort’), Astdonk, a hamlet of the village of Mendonk in northern East Flanders, Asthuso (Oosthuizen) in North Holland, and Astbroek (Oostbroek) in Velsen, also in North Holland. In the three last names, ast- goes back to Germanic austa (east).

The two final syllables of Vlaanderen (the Dutch name of Flanders) are remnants of two suffixes. Gysseling reconstructed the complex form as *flaumdra-um. The last part is a case ending, namely dative plural, which became the standard form of numerous place names, even if the root did not evoke the idea of a plural. The element –dra is an Old Germanic suffix, thought to be derived from a prehistoric language. This suffix was originally used to form nouns from verbs. However, the root flauma of *flaumdra already is a noun, which in an older, pre-Germanic stage had been derived from a verb meaning ‘to flow, to stream’ by means of another suffix, namely Indo-European *-mo (Germanic *-mo). It is likely that this Indo-European verb is also at the basis of the Dutch verb vlooiien (to flow). Strictly speaking, the element –dra is therefore redundant, as it does not add anything to the etymological meaning of flauma (flood, flooded area). Yet combinations of two suffixes with the same morphological function and meaning sometimes occur in Dutch. For instance, this process can be seen in the formation of diminutives, where the Germanic diminutive suffix –is is often combined with the more recent suffix –ken (reduced to –ken later on). Examples of this are Middle Dutch and dialectal diminutives such as bosseleke ‘bundle’, wegelteke ‘path’ and visselte ‘little fish’. The evolution of the reconstructed root form *flaumdra-um to Vlaanderen is plausible phonetically speaking. The vowels in the unstressed suffixes became weaker, which resulted in the intermediate form vlaam-dren. Already in the West Germanic stage that preceded Old Dutch, the Germanic dative case ending –m was replaced by –en due to assimilation with the accusative case. The change of the m in vlaam to –n under the influence of the –d that follows probably dates back to the West Germanic period as well. The old form ending in –m has been found four times in 13th-century texts, e.g. graue van vlaemendren, Bruges 1281. This –m has also been preserved in the demonym Vlaming (Fleming), where it has been able to maintain itself before a vowel. Finally, the German f- at the beginning of the word shifted to v- in Old Dutch, e.g. compare Dutch vlaam to Frisian flam, English flame, and German and Danish flamme.
Nowadays, Flanders (pale green) is one of the three “regions” of the kingdom of Belgium, besides the Walloon Region (dark green) and Brussels-Capital Region (olive green). The name comes from the historical County of Flanders, which roughly encompassed the current Belgian provinces of West and East Flanders, Zeelandic Flanders in the Netherlands and French Flanders (situation circa 1400) (VLIZ on the basis of Wikipedia maps).

**Origins in Pagus flandrensis**

As for the meaning is concerned, the explanation ‘flooded area’ is consistent with the historical geography of Flanders. The oldest sources in which the name Flanders – in its Latinised form - appears (8th-10th century) prove that the toponym already existed prior to the foundation of the County of Flanders by Baldwin II (in 884 or shortly afterwards). The area originally called Flanders was much smaller than the future county. It constituted a territorially limited administrative unit in the Frankish Empire, a so-called pagus (shire). According to Jan Dhondt, *Pagus flandrensis* covered a broad strip along the North Sea coast, which included the flood plain as well as the northern fringe of the adjacent sandy region. The area would have stretched from the Zwin estuary in the east at least to the river Aa (currently located in France) in the west. Yet according to recent historical research, Flanders originally had a smaller surface area, bounded in the west by the river Yser (Declercq 1995). In any case, its landscape mostly consisted of unembanked salt marshes criss-crossed with tidal channels and creeks. It is therefore not surprising that this marshy land was called “the flooded area” (map p.107).

**Adinkerke (De Panne)**

1123 Adenkerka, 1132 Odecherca, 1139 Adenkerke, 1159 Odenkercha, Odenkerka, 1513 Adinkerke, 1537 Aeyenkercke.

This place name is composed of –kerk and the Germanic personal name Audo, here in the genitive case, and means ‘Audo’s church’. The Germanic diphthong au became the close-mid vowel ɔː in Dutch (e.g. *brood* from Germanic *braudo*). In accordance with this phonetic law, Audo should become Odo as is the case in the southern West Flemish place names Otegem (submunicipality of Zwevegem) and Ooigem (submunicipality of Welsbeke), both derived from Odengem which in turn stems from ‘Audo-inga-heem’. However, in coastal dialects au sometimes became ɔː, hence Adenkerke besides Odenkerke (for this phonological change, see the etymology of ‘Flanders’ above). Apparently, the two variants coexisted for a very long time, and Adinkerke eventually became the standard written form as well as the common colloqual from. Due to replacement of the intervocalic consonant *d* by the palatal consonant *j* (e.g. Dutch *oedevaar > ooievaar* [stork]) the – antiquated – local pronunciation is Ooienkerke: 1566 Oyenkercke, 1650 Oeye Kercke, 18th C. Olenkerke.

**Boezinge (Ypres)**

1107 Bosinga, 1120 Boesinga, 1138 Boesinge, 1276 Bousinghes (Romanic form), 1744, Boesinge.

Derived from the Germanic personal name Boso and the patronymic suffix -inga, which converts personal names into clan names. These names were in turn often given to the settlement of the clan in question. Boezinge was originally the home of the people of Boso.
**De Panne**

± 1785 de la Kerkenpanne nommée Josephe Dorp, 1796 de plaets Kerkepanne, 1800, 1820 Joseph Dorp, 1818 Kerkenpanne, 1826 Kerkepanne (La Panne), 1840 hameau la Panne, 1900 Sint-Jozef’s Dorp, 1900 de Kerkenpanne, 1905 de Panne.

The original name of this fairly recent settlement is Kerkenpanne. Its root is *panne*, the western form of Dutch *pan*, which literally means 'a vessel used in cooking' and metaphorically also 'a depression in the earth, a basin, a dune valley'. This is one of many names of containers used to indicate valleys and depressions, cf. *basin, bowl, crater and trough* in English. The premodifier *kerk* does not refer to a local church, as no chapel was built on this site until 1860, the precursor of the current St. Peter's Church. Was this hamlet the property of a church, e.g. Adinkerke church? Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II wanted to expand the settlement for the western form of Dutch *panne*. The first part is the genitive of Germanic *pan*, which stems from Germanic *dika*, from which Dutch *dijk* and English *dike* are derived. In the name *Diksmuide*, *dik* has the original meaning, which still exists in the West Flemish dialects, of 'ditch, narrow channel'. Old English *dic*, which is etymologically identical to *dik or dijk*, has the same meaning (in addition to 'embankment') and is akin to the verb *to dig*. The settlement of Diksmuide was founded where a small stream issued into the Yser. Perhaps this stream was the forerunner of the current Handzamevaart canal, dug in the bed of a natural watercourse.

**Handzame (Kortemark)**

1085 Hansam, 1155 Hanzam, 1268 Hansame, 1289 Handsame, 1826 Handzame.

Handzame stems from Hands-hamme, a compound of the Germanic personal name *Hanno*, in the genitive case, and *ham*, a Germanic word that is frequently found in toponyms meaning 'meander, bend in a watercourse' as well as 'alluvial land in such a bend'. The -d in *hand* was added later on, possibly by analogy with the word *hand*; the -e in *hamme* is a dative ending. Handzame was originally the land of Hanno, located in the bend of a local watercourse. In French, *ham* evolved into *han*, as in *Bohan*, *Franah, Pouppehan and Mortehan*, which are all names of places near the Semois river.

**Diksmuide**

1089 Dicasmutha, 1119 Dischemue, Dixmée, 1128 Dinxmude, 1608 Dixmuide, 1906 Diksmuide.

The forms ending in *-mude* are Romanic. The current French form *Dixmude* actually corresponds to Middle Dutch orthography. *Diksmuide* is a compound of *muid*, which stems from Germanic *muntha* 'mouth', also in the sense of 'the point where a river empties into a sea or lake'. In Dutch coastal dialects in English, the -n disappeared before the dental fricative -th, as a result of which the preceding vowel became longer, hence Middle Dutch and West Flemish *muude* (>Dutch *muide*) and English mouth. The first part is the genitive of Germanic *dik*, from which Dutch *dijk* and English *dike* are derived. In the name *Diksmuide*, *dik-* has the original meaning, which still exists in the West Flemish dialects, of 'ditch, narrow channel'. Old English *dic*, which is etymologically identical to *dik or dijk*, has the same meaning (in addition to 'embankment') and is akin to the verb *to dig*. The settlement of Diksmuide was founded where a small stream issued into the Yser. Perhaps this stream was the forerunner of the current Handzamevaart canal, dug in the bed of a natural watercourse.

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**Houthulst**

1096 in Walensi nemore, 1151 copy from ± 1225 Woltehust, 1187 Wolthust, 1201 Outhulst, 1306 Houthulst.

This site was originally called *Woudhu(st)*, traditionally considered as a compound of *woud* (wood) and *hulst* (holly). According to this explanation, it would have signified ‘holy wood’. If this were the case, we would expect the reverse order of the name’s components, i.e. *Hulstwo(h)*, with the modifier preceding the modified element, as in *Hulshout*, a municipality in the province of Antwerp. It is therefore possible that the premodifier has another origin, but it remains unclear what this actually was. On the basis of the oldest vernacular attestation, *Woltehust*, it is possible to consider *hurst* as a variant of *horst* with the West Flemish elision of -r. Because the -w at the beginning of *woud* was dropped before the back vowel in West Flemish, as is still the case in West Flemish *oensdag* ‘Wednesday’ and *oerken* (Dutch ‘woekerun’), the form *Outhulst* came about. The first part was interpreted as the word *hout*, which formerly meant (timber) forest in Flemish and sounded like oud in *Oudhulst* in the h-dropping dialects of West Flanders. After this reinterpretation by folk etymology, *Houthulst* found its way to the written language and later on it became the official name. In 1926 Houthulst was split off from Klerken and became an independent municipality, which nowadays also includes Klerken, Merkem and Jonkershove.

**Yser**

846 Ysera.

Yser (*Izer* in Dutch) is also a prehistoric water name, formed with the same suffix as *leper*. The first part is the Indo-European (*Celtic*) word *yś*, which is thought to mean ‘lively’. The river was therefore called ‘lively water’. The Dutch name *Izer* is etymologically identical to e.g. *Isère* (France), *Isar* (Germany) and *Izera* (the Czech Republic).

**Kemmel (Heuvelland)**

1066 Kemble, 1089 Kemlis, 1189 Kemle, 1243 Kemel, 1269 ad opus rivi qui vocatur Kemle.

Various explanations have been suggested as to the origin of *Kemmel*. Gysseling initially traced the name back to *Camulien*, a prehistoric settlement named after the Celtic god *Camulus*, and he assumed that this god had once been worshipped on Kemmel Hill (*Kemmelberg* in Dutch). Later on he recognised a prehistoric water name derived from the Indo-European root *akom*, meaning ‘charming’ or ‘excellent’. Debrabandere also thinks that it originally was a pre-Germanic water name, *Kemel* or *Kemmebeck*, but he says its meaning is unclear. In 1977 Kemmel was consolidated with seven other villages into the new amalgamated municipality of Heuvelland.

**Ypres**

1071-93 Ipéra, 1096 Ipère, 1162 Ypère, 1798 Yperen, 1903 Ieper.

The city’s name is derived from the river *leper*, which was canalised and renamed *leperleent* later on. *Ypresa* (*Ieper* in Dutch) is a prehistoric water name borrowed from the Indo-European language that preceded Germanic and Dutch in this region, presumably Celtic. *Ieper* stems from *ip-ara*, a compound of an Indo-European root *ip*, derived from *ejap*, which means ‘flame-coloured’ or ‘red’, and the suffix *-ara*, which occurs in numerous names of rivers (e.g. *Dender*, *Demer* and *Vesdre*) and probably means ‘water’. Ypres therefore means ‘flame-coloured water’. The formerly often used form *leperen* is a more recent calque of the French form *Ypres*. The current Dutch spelling *leper* is etymologically incorrect, since the i is short in local pronunciation and according to the phonetic laws, and is not a long vowel or diphthong. The correct Dutch spelling should therefore be *Ieper*, cf. *Izernberge* and *Izegem*, or it should be pronounced with a Dutch diphthong (*Ieper*), cf. *Ijzer* (*Yser*), *Slipe* and *Wijtschate*. 
**Koksijde**

1270 Coxyde, 1295 Koxide, 1915 Koksijde.

Koksijde is one of many toponyms ending in (h)ide on the coast. The second part stems from the Middle Dutch verb *hiden*, etymologically identical to English *to hide* and Dutch *hoeden* (to tend, to keep watch over). Its original meaning ‘to hide’ developed into ‘to take to safety’ and in particular ‘to land a vessel’. An Ostend city account from 1403-04 states ‘*als men de bakine stac omme de horijnc scepe te hydene*’ (when the beacons were lit to guide the herring ships to land). The derivative ending in *-ide* is etymologically identical to English *hid* and Dutch *hude* (e.g. *Buxtehude*, *Steinhude*). The first part of the name Koksijde is thought to refer to a person, an important inhabitant of the settlement that grew around the landing place. The same name is possibly found in other coastal toponyms such as *Coxland* (Westkerke), *Coxmoer* (Varsenare) and *Coxweg* (St.-Kruis, Zeeland). It is more likely, however, that *kok* stems from *koog*, a coastal West Germanic word meaning unembanked alluvial land. In this case, the place name is comparable to German *Cuxhaven* (Lower Saxony): 1570 *Kuckeshaven*. It is likely that Koksijde was originally located on the coastline just outside the domain of Ter Duinen abbey. This settlement disappeared in the 14th century, after which the name was passed on to the older settlement of Simoenkapelle, which in turn was buried under the Galloper dune in the 17th-18th century. The current town of Koksijde was established about 600 metres to the south.

**Langemark (Langemark-Poelkapelle)**

1102 Marc, 1219 Langhemarc, 1824 Langemark.

Initially this village was called Mark, the name of the watercourse on which Langemark and Merkem (from *Mark-heim* ‘settlement on the Mark’) are located and which is still in part called Martje. Mark, from Germanic *mark*, originally meant ‘boundary’, hence also ‘boundary marker’ and in particular ‘watercourse as a boundary’. Numerous watercourses in the Low Countries have names derived from mark, and several of these names have been passed on to the settlements on these rivers, e.g. Marke (near Kortrijk), Maarke (near Oudenaarde), Merksem and Merkplas (both in the province of Antwerp). A village of the same name, currently known as Kortemark, was situated about twenty kilometres northeast of Mark. To distinguish between these two place, the premodifiers Lange- and Korte- were added in the 12th century. Why these premodifiers were chosen exactly remains unclear. *Lang* (long) and *kort* (short) do not refer to the shape of the territory of the two villages, as neither of them is particularly long or short.

**Lombardsijde (Middelkerke)**

1285 Lombardie, 1375 von Lombardiens, 1408 Lombaerside, 1409 van Lombaards yields, 1818 Lombartzijde.

In view of the oldest form, Lombardie, which survives in popular speech up to this day, it is unlikely that this is a name ending in -ide. Lombardie is thought to refer to the local dialect. This assumption does not explain the first part of the name: Lombard is probably not a personal name, as the genitive ending -s is lacking and since no given name or surname resembling Lombard has been found in our historical personal name lexicon. The name may refer to the region of Lombardy in Italy, not literally but in a figurative sense: a place far away from the eponymous centre. Remote hamlets and estates have often been named after distant places, e.g. *Turkien* (Turkey), Pollanen (Poland), Egipten (Egypt), Bohemen (Bohemia), Canada, Argentinie (Argentina) or Siberie (Siberia). We know from 13th-century sources that the polder of Lombardsijde was owned by St. Peter’s Abbey in Oudenburg. According to medieval standards, this *polre van Lombardien* was quite a long way from the abbey, which is probably where the thought of distant Lombardy came from. Rotterdam and Roermond also have neighbourhoods called Lombardijze and these are located at a fair distance from the city centre. The form *Lombaerside* did not appear before 1408, and likely arose by analogy with Koksijde and Raversijde. The ending -ide can be explained as a hypercorrection of -ie (cf. Dutch *kostijden* (to chastise) from Middle Dutch *castien*).

**Mannekensvere (Middelkerke)**

1171 kopie 13de eeuw Mannekin overvara, 1235 Mannekinsvere, 1435 Mannekenvere.

This place was named after a veer or ferry across the Yser owned by someone called Mannekin, a diminutive of the old Germanic male name *Manno* or of a shortened dialectic name such as Herman. Mannekin was probably the official who operated the ferry on behalf of the count. The ferry was replaced by the Gravenbrug bridge in 1287. The current Uniebrug bridge was constructed during the French occupation of Belgium. Mannekenvere was an independent municipality until it was consolidated with Schore, Slijpe and Sint-Pieterskapelle into the new municipality of Spermalie in 1971, which became part of Middelkerke in 1977.

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Pagus Flandrensis covered the coastal area between the Yser and the Zwin estuary, including the flood plain as well as the northern fringe of the adjacent sandy region. This administrative unit was created in the Carolingian period, so before the County of Flanders existed (Raakvlak, from Hillewaert et al 2011)
Veurne. Nieuwpoort was built in the area Sandasovad. The name is etymologically identical to this place next to site of Ostend.

The name means 'a long, narrow strip of land'. In the case of Nieuwpoort, this was an elongated tidal island separated from the mainland by a tidal channel. As the Germanic tribes orientated themselves along the north-south axis, the west is on your right-hand side if you are facing south.

Compound of *dal 'valley, hollow' and the name of a former inhabitant. Perhaps this is the Hebrew name Pascha, or a name from the language spoken in this region prior to the arrival of the Germanic tribes and linked to the Indo-European word 'pasik', which means 'child'. Passchendael was an independent municipality until 1977, when it was consolidated with Zonnebeke.

This name is a pet form of a name, with the plural genitive ending -ie used to derive a clan name from this personal name, perhaps by analogy with other names ending in -inge from the area such as Vilnertinge, Boezinge and Elverdinge.

**Ramskapelle (Nieuwpoort)**

987 kopie 12de Reninge, 1085 kopie 12de Ringe, 1162 Reninghe, 1903 Reninge.

Just like Boezinge, Reninge was originally the name of a Germanic clan, named after its chief, Rinno. This name is a pat form of a Germanic name beginning with ragin such as Reinbert, Reinhard and Reinboud.

**Reningelst (Poperinge en Heuvelland)**

1107 Ringelies, 1133 Ringlefs, 1200 Reningelst, 1391 Reninghelst, 1686 Reningelst.

The modern form, a compound of the place name Reninge and elst 'alder wood', is misleading. As the oldest attestation indicates, Reningelst is in fact a compound of Reninge and the Old French diminutive suffix -elle. So the name means 'little Reninge'. As early as the 12th century, this foreign suffix was assimilated with the well-known Dutch word elst.

**Schoorbakke (Diksmuide)**

1643 Schooerbakke, ca. 1680 tot Schoorbakke.

Schoorbakke is a hamlet of Pervijze on the Yser near Schore. The name is a compound of the place name Schore and the word bak (with dative ending), a Flemish derivation from Old French boc, which means 'ferry'. In Schoorbakke you could take the ferry to Schore. Nowadays, it is the location of the Schoorbakkebrug bridge.
European-Asian area of the Indo-European languages, Gyseling stated that Veurne and Veer go back to an older stratum than Germanic. He thought it was a prehistoric water name which he reconstructed as *Pura, a derivative from the Indo-European root *peur, from which our stems (‘flame-coloured’ in Greek and ‘pure’ in Latin). The equally prehistoric suffix *-ina means ‘water’, as does –ora in Ieper (Ypres) and Iizer (Yser). According to this explanation, Veurne means settlement on the red or pure water. French river names Rhône and Seine were also formed with (a variant of) this suffix.

**VLADSO (DIKSMUIDE)**

992 kopie 11e eeuw Frordeslo, 1119 Fradeslo, 1150 Fradeslo, 1223 Flartslo, 1279 Vlaardslo, 1529-38 Vaalzeele, 1609 Vladso.

Compound of the Germanic personal name Frawarad with genitive ending –s, and the word bo, which means ‘woodland on higher sandy soil’ in Flemish place names. So the village inherited its name from a woodland that once belonged to Frawarad. However, the locals of Vladso and the surrounding area do not call the village Vladso but Vlaizele in their dialect. The latter form, which dates back to at least the end of the 15th century, developed spontaneously from Vladso in popular speech. Due to the strong stress on the first syllable, the second syllable was reduced to –le, which occurred with various names ending in –lo, e.g. Stavele (West Flanders), Ronsele (East Flanders) and Zoerle (Antwerp). After this vocal reduction, the pronunciation became vladele in line with the West Flemish assimilation rule whereby an –s preceding an –le, –lo, or –l (cd. West Flemish vilzleuder instead of Standard Dutch *vleuder*). Yet the new form did not just have an obscure meaning, it was also difficult to pronounce because of the heavy consonant combination –dz. This was rectified by expelling the –d (cf. dialectal variant Dizele for the West Flemish village of Dudzele) and inserting the long close-mid vowel /e/ between z and l, which resulted in a new ending: –zelle. This may have occurred by analogy with other place names in the area ending in –zelle such as Voormezele and Dadizele. In written language, the original etymological form Vladslo remained predominant throughout the centuries and acquired official status.

**ZARREN (KORTEMARK)**

1089 Sarra, 1112 kopie 12e eeuw Sarren, 1185 Zarren.

Named after a local brook called Zarre. This prehistoric water name is derived from the Indo-European root *ser-/sor- which means ‘to flow, to stream’ and is akin to the name of the Saar river (French: Sarre), a tributary of the Moselle in France and Germany.

**VEURNE**

877 kopie 961 Furnis, 1080-85 Furnes, 1110 Furno, 1237 Veurne, 1306 Voerne, 1324 te Vorne, 1626 binnen Veurne.

Veurne stems from a water name, but its age and original form are uncertain. In all likelihood, it is etymologically identical or at least akin to the river names Veer (the name of two rivers, one in Limburg and one in Flemish Brabant) and Vurre (in Afsnee near Ghent), as well as Voorne, the name of a Dutch island. Gysseling initially thought this was the Germanic water name *Furno, derived from the same root as to fare (Old English faran). In this case it would mean ‘navigable water’. As a place name, this would have led to Old Germanic *Furnum (in the plural dative) and the Romantic plural dative forms of Furnis and Furnes. In a later study about water names in the wide

**WESTROZEBEKE (STADEN)**

1072 vals 12de eeuw Rosebeke, 1200 Roosebeke, 1299 Droghoe Rosebeke, 1567 Droochroosbeke, 1652 West roosebeke, 1802 West-Roosebeke, 1915 Westrozebeke.

This village was originally called Rozebeke after a local brook. The first part stems from Germanic *rausa ‘reed’, so Rozebeek was a brook in which reed grew.

**WIJTSCHATE (HEUVELLAND)**

1069 Widesgada, 1080-85 Wideschat, 1224, Widescote, 1237 Witscote, 1313 Wijtschate, 1641 Wijtschate.

The root in this name is got, which meant ‘passageway, entrance’ in Old and Middle Dutch (and still has this meaning in some Dutch dialects), cf. English gate. The first part is probably the Germanic personal name Wido in the genitive case. Another possibility is Middle Dutch wide ‘osier’, from which the synonymous West Flemish word wiedouw was derived. Wijtschate is therefore named after a passage or entranceway that either belonged to Wido or that was bordered with osiers or ran through such a woodland.

**ZEEBRUGGE (BRUGGE)**

This recent name dates from the late 19th century, when the development of a seaport connected to the inland harbour of Bruges by means of a canal was begun. The port was founded within the limits of the municipality of Lissewege, currently incorporated into the city of Bruges. The name Zeebrugge was devised by officials and was written down for the first time in 1894, when the Belgian state, the city of Bruges and a few private investors entered into an agreement as to the construction and operation of the planned seaport.

**Sources**


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