



Fortress Kołobrzeg

Baltic Culture and Tourism Route Fortresses



K O Ł O B R Z E G

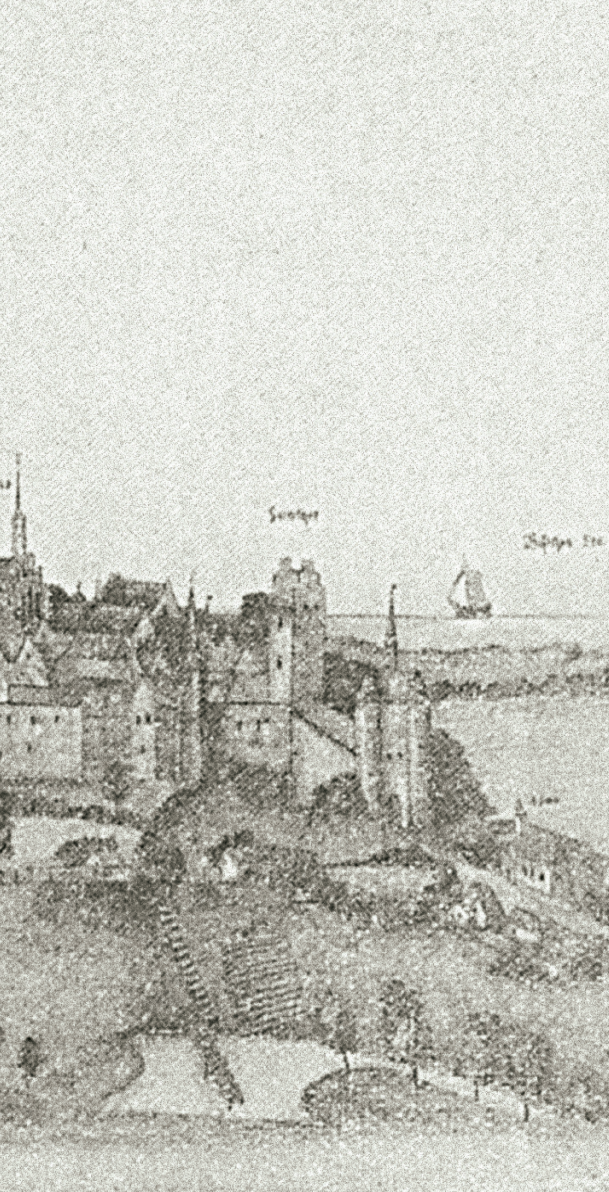


Medieval Kolobrzeg

*Oil on canvass by a Brabant painter,
Johann Wolfart, 1614*



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*Fortress
Kołobrzeg*



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Warfare traditions of Kołobrzeg in the Middle Ages

Kołobrzeg was founded in AD 880 – 890 on the alignment of a Slavic settlement of salt makers on the right bank of the river Parsęta, about 4 km away from its estuary to the Baltic. It was encircled with an earthwork of a grille timber construction. The river bed on the one side and a small lake on the other were natural defence features of the place. The fort (gród) developed into an early town integrating the whole area of the lower Parsęta. It took over from the falling fort in Bardy.

In the late 10th century the fort was partly destroyed, but rebuilt soon. During the rebuilding a sandwich construction was applied as well as other elements typical of the territory of Poland under the early Piast dynasty. It might have been the result of conquering Pomerania by a Polish ruler, Mieszko I. In AD 1000 Kołobrzeg became an important political and religious centre in Poland. By will of Bolesław Chrobry (Boleslaus I the Brave) a bishopric was established here – one of the first in Poland.

In the 11th century Pomerania became pagan again. Small tribal organisations were established. Kołobrzeg is supposed to have been the first centre of West Pomeranian state being established. The fortress was expanded at that time.

At the beginning of the 12th century a young and belligerent Polish ruler Bolesław Krzywousty (Boleslaus the Wrymouthed) decided to seize Pomerania. He launched the first warfare expeditions to Kołobrzeg (AD 1102, 1103, and 1107). They were covered extensively by Anonymous Gaul, who also recorded a song of the taste of fresh sea fish that the Polish knights were supposed to have sung at Kołobrzeg. Having

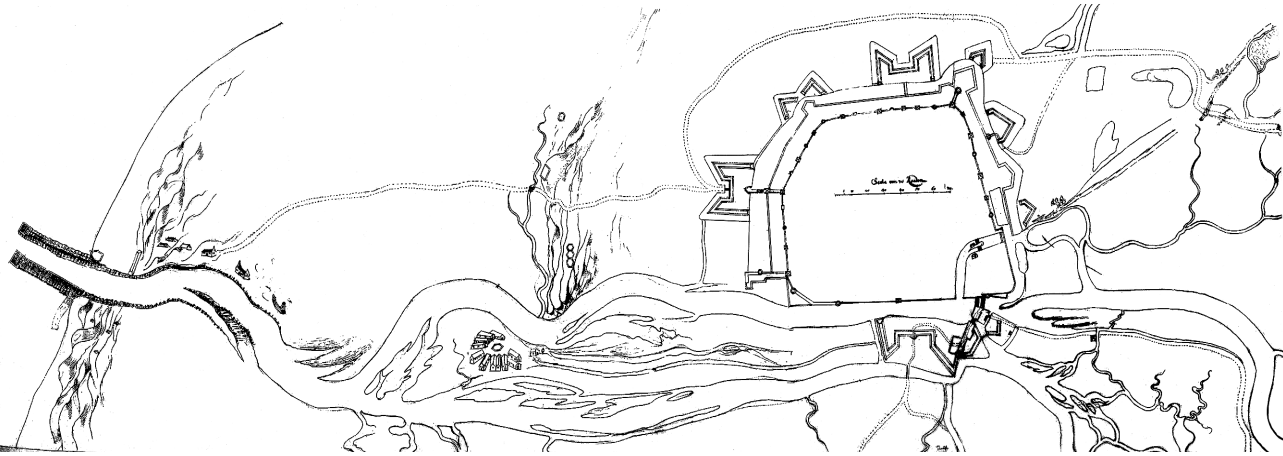
conquered Western Pomerania Krzywousty subordinated local dukes making them his vassals. The inhabitants of Kołobrzeg at that time could also fight at sea, which is confirmed by their participation in a famous, well-organised punitive expedition to the Viking town of Kungölf led by local duke Racibor I in AD 1136.

During the time of the so-called cultural transformation in the 13th century a new town on Lübeck law was established (AD 1255), a little bit closer to the sea, superimposed upon it is the contemporary centre of Kołobrzeg. It was constructed following the new principles of an urban lay out, which was imported to the area by German settlers. A ring of walls with numerous towers and a moat with three, and later four, gates encircled the town. The panorama of a late medieval Kołobrzeg can be seen on an oil painting (1614) attributed to a Brabant painter Johan Wolfart. The town took over the name and economic functions (salt making, trade) from the former Slav settlement.

Warfare traditions of incorporated Kołobrzeg are: fighting in wars between the Hansa and Denmark, and buccaneers (Vitalienbrüder) as well as a successful defence of their own town against the army of the Bishop of Kamień on 21 December 1462.

Medieval fortifications in Kołobrzeg survived down to the times of the Thirty Years War.

Wallenstein's soldiers are constructing the first modern fortifications



Örnebuud map of the estuary of the River Parsęta and Kołobrzeg with new fortifications, c. 1630 (Krigsarkivet Stockholm).

During the Thirty Years War West Pomeranian dukes were striving maintain the neutrality of their country. Unfortunately, in 1627 the commanding officer of the imperial army, Wallenstein made duke Bogusław XIV agree to the seizure of the territory of the duchy by the imperial army (the Peace of Franzburg). On 30 November Kołobrzeg was taken by an army unit commanded by lieutenant-colonel Fünfkirch (Fünfkirchen) consisting of five infantry companies, a total of 1,500 men. The troops were accompanied by no fewer than the same number of women and vagrants, as

custom had it at that time. Times of mayhem fell on the town. The imperial soldiers behaved as if they were on a conquered territory, turned out to be cruel invaders (robberies, rapes, fires). Hostile attitude by the invaders to the local community was also based on a religious background. The people living in Western Pomerania were Protestants while imperial soldiers were Catholics. Finally a plague broke out in the town claiming soldiers' lives as well. Imperial engineers also started to strengthen and modernise the defence system of the town, which survived down from medieval times.



The siege of Kolobrzeg by the Swedish army 1630/1631 (Archiwum Państwowe, Szczecin, collection of Loeper).

The construction of modern earthwork fortifications, much more resistant to artillery barrage, commenced outside the old defence walls. Enslaved townsmen and peasant from nearby villages were forced to do the work. The approaches to the town were cleared so that the enemy could be seen from a distance. Part of the outskirts and the village of Budzistowo were burnt down. 5 churches located outside the walls fell prey to fire. It was for that reason that biting remarks were

made on the surname of the imperial commander ('fünf Kirchen' means 'five churches'). Weak points of the old walls and towers were strengthened with small bastions. Horn works were built next to roads leading out of town. Some insight into the first modern fortifications is given by old maps that survived down to our times.

The Foundations of Modern Fortress

The occupation of Western Pomerania by imperial army resulted in Swedish intervention. On 4 July 1630 a fifteen-thousand army of Gustavus II Adolphus landed on Pomeranian coast and started to drive the imperial troops out of the town. On 18 September the Swedish king made an order to seize Gryfia (Grieffswald) and Kolobrzeg. Two days later the first Swedish reconaissance unit led by Colonel Baudissin appeared before Kolobrzeg. However, it was not until the beginning of October, after sufficient forces have landed, that the Swedes laid siege. They were commanded by colonel Claes Dietrich Sperreuter, sent a communiqué on the situation of the town as well as action taken to Chancellor Oxentiena on 7 October. In the middle of November Gustavus II Adolphus staying in Gryfice sent additional troops commanded by Major-General Dodo von Knyphausen. Due the conflict of competence there was in the Swedish camp at near Kolobrzeg a new commander Colonel Nikolaus Böethius was soon nominated. The supervision over the siege was exercised by Marshall Gustavus Horn – the commander of Swedish troops in Western Pomerania. The Swedes applied a unique tactics: mock night attacks. At that time the commander of Kolobrzeg was inexperienced Graph St. Julian, who allowed to use up all the ammunition bullets without any major loss to the besieging troops. Lack of means to fight and starvation made the besieged commence negotiations. Following them the imperial troops left the town honourably leaving 55 cannons, 19 harquebi and 90



General (later Field Marshal) Gustav Karlsson Horn (1592-1657), the commander of Swedish units in Pomerania, said to be the conqueror of Kolobrzeg in 1631.

A portrait by David Beck.



Town plan of Kolobrzeg showing new fortifications of 1648, attributed to E.J. Dahlberg (Krigsarkivet Stockholm).

barrels of saltpetre. On 2 March 1631 a five-hundred-troop Swedish unit entered the town welcomed by exhausted inhabitants of the town. Colonel Böethius became the first commander of the town. Later Colonel Erich Hansson Ulfsparre took over. After heirless death of the last West Pomeranian duke, Bogusław XIV (1637) the Swedes proclaimed the annexation of Kolobrzeg to the Swedish Crown.

The Swedes continued fortification works and constructed a regular bastion polygon of the Netherland type outside medieval walls. The works were supervised by Erich Svensson and master Peter. Sources mention engineer Lorentz von Schack as well.

Many people who became part of the history of Poland visited Kolobrzeg in Swedish times. Among others: on 1 February 1640 there was a wedding of a Swedish officer of the garrison Colonel Burchard Müller and Isabella Maria von Schmälingen, the daughter of the proprietor of Mścice (Gündenhausen) and Strzeżenice (Streitz). Said Müller was later the Swedish General commanding the siege of Częstochowa in 1655. Hence he entered not only Polish history, but Polish literature as well.

On 3 to 5 February 1646 Polish queen, Maria Ludwika (wife of Władysław IV) stayed here while travelling from France. Jean le Laboureur accompanying her noted that the queen visited brine springs in Kolobrzeg and that 'Kolobrzeg is powerfully fortified, ravaged by fires and war, depopulated, however, has a numerous and strong Swedish garrison.'

At the turn of 1640s and 1650s new fortifications in Kolobrzeg were documented by a famous Swedish cartographer Ric Jönson Dahlberg, the author of numerous maps and plans of Polish towns, issued in the form of a book (Wrocław, 1971).

A distinguished Pomeranian diplomat, Maciej Krockow-Krockowski, a vicar by title in charge of Kolobrzeg Basilica in 1646 was nominated a plenipotentiary of the Polish King, Władysław IV to a peace conference in Osnabrück, which was to bring the Thirty Years War to conclusion.



Kolobrzeg in the middle of the 17th century. Copperplate after a drawing by E.J. Dahlberg, Topographia Electoratus Brandenburgici et Ducatus Pomeraniae, Frankfurt am Main 1652



***Artillery General Otto Christof von Sparr (1599-1668),
the first Brandenburg Governor of Kolobrzeg***
(Muzeum Narodowe, Szczecin).

Brandenburg and Prussian Fortress

On 24 October 1648 the Treaty of Westphalia was signed in Münster and Osnabrück, a multilateral agreement bringing the Thirty Years War to conclusion. Heralds were announcing the happy news to the exhausted people. Leaflets were published: an explanatory text informed on the event and explanatory pictures (for the illiterate) showed a huge fallen warrior and ordinary people getting down to work (each in their job). Article 10 of the Treaty provided for the division of Pomerania into Western: Swedish part and Eastern: Brandenburg one. Kolobrzeg became a Swedish enclave in Brandenburg part. In order to solve the problem the interested states held bilateral talks. However, it was only after five years that an agreement was reached by the parties. Subject to the so called Szczecin Border Recess of 4 May 1653 Sweden made a decision to surrender Kolobrzeg to Brandenburg. On 16 June (or 6 June by the Julian calendar still used there) General Otto Christof von Sparr heading an infantry battalion took over Kolobrzeg from the Swedes. The Swedish garrison left the town through the Mill Gate while at the same time, on the other side, through the Stone Gate (already in its new position on the alignment of contemporary ul. Bogusława X) Brandenburg unit entered the town.

By decision of the new ruler, Frederick –William, Grand Elector, Kolobrzeg became the capital of the Brandenburg part of Pomerania, a fortress and a big military base. Here a Knight Academy was built, a naval port and a shipyard. It was here that the first Brandenburg men-of-war were built: Dorothea, Fuchs, Morian and Grosse Jacht. The organisation of the fleet was managed by the Dutch in Brandenburg service: Benjamin Raule



***Knight Academy rebuilt following the ravages of war,
today it hosts a sports hall.***



***Base course of Bastion Magdeburg;
photograph by H. Kroczyński, 1978***

and Gillis C. Peckelhering. Later on the naval port was moved to Piława (Pilau). The capital of the province was changed too, at first to Stargard, and later on to Szczecin. Kołobrzeg remained a fortress for the next 200 years to come.

Artillery General Otto Christof von Sparr (1599-1668) became the first Brandenburg governor of Kołobrzeg, while the first commander of the fortress Colonel (as from 1669 – General) Bogusław von Schwerin. It was them who were responsible for the organisation of the fortress. As the town was already relatively well-fortified by the Swedes, at first utility buildings were built (barracks, warehouses, workshops). They were located in the part of the town which was burnt out during the last war, on the embankment of the river Parsęta. Fortifications

were given second priority. At the beginning of the 18th century the fortress reached its scheduled shape.

From the right bank of the river Parsęta, to the north from the town centre, clockwise there were the following fortification works: Bastion Halberstadt, Horn Work Münde (estuary), Bastion Preußen (Prussia), Ravelin Bütow (Bytów), Bastion Neumark (New Mark), Ravelin Lauenburg (Lębork), Bastion Pommern (Pomerania), Small Bastion Magdeburg, and further, in the fork of the Parsęta and the Copper Canal, Small Bastion Cleve while on the left bank of the river Bastion Geldern I and Half-Bastion Geldern II.

There were fort ditches filled with water in between fortification works.



General H. Dąbrowski Park. Moat and covered passage adapted for park alley. Glacis on the right.

Apart from engineering works it was the natural features that to a large extent determined the defence qualities of Fortress Kołobrzeg. From the East, South and West the town was encircled with marches and boggy meadows. During war operations they were flooded with the waters of the river Parsęta. For that purpose the Long Bridge over the river Parsęta was converted. The so called batardeau was built, a structure of special significance to the defence of the fortress, which had three functions: it was the only bridge over the river, a defence gallery with loopholes for cannon and gun fire along the river

and, what is most important, huge reservoirs for holding up water. After draining the reservoirs it was in no more than 24 hours that the approaches of the fortress were flooded to the depth of half a meter on average. During war operations batardeau was covered with sacks containing horse manure to protect it against cannon balls.

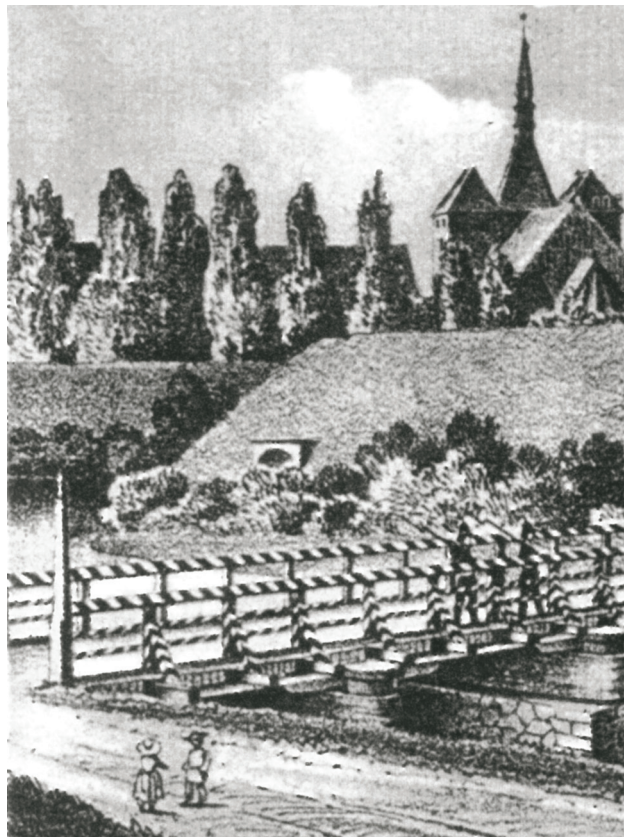
New gates to the fortress were also built. It was only in the north that the exit from town was left on the alignment of ul. Münce (currently ul. Armii Krajowej) and further through Horn Work.



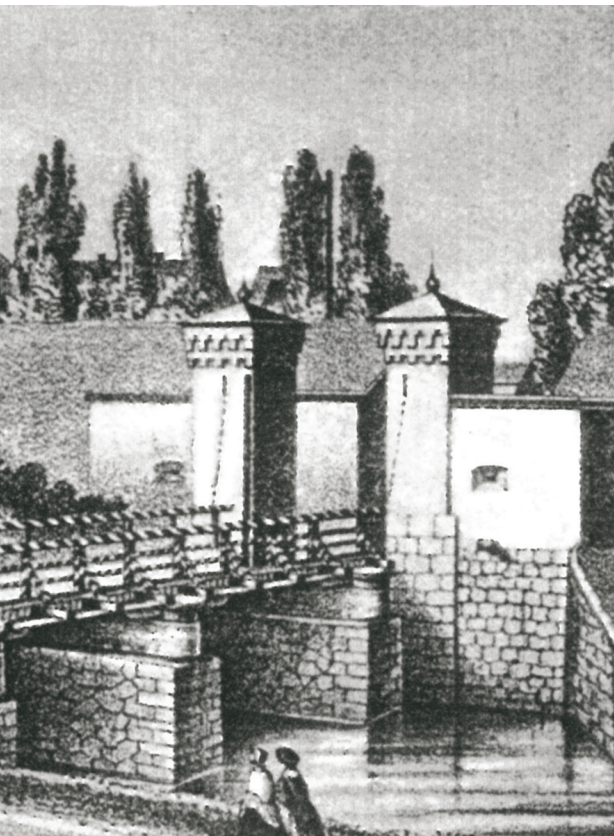
Batardeau. On the left loopholes, inside view; on the right outside view (photograph by H. Kroczyński, 1978).

In the west the exit from the town was very complicated: said batardeau, Geldern Gate built in 1708, and further over the Cow's Bridge over the Drzewny Canal (where it still is today). The exit to the south was the most grandiose. It was here that on the alignment of contemporary ul. Bogusława X Lauenburg Gate was built while the Royal Bridge over the moat. Apart from these a variety of field fortifications were built on the approaches to the town. The blokhaus to the right of the estuary of the river Parsęta was of considerable significance. Following its destruction in a storm in 1709 Münde Rampart,

also called Captain Engineer Frauendorff Rampart after the name of its designer, was built. The names of the above fortification units were finally approved in 1714. The headquarters of the fortress were then located in the former palace of the Swedish governors in ul. Budowlana, and as from 1770 in the so called new governor's house at the crossroads of contemporary ul. Katedralna and Armii Krajowej.



Geldern Gate built in 1708,
a photograph from the interwar period (the author's collection).

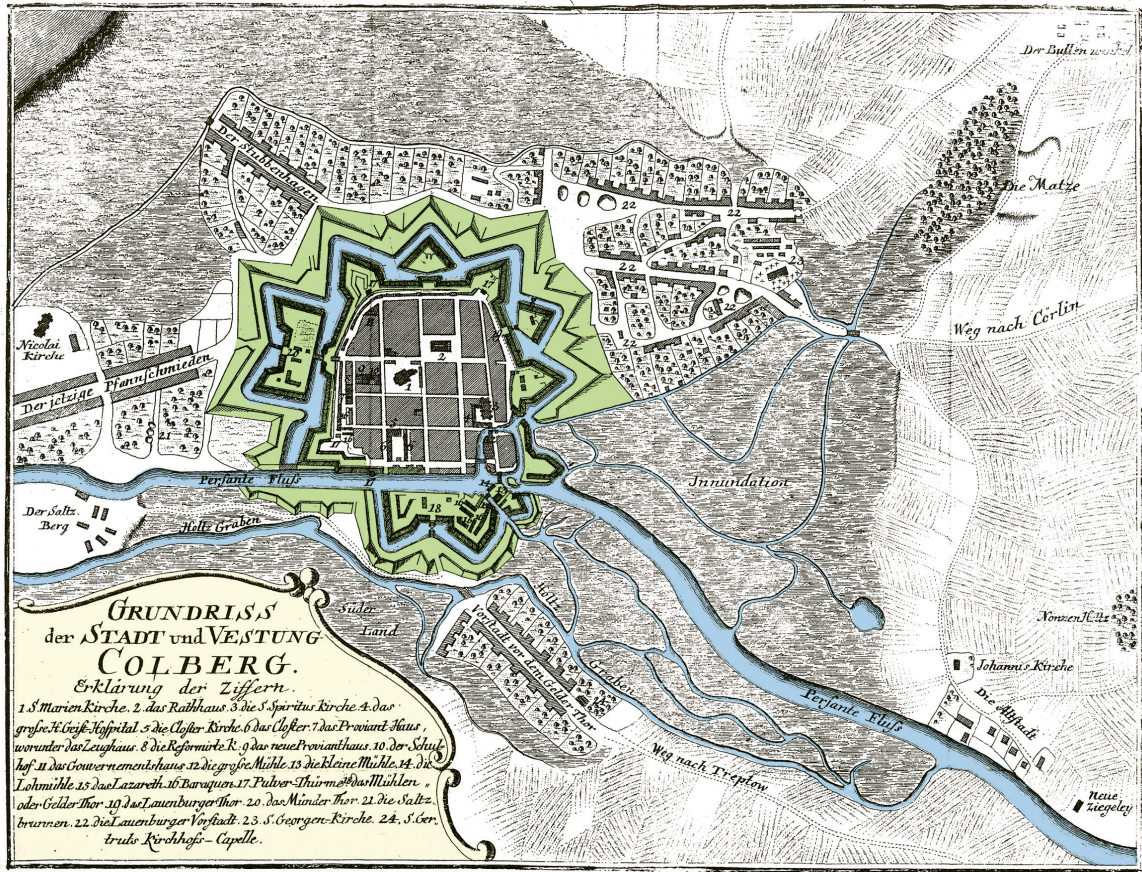


Lauenburg Gate and the Royal Bridge,
an old drawing (the author's collection).

During the Seven Years War.

Kołobrzeg was not struck by any enemy for over one hundred years. However, since the late 18th century two generations of the inhabitants of Kołobrzeg coped with living in warlike conditions again. During the Seven Years War the fortress was under the attack of Russian troops, who were striving to establish a base for their navy. The fortress was under the command of Major (later Colonel) Heinrich Sigismund von der Heiden (Heide) The garrison together with a battalion of townsmen was formed by no more than one thousand troops, 130 cannons and 14 mortars.

On 3 October 1758 the first Russian unit of 6,000 troops under the command of Lieutenant General Palmbach (Palmenbach) appeared in Zieleniewo. The Russian seized the port and the outskirts Münde in no time. The situation on the Pomeranian front did not allow for longer siege operations. Hence upon the initial success General Palmbach tried to frighten the defenders with artillery fire and make them surrender. Not having reached the intended aim he withdrew to Gościno. At the explicit order by his superior, General Wiliam Fermor, having received reinforcement under the command of General Jakovlev, he headed back for the fortress and laid a regular siege on 10 October.

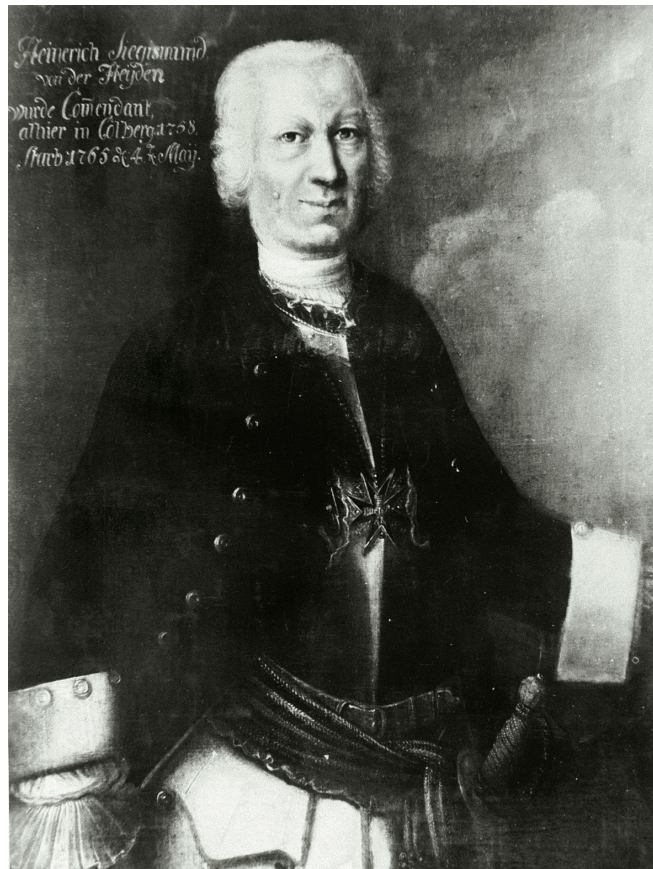


The fortress plan in the 18th century, from *Geschichte der Altstadt Colberg*. J.F. Wachsen, Halle 1767.

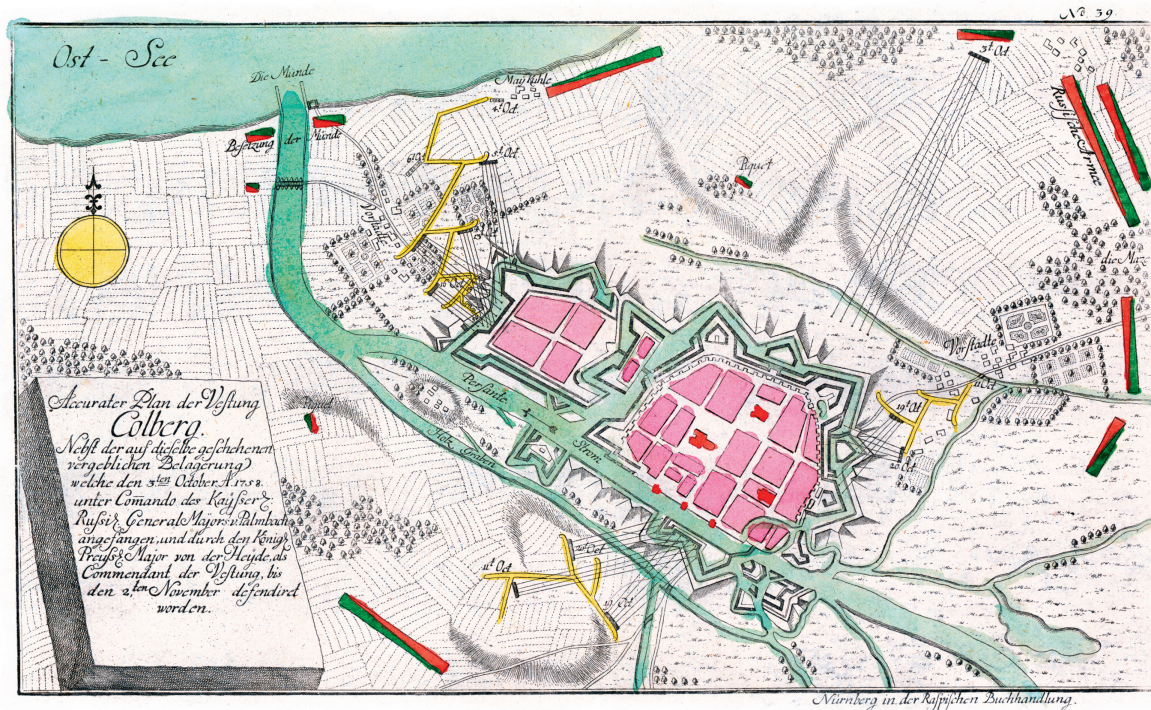
The fate of Kolobrzeg seemed to have been sealed. Heyden must have known that things were getting a little too hot for the Russians due to the overall military situation in Pomerania and hence he was delaying the final decision. His control over the situation and cool calculations resulted in absolute success. On 29 October Palmbach lifted the siege and withdrew. Frederick the Great, the King of Prussia, awarded Colonel Heyden an order 'Pour le merite' for successful defence of the fortress.

After two years, on 26 August 1760 the Russians appeared before Kolobrzeg again. It was a sea and land expedition under the command of Admiral Zachary Mishukov. His great three-deck flagship 'Dymitr Rostovsky' carried 100 cannons and raised apprehension. She was accompanied by 25 other vessels and a couple of dozens transport ships. All vessels carried a total of 1,574 cannons and mortars. A little later they were reinforced by a Swedish squadron headed by Vice-Admiral A. Lagerbjelke.

Having unloaded the troops and siege engines on 7 September the Russians commenced offensive military operations against the fortress. On 9 September Rampart Münde and the port were captured. Northern outskirts of the town were burnt down at the order of the Commander. After a few days Russian siege cannons were planted in the area of contemporary ul. Solna, wherefrom they started to bombard the town. Mishukov called on the commander of the fortress to surrender. The final attack could have started soon. However, it was also this time that fortune smiled on Heyden.



**Colonel Hetnrich Stegismund von der Heiden (1703-1765)
The Commander of Fortress Kolobrzeg during
the Seven Years War (Muzeum Narodowe, Szczecin).**



The siege of Kolobrzeg by Russian units in 1758, a map published by Rasvitch Bookshop, Nürnberg (the author's collection).

The relief arrived in the most critical moment. It was led from Głogów by the most distinguished commander of the war, General Johann Paul von Werner. The Prussians gained clear advantage on land. In that situation the Russians lifted the siege and sailed away. On 24 September Kolobrzeg celebrated victory. General Werner was pronounced a national hero. He

was awarded the title Admiral of the Baltic Sea and earned the sobriquet 'Liberator Pomeraniae' (the Liberator of Pomerania). K. W. Ramler, a poet, wrote a poem to commemorate the occasion: 'Song of the Parsęta Nymph'. King Frederick the Great had commemorative medals struck to the honour of the two heroes: Werner and Heiden.



Cavalry General J. Paul von Werner (1707 – 1785)



A commemorative medal struck to the honour of the commander of Fortress 'Kolberg' in 1760.

It was one more time that the Russians and the Prussians squared off again at Kołobrzeg. The fights commenced in August 1761. This time it was not Fortress Kołobrzeg but, resting upon it, a big encampment under the command of duke Frederick Eugene Wirtemberg. His corps consisted of over 12,000 men, of which cavalry constituted a considerable

part. The defence line ran from the hill behind Zieleniewo, along the ridge of terminal moraine in the south, and further along the edge of marshes in front of Kołobrzeg Forest. Ramparts were made along the defence line. In order to facilitate communication Zieleniewo was connected with Budzistowo with a boat bridge.



Hussars from General Werner's corps solemnly enter the fortress in September 1760, an old drawing (the author's collection).

The Russian corps under the command of General Peter A. Rumiancev initially consisted of 10,000 soldiers, but soon reinforcements of 24,000 soldiers and a Russian-Swedish fleet of 121 vessels under the command of Vice-Admiral A.I. Polański arrived. The siege corps consisted of many Russian commanders to become well-known later, such as the commander of a dragon regiment Alexander V. Suvorov.

The artillery on board started to fire northern edge of the fortress, while the infantry attacked Prussian ramparts. The hardest fights flared for the Green Rampart on the hill of Niekanin.



Russian and Swedish vessels near Kolobrzeg in 1761, a detail from a map by M. Keyl (Museum Oręża Polskiego, Kolobrzeg).



***Shuvalov's howitzer: a new weapon
used by the Russians near Kołobrzeg;***

*a model cannon and an original bullet: grenade (Muzeum
Oręża Polskiego, Kołobrzeg; photograph: H. Kroczyński).*

The introduction to fight of the so called Shuvalov's howitzer was quite a sensation. The muzzle was not square, but rectangular of rounded angles. Grenades launched from this weapon were flat and resembled bottles of Gdańsk liqueur. A nickname was soon devised for them: 'oxen's muzzles' (Ochsenmäuler).



***The siege of Kołobrzeg by the Russians in 1761,
an old copperplate signed 'G.L.'***
(the author's collection).

As early as in the middle of September the Prussian troops were beginning to run out of forage. It was for that reason that General Werner, the hero of the previous siege, and a two-thousand-troop cavalry unit fought his way through the Russian blockade intending to carry out sabotage operations on the rear of the siege corps. Immediate pursuit captured the General near Trzebiatów.

At the beginning of October General von Platen brought to Kołobrzeg reinforcements of 8,000 troops. They took positions in the district of Przećmin, Borek and Dźwirzyno thereby extending the area of the encampment.

The situation of the Prussian troops was becoming more and more severe (famine, scarcity of forage, diseases). Duke Eugene with a part of his units fought his way through the siege and marched west. He was back with relief on 12 December, however, he was defeated near Błotnica. The besiegers gained control over the whole encampment and approached the main fortifications of the fortress. Heavy frost froze water in the flooded areas and in ditches. The fortress turned defenceless. Surrender was unavoidable. On 17 December Prussian troops laid down their arms and left the town through Geldern Gate to be taken prisoners of war by the Russians. Russian troops entered the town through Lauenburg Gate.

The inhabitants of Kołobrzeg, so that they would win the favour of the invaders, offered them gifts. General Rumiancev was offered a chiming watch, while the new commander of the fortress General von Grebel a silver coffee set. Apart from that each of them was offered a barrel of oysters. The Russian occupation continued until 9 August 1762.



***Lieutenant-General Peter A. Rumiancev (1725-1796),
the conqueror of Kołobrzeg in 1761,
artist unknown (Suvorov Museum, Petersburg).***

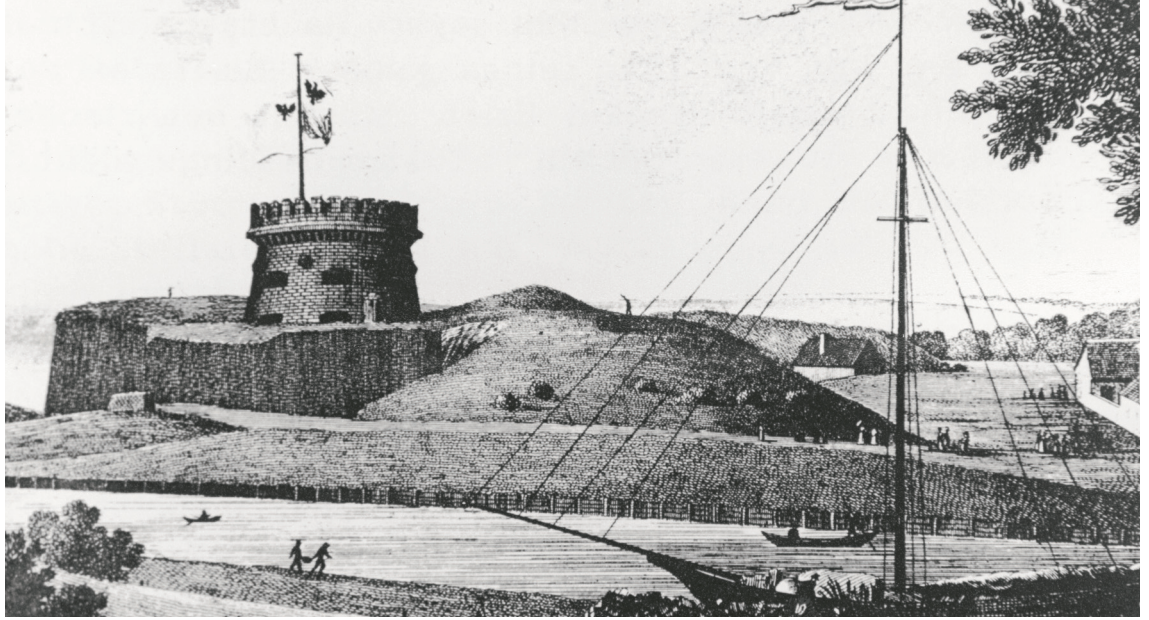
The Extension of the Fortress by Frederick the Great

The King of Prussia, Frederick the Great stayed in Kolobrzeg from 18 to 24 May. The experience of the last war was subject to analysis and a decision to modernise the fortress was taken. Main work in this regard was done in the years 1770-1774. These concerned mainly fortifications in the port. Here French patterns were followed. Two fortification works were constructed at the port entry. The first and the most interesting of them is Fort Münde built on the right bank of the estuary of the river Parsęta, on the alignment of the former rampart. It was a round, three-storey, brick tower, covered with earth. The cellar part served as a warehouse, the basement for infantry positions, and the first floor for artillery. Both upper floors had seven, evenly distributed firing ports. On the land side there was an entry door to the tower, and two small bastions right in front of them. There was a wooden palisade from the sea. On the opposite bank of the river Parsęta Rampart Maikuhle was built (since 1817 called Rampart Hayden).



Morast Redoubt at the beginning of the 20th century,
a photograph (Muzeum Narodowe, Szczecin).

On western tip of Solna Island, in the fork of the river Parsęta and the Drzewny Canal the Morast Redoubt was built, later called Schill Redoubt. It was pentagonal, consisted of a ditch filled with water, an earthwork, and a brick wall facing the town with four buildings adjoining it: one big and three small ones. The buildings were made of brick on a stone base course and covered with earth. There were firing ports for firing shotguns and two ports for cannons along the wall.



Fort Münde, a steel engraving (the author's collection).

Wooden entry gate reinforced with iron bars, and a small gate as well. There was a drawbridge right in front of the gate.

It was also in the 1770s that the main fortifications on the left bank of the River Parsęta were extended: Half-Bastion Geldern was turned into a standard bastion. Further north, along the river to the port a stretch of redan rounded off with Geldern Redoubt was built. On the left bank of the Drzewny Canal a bridgehead was built (Tzte du Pont) and a few half-moons in a variety of places. Bastion Magdeburg was also

extended. To the north of the fortress, right in front of the main fortifications, two more field works were constructed: the Church Rampart between the contemporary streets: Pomorska and Solna and the Brick Rampart in the district of contemporary streets: Norwida and Grottgera.



Major August Neithardt von Gneisenau (1760-1831), the commander of Fortress Kołobrzeg from 29 April until the lifting of the siege; a picture from Joachim Nettlebeck published by Peter Jancke, Hamburg 1988, p. 66.



Joachim Nettlebeck (1738-1824), chairman of the Townsmen's Council in Kołobrzeg, a lithograph by L. Heine (the author's collection).

Siege of Kołobrzeg by Napoleonic Army in 1807

After the defeat of Jena and Auerstedt on 11 October 1806 panic swept through the Prussian army as well as the corps of officials. Great fortresses were surrendering without fight while officials pledged allegiance to the new ruler. Very few had the courage to put up resistance to the corps of the Great Army marching east. The commander of Kołobrzeg Fortress, a French in Prussian

duty, Colonel Louis Maurice de Loucadou (Ludwig Moritz von Lucadou) was one of them. The other was Ferdinand von Schill of Polish-Bohemian background, using 'von' in front of his surname subject to Polish indigénat, serving in Prussian army since the age of 14, a cavalry officer. Having healed his wounds suffered in the battle of Auerstedt, Schill formed a unit of



***Major-General Louis-Henri Loison (1771-1816),
the commander of units surrounding Kołobrzeg***
(first name used in historiography: Olivier)

volunteers (Freikorps) to carry out bravado cavalry raids on French army tracts. Joachim Nettelbeck, the chairman of the townsmen's representative body, an influential personality in the town, was also a great adherent for resistance to the French. The conflict between Nettelbeck and the commander of the fortress was deepening, thereby affecting the organisation of the defence. The resistance of Kołobrzeg posed a considerable problem to the French headquarters. The main scene of war moved to Eastern Prussia and there were no sufficient troops in

Pomerania to capture the fortress. The situation got even more complicated upon the spectacular success achieved by Schill on 12 January 1807. He captured French General Viktor heading reserve units on his way to Szczecin and brought him prisoner to Kołobrzeg.

Loucardou used the few months of peace to prepare the fortress for defence. It had been known by then that the enemy would attack with their land forces only. Said artificial flooded areas provided effective means of defence of the fortress from the south, while the river Parsęta from the west. The only weak point was the stretch of dunes from the east. Loucardou ordered the construction of a rampart, also called a fort on a hillside called Wolf Mountain (Wolfsberg). It was designed by Major Engineer Müller. It was supposed to be built on a four-radial pattern, on the arms of which blokhouses were to be built, each of which hosted 3 cannons. Due to the imminent threat of invasion the decision was taken to shorten the building time. The idea of a blokhause facing the town was renounced and here entry to the fort in the form of a permanent bridge was built, which was blocked with the so called Spanish knight. The fort was encircled with a three-metre-high earthwork, a ditch with a palisade and three rows of pitfalls.



Wolf Fort, a drawing by O. Rubov



'Before Kołobrzeg 1807' by Fritz Grotmayer, oil on canvass; painting destroyed during fights in 1945.

At the turn of February and March Italian division headed by Major-General Peter Teulié started to surround the fortress. At the end of April further units arrived: 1st regiment of Polish infantry and Saxon contingents. The siege was commanded by Major-General Louis-Henri. However, he did not have sufficient forces to carry out successful operations from all directions.

As a matter of fact the battle was fought for the Wolf Fort only, which kept changing hands. In his reports Loison complains on the scanty militant capacity of the units. The Saxons were even suspected of treason.

the Italians felt unwell in northern climate, the Poles were most often praised. The latter were driven by patriot reasons as Napoleon promised to revive the Polish state. Part of the troops, especially Polish, were eliminated from the fights due to the plague of malaria.

On 29 April the defence of the fortress was taken over by a new commander, Neithardt von Gneisenau, who continued the idea of his predecessor. The reason for the change of the commander was said personal conflict. Loucadou was promoted to the rank of Major General and retired. In their operations in Pomerania the Prussians were backed by the Swedish. The Swedish frigate 'af Chapman' took part in the defence of Kołobrzeg firing at Polish camp many times. Operations by Swedish General Essen on the River Piana (Peene) were of considerable significance to the defence of Kołobrzeg as he succeeded in tying up the units of the 8th corps of Marshall Mortier that Napoleon ordered to fight at near Kołobrzeg.

Finally, at the end of June two French regiments of considerable fire-power and artillery arrived before Kołobrzeg. On 1 July the bombardment of the town as well as attacks from all directions broke out. The critical moment for the fortress was becoming imminent. On 2 July at noon an order to cease fire reached the fortress due to the Peace of Tilsit.

The defence of Kołobrzeg was just a minor incident in the war of 1807. The result of the war was decided somewhere else. However, for Prussia in those miserable times Kołobrzeg became an example of a duty to the Fatherland well-fulfilled, an example of patriotism that passed into legend.



***Duke Paweł Antoni Sułkowski (1785-1836)
leading his regiment at Kołobrzeg in 1807,***

*oil on canvas by Stefan Pajaczkowski
(Muzeum Oręża Polskiego, Kołobrzeg).*

A view of sieged Kolobrzeg in 1807, wood engraving after etching by Daniel Berger (the author's collection).



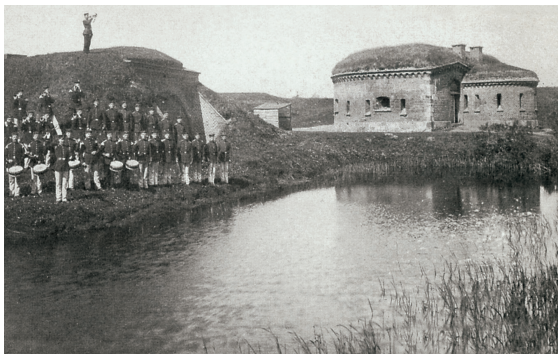
Fortress and Spa

The experience of 1807 was used during further modernisation of the fortress. Main work was carried out in 1832-1836. Particular emphasis was put on the defence of the port. Two works defending entry to the port: Fort Münde and Heyden Rampart were converted. Two new works were constructed in this area: Kleist Rampart on dunes in Maikuhle Wood and the Solna Redoubt on the left bank of the Drzewny Canal were built. In the eastern frontier of the seafront, where the fights of 1807 were the hardest the Wolf Fort was converted too and in its immediate vicinity, on the dunes Waldenfels Rampart (the Stone Rampart) was built. In the main fortifications only a few half-moon works were located; two works located just outside the earthwork were modernised: the Brick Rampart (currently ul. Norwida) and the Church Rampart (currently ul. Pomorska).

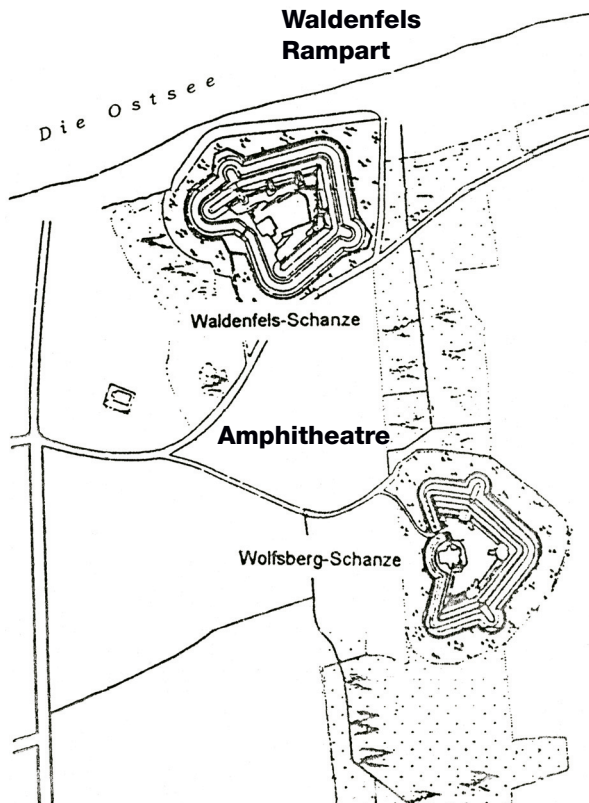
That was the last modernisation of Fortress Kolobrzeg. Due to the development as a spa and political changes in Germany the fortress was liquidated in 1872. Fortification areas encircling the medieval part of town were levelled. New squares and streets were built in their stead. Only the defence fortifications of the port were used for 15 more years by the army. However, finally even those were either adapted to new functions or demolished.



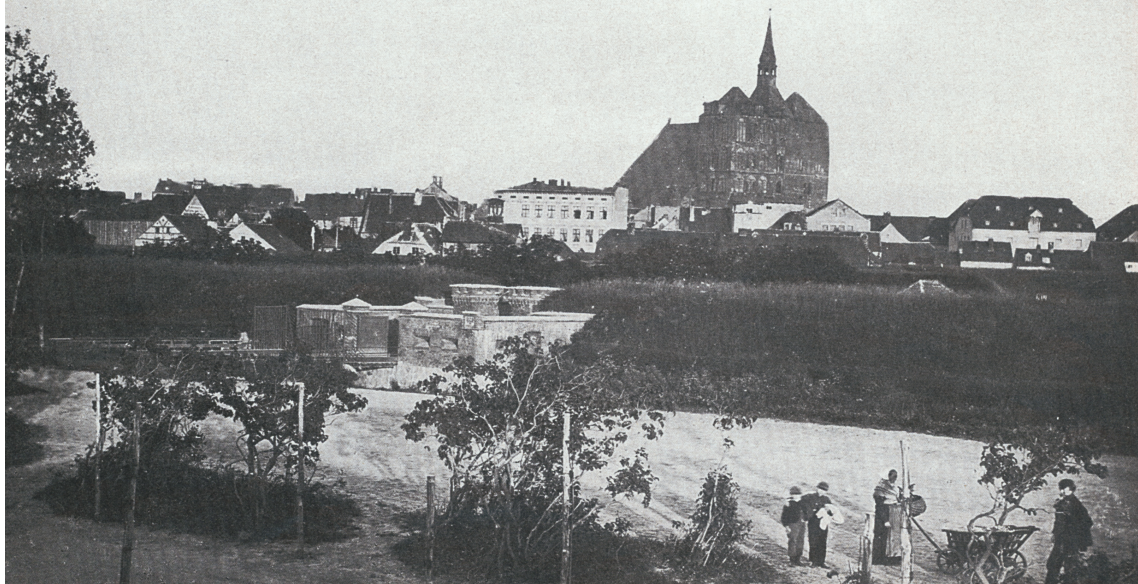
Entry to Kolobrzeg port in the middle of the 19th century. On the left: Fort Münde, on the right: Heyden Rampart, an illustration from a brochure dating back to the 19th century published by C. Burmann



Solna Redoubt, photograph by W. Riedel



Fortifications on eastern seafront frontier: the Wolf Fort and Waldenfels Rampart (the Stone Rampart), a detail from an old map.

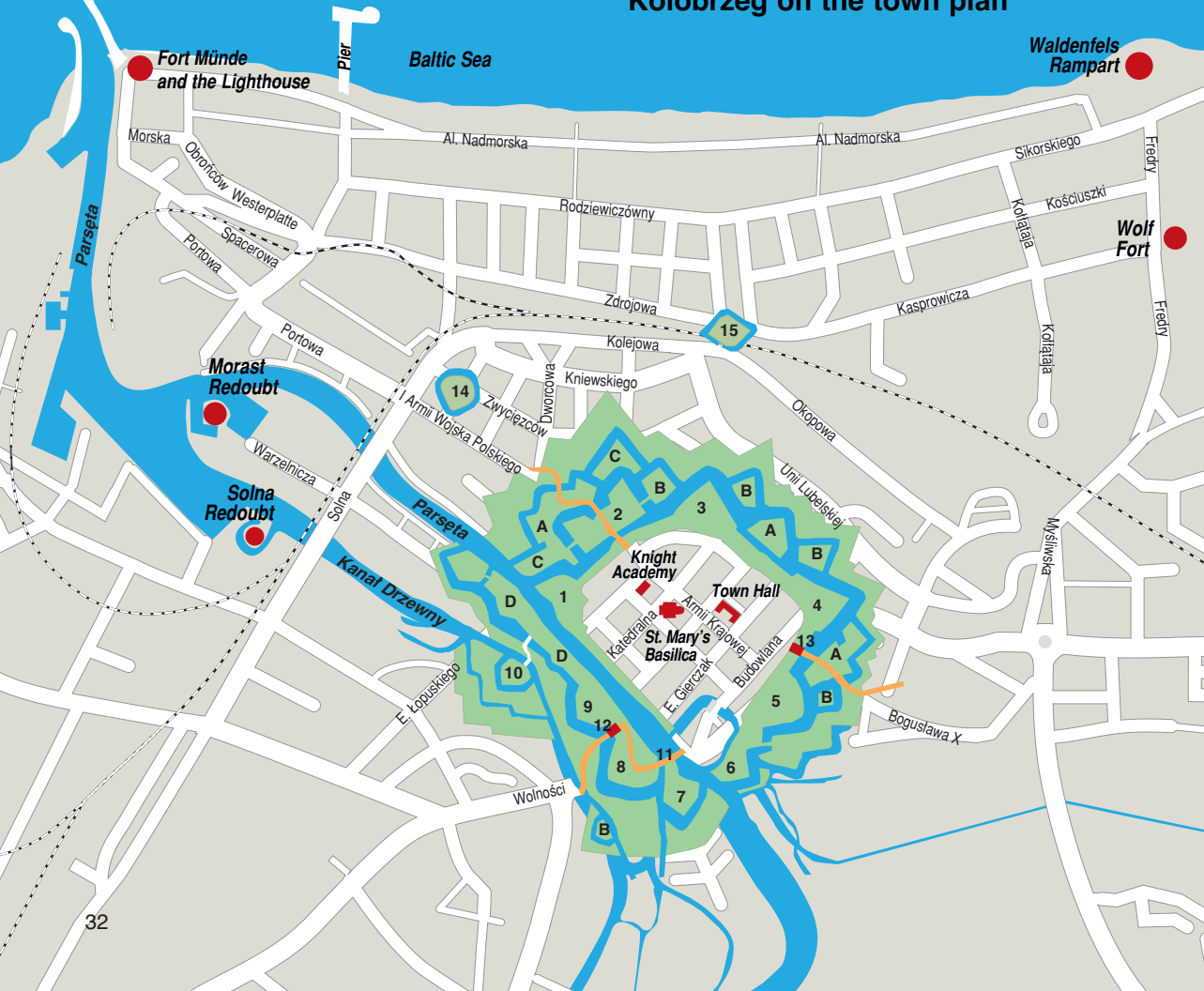


A view over the medieval part of Kolobrzeg in the 1870s during the filling of fortress ditches. The earthenwork still stands; the ditch was filled, a picture by Wilhelm Riedel.

The tradition of Fortress Kolobrzeg revived at the end of the World War II. Initially, for the purposes of war propaganda. By order of the German Minister of Propaganda J. Goebbels Veit Harlan made a big film Kolberg. In November 1944 Kolobrzeg was declared fortress. During the defence of the town in March 1945 the waters of the river were banked up so that the access to the town, just as before, would be hindered. Besieged Waldenfels Rampart refused to yield for a few days and Fort Münde was the last point of defence of the German garrison of the town. Kolobrzeg was conquered on 18 March 1945 by the First Polish Army. Five years after the

war, in already Polish Kolobrzeg the construction of fortifications commenced again due to tense international situation. Along the dunes in the seafront a series of combat bunkers, fire positions for shotguns and watchtowers were built. German steel cupolas were brought here from the Pomerania Wall. On the left bank of the Parsęta estuary a gun battery was established. Since 1957 Kolobrzeg has been rebuilt as a spa.

Main fortifications of Fortress Kołobrzeg on the town plan

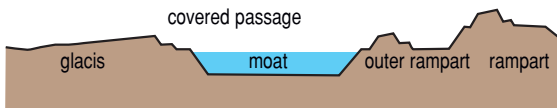


- | | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| 1. Bastion Halberstadt | 8. Bastion Geldern I | A Ravelin |
| 2. Hornwerk Münde
(Horn Work Münde) | 9. Bastion Geldern II | B Half-Moon |
| 3. Bastion Preußen
(Prussia) | 10. Tzîte du Pont | C Contregarde |
| 4. Bastion Neumark
(New March) | 11. Batardeau | D Redan |
| 5. Bastion Pommern
(Pomerania) | 12. Geldern Gate | |
| 6. Bastion Magdeburg | 13. Lauenburg Gate | |
| 7. Bastion Cleve | 14. Kirchows Schanze
(Church Rampart) | |
| | 15. Ziegel Schanze
(Brick rampart) | |

Glossary

bastion	a basic work of a defence circle of a fortress, pentagon-like shaped
batardeau	a work being also a bridge, a dam and shooting position for firing along a water barrier
blokhauz	a combat bunker of earth and wood
contregarde	an extra outer wok in front of main fortifications
horn work	an outer work in the form of two half-bastions strengthening a gate
fort	a permanent work adapted for a circular defence
Spanish knight	a log covered with spikes
half-moon	a separate outer work in the form of a small bastion
ravelin	an outer wok located in the ditch
redan	a triangle-shaped work with two defence sides
redoubt	an outer work (the prototype of a bastion)
rampart	an earth field work in the approaches to a fortress
Tête du Pont	a bridgehead
pitfall	a hidden hole of steep sides

Profile of a defence circle



Visiting Historical Kołobrzeg

It is almost 140 years since the fortress was liquidated. Today Kołobrzeg is an entirely different town, a health resort and a spa. However, the traces and the warfare remains of the past can be seen everywhere.

Let us start with the centre, the seat of the town council – the neo-Gothic Town Hall. It was designed by a distinguished German architect Karl Friedrich Schinckel, then for the town-fortress, hence the mock-defence character of the building. In its middle part we can see a tower resembling a crenel with merlon, and four corner towers. A huge mass of the basilica with original twin towers topped with a spire with a lighthouse also recalls defence traditions. It was in said lighthouse that the main lookout allowing for watching the approaches to the fortress was placed. The man on watch would write his observations down on a piece of paper, put it in a box and then, by using a rope, he would lower the precious information where it would be picked up by a guard who would thereupon run with it to the headquarters. Nearby the Basilica there is the Knight Academy that survived down to our times; it gave many prominent commanders to the Prussian Army.

Let us now walk to the river Parsęta. The turns of its embankments (ul. Rzeczna and Szpitalna) were marked by former fortifications. Classical Gelden Gate in ul. Szpitalna dating back to 1708 ❶, the exit from the town to the west, survived down to our times. Next to it an old smithy can be seen and the building of a military prison, which in Prussian soldiers' jargon used to be called 'Vater Philip'. The bridge over the river Parsęta joining ul. Budowlana and ul. Młyńska dates back to medieval times. For over six centuries it was the only bridge over the river Parsęta. It was successively called: Long, Mill, and Eagle Bridge (Adlerbrücke). In the times of the fortress here there was an important fortification work: 'batardeau' ❷, used for holding up the waters of the river Parsęta.

There were firing ports along the bridge for firing cannons and guns. To the south of the bridge the vestiges of Bastion Magdeburg ⑥ and Bastion Cleve ⑦ can still be seen in the area. Dąbrowskiego Park is also an interesting place. A good stretch of the main fort ditch remained as well as the profile of a defence circle (covered passage and glacis). This group of fortification work was considered of historic importance as early as in 1935. It was here and adjacent meadows that Veit Harlan shot many scenes of his work *Kolberg* in spring 1944. A big group of old fortifications remained in the port area. The Lighthouse built 1945 on the align of the 18th century Fort Münde is an interesting example of French fortification art in this area. The three levels of the fort with firing ports and a well are well preserved. The Morast Redoubt (which also used to be called Schill's Redoubt) located on northern tip of Solna Island comes from the same period (currently the Marina). The youngest building is the Solna Redoubt, located on the left bank of the Drzewny Canal. The few remains of structures located in the area of the amphitheatre that passed into legend of 1807 are also worth seeing. The amphitheatre itself is the Wolf Fort. The earthwork and a moat still exist today. It was here in May and June 1807 that fierce fights between the Prussian battalion of grenadiers and Polish-Italian units took place. The fort was changing hands many times. It was here that the second in command of the fortress, Captain Waldenfels was killed in action. The commander of the siege gave an honourable mention to a Polish soldier Corporal Sokolowski, who was the first to force his way into the fort. The Stone Rampart (Waldenfelsschanze) was built later. After the liquidation of the fortress, just as it does today, offered catering services.



Geldern Gate (Radzikowska Gate) ⑫

Built 1708 . It was here that the curve of exit road from the fortress to the west run from the bridge over the river Parsęta to the bridge over the Drzewny Canal. Currently private property.



Defence Bridge (batardeau) 11

In medieval town and later, in the times of modern fortress, the only bridge over the river Parsēta. Here there were also reservoirs for controlling the water level in moats and for artificial flooding the approaches to the fortress. A defence gallery with loopholes allowed for cannon and gun fire along the river. Northern gallery existed until 1988.



Fort Münde

Built in 1770-1774 as a three-storey tower with a well following French patterns. Converted in 1832-1836. Defended the entry to the port. Currently superimposed upon it is a lighthouse built in 1945.



Morast Redoubt

Built in 1770-1774 on northern tip of Solna Island, in the fork of the river Parsęta and the Drzewny Canal. It was a part of the defence system of the port. Currently a marina.



Solna Redoubt

Built in 1832-1836. It was a part of the defence system of the port. Currently a water sports centre of Polish Scouts' Association.



Wolf Fort (Wolfsberg-Schanze)

Built at the turn of 1806/1807. It defended the access to the port from the east. The area of fierce fights in 1807. Converted in the years 1832-1836. In 1925 the interior of the fort converted into an amphitheatre.



Stone Rampart (Waldenfels-Schanze)

Built in the years 1832-1836 to defend the access to the port from the east and to defend the coast. At the end of the 19th century converted for catering purposes. In March 1945 encircled defence structure.



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