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Admiral Edward Boscawen, c. 1755. Oil painting by Joshua Reynolds in the National Portrait Gallery, London

The Cape of Good Hope and foreign contacts 1735-1755

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Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	vii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i>	1
CHAPTER ONE	
The Danes at the Cape	14
CHAPTER TWO	
French commerce	33
CHAPTER THREE	
The London company: captains, crews and voyages	53
CHAPTER FOUR	
British East Indiamen and the Cape	76
CHAPTER FIVE	
The Dutch and foreign contacts, East and West	98
CHAPTER SIX	
Cape shipping and the war at sea	115
Conclusion	144
List of sources	149
Index to foreign callers, 1735–1755	159
General Index	168

List of Illustrations

Admiral Edward Boscawen, c. 1755	Frontispiece
<i>Steenhoven</i> and other Dutch ships in Table Bay, 1738 or earlier	2
Captain Michael Tønder of the <i>Prins Christian</i> , 1731	15
Elsinore, Kronborg and the Sound, 1739	15
La Caille's triangulation to measure an arc of meridian.	34
John Dean of the <i>Sussex</i> , 1741	54
A London East Indiaman taking on a pilot, mid-18th century	77
Table Bay and the township below Table Mountain, 1742	99
The Boscawen expedition at the Cape, 1748	116

Preface

This is a picture of the Cape of Good Hope in the middle years of its history as a small segment of the Dutch East India Company's vast trading empire. It makes no attempt to tell the whole story of the years 1735-1755 and looks only in passing at such internal events as the expansion of the frontier, clashes between settlers and the indigenous Khoisan, and the emergent economic and social pattern of a colonial society. It sees the Cape rather in what was then regarded as its major rôle: a welcome port of call for passing ships, providing needed supplies for long and arduous voyages and refreshment and relaxation for seafarers. And in this the emphasis is not upon the Dutch themselves, but upon the foreigners from east and west with whom they came into contact and who gave the township on Table Bay - the future city of Cape Town - a cosmopolitan and international atmosphere it has never lost. The timbers of these wooden ships have long since rotted and the men who sailed in them are no more. But the Cape sea route remains as important today as it was in the era of the great national trading monopolies which brought the riches of the east to the homes and tables of the west and in turn profoundly influenced the Asian societies with which they came into contact.

I am greatly in the debt of archivists and librarians in many lands for their generous assistance in helping me to prepare this picture of the Cape and its shipping in the 18th century. I also take the opportunity of offering my sincere thanks to the University of South Africa for providing me with the leave facilities and travelling expenses which made it possible for me to carry out extensive research in Europe and to the Human Sciences Research Council for financial assistance in completing my study of the relevant South African material. It should be added that the views expressed in these pages are my own and do not reflect those of any sponsoring body.

The text requires no special elucidation. The spelling of Christian names has generally been modernized in order to bring a degree of uniformity to the great variety of the period, even among people of the same nationality. Ships, which loom large in these pages, have normally been given the names they bear in the documents of the times: *Leijden* for *Leiden*, for example, and *Kiøbenhavn* for *København*. The variations in the contemporary spelling of Danmark (Denmark) in the names of ships have been arbitrarily simplified by choosing the not uncommon form "Dannemark" and using it in all cases, as in *Kongen af Dannemark*, *Dronningen af Dannemark* and so on. Quotations reflect the idiosyncracies of the writers and the standard of the age. In order to maintain consistency all dates are given in the so-called "New Style" and dates before September 1752 in such British sources as ships' logs have been adjusted to reflect the Gregorian Calendar which did not come into use in the British world until that time. New Year's Day is taken as 1 January and not, as in England before 1752, 25 March.

Introduction

The Dutch East India Company's colony and refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope had always had one foot in the eastern world and the other firmly planted on European soil. Visitors certainly saw it in that light. Those who landed there on first voyages to the east were often astonished by the strangeness of a land in which so many elements in the population had obvious links with other regions of Africa and with countries which lie beyond the Indian Ocean. Those returning looked on the Cape, with its neat houses, cultivated farms and ordered social life, as a first contact with a yet distant homeland in the northern hemisphere.

After the proclamation in 1745 of a vast new district soon to be named Swellendam in honour of the Cape governor Hendrik Swellengrebel and his lady Helena Wilhelmina ten Damme, the settlement was one of considerable geographical extent. It was, however, a small society in numbers. The indigenous Khoisan groups, bastardized and culturally dispossessed, probably formed the largest single element. Their numbers can scarcely have much exceeded 10 000 and there were few Khoi indeed in the south-western Cape by mid-century. For the rest, the Cape was a land of immigrants and their descendants, some voluntary settlers and others forcibly detained there, together with a company establishment for administration and defence. The burghers formed the largest section in 1745. These men, women and children of European birth or origin, augmented by a small number of so-called "Free Blacks", chiefly of Asian descent, numbered rather more than 4 000. They were served, if their needs required it, by upwards of 3 500 slaves and a handful of company servants loaned as farm overseers and schoolteachers. The Dutch East India Company's resident staff of some 1 100 men were mostly time-serving personnel, regularly renewed as occasion demanded



Steenhoven and other Dutch ships in Table Bay, 1738 or earlier. Water-colour by unknown artist in the Africana Museum, Johannesburg

and sometimes increased for defence purposes. In addition, the company and its employees owned about 550 slaves and there were also upwards of 150 convicts and political exiles from the east in the colony, the former swelling the ranks of the slave labour force and the latter living in isolation from the community. At this mid-point in our twenty year survey of foreign contacts, the total population under company jurisdiction in the entire colony did not exceed 9 500, the size of a modest European country town of the period such as Worcester in England.

Natural increase since the Dutch occupation of 1652 had led to a large Cape-born population, both free and slave. Swellengrebel, who became governor in 1739, was himself a Cape colonial by birth, as was his wife. The term "Afrikaander" was coming into use in the early 18th century, but it would seem to have denoted white colonists in general, irrespective of birthplace, to distinguish them from company employees. Among the settlers of European origin, the Dutch were dominant, but there were many who had been born elsewhere or were of non-Dutch parentage. The assisted immigration which had brought so many French-speaking refugees to the Cape in the late 17th century ceased in 1717 and thereafter most newcomers among the adult White burgher population were former company employees who obtained their freedom at the Cape.

By 1750 there were few of the original French settlers still alive and the language was only spoken by recent arrivals and by older people. One of the last survivors of the earlier French immigrants was Jean le Roux of Normandy, who died in 1752 after a successful farming career in the Stellenbosch district. There were burghers from several other European countries outside the United Provinces and British colonial America was also represented. Jan de Wit (John White) of New York, for example, was well known to British visitors at the Cape. It was, however, the Scandinavians and particularly the Germans who figured prominently in the small aristocracy of wealth and social position. They included in the years 1735 to 1755 such men as Andreas Grové of Viborg in Denmark, the Swedes Daniel Pfeil of Karlskrona and Matteus Bergstedt of Stockholm, and the Germans Johann Lorenz Bestbier from the Palatinate, Heinrich Ludwig Blättermann of Sondershausen, Henning Joachim Prehn of Hamburg, Jacob von Reenen and Martin Melck from Memel (Klaipeda), and Johann Friedrich Wilhelm Bötticher of Kappell in Hanover.

There was a still greater variety of national origins among the company's employees, with a heavy preponderance of Scandinavians and Germans, the latter at all levels of the administration. The Dutch East India Company was finding it increasingly difficult to recruit Dutch citizens, especially for the military branch, and Germans were taken on in large numbers. Izak Meinertzhagen of Cologne, appointed to lead the Cape troops in 1745, and Rudolph Siegfried Alleman of Westphalia, captain of the garrison,

commanded many junior officers and lower ranks of German birth. In the administrative grades were the Germans Joachim Nikolaus von Dessin of Rostock, under-merchant, bibliophile and son of an army officer in the Swedish service, Otto Lüder Hemmy of Bremen, future deputy governor, and the secretaries to the council of justice, Daniel Godfried Carnspeck from Pomerania and Johann Friedrich Tiemmendorf of Hamburg. The clerk Otto Friedrich Mentzel, who has left us so detailed a picture of Cape life from 1733 to 1741, came from Berlin.

The origins of the foreign-born slaves and those who obtained a freedom which placed them nominally on an equality with the White burghers were even more diverse. Malagasys predominated in the company's books, but slaves were also brought from more distant lands for both company and burghers: from Ceylon (Sri Lanka), the Indian sub-continent, Indonesia and other parts of south Asia. All these regions were represented among the freemen of non-European background, together with the Chinese Empire, which contributed its quota to the kaleidoscopic Cape. Convicts, often from the Far East, frequently settled as freemen on the expiry of their sentences, competing for labour on unequal terms with poor Whites, to the indignation of the council of policy in 1749. There were in addition a number of political exiles, some of them disaffected princes of Indonesian sultanates. The many languages spoken by the newcomers by compulsion led to the widespread use of creolized Portuguese and Bazar Malay to facilitate communication. Whites in the administration were often fluent in one or both of these forms of speech.

It was in the port settlement in Table Valley, nestling close to the Castle between the mountains and the bay, that the diversity of peoples in the colony made its impact upon visiting strangers. The township, referred to by its modern name Cape Town by William Steevens of the London East Indiaman *Delawar* on his return from China in March 1750, turned its eyes to the sea and the ships which sailed the wide oceans. Table Bay, and for Dutch vessels in the winter months after 1741, Simons Bay, were often crowded with shipping and the Cape township was geared to provide for the needs of captains and crews. For those who went ashore, the port afforded facilities at all levels: the provisioning and repair of ships, board and lodging, medical care, relaxation in congenial surroundings and the opportunity to conduct a profitable private trade, sometimes, as with Captain Jan de Jong of the Dutch East Indiaman *Tolsduijn* in 1747, against company orders.

On the one hand the township offered the refinements of cultivated society and even a seat at the governor's table; on the other it had its rougher side: the slave lodge, a brothel in all but name, and a wide selection of cheap eating-houses, bars and slop shops. The bars were often the scenes of considerable disturbance, to the disgust of sober citizens. One indeed, kept

by the burgher Coenraad Hinke, was censured in 1748. Its owner was stripped of his privileges and shipped off to the Indies as a sailor for sheltering deserters. Another, the "Schotse Tempel", once the home of an Aberdonian, Jacob Thomson, was kept jointly for some years by the burgher François Hendrik Mark and the Bengali "Free Black" Cornelis. Many a sailor too must have emptied his pockets before leaving in the appropriately named tavern, " 't Laatste Stuiverje".

The township in Table Valley was the seat of the colonial government, the temporary abode of a host of company officials, artisans, soldiers and sailors, and the place of confinement of most of the administration's slaves and some of the convicts. Perhaps one in five of the White burghers of the colony had their homes there, as did most of the "Free Blacks". Town dwellers were not slave owners on the grand scale, but many households possessed at least one. The total population would seem to have been about 2 500 in 1745, little more than that of an overgrown village in Europe.

It is interesting to compare the size of the township with the numbers aboard visiting ships in the period 1735 to 1755, when Table Bay and the Simons Bay roadstead on False Bay had an average of about 74 annual callers. It should be remembered in this connection that the Table Bay anchorage in particular was often crowded with shipping. Rather more than three-quarters of the visitors at this time were Dutch and the outward-bound Indiamen of that nation were usually heavily manned. The *Voorsigtigheid* of Delft, for example, had a crew of 281 when she sailed in 1744. Danish ships averaged about 140 men, the complement of the *Kiøbenhavn* on her visit in 1748, and French East Indiamen frequently carried 200 men and more, the average approaching the 180 aboard the *Montaran* in 1749. French vessels were required to carry a large number of officers in training. British ships, much the most regular foreign visitors, were smaller, although the 499 tons at which so many of them were registered was an arbitrary estimate designed to circumvent the regulation which stipulated that larger vessels had to carry a chaplain. Ships of this size, like the *Ilchester* of 1746, were customarily manned by 99 men and a boy. The warships and privateers seen at the Cape in these years often had much larger crews than merchantmen.

Long voyages were carefully planned to take maximum advantage of the seasonal changes in wind direction, with special reference to the monsoons of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. The south-west monsoon assisted outward voyages between April and October in those regions; homeward-bound ships made use of the north-east monsoon during the remainder of the year. The heaviest concentration of Indiamen was therefore to be found at the Cape between late December and early May. Dutch return fleets used to assemble there for the onward voyage and there were times when the total number of men on ships at anchor approached and even exceeded the population of the port settlement.

The years 1735 to 1755 are of considerable interest in the history of foreign contacts with the Cape of Good Hope. They witnessed in the first instance the growing maritime strength of Great Britain, the outbreak of her war with Spain in 1739 - the so-called War of Jenkins' Ear - and its extension in 1744 to a conflict with France during the War of the Austrian Succession. After the end of hostilities in 1748, Britain and France began to consolidate their respective positions in India for the almost inevitable resumption of fighting between them in the Seven Years' War of 1756-1763. In this period of international rivalry the equivocal rôle of the Dutch, and therefore of the Cape administration, played its part. The war at sea did not pass the colony by and its defence became a major consideration.

Conflict between the powers was little to the liking of officials in the pay of the commercial companies operating in Asia, whose network of private trading arrangements cut across national antipathies. The great companies, however, remained jealous of their privileges and these years are remarkable for the absence at the Cape of the ships of unwanted competitors, although such rivals were not absent from the carrying trade.

This hostility to outsiders was long shown to the ships of the reconstituted Danish Asiatic Company of 1732 trading to China, although Danish East Indiamen on the India run were not affected. A change in the Dutch attitude was brought about by an event in 1744 and its sequel, to which we shall refer in the following chapter. Vessels of the Swedish East India Company of 1731 regularly rounded the Cape, but it was not until 1759, when the *Prins Karl* and *Prinssessan Sophia Albertina* anchored in Table Bay on their return from China, that Swedish ships began to call at the settlement. Perhaps the unidentified vessel flying what the look-out thought to be a Scottish flag, which failed to make port against an adverse wind in September 1738, was a Swedish ship in difficulties. The Dutch had been antagonistic to Swedish competitors from the start, as is evident when some men from *Drottningen Ulrica Eleonora*, formerly the London East Indiaman *Heathcote*, touched at the Cape in 1753. They had been arrested for unauthorized entry at Cochin on the Malabar coast and sent to Batavia (Jakarta) for return to Europe. The group included several Britishers, among them the third mate Thomas Ouchterlony of Dundee.

It was the arrival early in 1755 of the *Prinz von Preussen*, bound for Emden from China in the service of a new and short-lived Prussian Asiatic Company, which marked the first breach in exclusiveness, a breach which was to widen considerably later in the century. The Cape authorities gave Captain Groenewee a very cool reception. From April 1734 until that date foreign visitors, with a single exception, had been British, Danish and French, and very seldom was their business suspect. The one exception caused no anxiety. It was a small Portuguese ship, the *São João Baptista*, commanded by José da

Costa, which had been blown off course on a voyage from Brazil to Angola in 1735. Many perfectly acceptable ships rounded the Cape in both directions without calling, a few Portuguese vessels included, although Portugal's eastern empire had long been in sad decline.

The reason for hostility to new competitors was that they were rightly considered to be under the direction of international consortiums which made them less than genuine national companies. Moreover, their merchants, captains and crews were often foreigners who put the expertise they had acquired with the older established companies to the service of the newcomers, concentrating their efforts on the lucrative trade with China. This was particularly true of the Swedes and the Prussians; less so of the reconstituted Danish company. To compound the fault, the new companies were the heirs, in capital and personnel, of another international venture which had been suppressed at the insistence of British, French and Dutch trading interests: the East India Company of the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium), chartered in 1722. This "Ostend Company" had been preceded by a number of independent voyages from that port after 1715, trading with merchants from Mokha to Canton and setting up factories on the Coromandel coast and in Bengal. The company into which these ventures were amalgamated had a short life as an active competitor, although it lingered on until 1774. Its trade was suspended in 1727 and four years later, in return for a political *quid pro quo*, Karl VI of Austria made the suspension permanent. Two ships were permitted to sail to the east to wind up the company's affairs, one of which, the *Concordia*, commanded by Jacob Larmes, anchored in Table Bay in March 1734 on her return voyage to Ostend from Bengal. The company's factories became Austrian colonial appendages until the imperial flag was lowered over the last of them, that on the Coromandel coast, in 1752.

Ostenders visited the Cape between 1716 and 1719, but met with growing opposition from the local authorities. The departure in 1719 of one of these vessels, the *Charles VI*, was to link a Cape settler with the wider world of international rivalries in the east. The ship sailed with a burgher, Frederik Meijer, his wife Cornelia Rosendaal and their daughter Anna Cornelia, leaving behind another daughter, Catharina Elizabeth and her husband Amos Lambrechts. Burghers were not allowed to leave the colony without permission and this unauthorized embarkation, reputedly the first of its kind at the Cape, caused a considerable stir and resulted in the sale of the family possessions and the confiscation by the company of the proceeds. Dissatisfaction with life in the settlement and a desire to further Anna Cornelia's prospects underlay the decision to emigrate and Cornelia Rosendaal seems to have taken the lead in the affair. Anna Cornelia married the Flemish second in command of the ship, Marie-François de Schonamille, scion of a family of Sicilian origin, and a son François-Corneille was born to them and

baptized at the French settlement of Pondicherry on the Coromandel coast in 1721. His father, who became a friend of the future French governor general in the Indies, Joseph-François Dupleix, maintained the imperial presence after 1731 as governor of Banquibazar in Bengal and married François-Corneille into the Dupleix family circle. The young man's grandmother, Cornelia Rosendaal, died in Calcutta towards the beginning of 1746, leaving an inheritance to him and to his Cape cousin Hugo, son of Amos Lambrechts. On hearing the good news, Hugo made immediate application for the restitution of the cash value of his grandparents' goods, but it was not until 1757 that he learned that the Dutch company had finally decided in his favour.

The years 1735-1755 were certainly not without incident in the domestic history of the Cape and a number of aspects may be seen through the eyes of foreign visitors, sometimes, as with money values and the cost and supply of provisions, from a personal angle. The period covers the entire governorship of Swellengrebel from 1739 to 1751 and the first years of a continuing family compact in government under his successor and brother-in-law Rijk Tulbagh. Moreover, the existence of warring factions at the Cape in the years preceding Swellengrebel's appointment did not pass unnoticed by callers. There are also pertinent comments on the attitude of officials to their foreign guests, as well as to administrative shortcomings. Slavery was accepted as a natural condition of life and we find few references to the institution or to the presence of the indigenous Khoisan. In religious matters, the Dutch Reformed Church remained intolerant of other creeds. Lutherans sought freedom of worship in vain, although it was granted to them in Batavia. They and, clandestinely, the Catholics, had to rely on the infrequent ministrations of passing chaplains and priests. Anglican services, however, were held in the Dutch church on occasion for the benefit of visiting Englishmen. Missionary endeavour was limited and the Reformed Church looked unfavourably on the labours of the German Moravian Georg Schmidt among the Khoikhoi from 1737 until 1744. On the other hand, the strictures of the visiting governor general, Gustaaf Willem van Imhoff, in 1743 on the lack of piety among settlers in the interior led to the founding of new Dutch Reformed congregations at Swartland (Malmesbury) and Roodezand (Tulbagh) to supplement those already in being at the Cape, Stellenbosch and Drakenstein (Paarl).

We also gain further insight from foreign visitors into the desire of many burghers for free trade and the importance to them of commercial relations of all kinds with those on passing ships. Burgher participation in the economic life of the Cape was closely controlled, but Batavian citizens enjoyed much greater freedom. The close of the War of the Austrian Succession saw renewed demands at the Cape for independent burgher trade, supported by new economic trends in the United Provinces. Nothing, however, came of them at

that time. Dissatisfaction in this field was understandable, although pressures for political and economic change were perhaps relieved by the dispersion of burghers as the frontier advanced. Nevertheless, this was a period of unrest and, briefly in 1739, of open insurrection. A step in the direction of greater burgher involvement in the Cape economy was taken in 1743, when a chartered company was formed to exploit anticipated gold and silver deposits. Olof de Wet, son of a Swedish mother, was chairman of the board and an active promoter of the scheme. Shareholders included Bestbier and another German burgher, Johann Heinrich Hop from Hanover. The expectations raised by the prospector and self-proclaimed mining expert, Franz Dietrich Müller of Worms, were not, however, fulfilled and operations were abandoned in 1748.

There was a decline in the number of ships calling at the Cape in the years 1735-1755, compared with the total for the previous twenty years following the close of the War of the Spanish Succession. The difference amounted to some ten ships per year. The percentage of Dutch vessels to foreigners also dropped somewhat, although still forming an overwhelming majority, befitting a nation whose home port it was and whose eastern empire was still the greatest among those of the nations of Europe. The decline, however, was a first hint of things to come. Danish ships, about 11% of all foreign visitors in our period, showed a slight proportional increase, to be accounted for in part by the tardy acceptance at the Cape of those on the China run. French shipping represented about 15% of the foreign total, a marked rise despite the avoidance of the Cape by merchantmen during the Anglo-French war and the development of bases in the Mascarenes. The increase gives some indication of the faster tempo of French commercial and political activity beyond the Cape of Good Hope. Almost three-quarters of the foreign callers were British in these years, but this proportion represented a slight drop and the nature of the callers shows some interesting changes. Gone were the independent merchantmen; all those in Table Bay now flew the flag of the East India Company of London. There were, however, far more ships of war in the roadstead, a reflection of the struggle with France. The London company's refreshment station at St Helena had its drawbacks and was in any case less valuable as a port of call than the Cape for outward-bound ships as the island lay to the east of the normal recognized route in the middle of the south-east trade wind belt, of advantage only on homeward voyages.

The standard routes for all vessels engaged in the European trade with the Indies and China varied little. For entry into the North Atlantic, Scandinavians from the Sound generally favoured the northern passage round Scotland. This route, *achter om* in the Dutch phrase, was often used by East Indiamen from the United Provinces, especially in wartime, although they also took the Channel route of the London company's ships. French and Portuguese vessels from Lorient and Lisbon had immediate access to the

Atlantic Ocean. A course was generally set for the Canaries and the Cape Verde Islands - a popular port of call - and East Indiamen then sailed to the south-west towards the South Atlantic island of Trinidad (Trindade) and sometimes as far as the Abrolhos reef off the Brazilian coast. A change of course to the south-east was made in the southern tropics and at length ships found themselves in the belt of prevailing westerlies. From the Cape these westerlies - the famous roaring forties - could be used as far as the islands of Amsterdam and St Paul by ships taking the passage through the Sunda Strait to Batavia and the South China Sea, or by those which followed a more easterly route through the Indonesian archipelago. Some ships for the Coromandel coast or the Bay of Bengal also made use of the roaring forties, but the more usual routes to Arabia, India and Ceylon involved a change of course to the north-east after leaving southern Africa. Ships sometimes took the inner passage between Madagascar and the mainland in winter months, but more frequently made use of the middle and outer passages to the west or the east of the Mascarenes. Return voyages to the Cape across the Indian Ocean were usually more direct, with ships passing to the south of Madagascar. Ships then normally set course for Europe by way of St Helena, Ascension and the Azores, those returning to ports in northern latitudes sailing by way of the Channel or round Scotland as circumstances demanded.

There were nevertheless many deviations from these routes and calls in unusual places: in Norwegian ports by the Danes, home waters to ships of the Kingdom of Denmark and Norway; in Irish harbours and English roadsteads by the Dutch; at Cadiz to load bullion by the French East Indiamen; at Lisbon by the British; in Brazil and on the coasts and islands of the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans by many vessels. Portuguese ships made regular use of Bahia in Brazil on return voyages from India, French East Indiamen sometimes visited Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island and London ships put into Newfoundland harbours on occasion.

Outward-bound East Indiamen carried considerable quantities of coin and bullion for the purchase of commodities, together with a variety of European sale goods, including manufactured woollens, iron and lead. The return cargoes unloaded in the Thames indicate something of the range of eastern products brought to Europe from the east: tea, silks, porcelain and drugs from China; cottons, silks and saltpetre from India; pepper from the Malabar coast and Indonesia; coffee from Mokha.

The slave-trade between Madagascar and the Americas, which frequently touched the Cape in the earlier years of the 18th century, had virtually come to an end by May 1730 as far as the Dutch settlement was concerned, when Francis Williams took the *Rudge* galley out of Table Bay on a voyage to the River Plate. One such voyage remains to be discussed, but for the rest, the trade in slaves which affected the Cape between 1735 and 1755 was carried

out to supply a labour force for company settlements of various nations from St Helena to Indonesia, the Dutch colony at the southern tip of Africa included.

Piracy was a diminishing threat as the century advanced. Barbary corsairs operating off the north-west coast of Africa remained a potential danger and passports were carried by merchantmen as some guarantee of immunity. Maratha pirates infested the Arabian Sea until 1756, when a British punitive expedition destroyed their fleet and captured the chief stronghold, Gheriah. The former threat by European pirates operating from Madagascar was by 1735 a thing of the past. They had had a field day before being driven off to other climes, taking the London East Indiaman *Cassandra* in 1720, the Portuguese ship *Nossa Senhora do Cabo* in the following year and successfully attacking the Cape's Delagoa Bay outpost of those days in April 1722. It was the spirited, but unavailing resistance of the *Cassandra*'s commander, the Scotsman James Macrae, which earned him the governorship of Madras, a fortune and retirement to an estate in his native land. His home, Orangefield House, was destined to achieve special status in a new age of international travel as the original terminal building and control tower for Scotland's Prestwick airport.

The early defence of Britain's trade against piracy in the Indian Ocean was entrusted to a naval squadron under the command of the choleric and indecisive Commodore Thomas Mathews. It reached the Cape in 1721, but the cruise added no glorious page to the annals of the Royal Navy and the London East India Company prayed that Mathews would never again be sent out to serve in eastern waters. Naval action was on a much greater scale in the years after 1739. Well-armed East Indiamen, miniature ships of the line themselves, assisted naval craft and privateers, and the Anglo-French conflict of 1744 brought considerable forces into the Indian Ocean.

General navigation in this period presented age-old challenges and experience counted for much in a day of imperfect charts and instruments. Ships' logs are full of details of land sightings, an important check on navigation when precise positions could not be accurately determined by other means. John Hadley's double-reflection quadrant of 1731 marked a more scientific approach to the correct measurement of longitude, but further advances were the work of the second half of the century. Errors of judgement in making a landfall were not infrequent and led to such disasters as the loss of the Dutch East Indiaman the *Visch* while attempting an unauthorized entry into Table Bay by night in 1740.

Although the great majority of voyages were accomplished without incident, there were many disasters along the sea routes linking Europe and the Far East. Cyclones in the Indian Ocean were greatly feared and several ships

limped into port at the Cape in a deplorable state, sometimes so badly battered that they could never put to sea again. There were some incredible escapes from disaster. The outward-bound Enkhuizen East Indiaman *Petronella Alida* was holed in the Cape Verde Islands in 1737, but a stone which lodged in her damaged keel enabled her to reach the Cape in safety. She was, however, condemned as unseaworthy at Saldanha Bay in 1739. Shipwrecks occurred all too often in Cape waters. The great storm of 1722 in Table Bay, which destroyed the ten ships then at anchor, including the London East Indiamen *Addison*, *Nightingale* and *Chandos*, was followed by others in 1728 and 1737 which wrecked more Dutch vessels. The second disaster saw the loss of the homeward-bound East Indiamen *Ijpenrode*, *Flora*, *Paddenburg*, *Westerwijk*, *Goudriaan*, *Buijs*, *Duijnbeek* and *Roodenrijs*, as well as the locally-based brigantine, the *Victoria*. Another Cape fatality was the loss of the *Reijgersdaal*, outward-bound, in October 1747. Losses caused by storms in Table Bay led to the use of False Bay as a winter anchorage for Dutch ships and also to the abortive attempt to provide shelter behind a protective breakwater.

Improvements in ship construction in the interests of greater safety and efficiency date mainly from the later 18th century. Indian teak began to replace oak and copper sheathing also helped to protect East Indiamen from the ravages of the teredo worm in tropical waters. The straight-sided ship was introduced, eliminating the "tumble-down" topside and giving greater security to the masts in a wider spread of the shrouds. Design long continued to incorporate the dangerous waist, always liable to ship heavy seas, but the *Boscawen* of the London company, built at Blackwall on the Thames in 1748, was a pioneer among flush-decked vessels. Advances in rig, making ships easier to handle and more readily answerable to the helm, continued throughout the century. By 1750 topgallant sails were being carried on all three masts of East Indiamen and the cumbersome lateen was being replaced on the mizen-mast by the more manageable spanker. British methods of construction had their influence in the United Provinces and one Dutch East Indiaman, the *Prinses van Oranje*, named for the wife of the stadtholder, Willem IV, was built on the Thames in 1747. A contributory cause of unseaworthiness on Dutch return ships was considered to be the excessive load of ill-distributed additional cargo taken aboard in the east as private trade.

Shipwreck was only one hazard among many on East India voyages. Fire and explosion also took their toll. This was the fate of more than one Dutch East Indiaman, including the homeward-bound *Hilversbeek*, which blew up in the Azores in June 1741. Fire reaching the powder-room could have disastrous consequences.

Few voyages were unaccompanied by sickness and death aboard. Even sea-

sickness could lead to acute despair. A soldier on the Zeeland return ship *Westcapelle*, at the Cape in 1735, gave this as the reason for his attempted suicide. Accidents aloft and drownings were not uncommon, but it was the effects of long months at sea with diminishing supplies of water and provisions which caused the greatest losses. Protracted voyages were not always the result of the adverse weather conditions alone. There were often long delays in port and some ships were even taken off their normal route to enable the captain to negotiate private trade of his own. Calms and contrary winds could cause disasters of large proportions. The Dutch ship *Diemermeer*, returning from Ceylon without a Cape call, was becalmed off the Guinea coast in 1747, losing all but nine of her crew. Her hempen cable eventually parted and she ran on shore where she was pillaged and burnt by villagers. There were only two survivors. Another Dutch East Indiaman, the *Casteel van Woerden*, drifted round the Arabian Sea for fifteen months before reaching her final destination, Colombo, late in 1744. Some 250 men died aboard this prototype of the legendary "Flying Dutchman".

Although officers and passengers lived in reasonable comfort aboard ship, except in extraordinary circumstances, life afloat was by no means as pleasant for the crews. Efforts were made to keep the lower decks clean, but vermin abounded. Crowded and insanitary conditions encouraged the spread of disease and medical attention was rough and ready. Ship fever was common, respiratory complaints and dysentery were widespread and dietary deficiency led to scurvy. Ships often carried the very products which alone could prevent scorbutic diseases, but it was not until the later 18th century that their certain preventive properties were recognized. Meanwhile, hundreds died unnecessarily and the death rate was often staggeringly high, even on voyages of moderate length. It was, however, realized that men brought on shore in an advanced state of sickness frequently recovered with remarkable speed. For many, therefore, the Cape anchorage provided a reprieve from an otherwise inevitable fate.

We have taken a general look at the Cape and the shipping which passed round it. We now view more closely the foreigners who visited the Dutch East India Company's southern African refreshment station. Here was a valuable port of call, not only for the sick, but also for those whose duty lay in ensuring the safety of ships and cargoes on long voyages to Europe or the east. We shall see something not only of these activities, but also of relations with those on shore, of shipboard discipline, of desertion and escape, of servitude and freedom, of trade and politics, and of human endeavour in peace and war.

1

The Danes at the Cape

Danish ships began to trade round the Cape of Good Hope after an East India Company had been chartered by Christian IV in 1616. Dutch merchants in Copenhagen had much to do with the scheme and in August 1618 a ship was sent out to Ceylon to prepare the way for commerce with that island. A fleet of merchantmen and naval vessels followed a few months later under the command of Ove Giedde and in July 1619 reached Table Bay with two French privateers captured in the Cape Verde Islands. Second in command of the military forces with the expedition was Erik Grubbe, who was accompanied by his wife. Soon after the ships dropped anchor she gave birth to a boy who was given the incongruous if appropriate name, Cabo de Bona Esperanza. This was perhaps the first White birth at the Cape, more than 30 years before the arrival of the Dutch to inaugurate permanent settlement. Sadly, however, both mother and son died before the fleet sailed on.

The Danes were unsuccessful in Ceylon, but in November 1620 they secured a foothold at Tranquebar on the Coromandel coast. This Indian trading outpost, protected by the Dansborg defences, became the hub of all Danish commerce in the Indies. Tranquebar also developed into a noted missionary centre after the arrival in July 1706 of the Germans Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau, ordained ministers of the Lutheran Church. When they visited the Cape on that initial voyage the two missionaries were disappointed to find little evidence of deep religious feeling among the Lutherans living there under Dutch rule.

The first Danish East India Company was a small-scale venture and was wound up in 1650. It was, however, reactivated under a new charter twenty years

Captain Michael Tønder of the *Prins Christian* 1731. Clay figure made in Canton in Handels- og Søfartsmuseet, Elsinore



Elsinore, Kronborg and the Sound, 1739. Gouache by J.J. Bruun in Handels- og Søfartsmuseet, Elsinore



later and made modest profits until the early years of the following century. Trading contacts were established to associate Tranquebar with Asian commerce from Mokha to China, although attempts to set up permanent factories on the Malabar coast, in Bengal and in Indonesia met with little success. Losses incurred after the resumption of war with Sweden in 1709 led to the liquidation of the company in 1729. Control in Tranquebar was vested as an interim measure in the crown and private interests not only took over the trade of the Indies, but also forged a direct link in 1730-1732 between Copenhagen and China. The voyage to Canton and back was undertaken by the man-of-war *Prins Christian*, a captured Swedish frigate. Her captain was the naval officer Michael Tønder, a maimed veteran of the Great Northern War, and trade negotiations were entrusted to a Dutch speaker, Pieter van Hurk, who had previously been to China in the service of the East India Company of the Austrian Netherlands and was later to become a director of a new Danish company trading in eastern waters.

It was at this point that the "Ostend Company" was forced to yield to international pressure and to leave the East India trade in the hands of the major monopolies. Flemish interests sought new outlets for their commerce and a plan was put forward in 1728 to trade from the then Danish port of Altona in northern Germany as a branch of the Copenhagen company. This scheme too had to be abandoned in the face of British, Dutch and French hostility. Scandinavia itself offered possibilities, as Pieter van Hurk discovered, and it was against this background of suspicion in London, Paris and the United Provinces that Denmark re-entered the world of national companies trading in the Far East with the chartering of an Asiatic Company by Christian VI on 12 April 1732. The enterprise was essentially a national one, although foreigners were associated with its commerce. Pieter van Hurk was one and another was the supercargo (merchant) John MacCulloch on the *Dronning Juliane Maria* which Svend Fenger brought to the Cape in 1755 on a voyage to China.

This extension of trading activities by the Asiatic Company across the South China Sea was a new departure. The old Danish East India Company had not been directly involved in the field, but trade with China had been a prime objective of the hated "Ostend Company". It is not to be wondered at that the Dutch took a jaundiced view of Pieter van Hurk's connection with the pilot venture which preceded the creation of the chartered company of 1732. The *Prins Christian* had been received civilly enough at the Cape on her return voyage in March of that year, but in the following November the colonial government was instructed to refuse supplies of all kinds to Danish ships on voyages to and from China or any other regions with which Denmark had hitherto had no commercial relations. At the same time the ships of the new Swedish East India Company were placed under a complete embargo.

This then was the position in 1735. Regular China voyages by Danish vessels, destined to become the mainstay of the Asiatic Company's prosperity, had been initiated in the previous year, but from 1733 until 1744, when the ship *Kongen af Dannemark* put in an unexpected appearance, all Danish company vessels at the Cape were on the authorized Tranquebar run. It was not until mid-century that Danish East Indiamen in the China trade made use of Cape facilities with any regularity, a departure which indicates a change of attitude by the Dutch authorities.

The change was brought about by the *Kongen af Dannemark* affair. This ship, commanded by Philippus Jacobus Derdeijn, sailed from the Sound on the last day of December 1742, bound for Tranquebar and Canton. A 24 gun vessel with a crew of 140, she carried several supercargoes for the transaction of trade and a large quantity of coin for the purchase of tea, silks, porcelain and other goods from the Chinese merchants. Derdeijn had to anchor for several weeks in Norwegian waters before taking his ship into the Atlantic by the northerly route. He made for the Brazilian coast, but failing to round Cape Santo Agostinho, returned to Ireland to shelter in Kinsale Harbour from September 1743 until January 1744. There he provisioned ship and signed on additional crew. *Kongen af Dannemark* finally reached Table Bay via the Cape Verde Islands on 3 May 1744, more than sixteen months after leaving Denmark.

Derdeijn and his chief officers asked for food and water, but to their astonishment in view of the difficulties of the voyage and the international tradition of help for those in trouble, the independent fiscal, Pieter van Reede van Oudtshoorn, refused to entertain their request in terms of the governor's instructions to him. It is possible that Swellengrebel might have taken a different line had he been on the spot to assess the situation. He had, however, gone to Rondebosch to attend the sale of property belonging to his late father, Johannes Swellengrebel, and had taken with him the deputy governor, Rijk Tulbagh. The fiscal found means to isolate *Kongen af Dannemark*, preventing contact with the shore and with the Danish vessel *Docqven*, returning from India to Copenhagen under the captaincy of Peter Nielsen Roed. Even the Dutch post at Saldanha Bay was alerted, in case Derdeijn should slip out of harbour to seek shelter there.

Kongen af Dannemark's captain was obliged to admit defeat and on 9 May raised anchor to continue his voyage. Two weeks later, however, news reached the Castle that the Danish ship had run into a heavy storm off the Cape and had been forced to make for False Bay. She was badly damaged and in urgent need of help. The authorities thought at first that this might be a ruse, but a commission of inspection under Jacobus Möller, the marine superintendent, reported on 28 May that *Kongen af Dannemark* was indeed in bad shape. The Cape could not supply all her needs and in any case Dutch timbers did

not match the specifications of Danish vessels. Permission was granted for a Danish deputation to return to Europe on Dutch ships to discuss the situation with the directors in Copenhagen. The deputation, which included a second mate Christian Sommer, also carried a letter from the captain and supercargoes complaining bitterly about the treatment meted out by the Cape government to a ship already in poor condition, even before the fateful storm. The mate Sommer was to rise to captain's rank before his death off Tranquebar in July 1748 as commander of the *Kiøbenhavn*.

There ensued a period of enforced idleness. A request for some of *Kongen af Dannemark*'s crew to be taken into the Dutch service was turned down, although a year later 27 sailors and a second mate were drafted to various ships of the Dutch return fleet, together with four compatriots left behind when Niels Hansen Gram's *Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia* sailed for home. Idleness breeds mischief and in September 1744 a sailor was clapped in irons for attacking James White, one of the crew taken on in Ireland. The rumour that the man was soon to be released elicited a letter of protest from Patrick Bourke and other English-speaking crew members. Should this be true, they wrote, "We make it our requests that you will send us ashore, for we fear if he be let loose that he will come at Night and Kill us in our hammacks (*sic*)".

The Danish company's decision concerning *Kongen af Dannemark* reached the Cape in March 1745, when Reynert Jansen of the *Tranquebar* sailed into Table Bay from Copenhagen. *Kongen af Dannemark* was to be legally declared unseaworthy and was to remain at anchor until the underwriters gave permission for her to be sold. Two months later Dirk Wolter van Nimwegen of the Dutch company's warship, the *Leijden*, brought disagreeable news of the affair. The Danish directors had been incensed by the complaints about the Cape authorities they had received from the deputation of the previous year. They had taken the matter up at the highest level and Christian VI had instructed his envoy in The Hague to protest to the states general. In his letter, passed on by the states general to the Dutch company, the Danish ambassador, Nils Griis, contrasted Dutch inhumanity at the Cape with the kindness shown shipwrecked sailors of that nation by the Danes in the Faroes. The protest had its effect, for in March 1745 it was decided that henceforth Danish ships on the China run would be given the freedom of the Cape anchorage. The Dutch company asked the Cape authorities to comment on the Danish charges. Swellengrebel and his council of policy disclaimed any knowledge of the state of the Danish ship when it first arrived and pointed out that in sending the Danes on their way they were only acting on orders. There were no further repercussions. The Dutch directors asked that every facility be afforded Danish vessels coming to the assistance of *Kongen af Dannemark*, but warned that care should be taken to prevent *morshandel*, that illegal private trade against which the great monopolies fought an unrelenting and largely fruitless battle.

This was not the Danish king's first intervention in affairs at the Cape. A Danish missionary who visited the settlement in 1740 brought news to Christian VI of the disabilities under which Lutherans in the colony suffered. The king's request that Cape Lutherans be accorded freedom of worship was laid before the states general and the directors of the Dutch company in 1741. Christian VI's intervention led to the taking of a census of Lutherans at the Cape and aroused vain hopes among them of an imminent change in the religious dispensation at the settlement. The chaplain of *Kongen af Dannemark*, Petrus Schouw, regularly conducted services while he was at the Cape, preaching in German. He must also have confirmed children of Lutheran parents in the faith. Swellengrebel, of Lutheran background, raised no objections to the chaplain's ministrations.

On 25 May 1745 Peter Nielsen Roed paid his last visit to the Cape, this time in command of *Dronningen af Dannemark*, bound for Tranquebar and China. He took aboard the money chests and cargo carried by Derdeijn's vessel and embarked as many men as he could, leaving the captain and a skeleton crew to await the final disposal of *Kongen af Dannemark*. The fate of Roed's ship is one of the many mysteries of the sea. She reached Canton, but after passing through the Sunda Strait on her return voyage, disappeared without trace in the Indian Ocean. Early in 1746 Rolof Kierulf brought the China ship *Christiansborg Slot* to the Cape with the official authorization for the sale of *Kongen af Dannemark*, now riding on rotting cables and a potential danger to herself and to other shipping. The sale took place towards the end of April, while Kierulf's ship and Emanuel Sporing's *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark*, bound for Tranquebar, were still in port. As a result, the Cape administration was able to buy the hull, useful for its wood, a small boat for service in False Bay, some cannon for the defences and a quantity of masts, spars and other accessories. *Kongen af Dannemark*'s foremast was to help the Dutch ship *Haarlem* continue her voyage to Ceylon in 1749 and her rudder was fitted to the damaged *Hercules* from that island in the following year.

The visiting Danes sailed on, but there remained at the Cape the skeleton crew, presided over, in the best traditions of the sea, by their captain. Most were repatriated with the Dutch return fleet of 1746, Derdeijn and his officers travelling as gentlemen of leisure and the crew members working their passages. There is a reference in November 1747 to some Danes left at the Cape who had been rescued from vagrancy by signing on with the Dutch, but there is no indication that they were from Derdeijn's ship. Two men, however, stayed on at the Cape and became burghers: Peter Andreas Christian Wydeman of Copenhagen and David de Leeuw from Glückstadt in Holstein. The latter settled in Swellendam, although he was apparently not a productive asset to the new district. The way was now open for all Danish ships to touch at the Cape and the extended invitation was accepted by the future company director Jens Werner Ackeleye of *Dronningen af Dannemark* - a new ship of that name - when he called on 21 April 1749 on his voyage to China.

Although losses at sea among Danish East Indiamen were never excessively high, it is surprising how many of the fine ships mentioned in these pages ultimately met with disaster, some, like *Dronningen af Dannemark*, vanishing without trace. The years 1749-1752 were particularly fateful. The *Kjøbenhavn* was lost with all hands off the Faroes at the end of December 1749 and the *Christiansborg Slot*, outward-bound for China under Lyder Ridder Holmann, ran aground in the Kattegat in December 1750. She managed to limp into the Swedish port of Gothenburg, but was found to be unseaworthy and had to be sold. Her first supercargo was Derdeijn's former purser, Marcus Christian Svendsen. *Docqven*, commanded by Niels Haagenen Due, called at the Cape in November 1750 on a voyage to Tranquebar, but disappeared on the homeward run in the following year. The captain and his son Haagen Nielsen perished with her. We learn from the log of the London East Indiaman *Essex* that *Docqven* had been in some danger at the Cape in February 1749 when she was returning to Copenhagen under the same captain. Fire broke out near the fo'c'sle, but the blaze was fortunately soon brought under control. *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark*, then commanded by Svend Fenger, was one of two Danish ships lost on the southern Cape coast in the years 1750 and 1752.

The first of these disasters occurred to the East Indiaman *Elefanten*, whose captain, Andreas Evensen Grimsta, was evidently a brutal man and insensitive to the sufferings of others. The first mate too was hardly a popular figure. Nathanael Aars spent part of this particular voyage in custody for theft and ultimately came to assume the captain's heartless rôle. *Elefanten* had visited the Cape in 1748 under Jesper With's command, but she was a fairly new ship, built in England and well-found. She sailed from the Sound on her last voyage on 8 January 1749 and Grimsta brought her to the Cape for repairs to be carried out in False Bay in May and June of that year. Fever was rampant aboard on the further passage to Tranquebar, which was reached on 14 September. Some six weeks later *Elefanten* was despatched to Sumatra (Sumatera), returning to the Coromandel coast early in the next year. She sailed for home on 4 March 1750. The Indian Ocean crossing was long and arduous, with variable winds and heavy storms. Provisions and water ran short and there were many deaths and much sickness among the crew before the ship reached the mouth of the Gouritz River, west of Mossel Bay, on 5 August. The crew's only thought was to reach the shore and discipline completely broke down. On 8 August *Elefanten* was deliberately allowed to drift on to the rocks. Local farmers assisted in the rescue operations and the last three men were taken off on 16 August, not long before the vessel's timbers were finally shattered, strewing cargo along the beach.

The German-born landdrost of the Swellendam district, Johann Andreas Horak, came down to the shore to arrange for the accommodation with farmers in the vicinity of the 78 men saved. The colonists could not be persuaded to

guard the goods scattered on the beach and there were fears that they intended to steal what they could. It was, however, a sailor from *Elefanten* who picked up the chalice and paten used aboard in the communion service and also found a small chest containing miscellaneous wares. He sold his loot to a farmer, but the purchaser was traced with the help of the authorities and compelled to return the items without compensation.

The farmers soon tired of their unexpected guests and undertook to transport them overland, at a price, to the Cape. The journey took about three weeks and groups were despatched at intervals from early September. Grimsta reached the port settlement on 26 October 1750 and was well received by the governor. His crew were lodged on Dutch ships and complaints of ill-usage were stilled when Swellengrebel issued orders that the Danes were to be shown every courtesy. In November, Due's ship *Docqven* arrived on her voyage to Tranquebar. The captain was short of men and took a number of the shipwrecked sailors on board. They doubtless went down with that unfortunate vessel on her homeward passage. The Cape gained some settlers as a result of the wreck of *Elefanten*: Johan Christian Bresler and Johan David Groodschel of Copenhagen, and the surgeon in the Land van Waveren (Tulbagh), Nicolaj Fuchs of Rendsburg. Most, however, returned to Europe on Dutch ships and many men remained in the service of that country. Grimsta sailed on the *Hoop* and at length reached Copenhagen on 3 June 1751. An enquiry into the loss of his ship held on 6 October of that year apportioned no specific blame and a few weeks later the captain sailed again for Tranquebar on Michael Jacobsen Rønne's *Prinsesse Vilhelmine Caroline*. Grimsta died at Tranquebar in July 1756 and in our catalogue of Danish maritime disasters we may note that the vessel on which he sailed to India vanished between the Cape and St Helena in 1755 on her return voyage from China under the captaincy of Poul Kock.

Kronprinsessen af Danmark sailed from Copenhagen on her last voyage on 12 October 1750, reaching Tranquebar on 30 May of the following year. She lay at anchor for two weeks in Table Bay at the beginning of February, when Captain Fenger had the pleasure of attending a farewell banquet to the retiring governor, Swellengrebel, and also represented his company at the funeral of Governor Wake of Bombay, a ceremony to which we shall return in discussing British visitors. After loading calico and other goods at Tranquebar, Fenger sailed to the Malabar coast for pepper, where he narrowly escaped detection by a pirate fleet. *Kronprinsessen af Danmark* left Calicut on 4 February 1752 with two Portuguese stowaways aboard.

The crossing of the Indian Ocean was uneventful enough and was enlivened by a competition designed to clean the ship up. The reward of a tot of brandy was offered to any man who could collect 1 000 cockroaches. In little more than five weeks more than 38 000 of these omnivorous insects had been

caught. As the ship approached the African coast in mid-April the weather worsened and the crew had to man the pumps day and night. The vessel was in grave danger of sinking and the first mate Rasmus Munck expressed his fears in sombre verses inscribed in the log.

Kronprinsessen af Dannemark at last reached land near Mossel Bay on 24 May. Contact was made with farmers on shore and with the landdrost Horak, and it was decided early in June to enter the bay in order to winter there. By this time the crew were in a sorry state. There had been a number of deaths and many of the survivors were sick. The ship anchored on 9 June and provisions were brought by farmers to succour the needy. It soon became apparent that *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* was in too bad a condition for repair and in July and August the cargo was brought ashore. Arrangements were made locally for the erection of shelters to store the goods and to house the crew. Two carpenters were sent from the Cape to inspect the ship and towards the end of August it became necessary to beach her. Information had been sent to Copenhagen about the disaster and in October most of the stranded Danes travelled overland to the Table Valley settlement in groups, leaving Fenger and 25 men to guard the stricken vessel and the cargo. The captain, however, had to visit the Cape for some weeks to make arrangements to pay the men and to discuss their repatriation. One problem arose over reimbursement for clothes purchased from the burgher Jan George Smal, who was among those who provided lodging for the Danes. Whilst awaiting repatriation some of the crew helped on the farms.

Those who had been sent to the settlement went back to Europe on the Dutch ships *Hercules*, *Slooten* and *Huijgewaard*, and on Rønne's *Prinsesse Vilhelmine Caroline*, returning early in 1753 from Tranquebar. Of those on the Dutch East Indiamen several absconded in Amsterdam, one was left behind when his ship called at Plymouth and another broke his leg and had to remain in Middelburg. Fenger and his men at Mossel Bay had a longer wait, enlivened on occasion by visits from the landdrost and his family. Many toasts were drunk when guests were present, each accompanied by a cannon shot: 36 on one day; 27 on another. At last a salvage expedition sent out from Copenhagen in ships loaned by the Danish West India and Guinea Company reached Simons Bay in mid-July 1753. These vessels were the frigate *Prins Christian*, under the command of Jørgen Maartensen Grønborg, and *Rigernes Ønske*, captained by Johan Christian Hove. Before these ships reached the scene of the wreck and after permission had been obtained, an auction of the hull and fittings of *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* was held, to which farmers came from far and wide.

Rigernes Ønske sailed into Mossel Bay on 19 September 1753 and the *Prins Christian* on 6 October. Within two weeks the beached cargo had been taken aboard the rescue vessels and the captain and most of the remaining crew had

embarked for the voyage back to Copenhagen. The youngest mate, Michael Hansen Lindegaard, decided to see a little more of the country and travelled to the Cape overland. The West India Company ships spent a month at the Cape on their return journey, sailing for home on 7 December 1753 and a safe arrival in Denmark. While they lay at anchor in Table Bay, William Hutchinson brought the London East Indiaman *Godolphin* in from Bengkulu in the East Indies and was able to obtain a useful cable from the Danes, previously part of *Kronprinsessen af Danmark*'s equipment.

Fenger's long stay at the Cape introduced him and his men to many burghers and the names of a few they met in the Mossel Bay region are recorded. These include Izak Meijer, from whom useful information was obtained in early June 1752, and a farmer Adam Barnard, who was of great assistance in the following month. The chief carpenter of Fenger's ship, Niels Hendriksen Gunter, and his assistant Christian Mortensen Marreboe figure in the Cape records in connection with a debt incurred while they were at Mossel Bay. As with earlier Danish disasters at the Cape, the Copenhagen company's loss was the settlement's gain in manpower. Two former soldiers of the Tranquebar garrison, Ole Pedersen and Ole Mortensen, elected to remain behind; so too did the cooper Sivert Jacobsen Wiid. To these may be added the future Cape burgher Rollof Fischer of Copenhagen, left at the Cape by the Danish East Indiaman *Prinsesse Louise*.

Most Danish ships, and indeed the majority of vessels from other countries, went quietly about their business on the high seas and their presence at the Cape is merely noted in the daily journal and in the official communications sent back by the government to the homeland or on to Batavia. We learn a little more from passing references to Danish visitors in the logs of other vessels at anchor in the roadstead. In late April 1747 John Lyon, chief mate on Benjamin Lowe's *Walpole* returning from Canton to the Thames, noted a strange ship in the offing between Green Point and Robben Island, "with an old tore Dans Jack at her Ensign staff". This was the now familiar *Kronprinsessen af Danmark* with Sporing in command, bound for Copenhagen. A British warship, the *York*, sailing for home from the Coromandel coast in January 1750, saw the same Danish East Indiaman in Table Bay, again under Sporing's captaincy, on another return voyage from Tranquebar. Naval personnel may be excused their ignorance of restrictions in the contemporary struggle to maintain monopoly trading rights and the *York*'s log records: "A Sweeds Ship Anchor'd here". The Danes, far less frequent Cape callers than the British, sent letters to Europe on occasion with London East Indiamen. Augustus Townshend of the *Augusta* returning from China performed this service for Kierulf of the *Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia* in early May 1743. Both vessels left for home at about the same time, but the *Augusta* may have been a faster sailer and the duplication of letters as a precaution against loss was a common practice. The communication was to

be delivered to the Danish company's London agent, John Collet. Danish ships were also used by the Dutch to carry official letters. The *Tranquebar* carried mail of this kind to the Dutch factory at Nagappattinam on the Coromandel coast when she sailed in April 1745 from Table Bay.

East Indiamen regularly embarked a few passengers, among them officials serving in the factories and settlements of the Far East. Danish vessels were no exception. Early in 1734, for example, the *Wendela*, commanded by Jørgen Mathias Foss, touched at the Cape with the retiring royal governor of Tranquebar, the sea-captain Diderich Mühlenfort, aboard. Mühlenfort, who held that post during the years of the reconstruction of Danish East India trade, was a fluent Dutch speaker, as a financial transaction he recorded at the Cape indicates. In May 1747 the former second in command of the British settlement at Madras, William Monson, who was accompanied by a young writer with the London company, transferred in Table Bay from *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* to the *Walpole* of his own nation. Monson's departure from India was in the aftermath of a British setback on the Coromandel coast to which we shall later turn our attention. A similar transfer took place in February of the following year when an Englishman William Desbordes, who had reached the Cape from Batavia on the Dutch vessel the *Hoop*, continued his voyage with the Danes on With's *Elefanten*. Three men left behind when *Elefanten* sailed worked their passage back to Europe on ships of the Dutch return fleet. When Caspar Fenger brought the *Tranquebar* to the Cape in March 1754 from Copenhagen, a passenger Johannes de Wet disembarked. He was no doubt Johannes Matthias, son of Johannes Carolus de Wet, no stranger to the Danes as we shall see.

Desertions from ships lying at anchor in the Cape roadstead were not infrequent and evasions and attempted evasions by sea of company servants and slaves became an increasingly serious problem in the 18th century, with heavy punishments for would-be escapees and for those who helped them. When Sporing brought *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* to the Cape in 1747, four men deserted and nine others were lost when a boat from the ship capsized in Table Bay. The fatalities included the quartermaster Hans Hoff. Faced with a depleted crew, Sporing decided to release a sailor Christian Brun who had been arrested for threatening a quartermaster Christian Andersen. Trained men could not be allowed to remain idle in the stormy weather then prevailing. When *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* had called outward-bound in the previous year three Dutch deserters and a Singhalese slave Alexander, the property of the German burgher surgeon at the Cape Johann Georg Hauptfleisch, had managed to escape on her. Alexander was taken to Tranquebar, where the governor, Hans Ernst Bonsack, determined to send him back again to the Dutch settlement. The slave, however, succeeded in making his escape once more and Hauptfleisch gave a power of attorney to Johannes Keijl in Batavia to handle the matter should Alexander be found

again. Sporing's ship was once more in the news early in 1750 on his last return voyage as her captain. He tried to take some shipwrecked sailors from the French East Indiaman the *Centaure* on board to work without wages, but his manning problems were solved when eleven Dutch deserters emerged from their hiding-places after *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* had sailed.

The *Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia* left with three deserters from the settlement in 1743. One, Peter Jørgensen Brun, was from Christiansand in Norway and another, Jacobus Ruijgrok, was the Cape-born son of a Dutch carpenter Arnoud Ruijgrok. In the next year three garrison soldiers were found aboard *Docqven*, but they were returned to face a sentence of 18 months' imprisonment in chains. Another unsuccessful escape bid was made by three sailors in 1751, when Ackeleye's *Dronningen af Dannemark* lay in Simons Bay on her return from China. One of them was a Norwegian from Stavanger, Peter Rolfsen, who worked on the company's wharf. These men were more heavily punished, receiving a scourging and ten years' hard labour.

The Cape provided Danish ships with a considerable measure of assistance. Supplies of food and water were readily available, services of various kinds were offered, equipment could often be replaced and cash advances made. The smooth working of these arrangements depended on maintaining good relations with the governor and leading officials. To expedite matters at the Cape an efficient agency was established which co-ordinated the various requirements of visiting captains.

Gifts, judiciously apportioned according to rank and seniority, played a large part in securing the co-operation of the Cape administration. The governor and his deputy were never overlooked; the fiscal too had to be propitiated, as his friendly attitude could do much to smooth the way for the private trade which flourished between ship and shore, not always within permitted limits. Luxury goods from the east and special items of food and drink from Europe reached the homes of senior officials in this manner; slaves also made very acceptable presents and figure in the accounts of the *Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia* in 1743. In exceptional circumstances captains would supplement the company's largesse out of their own pockets. Svend Fenger of *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* did this in 1752 after the shipwreck in Mossel Bay. His gifts included a slave boy he had bought in Calicut. The Cape authorities in turn generously invited foreign captains to share in festivities ashore. When Jacob Beckmand brought a new *Kongen af Dannemark* into Table Bay in 1752 after a long voyage with a protracted delay at Bergen in Norway, he and his principal officers were guests at the banquet of 8 April to celebrate the centenary of Dutch rule at the Cape at which toasts were drunk to Frederik V of Denmark, George II of Britain and Louis XV of France.

It was sometimes felt that captains made money by saving on the Danish company's official allocation of presents for distribution. In the course of a

quarrel between Sporing and his writer Peter Beck when *Kronprinsessen af Dannemark* was at the Cape in 1750, it appears that Swellengrebel was dissatisfied with his gifts. This may also have applied to the fiscal. Certainly, Beck was told by Pieter van Reede van Oudtshoorn that if it had not been for the high regard in which the Danish nation was held at the Cape he would have sent his "Kaffirs" - the fiscal's Asian helpers - on board the ship to confiscate all the goods which had been illegally embarked. Sporing, it was alleged, had done this under cover of darkness with the help of a Dane in the Dutch company's service. It would seem that Beck's open hostility to his captain had its source in his knowledge that Sporing had flouted the Danish company's own rules on private trade and had not been too scrupulous about making money on the side.

Private trade included the sale of slaves. This commerce was nominally a Danish company monopoly after 1732, but there was also an illegal trade. Slaves were evidently sent to the Cape for official sale for some years after 1737, but these transactions were on a limited scale. This was a period of labour shortage in the Dutch colony for the heavy work involved on company projects.

The agency established at the Cape to assist Danish captains was doubtless a very profitable undertaking. It was in the hands of Johannes Carolus de Wet, the Cape-born son of Jacobus de Wet of Amsterdam and his wife Christina, daughter of Olof Bergh of Gothenburg in Sweden and Anna de Koning, a woman of Dutch and Bengali descent. On Johannes Carolus de Wet's death on 1 May 1748 the business was continued by his widow, Maria Magdalena, daughter of Johann Blanckenberg of Berlin and his wife Catharina Baumann.

The activities of the agency are reflected in a number of Danish ships' logs of the Swellengrebel governorship years and later. It is evident too that the family also lodged captains and senior officers while their ships lay at anchor in the roadstead. Accounts for services rendered and for supplies delivered were channelled through the agency. In the accounts for Kierulf's *Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia* in 1743, Hendrik van der Heijden submitted a bill for meat and 30 live sheep, there was another for a shackle supplied and a third for a considerable purchase of wine and foodstuff. Waggon hire cost some four rix-dollars (R1,60), the quartermaster and crew of the Dutch company's harbour boat charged fifteen rix-dollars (R6) for ferrying goods to the ship and nine days' lodging for the captain and his purser Charles Hersting cost a further eighteen rix-dollars (R7,20). The total bill was reduced through the sale of a quantity of rice from the ship negotiated by the agent.

Similar accounts submitted through Maria Magdalena Blanckenberg to Captain Rønne of the *Prinsesse Vilhelmine Caroline*, returning from Tranquebar

ten years later, include charges for repair work, some of it carried out by the glazier Frans Lens. On both voyages the sick needed accommodation. Wilhelmina Berkman, widow of the baker Cornelis Goosen, put three men up from the *Prinsesse Vilhelmine Caroline* and a Dane from Copenhagen, Sverus Cornelissen, provided lodging for the bos'n of the same ship, Peter Knossen. On the voyage of the *Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia*, Barend Schmidt charged six rix-dollars (R2,40) for accommodating the sick sailors Svend Klingenberg and Hans Muller for almost a week.

Not all voyages to the Indies in the interests of the Asiatic Company of Copenhagen were purely trading ventures. An expedition which sailed from Denmark on 1 December 1751 and returned to the Danish capital on 1 July 1754 took place under naval auspices, but at the urgent request of the company. To view this show of force in perspective something of the background needs to be considered. The extension of the War of the Austrian Succession to the Indian Ocean region in a political and commercial struggle between Britain and France was to the benefit of such neutral traders as the Danes. The company prospered and Tranquebar also became a useful focal point for the expansion of an Asian country trade divorced from the problems of international rivalries. Spain opened the threatened Manila trade to Danish ships in 1742 as a counter to possible isolation if France and Britain went to war and the French governor general, Dupleix, organized this commerce in 1745 for the benefit of merchants in Asia without regard to nationality. The venture was a success and after the war had ended in 1748 Tranquebar began to flourish as a free trade centre. The company too had enjoyed several years of increased profits and stood poised for further growth and the conquest of new fields of commercial endeavour. Already some expansion had taken place on the Coromandel coast; now, Bengal and the Malabar coast beckoned.

There was, however, growing unrest on Tranquebar's doorstep. The recent Anglo-French struggle had destroyed the generally happy relations between the commercial agents of those powers. In the period of uneasy peace which preceded the Seven Years' War of 1756-1763 each side strove for advantage, making use of contending Indian potentates to further its own ends. Southern India was in a chronic state of unrest and warring Indians welcomed strong European allies. The resultant fighting threatened the hinterland of Tranquebar controlled by the Asiatic Company, a small enclave in the state of Tanjore.

It was against this backdrop of a threat to the security and prosperity of Tranquebar and a desire to expand Danish commercial activity that the Asiatic Company turned to Frederik V for assistance. The two naval vessels sent out to the Coromandel coast were the man-of-war *Nelleblad*, under the command of Jesper Hansen Reichardt, a sailor of world-wide experience

in the commercial service, and the frigate *Bornholm*, captained by Gerhard Sivers. This was not Reichardt's first voyage to the east. He had taken the Asiatic Company's *Kronprinsen af Danmark* to China in 1742-1743, a ship which ran aground in the Orkneys early in 1745 on a similar voyage under Kierulf's command. The expedition of 1751 carried a small military force and a cash grant from the king for the extension of Tranquebar's fortifications. The ships, which spent two weeks at the Cape in late April and early May 1752, anchored off Tranquebar on 5 July after a voyage marred by many fatalities. The senior captain, Reichardt, died soon after reaching the Danish headquarters on the Coromandel coast and Sivers assumed general command. Ole Hansen, a future rear admiral in the Danish navy, took over from Reichardt on *Nelleblad*.

There was no immediate threat to the peace in the neighbourhood of Tranquebar and on 29 September Sivers sailed with the two warships to Achin (Aceh) on the island of Sumatra, where good relations with the local ruler were reaffirmed. The expedition returned to Tranquebar on 27 January 1753 and in the following July the Danes despatched an impressive embassy under Sivers to Tanjore with military support. It was a show of strength with a definite purpose: the acquisition of more land in the neighbourhood of Tranquebar. The embassy failed in its design and after the exchange of courtesy gifts, including a portrait of the king from the Danes, the column returned empty-handed to Tranquebar in early August. Relations between Tanjore and Tranquebar remained uneasy as an episode in 1756, when a Danish officer and twenty men were killed, demonstrates.

Meanwhile Danish initiative in 1752 had laid the foundations of a prosperous factory at Calicut for the important pepper trade of the Malabar coast and in 1755 another was established in the same region at Colachel. In May 1753, while the Danish warships still lay at anchor in the Tranquebar roadstead, the first steps were taken for a return to Bengal. This was accomplished with French help by Jacob Christopher Soetmann in 1755, when the Asiatic Company obtained a factory at Serampore on the Hooghly. France and Denmark then enjoyed treaty relations. Further expansion was to follow on 1 January 1756 with the annexation of the Nicobar Islands in the Indian Ocean.

The naval presence made only a small contribution to the Danish drive for commercial advantage. Death and disease took their toll while the ships lay at Tranquebar and Sivers himself succumbed on 23 October 1753. The *Bornholm* thus came under the command of her first lieutenant Antoine Nicolas le Sage de Fontenay, an officer of old Picardy stock who prided himself on maintaining the French tradition. Fontenay was destined to rise to admiral's rank before his death in 1787. The two vessels called at the Cape again in February 1754 on their return voyage to Denmark after a

difficult crossing of the Indian Ocean which again caused many fatalities. Hansen was so hard pressed for fit sailors that he had to sign on 40 men at great expense while his ship *Nellebladet* lay in Saldanha Bay. A few of his new recruits were from Scandinavia, including Peter Petersen of Bergen and Frederik Blok of Christiania (Oslo).

With a single exception, all Danish shipping at the Cape between 1735 and 1755 either belonged to the Asiatic Company or served its interests. The exception, *Grevinden af Laurvig*, sailed on a different mission, with a final destination across the Atlantic. *Grevinden af Laurvig* was a slaver belonging to the West India and Guinea Company of Copenhagen and was hired to a British merchant adventurer for a joint voyage to Madagascar for the purchase of a human cargo.

The promoter of this scheme, Charles Barrington, had once been employed by the East India Company of London on its Madras station, but turned to the new Swedish company of 1731 to better his prospects and sailed for India two years later as first supercargo on *Drottningen Ulrica Eleonora*. The hostility of the older national companies to the Swedes resulted in an Anglo-French attack on their new factory at Porto Novo on the Coromandel coast and Barrington escaped to Tranquebar, where he embarked on the Danish return ship *Fredericus Quartus*, commanded by Claes Thaae. He spent almost three weeks at the Cape in April and May 1735 on the voyage to Copenhagen, lodging with Johannes Carolus de Wet. Once back in Europe, Barrington conceived the plan of setting himself up as a planter on the island of St Croix in the West Indies, recently acquired by Denmark. Slave labour would be required and he therefore approached the Danish West India and Guinea Company with a proposal to sail to Madagascar for the purchase of slaves for himself and other planters in the Danish West Indies. The company entered into an agreement with him, under which *Grevinden af Laurvig* was to sail with a Danish crew of 40, supplemented by a smaller British contingent in which Scotland was well represented. Both parties were to share in the profits. The young Danish captain and future rear admiral, Jacob Nicolaj Holst, had an English-speaking deputy in Ninian Bryce and Barrington as supercargo had a Danish understudy with experience in the East India trade, Sigvard Friis Bruun. Relations between the two national groups were often strained.

Grevinden af Laurvig left port on 8 June 1737, running for the Atlantic by the northerly route between the Orkneys and the Shetlands. The voyage south was marked by a series of quarrels between Danes and British, erupting into a full-scale riot when the ship reached the Cape Verde Islands. Holst and Barrington had the greatest difficulty in restoring order. *Grevinden af Laurvig* made landfall near Lion's Head on 30 October 1737 and cautiously entered Table Bay by night, skirting the scum on the water at the entrance

which to the inexperienced resembled breakers in the pale moonlight. Barrington's chief anxiety was that the Cape authorities would not grant the ship permission to stay, in view of the unusual nature of the expedition. He and his officers were, however, greeted civilly enough by the marine superintendent Möller when he came aboard on the morning of 31 October to discuss details of the voyage and the state of the crew's health over a glass of wine. The request for port facilities was at length put before the acting governor, Daniël van den Henghel, and the council of policy. To Barrington's relief, the request was granted. The council saw no threat to Dutch commerce in the proposed voyage and also considered that a refusal might well lead to Danish complaints at higher level in Europe. The decision was conveyed to the directors of the Dutch company who gave qualified approval of the action taken.

Barrington again lodged with Johannes Carolus de Wet and renewed acquaintance with other friends made on his last visit, among them the Swedish-born burgher Bergstedt and Jan de Wit (John White) of New York. Presents of food and drink were distributed to senior officials, although on this occasion those given to the fiscal, Johannes Needer, were more modest, as he only held that post in a temporary capacity. Friends ashore too were not forgotten in the distribution of gifts. Much of the time spent at the Cape was taken up with watering and provisioning. Some minor repairs to equipment were effected, as a result of which Barrington lost a large number of chairs which had been taken on shore to be mended, only to be stolen by the soldiery for sale round town. *Grevinden af Laurvig's* hull was scraped down to the water-line and the officers were granted shore leave, due care being taken to disguise the fact that this ostensibly Danish trading venture had British backing. Barrington had to deal with a number of disputes with his British colleagues and once more trouble arose between rival national factions in the course of which two pet dogs, the mascots of contending forces, were treated with considerable cruelty. Barrington had intended them as gifts for Malagasy potentates, but decided to leave them at the Cape to prevent further maltreatment.

Barrington made it his business to learn something of the political situation in the settlement following the death of the governor, Adriaan van Kervel, in September 1737. He noted the in-fighting which preceded Daniël van den Henghel's triumph over Swellengrebel for the acting governorship, a triumph which was short-lived as Swellengrebel was given the permanent post by the company's directors less than two years later. The British supercargo was also keen to learn as much as he could about his prospects in the Madagascar trade and approached Jan de Wit, who lent him the famous account of experiences on that island written by the English sailor Robert Drury. In other ways, however, Jan de Wit was less helpful than had been expected of a man who had known Madagascar in earlier days. Barrington said of him that

he was "only a Rattling Ignoramus as to these Matters, tho' he pretends to know more than Any One". Captain Bryce and his mate Walter Leith also made a few enquiries which promised to be more valuable.

The interest shown by a group of burghers in the possibility of profit from Barrington's voyage to Madagascar reflects the growing desire of Cape colonists for opportunities of private trade. Johannes Carolus de Wet was somewhat cautious, but was prepared to help his guest dispose of some slaves, should he return to the Cape. Barrington left him a list of the commodities he was prepared to accept at the settlement in part exchange: tea, coffee, porcelain, silks and arrack - an indication that imported goods were not in short supply in the colony. The brother of Barrington's host, Olof de Wet of Stellenbosch, Olof's attorney at the Cape, Jacob Lever, and the burgher Bergstedt were all prepared to invest in the Madagascar venture, but it was the German settler Bestbier, who had acquired a fortune in the Indies and had recently made his home in the colony, who showed the most enterprise in planning the disposal of surplus slaves on Barrington's intended return. Bestbier let it be known that government would raise no objection on payment of a 5% commission.

Charles Barrington, however, was destined never to complete the round trip and *Grevinden af Laurvig* did not anchor at the Cape again. The vessel sailed on 11 November 1737 on a further voyage characterized by continuing quarrels, open mutiny, hardships, sickness and the expenditure of much effort for little reward. Slaves were indeed purchased on a small scale, but Barrington's restless mind conceived another plan for future riches. He married a Malagasy princess and talked of a return to the island after disposing of his human cargo. Holst, exasperated by the supercargo's wayward actions, at last sailed from Madagascar for the coast of Mozambique, leaving Barrington ashore with the mate Leith and some other companions. Their fate is not known.

Grevinden af Laurvig ran aground off Mozambique in July 1738, Bryce and two fellow-Scots preferred Portuguese hospitality to a longer stay aboard and on the return voyage a fierce storm prevented the ship from reaching the safety of the Cape and compelled Holst to sail on for St Helena with a sick crew. 21 slaves were at last landed on the Danish island of St Thomas in the West Indies on 11 February 1739, just half of those originally shipped out of Madagascar. *Grevinden af Laurvig* finally reached Copenhagen on 28 August 1739, where an official enquiry found Barrington negligent and ordered the confiscation of his trade goods still aboard to help defray his debt to the West India and Guinea Company. One of the Danish mates, the coarse-mouthed Herman Dyssel, had been banished from the ship at Madagascar and delivered into the keeping of a Malagasy potentate. Dyssel's indignant wife lodged a complaint against the captain for leaving her husband,

as she put it, among the savages. Holst took *Grevinden af Laurvig* out on a second projected voyage to Madagascar, but she was wrecked outward-bound off the Dutch coast in March 1747 with great loss of life. Although Holst was saved, he found himself destitute.

The story of *Grevinden af Laurvig*'s voyage of 1737-1739 is scarcely typical of those of other Danish vessels which called at the Cape in our period. It is interesting, however, in the context of the slave-trade and the visit of the ship to the Cape enables us to glimpse through Barrington's eyes something of the lives and activities of burghers and company officials, and to gain further insights into the economic structure of resident White society.

Danish callers at the Cape in the years 1735-1755 numbered only 39 and many dropped anchor there on more than one occasion, sometimes on both outward and return voyages. The Danes were the smallest contingent among the foreign visitors; the French were somewhat more numerous and certainly more significant in the drive for empire and commercial advantage across the Indian Ocean. Their trading voyages, which form the subject of the next chapter, reflect many aspects of those of their Danish competitors, but reveal other facets too of the Cape's contact with foreigners.

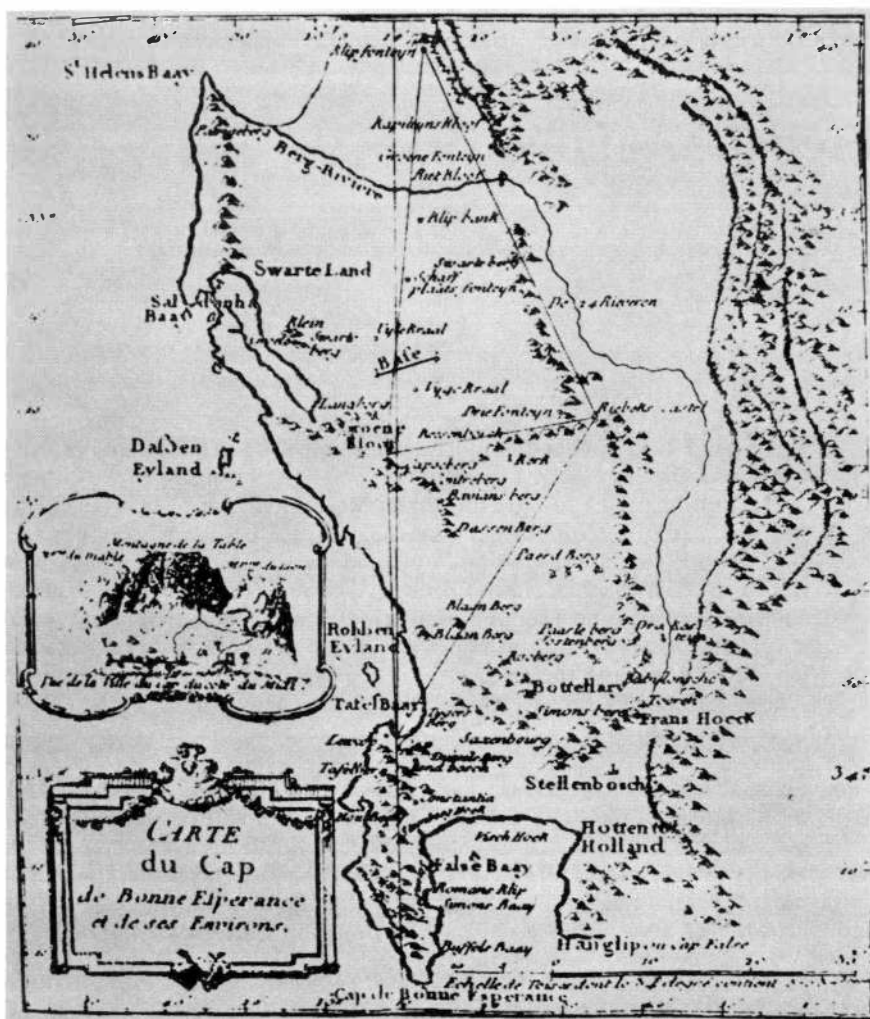
2

French commerce

Although France was not far behind England and the United Provinces when she established an East India Company in 1604, the venture represented a hope, not a fulfilment. A group from Saint-Malo in Brittany had managed to send two ships to the Moluccas, the legendary spice islands of Indonesia, as early as 1601, but successive attempts to found a viable trading company were frustrated until Richelieu's Eastern Company was created in 1642 through the amalgamation of Paris and Dieppe promoters. Even this commercial syndicate was short-lived, however, and in the evolution of the French unitary state in the 17th century trade in the Far East was too often subordinated to political ends. Colonization and the dream of empire weighed at least as heavily as mercantile advantage.

The successive French trading monopolies operating in eastern waters throughout most of the 18th century differed fundamentally from those of their main competitors in Britain, Denmark and the United Provinces. They were agents of government, largely controlled by the state, rather than independent commercial undertakings, and their personnel, at home, at sea and abroad, was always more national in its composition than that of their rivals.

The Eastern Company of 1642 was preoccupied with settlement, trade and missionary endeavour on Madagascar. Some interest was shown in the possibility of using Saldanha Bay as an anchorage and refreshment station on the voyages of its ships. Etienne de Flacourt of Orleans spent some days there in 1648 on his outward voyage from La Rochelle in the *Saint-Laurent* and was at Saldanha Bay again for three weeks in 1655, after Jan van Riebeeck's arrival at the Cape, on his return in the *Ours*.



La Caille's triangulation to measure an arc of meridian. From his *Journal historique*, 1763

A new East India Company founded by Colbert in September 1664 almost collapsed at the outset through its continued concentration of effort on the colonization of Madagascar. Saldanha Bay remained an objective and a tenuous right of possession was maintained there until the outbreak of the Franco-Dutch War in 1672. Officers from the *Saumacque* raised a pillar at the bay in 1666 bearing the French royal arms and the claims of that country were again asserted in 1670 when Louis XIV's Persian squadron under Jacob Blanquet de la Haye called at the Cape. This fleet, intended to establish French power in the east on a firm basis, was a disastrous failure, but men of commercial vision such as the Dutch East India Company's former employee François Caron of Brussels and the Parisian François Martin laid the foundations for future French commerce in the Indies. The island of Bourbon (Réunion) in the Mascarenes took the place of Madagascar in French colonization schemes, and factories, not all of them destined to become permanent, were set up on Java in Indonesia, at Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf, at Surat, north of Bombay, at Pondicherry on the Coromandel coast and at Masulipatnam to the north of it, as well as on the Malabar coast. Pondicherry, founded in 1672, was to become the centre of the French commercial empire in the east and was defended from 1706 by the fortress of Saint-Louis.

The company was reformed in March 1685, just as two royal vessels sailed for Siam (Thailand) in a bid to extend French influence in that region and in the Chinese Empire. These ships, the *Oyseau* and the *Maligne*, called at the Cape on 31 May of that year and the Jesuit scientist-missionaries aboard, among them Jean de Fontaney from Brittany, leader of the party, and Guy Tachard from the Angoumois, took astronomical readings there. Tachard and a second group of Jesuit astronomers were at the Cape again in June 1687 with a squadron despatched to Siam. This expedition, which hoped to secure a useful foothold on the Bay of Bengal at Mergui, now in Lower Burma, failed in its aim. This lack of success, however, was offset by the achievement of Martin's son-in-law André Boureau Deslandes in making Chandernagore in Bengal an important link in the chain of French commerce in the east. It was in this period that the French Calvinist refugees began to reach the Cape and it is from Tachard's pen that we have a picture of the arrival of a number of them in 1688, when the Jesuit was homeward-bound from the Indies on the *Gaillard*.

The outbreak of the War of the League of Augsburg in 1688 seriously disrupted French trade beyond the Cape. Two vessels, the *Normande* and the *Coche*, were taken by the Dutch in Table Bay and Pondicherry fell to the same nation in 1693 and was not returned until 1699. As early as 1681 the French East India Company had permitted private shipping to trade in eastern waters in association with the older monopoly and it was as a private venture that the *Amphitrite* was sent out in 1698 to inaugurate French commerce

with China. This trade was absorbed into a chartered company in 1705 and further reorganized along monopoly lines in 1712. The War of the Spanish Succession, however, ruined the older East India Company, which was compelled to lease its trade to merchants in Paris and Saint-Malo after 1706.

In 1719 Louis XV took the advice of the expatriate financier John Law from Edinburgh and merged much of French commerce in the Americas and West Africa with the India and China trade. The resultant Company of the Indies was reconstituted in 1723 after the failure of Law's economic system and its financial stability was buttressed by the revenue from the royal tobacco monopoly. The Company of the Indies was saddled for almost a decade with the Atlantic commerce it had inherited from the Law era, but from 1732 it could be considered essentially a monopoly trading to the Indies and China. With headquarters in Paris and port facilities at Lorient on the roadstead formed by the confluence of the Scorff and the Blavet in southern Brittany, protected by the citadel of Port-Louis, the company flourished until the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1756, despite some setbacks during the Anglo-French naval war of 1744-1748.

The Company of the Indies never placed quite so heavy an emphasis on the China trade as did most of its competitors, but consolidated its position in the Indian Ocean region. Colonization of the Ile de France (Mauritius) began in 1721, eight years after France had claimed the island following Dutch withdrawal from it. The Ile de France was to become the chief French possession in the Mascarenes and a focus of naval power in the east. A factory was founded at Mahé on the Malabar coast in 1721, made permanent after military and naval action in 1725. Others were established at Yanam on the Bay of Bengal in 1723 and at Karikal on the Coromandel coast in 1739. French commercial rights were reasserted at the coffee port of Mokha in 1737 and further expansion took place at St Mary's Bay on Madagascar and in the Seychelles before the war of 1756-1763.

French contacts with the Cape of Good Hope in the years 1735-1755 reflect, therefore, considerable commercial activity to the eastward, interrupted in some measure, however, during the power struggle with Britain of 1744-1748, to which we shall turn our attention in a separate chapter. All the voyages discussed here were of a pacific nature and most of them were of ships sailing between Lorient and the Ile de France, Bourbon, India and China.

Our point of departure is the arrival in Table Bay on 28 February 1735 of the 44 gun *Condé* with a complement of 190 men, which had sailed from the Lorient roadstead by way of Cadiz and was bound for China under the command of the experienced Jacques Morellet. As they peered through the mist towards the shore those aboard were just able to descry the little fort, as they described it, nestling on the water's edge and the windmill in the furthest part of the bay.

Landmarks like the Castle, the mill, the church in the township and the gallows at Green Point served mariners as bearings for securing a good anchorage in Table Bay, as appears from the log of the *Condé* on a later voyage to China in March 1739 under the captaincy of Herbert de la Portebarré, one of several French captains mentioned in these pages who came to hold the coveted cross of Saint-Louis for services rendered to the state. Captains and navigators were not, however, left to their own devices in finding a suitable place to anchor. Assistance in this matter was a normal courtesy extended to visiting ships at the Cape, as is instanced by Jean-Christophe d'Argy de la Châtre of Lorient, captain of the *Duc de Parme* on a voyage to Bengal in January 1751.

In that age of imperfect navigational aids captains were seldom entirely certain of their precise position until landfall was made. There are many entries in ships' logs which note, for example, a difference in longitude at the Cape compared with that recorded on the charts. This problem is remarked on in the log of the *Comte de Toulouse*, bound for Bengal in 1738 under the command of a captain of Irish background, Richard Butler de Trovern, and in that of the *Maurepas*, sailing to the same destination in 1753 with the future Lorient port commander Jacques-Pierre-Guillaume Buisson de la Vigne as captain.

This intrepid sailor from Saint-Malo has other claims to fame. He was ennobled by Louis XVI in 1776 and his granddaughter and ward Céleste married the writer Chateaubriand. Buisson de la Vigne's brother François-André served in the French navy during the War of the Austrian Succession and was crippled by a knee injury sustained in action in 1747. As first lieutenant of the company ship the *Diane* he fell sick on a voyage to the Indies in 1752 and was transferred in the South Atlantic to the London East Indiaman *Prince of Wales*. He was landed at the Cape by her captain William Peck on 30 March and was taken to the home of the burgher Bestbier, where he died two days later. The French lieutenant, born in Pondicherry, was in his 34th year.

Navigation in Cape waters required special caution, although the log of the *Prince de Conti*, sailing for China in 1737 under the captaincy of Julien Danycan from Saint-Malo, expresses surprise that the channel into the roadstead was far safer than had been anticipated. Return ships frequently kept the south-east coast of Africa in sight and descriptions which might be of service to future navigators in those waters were filed by the French company. One of these, undated, draws attention to the petrels whose flight indicates the proximity of land and from a British source in French hands comes a view of the Cape on a foggy day early in 1745: "A high Cliff Point having a very remarkable Rock upon the Descent of the Bluff. This Rock much like a Tower or Chimney. Likewise a small round Rock or Island (off) the Point bearing W."

Cape weather could be capricious. The *Prince de Conti* ran into a heavy storm on her approach in 1737 and a fearful crew prayed that God would be merciful and calm the elements. Fortunate on that occasion, she was ultimately wrecked in 1746 off Belle-Ile near the Quiberon peninsula. The *Comte de Toulouse*, sailing out in 1738, took more than a week to round the Cape from Table Bay in the teeth of contrary winds and the *Lys* was so disabled by a storm off the Cape that she had to be abandoned in Todos-os-Santos Bay on the Brazilian coast in 1747. Her cargo was brought to Lisbon by the Portuguese. Ships which did not call at the settlement often passed the Cape well out of sight of land on outward voyages. The passage was customarily marked by a religious ceremony. When the explorer and future governor of Bourbon, Jean-Baptiste-Charles Bouvet de Lozier, rounded the Cape in 1749 aboard another *Lys*, this time a naval vessel, the usual Te Deum was sung at an early morning Mass to give thanks for the safe delivery of the ship at the most dangerous point on its voyage to Pondicherry. Bouvet de Lozier was described in 1769 as the most skilful officer the company had ever employed.

His fame rests in part on his Antarctic expedition of 1738-1739, commemorated in the name of Bouvet Island. Bouvet de Lozier touched at the Cape on his return voyage aboard the frigate *Marie*. He arrived on 28 February 1739, but was unable to move to the normal anchorage until 4 March. His first task was to rent a house ashore to accommodate the sick aboard, the usual practice in such cases with French and other captains. Daniël van den Henghel, still acting governor at that time, refused to accept bills of exchange for the costs of the visit to the Cape and as Bouvet de Lozier had already exhausted his cash reserves he had to find another avenue to pay his debts. He was, however, able to turn for help to the captains of two visiting French ships, Etienne Lobry of the *Philibert* and Jacques de la Chesnaye of the *Duc d'Orléans*, both bound for Pondicherry and Bengal. It was the *Philibert*'s last voyage. She was lost in calm weather at the mouth of the Ganges on 24 June 1739 through the negligence of a British pilot and although her crew were saved, her cargo could not be recovered. The *Duc d'Orléans* had a longer career, but foundered in a cyclone off Madras in October 1746 with great loss of life. Her captain, Gabriel-Joseph Béard du Désert, tried to reach shore by clinging to a chicken-coop, but was dislodged by a wave and drowned when safety was almost assured. Bouvet de Lozier sailed from the Cape on 31 March 1739, calling at the island of Trinidad off the Brazilian coast on his way back to France in order to investigate its possibilities as a refreshment station for French ships. The *Marie* reached Lorient on 24 June.

The chief navigator of the *Marie*, Jean Catin, was a man of parts, but there were exceptions to the general excellence of such officers. When the *Maurepas* returned from Bengal in 1754, her log was tersely endorsed to the

effect that its author, Jean-Baptiste Crété of Saint-Aubin, neither knew how to write nor to navigate. The company's comment on the log of a sister-ship the *Saint-Priest*, commanded by Louis de Saint-Médard, which reached Lorient from the Indies in 1752 after a voyage round the Cape, goes further in its condemnation. The navigator, it was stated, was so careless and ignorant that his account simply wasn't worth examining.

The most famous navigator of the period to visit the Cape was the sea-captain and hydrographer Jean-Baptiste-Nicolas-Denis d'Après de Mannevillette of Havre-de-Grâce (Le Havre) in Normandy. One of the greatest cartographers of the day, he published the *Neptune oriental* in 1745, an invaluable collection of charts which was subsequently revised and also translated into English. Among his other publications was a navigational guide for voyages between France and the Indies. This work of 1765 ran into a second edition and also appeared in English and Dutch. The cartographer's abilities were given special recognition by the company in 1762 when he was appointed director of maps and plans at Lorient, where he died on 1 March 1780 at the age of 73. In 1767 he was decorated with the order of Saint-Michel.

Jean-Baptiste d'Après first sailed to the east as a boy of twelve and was second lieutenant on the *Prince de Conti* when she called at the Cape on her voyage to China in 1737. In November 1750 he left Lorient as captain of the *Glorieux*, bound for the Ile de France. After touching at Rio de Janeiro and Saldanha Bay the *Glorieux* reached Table Bay on 19 April 1751, where the chief officer Pierre Chartier of Port-Louis presented the ship's papers to the new governor Rijk Tulbagh. The officers of the *Glorieux* included among their number a scion of a noted French seafaring family, the sub-lieutenant Julien Magon de la Villebague. Also on board was the distinguished astronomer, the Abbé Nicolas-Louis de la Caille from Rumigny in north-eastern France, accompanied by his artisan servant Poitevin. La Caille was to remain in the settlement for more than 22 months in order to carry out important scientific observations. He sailed for the Ile de France on 8 March 1753 aboard Sanguinet's *Puisieulx*, bound for China.

Jean-Baptiste d'Après was again at the Cape in March 1752 as captain of the 22 gun frigate *Treize-Cantons* which had been sent from the Ile de France to survey the southern African coast in company with the small colonial-built snow the *Nécessaire*, commanded by Captain Trémolu. The news that nine men from the snow had been stranded at Algoa Bay alarmed the Cape authorities, who feared that France had plans to annex the region. Instructions were sent to the German-born leader of an exploring expedition in the vicinity, August Friedrich Beutler, to erect beacons proclaiming Dutch possession of the coast.

Cape fears, however, were misplaced. The voyage of the two ships from the Ile de France had no political design and the men had merely been sent on shore to obtain fresh water. Their boat had been smashed in a sudden storm and they had been unable to regain their ship. The two most senior of the stranded men, the second lieutenant Jacques-Thomas Perrot and the second bos'n François Rubion, at length succeeded in reaching the farm of a burgher Frederik Zeele near the Great Brak River and finally made contact with Beutler's party. The other seven, all ordinary seamen, perished in the attempt to reach safety. One of them, Hervé Coenan, was an epileptic whose disability contributed to his death. Perrot and Rubion were taken to the Swellendam settlement and from there travelled to the Cape, which they reached on 24 April 1752. Both the *Treize-Cantons* and the *Nécessaire* had by then sailed for the Ile de France, the latter carrying a cargo of wheat and with her crew deficiency made up by embarking men from Captain Selle's *Villefrix*, outward-bound for China. The two survivors, however, were able to obtain a passage to the island with the experienced captain from Brest, Jacques Lars de Lescouët, in command of the *Maréchal de Saxe*, also destined for China. La Caille informed Jean-Baptiste d'Après of the story of the two men's escape in a letter of 29 April.

The cartographer and his passenger La Caille have both left us some comments on the Cape scene at mid-century. For Jean-Baptiste d'Après the settlement was by far the best port of call on the route to the Indies, where good food and a healthy climate combined to make it a delightful place for rest and relaxation. The 21 sick sailors he lodged in a house rented as a hospital doubtless soon recovered. If only, the cartographer mused, the French colonies possessed just a few of the advantages of this flourishing refreshment station. Both he and La Caille praised the hospitality of the burgher Bestbier, with whom the latter stayed. Bestbier, who had served at one time in the French army, was described by Jean-Baptiste d'Après as the warmest friend the French had in the colony. He acted as an interpreter for La Caille during the astronomer's visit and helped him in many ways, including the loan of slaves. La Caille also spoke highly of the intellectual qualities of three leading personalities in the company hierarchy: the governor, Tulbagh, the secretary to the council of policy from 1741 to 1756, Josephus de Grandpreez of Valenciennes, and the erudite bibliophile Joachim Nikolaus von Dessin. Here were representatives of three of the four main national strains which went to make up the composition of contemporary Cape society; only a Scandinavian is missing.

The Abbé de la Caille's diary of his expedition to the southern hemisphere was first published posthumously in Paris in 1763. The remarks in it on the Cape did not entirely satisfy the former company employee Mentzel, who felt that the Frenchman's lack of knowledge of the Dutch language often led him astray. There is, however, much of value in La Caille's account and Mentzel

himself is not always above criticism. The German writer had left the Cape before La Caille's visit and was clearly not aware of changes in personnel there. The marine superintendent while the astronomer was at the Cape was indeed, despite Mentzel, the sea-captain Hendrik de Ruijter and the artillery officer deputed by Tulbagh to help La Caille in 1752 with his observations in the interior was, as the astronomer rightly says, Engelbert Muller. The confusion arises from the fact that the marine superintendent of Mentzel's day, Jacobus Möller, had died early in 1748.

La Caille was treated with the utmost consideration by Tulbagh, even to the provision of materials and labour for the construction of an observatory. The astronomer travelled fairly extensively in the Cape and Stellenbosch districts, witnessing the militia review of 1 November 1751 at Stellenbosch and attending, with other foreign visitors, the colonial centenary banquet of 8 April 1752. French guests also included the captains, first lieutenants and passengers of the *Treize-Cantons*, the *Nécessaire*, the *Villeflix* and the *Maréchal de Saxe*, as well as those aboard Mamineau-Brunet's *Philibert*, a later ship of that name returning via Bourbon from the Indies. La Caille was also the only foreigner present at a function held on 26 August of that year when Jacob Mossel was proclaimed governor general of the Dutch Indies and witnessed on the day of his departure from the colony the celebration of the birthday of the young prince stadtholder Willem V. La Caille's visit to Drakenstein in May 1752 enabled him to see the region originally populated by so many of the French Protestant refugees. He noted that the third generation knew no word of their grandparents' language and was informed that there would be none to speak it in twenty years' time save a handful of newcomers.

La Caille's assessment of the merits of Cape fruits and vegetables, and his assertion that they were expensive make interesting reading. Not everyone would agree with him about prices, however. He gave high praise to carrots, cabbages, strawberries and grapes, but was not impressed by the quality of celery, asparagus, oranges, pears and plums. Wine-making seemed to be beyond the capabilities of most farmers, whose product was mediocre. Governor General van Imhoff had brought out Johann Serrurier of Hanau to effect improvements, but the man was only conversant with Rhine wines and after marrying the rich widow Catharina Kretzschmar, who died of smallpox in 1755, Serrurier turned to the retail wine trade. Mentzel took the astronomer to task for his strictures on the quality of Cape bread and the fondness of the burghers for salted and smoked meats and fish. These were doubtless not to the Frenchman's taste. From La Caille too we learn that it was customary to drink beer after wine at meals. Cape beer was poor and the imported product was preferred.

The French astronomer regarded the White inhabitants of the colony as lazy and said, although Mentzel denied it, that the Khoikhoi in their employ would

readily ally themselves with marauding San to steal from the resident White population. Of the slaves, La Caille noted that the need to give a monetary guarantee made manumission rare. Nor, he said, were the burghers interested in providing religious instruction for their slaves. Nevertheless it was the Frenchman's opinion that company slaves, who were taught the catechism, were not better for it than those of the burghers who generally had no contact with Christianity. He wondered whether education of any kind for them had a value in a society which depended on slavery. La Caille deprecated the viciousness of life in the slave lodge where prostitution was a remunerative profession for many female inmates. In his view, access to strong drink also led to slave depravity, both among the human chattels of the burghers and those of the company. He commented in particular on the slave women, playthings of Whites of all ages in their early youth, who openly solicited on the streets, but conveniently forgot that such encounters were a commonplace in the cities of Europe in the mid-18th century. La Caille had no novel solution to the problem of dissolute slaves, but considered that probably the only effective sanction was fear of a thrashing, the answer of the burghers to anti-social behaviour.

Finally, La Caille listed several major grievances of the burghers against company rule and although Mentzel substantially disagreed, most of the complaints had their validity. Cape inhabitants, the Frenchman stated, resented the ban on the sale of wheat to foreigners, wanted a share in coastal shipping and objected to high interest rates and the payment of heavy stamp duties. The Lutherans sought freedom of worship and almost all citizens advocated the repatriation of undesirable Asians, a question to which we shall return later.

La Caille had the opportunity of seeing the Cape scene at close quarters; ships' officers on the other hand, in port for relatively brief periods, rarely looked closely at local society. An exception, however, was Mathieu de Gennes de la Chancelière, first lieutenant on Herbert de la Portebarré's *Condé*, at the Cape in 1739. Gennes had much to say on eastern commerce in the context of other voyages and his observations on this occasion, whatever their shortcomings, show a man who liked to keep his eyes and ears open in novel surroundings. He it was who was sent ashore to announce the ship's arrival to the acting governor, Daniël van den Henghel, his deputy Swellengrebel and the temporary fiscal Needer. Like Barrington before him, Gennes was alive to the political stresses of the period, even if he did not quite grasp the processes involved. His interpretation of events is not therefore as sound as that of Barrington, whose account tallies very well with Mentzel's, who as a company official was better able to see things from the inside. The French visitor greatly exaggerated the power of the states general in company affairs, claiming that Cape governors were appointed by the state, which regarded the Dutch East India Company as a subordinate department, required to pay

the states general a ton of gold annually for the privilege of holding its southern African colony. This tribute, Gennes averred, was raised by the excessive duties levied on visiting foreign vessels. Hence the exactions of the fiscal Needer, supported by his predecessor in that post, the acting governor. To ensure that none slipped through the net, the fiscal employed his "Kaffirs" to enforce payment. Although Gennes saw Cape and company as minor departments of state, he claimed that the governor exercised absolute and tyrannical powers.

Gennes de la Chancelière, however, showed prescience in some matters. He rightly considered that the Dutch company was in decline. A Hollander told him that although great personal fortunes were made at Batavia and handsome profits by the company, the rich were deserting the eastern capital for Europe and Batavia seemed destined to decay like Portuguese Goa. The Cape too faced a serious problem. There were, Gennes said, grave fears of another shipping disaster on the scale of that in 1737. The local people were wholeheartedly behind a scheme to build a protective breakwater and were more than willing to help defray the cost, since the only alternative would be, wrote Gennes, to abandon the settlement. The breakwater plan, however, was in the Frenchman's view quite impracticable. In this he was entirely correct, although the inconveniences of the Table Bay anchorage did not lead to a Dutch withdrawal from the colony.

Gennes certainly made a good impression at the Cape. He paved the way for a sympathetic reception by offering the acting governor a basket of Champagne wines as a mark of the French company's appreciation of the excellent treatment of its ships. Daniël van den Henghel, we are informed, was touched by the courtesy and offered every help to the *Condé*. Cape governors, the first lieutenant added, were always highly flattered by the salutes of foreign vessels. Even Dutch East Indiamen, he said, usually followed the custom, but sometimes refrained from firing in order to conserve their powder.

From the pen of Gennes de la Chancelière we also gain a glimpse of the Khoisan reaction to an expanding White frontier. Although these indigenes came to the settlement from time to time to trade in ivory, those whom Gennes encountered had travelled from the distant "Mountains of the Moon" (the Cedarberg range) to complain to the governor that their people had been robbed and insulted by Dutch settlers, who had even killed some of them. In the disorders of 1738-1739 resistance to White intrusion was coupled with Khoisan depredations on isolated farms and government policy alternated between conciliation and retaliation. The French lieutenant saw the deputation camping out with wives and families on the glacis of the Castle and although he took a sober and objective look at the object of their mission, their strangeness impressed him forcibly. The members of this Kaffir tribe, as called them, sang and danced round the town, howling like wolves and

mumbling songs with strange tunes. The men played upon a reed flute and the women kept time with their heads.

Jean-Baptiste d'Après observed in 1751 that the arrival of foreign ships in the Cape anchorage was marked by extraordinary formality. Courtesy salutes were certainly expected, as Gennes de la Chancelière noted, before a ship's papers were presented to the governor. This task was often delegated to junior officers, as was the case in 1752 when Selle entered the roadstead in the *Villeflix*, sending the papers with the young sub-lieutenant René le Brun of Paimpol. Captains, however, were sometimes excused the omission of courtesy salvoes as occurred on 4 February 1744 when Butler sailed out for Pondicherry and China in the *Dauphin*. The Cape authorities knew that he was a very sick man. Failure to salute on arrival could, on the other hand, lead to a lukewarm reception. This problem arose in March 1754 when Jean-François-Marie de Surville of Port-Louis brought the *Renommée* into the roadstead on a voyage to China and was followed a few days later by Saint-Médard in a new *Dauphin*, bound for the same destination. Governor Tulbagh was indisposed, but his deputy Sergius Swellengrebel, cousin of the former governor, received the first French arrival. Surville refused to salute unless he could be assured that the Castle would reply to his nine shots with an equal number. He was also reluctant to show his pass, although he finally agreed to do so. The Cape authorities would not deviate from the standard practice of returning the customary nine shots with two fewer from the battery. Surville would not climb down and a guard was mounted to prevent contact between ship and shore. When the *Dauphin* sailed in, Surville told her captain what had taken place and Saint-Médard accordingly adopted the same attitude. The French ultimately had to give way, but it is significant that the two vessels sailed on 4 April without the usual courtesy salute on departure.

Surville was at the Cape in 1763 under different circumstances. He had joined the *Fortuné* at the Ile de France as captain, but the ship ran into a gale off the southern African coast on the homeward voyage and had put into Fish Bay in a sinking condition. The captain succeeded in getting off the crew, military personnel and cargo before the vessel broke up in a storm. The survivors travelled overland and on arrival at the Cape were repatriated in other French ships. Surville later became acting governor of Pondicherry and led an exploring expedition to the South Seas, reaching the shores of New Zealand's North Island in December 1769, some two months after the arrival further down the coast of the Englishman James Cook. Surville drowned in a boat accident off Peru on 5 April 1770 and was buried at Lima.

Some French shipping disasters between 1735 and 1755 have been touched on here and the company lost a number of other ships in these years, apart

from those captured or destroyed as a result of action in the Anglo-French war, to be discussed in a later chapter. Among the merchantmen wrecked were the *Marquis de Lassay* in April 1749, an Indiaman commanded by Denis Bécart of Saint-Malo, a one-armed veteran of the recent war, the *Espérance* under the captaincy of Buisson de la Vigne, lost off the Glénan Islands west of Lorient in March 1751 on her return from Bengal, and the *Paix*, which foundered in a squall off Bourbon in April 1755. Bécart's luck ran out on this occasion and he went down with his ship. The Indian Ocean claimed more victims, including the *Prince* in 1753. Bound for Pondicherry, she caught fire and most of her crew were lost.

A well-documented disaster occurred to the *Saint-Géran*. This ship, no stranger to the Cape which she had visited in January 1740 on a voyage to Pondicherry under the command of Porée de la Touche, sailed from Lorient on 24 March 1744 with much-needed supplies for the governor general, Mahé de la Bourdonnais, on the Ile de France. Captained by Gabriel Richard de la Marre she touched at the island of Gorée off the coast of Senegal where 30 slaves were taken aboard. By the time the ship reached the approaches to the Ile de France many of the crew were sick and an error of navigation drove her in perfect weather on to the rocks off the Ile d'Ambre on the north-east coast of the island colony. The *Saint-Géran* broke in half and of some 200 persons aboard, including fifteen passengers, only eight crew members were saved. The captain and all his senior officers were drowned, together with the passengers and the unfortunate slaves. One young lady aboard the vessel, Virginie de Mallet, was returning to her family after completing her education in France. Her fate, and the tragedy which has left its record in island topography, were to serve as the backdrop for Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's famous novel of 1787, *Paul et Virginie*. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre went to the Ile de France as an engineer officer in 1768 and spent two years there before returning to Europe by way of the Cape. His account of his experiences published in 1773 provides a well-considered description of the Dutch settlement in southern Africa in the later 18th century.

Only one ship of the French company was wrecked on the Cape coast in the years 1735-1755, the *Centaure*, commanded by Guillaume de la Butte-Frérôt of Lorient. She was homeward-bound from the Ile de France when she ran aground at Cape Agulhas in a calm sea on 19 January 1750. The *Centaure* was a large vessel, with a crew of 310, and carried more than 80 passengers, for the most part company employees, including many soldiers, their wives, children, servants and slaves. Two of the soldiers had been banished from the Ile de France; another, nicknamed "Cent Mille", had been condemned to serve in the galleys on his return to Europe. All those aboard were brought safely to shore, although the *Centaure's* cargo of pepper could not be saved. Twelve sailors made a five day journey to the Cape with news of the disaster and relief was immediately organized. Waggons and provisions were sent to help

the main party and all were brought to the settlement where they were accommodated privately, or in the company's hospital and on ships in the roadstead. The burgher Bestbier played a valuable part in arranging for the comfort of the survivors. The repatriation of so many men, women and children was a major undertaking, but there was a considerable volume of shipping in Table Bay at the time, including East Indiamen bound for the Thames and a returning British naval squadron. These ships, together with Dutch and French vessels, took most of the crew and passengers of the *Centaure* back to Europe. However, a surgeon major from the wrecked French ship, Julien Aubert, decided to sail on the Dutch East Indiaman *Geregtigheid* to Ceylon with his wife, infant child and a slave girl. From there he planned to make his way to Pondicherry. By early May 1750 the last two French officers had left the settlement. The London East Indiaman *Chesterfield*, returning from Fort St David on the Coromandel coast under the command of Edwin Carter, assisted in the repatriation and was able to make good use of a sail-maker and a cooper from the *Centaure*.

The slaves aboard the *Saint-Géran* were not the only human cargoes carried away from the French settlement in Senegal to the Mascarenes. This was a regular route at this period, but ships on it seldom touched at the Cape. The *Favorite*, despatched with the co-operation of a Nantes shipowner Gabriel Michel, left Lorient in October 1744 on such a mission and took aboard an unwilling labour force for the Ile de France towards the end of the year. On 14 January 1745, however, soon after sailing from Gorée, the slaves rose up against their captors. The revolt was speedily quelled and the frigate rounded the Cape for the French island colony in the Indian Ocean without further incident.

One ship which did call at the Cape with a cargo of Senegalese slaves was the frigate *Cybèle*, which left Lorient in November 1755 under the captaincy of Jean-Henri Trévan. On 19 March 1756, while trying to beat into Table Bay, she went ashore above Bloubergstrand and soon became a total wreck. Another French vessel, the *Saint-Charles*, commanded by Captain Brulaine, was loading grain for the Ile de France at that time and took on board the *Cybèle*'s crew and slaves. The wreck and its provisions, including brandy, wine and grain, were sold on the spot. The *Cybèle*, doubtless the former transatlantic slaver of this name which was confiscated by the French company, brought news to the Cape of the violent earthquake of 1 November 1755 which devastated Lisbon and caused havoc as far afield as Madeira. The French were to play an active part in the direct slave-trade to the Cape later in the century.

The logs of French ships sometimes record the festivities marking local events. That of the *Triton* notes the wedding on 16 February 1744 of the first lieutenant of the Dutch company's warship the *Herstelder*, Christiaan

Everhard Philip van Jonkheijn, to Elizabeth Theresia Visser of the Cape. The *Triton* fired three congratulatory salvoes, a tribute echoed by the *Phénix*, returning to Lorient from Pondicherry under the command of Gardin du Brossay. The bridegroom was the nephew of the *Herstelder's* captain and commodore of the Dutch return fleet, Dirk Wolter van Nimwegen. His ship, formerly the *Edam*, had been bought by the company from the Amsterdam admiralty in 1741.

The *Triton's* captain, Ignace Bart, was a descendant of the famous Dunkirk seaman Jean Bart who fought with distinction in northern waters during the War of the League of Augsburg. He had come to the Cape from the Ile de France on a special mission and the *Triton's* arrival in Table Bay was remarked on in the log of the London East Indiaman *Salisbury*, returning from Madras under Christopher Burrows. When the Frenchman entered Table Bay on 13 January 1744, the salute of fifteen guns ordered by Captain Bart was evidently considered over-enthusiastic by the Castle and the *Herstelder*. Neither deigned to reply. The *Triton* was bound for France, but Bart brought with him two letters of 7 December 1743 addressed to Swellengrebel by the French governor general, La Bourdonnais, who wished to purchase wine for the French colony and had given Bart permission to bring any supplies obtained back to the Ile de France before setting out again on his homeward voyage. La Bourdonnais sent as a present some ebony suitable for furniture manufacture, some coffee and a little Bourbon tobacco - samples, the governor general said, of all the available products of the islands. For La Bourdonnais made the real purpose of his correspondence clear in his second letter: the establishment of a regular trade between the islands and the Cape.

The immediate response was that Bart could buy from the burghers the wine La Bourdonnais requested, but that no official trade link could be entertained. Nevertheless some ebony was sent to the United Provinces on the *Goidschalxoord* in April 1744 to reinforce an argument that a trade in timber in exchange for grain and wine might well be initiated. It was decided in 1746 that Cape burghers could purchase wood if French ships should bring any more, but only for subsequent sale to the company at a fixed price. The ebony which Bart had given certain burghers in 1744 and which they had surrendered to the company would now be paid for.

This interesting development in limited private trade for Cape burghers had no immediate result. Colonists on the Ile de France and on Bourbon might also have been brought into the picture. However, although they had enjoyed trading rights since 1742, they owned no ships. Nor was commerce between the two companies fostered. Instead, the French authorities concentrated on broadening the basis of the agricultural economy of the Mascarenes. The Lyons merchant Pierre Poivre, later to join the administrative service in the islands, called at the Cape in January 1749 aboard the China ship the

Montaran, commanded by Jean Jolif du Colombier of Saint-Malo. Poivre collected slips of all kinds of useful plants which, as he says, Dutch ingenuity had brought from many quarters of the globe to flourish in their beautiful colony. These he transported to the Ile de France. Again, instructions were given in that year to a captain of another noted seafaring family, Louis Béard du Désert of Port-Louis, to buy seed-corn, vegetable seeds and slips of fruit trees which could easily be carried to the Ile de France from the Cape. He was exhorted to work surreptitiously and without compromising himself in his efforts to obtain what was required. How successful he was when the *Baleine*, bound for China, touched at the Cape in March 1750 is not recorded, but it is known that ignorance and neglect wiped out most of the slips which Poivre had earlier taken to the Ile de France. Better relations between the United Provinces and France after the close of our period led to open trade links between the Cape and the islands, and the appointment in 1757 of Louis-Adrien Percheron de Mouchy as a French commercial agent in the Dutch colony. He was later to become the first accredited foreign representative in the settlement.

La Caille sent many examples of Cape flora and fauna back to France and it is on record that when he finally left the colony he was exempted from current legislation regarding the export of private goods. He was, however, the soul of honesty and embarked with very little. This circumstance did not pass unnoticed at the Cape and the astronomer had to turn down a request made by a certain gentleman living there that he sell him his privilege and allow the other man to use his name. There is little doubt that many visiting Frenchmen took every opportunity of indulging in a little private trade at the Cape. They were certainly not alone in this, for making money at company expense was a normal practice among those of all European nations engaged in the East India trade. There was much smuggling of illegal goods into France. These were often unloaded at the Ile de Groix before the ships entered the Lorient roadstead and were then brought clandestinely into the port. Even some of the voyages were suspect. Why did poor Bécart, who drowned in 1755, visit Martinique in the West Indies on a return voyage of the *Dauphin* from the Indies in 1752? His excuse that his crew suffered badly from scurvy after leaving Ascension and that the rations were poor may not have been the whole story. Captains enjoyed a permitted allowance in private goods and were also given table-money for the proper entertainment of passengers. However, a captain who sold supplies at the Ile de France which were intended for passengers was suspended for three years in 1754 and in the same year Deschiens de Raucourt of the *Silhouette* was fined on his return from India for bad behaviour and for overcharging a lady travelling with him.

French East Indiamen would appear to have carried a larger number of passengers in the earlier 18th century than the ships of other nations on the route, many of them sailing between the homeland and the island

colonies of the Indian Ocean. There was also a considerable movement of company officials, military personnel and missionaries to and from the French settlements and China. The Jesuit priest Claude-François Loppin sailed on a voyage to the China mission aboard the *Duc de Chartres*, commanded by a captain held in high regard by the company, Louis Drias of a Port-Louis merchant family. The ship called at the Cape in March 1739 and Loppin and two fellow-travellers, doubtless Jean-Antoine Delacourt and Jacques d'Artigues, said Mass in secret during Holy Week without taking their French-speaking host into their confidence. Another Jesuit at the settlement in the period was Jean-Joseph-Marie Amiot of Toulon, astronomer and sinologist, who arrived on 23 March 1750 on his voyage to China aboard the *Villeflaix*, commanded by Le Fol de la Londe of Cherbourg. With Amiot were the Chinese priest Jean-Régis Lieou and a compatriot still in his novitiate, Philippe-Stanislas K'ang, who died on the voyage after leaving the Dutch colony. Both had been educated in Paris. It is probable that such priest-passengers and the chaplains carried on French vessels ministered on occasion in secret to Catholics in the colony.

A foreign passenger on the *Diane*, at the Cape in December 1755 on her return from Pondicherry, was David, Baron Vasserot, a former lieutenant of the Swiss troops in British service at Madras. He asked permission to remain at the settlement for some weeks in order to recuperate. Five Chinese bound for Lorient were also on board the French vessel. The *Diane* had sailed from Lorient in August 1754 under the command of Thomas Rapon de la Placelière and called at the Cape later that year on her outward voyage. Her captain died at sea in September 1755 and the first lieutenant Jacques Kerlero de Rosbo of Pont-Scorff succeeded him.

The most famous of the company officials of these years to set foot on Cape soil was the great French governor general of the Indies, Dupleix, returning from Pondicherry in ill-deserved disgrace. Dupleix reached the Cape on 2 March 1755 on Lobry's *Duc d'Orléans*, accompanied by his wife Jeanne Albert, daughter of the French surgeon Jacques-Théodore Albert and his Indo-Portuguese wife, Elisabeth-Rose de Castro. With the couple were other members of the family, a considerable retinue including Indian musicians and a vast quantity of valuables. Even a menagerie was included. Dupleix was received at the Cape with due pomp and circumstance before the *Duc d'Orléans* sailed out on the last leg of the voyage to Lorient on 1 April. Is it possible that Jeanne Albert met Hugo Lambrechts at the settlement? He was the first cousin of François-Corneille de Schonamille, who served with Dupleix in the Carnatic and married Jeanne's daughter by her first marriage, Jeanne-Suzanne-Ursule Vincens. Here was a link with the "Ostend Company" of old.

There were, as always, deserters from French ships at the Cape and others from the shore or from other vessels at anchor who took the opportunity of

stowing away on French East Indiamen. These last were frequently soldiers and sailors born in France who sought to leave the Dutch service and rejoin their countrymen. When Bart brought the *Triton* to Table Bay in 1744 a mate Linger deserted the ship and eight men smuggled themselves aboard and at length sailed with the Frenchman. They included Pierre-Jacques le Fèvre of Lille, Etienne Boutet from Berry, François Mirailhé of Rennes and two men from La Rochelle, the cooper Augustin Gatineau, who died a month after leaving the anchorage, and Antoine Liard, known by his nickname "Saint-Sulpice de Paris". Sobriquets were in frequent use by men in the French service and names often reflected their owners' habits or characteristics. "Sweetness" and "Debauchery" are among those encountered.

Lars de Lescouët of the *Maréchal de Saxe* lost six men in 1752. They escaped in the ship's boat and hid ashore, but were soon recovered. He in turn found three of the Dutch company's men aboard after he had sailed, but they ran away again in the east. A similar pattern marked the arrival in Table Bay of the *Achille* in March 1753, bound for Bourbon and the Ile de France under the command of Lévesque de Beaubriand of Saint-Malo. Those deserting the vessel included some Italian sailors and a girl stowaway, Jeanne Barron of Nantes. Governor Tulbagh was informed and several French deserters already in custody at the Cape were placed on board, but the loss of good men delayed the ship's sailing. On the eve of departure two stowaways described in the log as "Blacks" were found on the ship and were sent ashore in the jolly-boat. When the same vessel called at the Cape in 1750 under Lobry's command on a voyage to China, a Portuguese shoemaker Francisco Urbano Flori was left behind. He applied for burgher papers in 1756. Four deserters from the *Dauphin* who had been apprehended in the settlement and held on Robben Island were transferred to the *Diane* in 1754. After the latter vessel had left the Cape homeward-bound early in 1756 a stowaway, Wilhelm Hansen of Aachen, was discovered on board. Kerlero de Rosbo had, however, lost a member of his crew, Abraham Messe, through desertion while he was at anchor in Table Bay.

Lévesque de Beaubriand brought the French company's ship the *Lys* into Table Bay in April 1755, outward-bound for the Indies. It was to be the captain's last voyage. He met his death at Achin on Sumatra in October of that year and his vessel returned to Lorient in 1757 under Dufay de la Branchère. While the *Lys* lay at anchor at the Cape a mate deserted and was, it appeared, given sanctuary in the house of a French-speaking burgher, the tailor Jacob Taillard of Tournai in the Austrian Netherlands. Taillard was aggressive, argumentative and evidently untrustworthy, and was called a "French" windbag to his face. His clashes with authority, of which this episode formed a part, led to his imprisonment on Robben Island after a flogging and his ultimate banishment from the colony. His descendants in South Africa are the Taljaards of today. Robben Island long remained both a

prison for criminals in the Dutch service and a place of detention for foreign deserters. Five Frenchmen who had jumped ship were transferred from the island to the mainland late in 1755.

Death, injury, violence and insubordination were problems which plagued all commanders, French captains included. Bart of the *Triton* took aboard the second gunner of Butler's *Dauphin* in 1744, in order to transport him in irons to the Ile de France; the bos'n and the chief gunner of the *Triton*'s own crew were clapped in irons for disobeying orders by sleeping ashore for several nights in the Cape settlement. Two soldiers on the *Condé* were dealt with severely early in 1735 for stealing from their messmates a few weeks before the ship reached Table Bay.

A sailor on the *Triton* was unfortunate enough to break a leg while the vessel lay in the Cape anchorage in 1744 and another, Lucien Rossel, was found in 1739 in a drunken state on the stoep of the burgher Jacobus Bruijns's house in the settlement. He had been stabbed in the pit of the stomach and was rushed to the company hospital where despite the attention of Dutch and French surgeons he died. Rossel was a crew member of Lobry's *Philibert*. Charles Porlé de Montigny, a servant from the wrecked *Centaure*, was set upon and injured by three men late one night in 1750 between the slave lodge and the church. Deaths included those of a soldier on the *Duc de Parme* who suffered a sudden heart attack in January 1751 and of another of similar rank on the *Villeflaix* who died at the Cape on 7 April 1752. This second man, Joseph Barity, was known from his origins as "Provençal". It was perhaps two men from the *Duc de Parme* who, with a companion, asked for food and drink at the house of the Dutch company's master bricklayer Jan de Winnaar late on the evening of 4 February 1751. They were first offered the meal as a gift, but were later confronted by their drunken host with a demand for payment. The scene was part of a larger domestic quarrel.

Relations between visiting Frenchmen and those ashore were generally cordial enough and there were many in the settlement apart from Bestbier who gained financially from those they entertained during a brief respite from the discomforts of long voyages. French officers from the *Baleine* lodged in 1750 at the house of a former burgher from Nîmes in Languedoc, André Mellet, stepson of an earlier refugee at the Cape from that province, Gilles Sollier, who played a useful part in the financial and commercial transactions of his compatriots in the settlement. By 1750, however, Sollier was dead and Mellet was no longer resident at the Cape. The younger man, a baker by trade, had fallen foul of the authorities for receiving stolen company goods and had been compulsorily repatriated to the United Provinces on the *Suijderburg* in April 1748. Isaac de Villiers, son of the French settler Pierre de Villiers, had undertaken to look after Mellet's interests, including the care of a young family.

The French were also on good terms with the Dutch at the Cape at official level while France was at peace with Britain, although there were complaints about the high price of assistance rendered when the *Villeflix* called in 1752. These, however, were not a true reflection of relations in time of peace. Captain Chantelou of the *Lys* took vegetable seeds from the Cape to supply the Dutch at Nagappattinam when the ship sailed for Pondicherry in 1742; letters for the Dutch in Bengal were carried by Chévery of the *Hercule* in the same year and by Aubin du Plessis of the *Argonaute* in 1743. Some ten years later in contrast, when international tensions were building up and the Dutch position was uncertain, letters were sent to Europe from the Cape by French captains and supercargoes anxious to inform their masters of the current situation. These were despatched via the United Provinces, but not through official channels. The surgeon of a Dutch ship was used as a courier. It is at this period too that we learn of the export of Cape wine for French consumption. The director Charles-Robert Godeheu de Zaimont, who had the unenviable task of succeeding Dupleix as governor general in India, received some in France from a Dutch source; a supply was also taken aboard the *Duc d'Orléans* bringing Godeheu's predecessor home in 1755.

French callers in the years 1735-1755, excluding two vessels of war, numbered 56, just over 60% of them visiting the Cape in the years after the close of the War of the Austrian Succession. The same ship seldom anchored in Table Bay on both outward and homeward voyages, and indeed the great majority of French visitors arrived on voyages from Lorient. Brittany and to a lesser extent Normandy supplied most of the officers and crews of French East Indiamen and training was provided in the executive branches at Lorient and in Paris. Captains, as with the Dutch and to some degree the Danes, were not usually assigned to one ship for successive voyages, but commanded several vessels in the course of their careers. Officers, as was the case with those in the rival national monopolies, came largely from the bourgeoisie and country gentry, and many families prided themselves on a continuing tradition of service in the East India trade and were often closely related. This was the most flourishing period in the history of French commerce with the east in company days and the great sales of imports, transferred from Nantes to Lorient in 1733, brought purchasers from many regions. Those from Nantes took the lion's share, followed by merchants from Paris, Montpellier, Lyons and Geneva.

In the longer term, however, the future history of the Indian sub-continent and of the Cape colony lay with the British, rather than with the French. We turn our attention therefore to the commerce of the East India Company of London, whose vessels far outnumbered those of other foreigners in the years 1735-1755 at the Cape, ushering in an era of British dominance in the affairs of southern Africa and the lands to the east across the Indian Ocean.

3

The London company: *Captains, Crews and Voyages*

English exploration of the resources of the east began with voyages round the Cape of Good Hope in 1591 and this early commerce was consolidated after January 1601 in the Company of Merchants of London trading with the East Indies, chartered by Elizabeth I. The company was the earliest of the national monopolies to challenge the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean and beyond, for the similar amalgamation of Dutch interests did not take place until the following year. The London company had to face opposition from the Dutch in Indonesia and from the Portuguese at Surat. A foothold was secured at the now ruined port of Bantam on Java and was retained until 1683, but war with the Dutch company in 1618-1619 drove the English from the Moluccas. They were more successful at Surat, where Portuguese hostility was overcome and a trading concession obtained in 1615 from the Mughal emperor, Jahangir.

Famine in Gujarat led to a decline in cotton exports through Surat, but an alternative source of supply was found on the Coromandel coast. It was there that the London company erected a factory at Madras in 1640 named Fort St George, raised to the status of a presidency in 1653 under the governorship of Aaron Baker. Factories were also established in 1640 at Balasore in Orissa and on the Hooghly in Bengal, and in 1668 Charles II transferred to the East India Company the crown colony of Bombay, obtained in 1662 through his marriage to the Portuguese princess Catarina de Bragança. The presidency of Bombay became the second jewel in the London company's diadem, particularly after 1686 when Surat was seen to be too vulnerable during the contemporary forceful assertion of English rights against the emperor, Aurangzib.

The London company was by this time steadily extending its fields of



John Dean
the only survivor of the "Sussex" ship which remained on board the
"Sussex" in the West **EAST INDIA COMPANY** *1741*

John Dean of the *Sussex*, 1741. Mezzotint by John Faber, from an oil painting by Willem Verelst. Reproduced by permission of the Director of the India Office Library and Records, London

influence. The island of St Helena had been ceded to the East India Company by Charles II in 1673 as a regular port of call on the Atlantic sea route and in the next decade the fortified factory at Bengkulu on Sumatra guaranteed a profitable trade in pepper. The fort there took the name Fort Marlborough in 1714 in honour of the great military leader in the War of the Spanish Succession. Further extensions of commerce from the coffee port of Mokha on the Red Sea to the Far East testify to the vitality of the English company. Among its acquisitions were factories on the Malabar coast and territory at Fort St David near Cuddalore on the Coromandel coast, purchased in 1690 by the American-born governor of Madras, Elihu Yale, whose bequests later gave his name to Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. The foundations of secure company control in Bengal were laid by the resourceful factor Job Charnock, who raised the first Fort William in 1696 at what was destined to become the thriving commercial centre of Calcutta. A permanent fort was built in 1700 and a Bengal presidency inaugurated. The Madras, Bombay and Bengal presidencies were to become the main power bases of the London East India Company in the 18th century. It was, however, the tea trade with China, inaugurated in 1676 on a regular schedule of sailings and involving no colonial territorial holdings, which was at length to outstrip in the value of imports landed in the Thames the entire produce shipped home by the company on all other voyages.

English ships, like those of their foreign competitors, were no strangers to the Cape of Good Hope, even before Van Riebeeck's time. The Cape was used for the transmission of letters as the famous postal stones indicate; English seamen also gave names to local landmarks which long competed with others for acceptance: Penguin Island, for instance - the old name for Robben Island - James's Mount for Signal Hill and Charles's Mount for Devil's Peak. Other names, now half-forgotten, included Coney Island, Deadman's Bay and Chapman's Chance. Sir Thomas Roe, sailing to India on a diplomatic mission in 1615, landed some felons who had been spared the gallows to explore the Cape hinterland. This experiment in leniency was not, however, a success. Five years later Humphrey Fitzherbert, sailing for Bantam, and Andrew Shilling, in command of a fleet bound for Surat, took possession of the Cape in the name of James I of England and VI of Scotland, evidently with the approval of visiting Dutchmen. Among the signatories of the annexation document was the navigator William Baffin, whose earlier explorations in North America are commemorated in the name of Baffin Island in northern Canada. The subsequent history of South Africa would doubtless have taken a different turn if the Stuart monarch had accepted this territorial gift. He showed no interest in it, however.

The Company of Merchants of London trading with the East Indies early faced challenges to its monopoly. In 1617 the king granted letters patent to Sir James Cunningham for a Scottish East India Company, but the recipient

later assigned the patent to the London merchants. In England, grievances within the company and jealousies outside it conspired to break the monopoly. In December 1635 Charles I licensed a rival group led by Sir William Courteen and his associates to trade in the Far East. The Courteen group and the older company were hard pressed by the Civil War and its consequences, but although a Courteen offshoot, the Assada association headed by Lord Halifax, was compelled to amalgamate with the original East India Company in 1650, both private and company voyages continued and indeed from 1654 until 1657 the trade was thrown completely open. The first company seemed destined to go under when in 1656 a majority of its directors voted to sell out to private interests. However, the lord protector, Oliver Cromwell, acting on advice and fearful of Dutch success in eastern trade, granted a new charter in 1657 to the Company of Merchants of London which reinstated the monopoly and reconstituted the undertaking along modern joint stock lines.

Hostility to monopoly did not end there and interlopers in the trade were not entirely eradicated. The Scottish parliament in 1695 promoted the Company of Scotland trading to Africa and the Indies, a commercial venture which came to concentrate on the Caribbean, but which sent two vessels to the Indian Ocean and beyond. Both voyages ended in disaster and the loophole of Scottish legislation hostile to English interests was plugged by the Act of Union of 1707 abolishing the parliament in Edinburgh. In England, however, opponents of the old monopoly succeeded with legislation in 1698 which allowed the creation of an English Company trading to the East Indies in competition with the Company of Merchants of London. Prolonged negotiation led to their amalgamation in 1708 as the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies. Henceforth those who sought to challenge the national monopoly would generally seek opportunities abroad, although free trade interests tried again to challenge the company in parliament as late as 1730.

Before considering some Cape callers and their crews in the years 1735-1755 - and as with the French this chapter and the next are limited to observations on purely commercial voyages without reference to the Anglo-French struggle for power - a few words about the shipping interest will not be out of place. The early company had purchased or built its own ships, but from 1639 it became increasingly usual to hire so that by the early 18th century East Indiamen were all on charter and the company only maintained a very small fleet of its own as despatch vessels or for use in European waters.

Hence the rise of the shipping interest, a consortium of owners with close family connections, wielding great power in both parliament and the inner circle of company administration. Most owners had shares in a number of vessels, a practice which, together with insurance, minimized the risks. The

managing owner, better known as the ship's husband, held a position of particular influence and privilege to which many a commander aspired on his retirement from the sea. Husbands had the patronage of the ship and expected a say in the selection of the commander and subordinate officers, who were usually drawn from the middle and upper echelons of society. Commands were regularly bought, sold and bequeathed and those who held them did not move from ship to ship. Indeed, the practice grew of husbands providing a new ship for trusted commanders when their previous one had to be taken out of service or was written off. This was the system of hereditary bottoms which long prevailed in the East India Company.

Commanders were expected to give loyal service to the company and in return enjoyed privileges of private trade which could lead to fortunes far in excess of anything their very modest salaries of £10 (R20) a month might bring them. A mate would succeed to the captaincy of a ship if his commander died on a voyage, but his permanent appointment would depend on the decision of the owners and particularly the husband, and not on that of the company. Moreover he would be required to purchase the command. The shipping interest, from its officers afloat to the owners ashore, was an oligarchy until the last decade of the 18th century, but it worked effectively enough and enabled the East India Company to concentrate upon its commerce and administration. In so doing it had become as the middle years of the 18th century approached the most efficient of the national trading monopolies in eastern waters.

It is appropriate in view of the importance to the London company of the China trade to begin this survey with the arrival in Table Bay towards evening on 29 March 1735 of the East Indiamen *Harrison*, commanded by Samuel Martin, and *Grafton*, under the captaincy of Robert Hudson. Both ships were returning from Canton, although the *Grafton* had first sailed further up the Chinese coast to Amoy in a vain effort to obtain a cheaper cargo in a port where competition was not so fierce. The captains, chief officers and supercargoes were doubtless well pleased with the private trade they had been able to conduct. Hudson, we know, had purchased gold and goods to a considerable amount and would sell his merchandise in London through the company at a significant profit. Gold was bought with silver from Europe, the company providing the capital at a high rate of interest. Such miscellaneous articles as mathematical instruments, watches, snuff-boxes and silver plate were brought out for private sale and officers and supercargoes in the China trade returned with goods which indicate prevailing tastes in their homelands: tea in particular, blue and white chinaware, fans, walking canes, rosewood furniture, lacquered cabinets, prints and medicinal products among them.

The China trade was not without its difficulties. Negotiations were protracted

and subject to arbitrary and vexatious regulations on the part of the Chinese. Relations were often strained and insults came from both sides. There was also sometimes hostility among the Europeans competing for cargoes. Nevertheless profits were high and it is small wonder that for those with a private investment a "coast and China" voyage by way of India was much sought after. Almost as popular was the "coast and bay" voyage to the Madras presidency and Bengal. A good profit could be made, although fever was a hazard in the bay. Less favoured, both on health grounds and for possibilities of private trade, were sailings to Bombay, the Red Sea and Bengkulu.

There were naturally variations on these standard voyages. Banjarmasin on Borneo (Kalimantan) comes into the picture as an alternative source of pepper. Ralph Congreve's *Onslow* called there in 1746 on her voyage to China, but the Dutch who claimed suzerainty were hostile in the aftermath of an Indonesian revolt to which we shall return. Their attitude led to difficulties for the captain and the imprisonment by the local authorities of the two supercargoes aboard, William May and John Swynfen, both of whom died as a consequence of ill-treatment. The *Onslow* had called at the Cape in December 1745 earlier in the voyage.

A number of ships also visited Madagascar, sometimes to water and provision, but also often enough to buy slaves there for the London company's factories and settlements. The 30 gun *Harrington* was on such a voyage when she called at the Cape in April 1736 with Bombay and Bengal as her further destinations. Her commander Robert Jenkins knew the settlement well for as second mate of the ill-fated *Nightingale*, bound for Madras and Bengal under William Mackett, he was stranded there for more than a year after his ship had been wrecked in the great storm of 1722 in Table Bay. While he was there Jenkins recommended to the Cape authorities that they seek the services of John Lethbridge of Newton Abbot in Devonshire to help salvage sunken cargoes. Lethbridge had invented a "diving-engine", consisting of a tapered wooden cylinder, reinforced with iron hoops, into which air was pumped. Apertures for the diver's arms were provided and a small window of thick glass enabled him to see what he was doing. The English diver came out with a team of assistants in 1727 and had some success in recovering bullion with his strange machine. One of his helpers, Peter Richards, returned to the Cape in 1732 with two companions to continue the search and remained about a year.

Jenkins then entered the West Indian trade and in April 1731 his ship, the Glasgow brig *Rebecca*, was intercepted by Spanish coastguards. Jenkins was roughly handled and apparently suffered the indignity of a mutilated ear. This incident was recalled in 1738 when anti-Spanish feeling was growing in Britain and the captain was asked to testify before a parliamentary

committee. Public indignation was such that when hostilities with Spain began in the following year the conflict was known popularly as the War of Jenkins' Ear.

Robert Jenkins returned to the East India service in 1732 and was given the command of the *Harrington*, a new vessel launched in September of that year which made her maiden voyage to Bengkulu, returning in 1734. After his voyage to Madagascar and India in 1736-1737 he sailed again for India and China as commander of the *Harrington* in 1738, calling at the Cape in November of that year where, "being Determined not to Lumber the Ship", he decided not to take aboard too much of the Cape wine and arrack so popular in eastern settlements. He sailed on 22 November for the Malabar coast where he picked up the new governor of Bombay, Stephen Law, and took him to his headquarters. The *Harrington* at length reached Canton and on her return voyage fought a successful action against Maratha pirates off the west coast of India and escorted a convoy of East Indiamen home from St Helena. Irregularities in company affairs on that island brought Jenkins back as administrator in 1741. He rejoined the *Harrington* at St Helena in the following year and sailed to Bombay where in December 1742, at the age of 60, he died of amoebic dysentery, the dreaded "bloody flux" which carried off so many in tropical climes. His career is of more than passing interest in the history of the Cape and of the East India trade.

Jenkins was not the only man of note on London East Indiamen of our period. Some names stand out in the "Who's who" of British mariners at the Cape between 1735 and 1755. Augustus Townshend who brought the *Augusta* to the anchorage in 1743 on his return from a second voyage to China stood on a high rung of the social ladder. He was a son of Charles, Viscount Townshend, better known as "Turnip" Townshend for his agricultural reforms. The commander's mother was Viscount Townshend's second wife Dorothy, sister of the Whig premier Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford. Another of the statesman's nephews was Richard Walpole, commander of two ships named the *Houghton* and later member of parliament for Great Yarmouth.

Augustus Townshend sailed on the *Augusta* with his half-brother Roger Townshend on a third voyage to China in 1744, but died of dysentery at Batavia on the morning of 18 November 1745. He was only 28 years of age. The command passed to the chief mate Thomas Parker who brought the ship to a Cape anchorage on her return voyage in April 1747. The captain was not the only fatality in those last weeks of 1745. Six days after Townshend's death the third supercargo on the *Augusta*, John Steel, died after a lingering illness. Less than three weeks later the newly promoted chief mate Edmund Moreton also succumbed.

Sir Robert Walpole's son Horace, the distinguished man of letters and fourth

earl, had little time for Augustus Townshend. His main concern when he was informed of the commander's death was that the news might seriously affect the delicate health of Augustus's sister Mary. She recovered from the shock, however, and lived until 1776. Horace Walpole described his cousin as "a pert boy" in a letter to his friend Sir Horace Mann and mentioned the duel Augustus fought in London's Hyde Park on a Sunday morning in October 174 with the future paymaster to the forces, Thomas Winnington. The wife of Augustus's half-brother Charles Townshend, the third viscount, was Audrey, daughter of Edward Harrison, a former director of the East India Company and governor of Fort St George. Audrey was Winnington's mistress and the duel had been fought over some remarks passed by young Augustus about the relationship.

Francis d'Abbadie, who brought the *Neptune* into Table Bay in December 1741 on a voyage to Bengkulu and was later at the Cape as master of the *Portfield*, outward-bound for Bombay in January 1747, was of French Huguenot descent, as was the supercargo Frederick Pigou, long associated with the Canton trade. Two captains came from well-known and related families from Jersey in the Channel Islands: the commander of the *Scarborough*, Philip d'Auvergne, at the Cape on his return from China in March 1749, and his fellow-captain Carteret le Geyt, who took over the *Portfield* from Francis d'Abbadie and touched at the Cape on his return from Bengal in April 1754. Francis d'Abbadie had originally come out to Bombay in 1714 and was for many years involved in the country trade in which he had a considerable investment. Colonial governors also had a lively interest in this commerce between Asian ports and Captain d'Abbadie had the misfortune to incur the displeasure of William Phipps, governor of Bombay, who blighted the captain's chances. The Auvergne family of Jersey inherited in 1802 the dukedom of Bouillon in modern Belgium, but lost it again in 1815 after the close of the wars against Napoleon I.

Many men became part owners of East Indiamen, among them the Canton supercargo John Misenor who made more than one Cape visit and Benjamin Fisher who called there on several occasions between 1741 and 1747 in command of the *Porto Bello* East Indiaman. Others like Hudson of the *Grafton*, John Pelly of the *Prince of Wales*, a regular Cape caller, Charles Raymond who brought the *Wager* into Table Bay three times between 1738 and 1744 and Richard Crabb of the *Durrington*, a Cape caller in 1748 and 1750, joined the shipping interest as husbands. Pelly was also active in the world of marine insurance. There were some who used their knowledge of the eastern trade in the direct service of the London company at the highest level. John Purling of the *Sandwich*, at the Cape in February 1755 on a return voyage from Bombay, was in later life a director. William James, chief mate on John Samson's *Hardwicke* which anchored in Table Bay in 1748 and 1749 on both legs of a China voyage became commodore of the

East India Company's famed Bombay Marine and, with Robert Clive and Vice Admiral Charles Watson, contributed to the downfall of the Maratha pirates in 1756. He was subsequently chairman of the company's board of directors and a useful voice in parliament for the East India interest as member for West Looe in Cornwall. James received a baronetcy in 1778.

The families of other sea-captains of the age deserve recognition. George Steevens, the noted Shakespearean commentator of the later 18th century, was the son of an East India commander and company director of that name and nephew of Rear Admiral Charles Steevens. Of the same family was William Steevens, commander of the *Delawar* East Indiaman which touched at the Cape on a China run in 1748 and 1750. Gabriel Steward, evidently the son of the commander so named who brought the company's *East India* yacht to the Cape with despatches in 1741 and was later captain of the *Winchester* which anchored there in 1744, was himself a commander in the service and a member of parliament for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis. The sons of the Scotsman Charles Boddam who was at the Cape in the *Walpole* on a China run in January 1739 also served the company well. The elder, Charles, was on the Madras council and later became a director in London; the younger, Rawson Hart Boddam, was governor of Bombay.

Continuity in the sea service and the shipping interest is illustrated in the activities of the Braunds, a Devonshire family which settled in Essex. William Braund was an East India Company director from 1745 until 1753, his brother Samuel was a leading husband and another brother Benjamin had commanded the *Duke of Cumberland*, an earlier Cape caller. Benjamin Braund, who died in India in 1738, was fined for smuggling in 1730. His son of the same name commanded the *Boscawen*, of which his uncle Samuel was husband. The *Boscawen* was at the Cape in 1751 and 1753. Another of Samuel Braund's ships, the *Edgecote*, built up from the old *Montagu*, was commanded by John Pearse, a relative of Braund's nephew and partner Nicholas Pearse. The *Edgecote* also figures in Cape records from 1748. And in this picture of family relationships it should be remembered that the grandfather of a rising young politician of the period, William Pitt, the future Earl of Chatham, was the famous Thomas "Diamond" Pitt, governor of Madras early in the century. There were other Pitts in the service of the East India Company, afloat and ashore.

Jenkins and Townshend were not the only commanders to sicken and die on the voyages of our period. Richard Sheppard of the China ship the *Winchester* died in the Far East in December 1737 and John Dove took charge of the vessel for the homeward voyage; Walter Wilson of the *Grantham*, also bound for China, died in mid-Atlantic in March 1750 and the chief mate John Oliver assumed the command. There were two command changes on the *Fort St George* which was at the Cape late in April 1748 on a voyage to

the Coromandel coast. William Bressey was captain then, but by the time the ship returned to Table Bay in January 1751 the command had been assumed by the third mate Robert Burdett. The voyage had been a protracted one, involving a passage from Fort St David to Madagascar and back before the vessel finally set sail for the Thames. Since leaving the Cape there had been a threatened mutiny aboard and many deaths, including those of Bressey and his successor, Captain Mortimore. The *Winchester's* captain, Gabriel Steward, died at Fort William on 6 August 1744 after the completion of a lengthy and adventurous voyage of well over a year. In the course of it Steward's ship was driven on to the coast of Brazil "with Abundance of Damage" necessitating a long delay for repairs at Pernambuco before the captain could weigh for the Cape, Madras and Bengal. It was an exciting start to a distinguished career for Robert Clive, coming out as a young writer to Fort St George. John Samson took over the command in Bengal and brought the ship back to Table Bay in April 1745, homeward-bound. He was perhaps more popular than his predecessor, a parsimonious man always ready to make money out of supplies for the captain's table.

Fever was particularly virulent on the Bengal station in 1745 and Raymond of the *Wager*, who lost his second and fourth mates, Joseph Bond and John Phillips, stated: "There was scarce such Mortality ever seen here before ... Not one in Twenty recovers that is Seiz'd with this Plague". The *Edgbaston*, with Mokha as her immediate destination, had called at the Cape in February 1744. She sailed on from the Red Sea to the Bay of Bengal, finally reaching Calcutta in the middle of the following year at the height of the fever season. Between July and November 1745 she lost her captain Stephen Cobham, the chief mate Thomas Parker and the third and fifth mates Francis Musgrove and George Whitwell. The command passed to the second mate John Hereford who was confirmed in his new post. Hereford was at the Cape again in 1748, but died on the Coromandel coast in May of the next year, giving the command of the *Edgbaston* to the chief mate Edward Tiddeman of a noted seafaring family. It was under Tiddeman's captaincy that the *Edgbaston* called at the Cape in March 1753 en route for China.

Richard Mickelfield of the *Colchester* died at sea between Batavia and Borneo in October 1743 and her former chief mate Colin Campbell brought her back to the Cape in October 1744. Another chief mate to obtain promotion in this manner was George Lindsay of the *Pelham*, an Indiaman which called at the Cape in both directions on a voyage to Bombay and back in 1745 and 1747. She sailed out under the command of William Wells who died at Bombay in May 1746. Lindsay was confirmed in his appointment before all hands by the company's secretary in the Indian port, Thomas Hodges. John Flower had succeeded Daniel Seal of the *Montagu* when that ship reached Table Bay from Bombay in February 1738 and the *Elizabeth*, at the Cape in April 1748 under the command of Ambrose Lawrence, returned to the roadstead from Fort St

David in December 1750 with Edward Wills as commander. Lawrence died off the Malabar coast in May 1749 and was buried at sea, "for whom", the log states, "the Joyner made a Coffin out of His own Teak Plank". The third and fourth mates, John Ouchterlony and William Stone, died in the following September and of the original crew of 100, almost two-thirds failed to complete the round voyage.

Mathew Bootle of the *London* died "of a Consumption" off the Canaries in May 1745 after a lingering illness and William Sedgwick took the ship on to the Cape, Madras and China. Another captain who died on a China voyage was Felix Baker of the *Stafford*. The ship returned via the Cape in April 1755 under the command of John Green. The *Onslow* lost two commanders. John Balchem died at Canton in August 1742 and Congreve brought the ship back to England in 1743, calling at the Cape in April of that year. He anchored again in the roadstead in December 1745 on another voyage to China, but died on 5 April 1748 after a long illness during which he became delirious. His death occurred just after the *Onslow* had rounded the Cape homeward-bound. The chief mate Thomas Hinde took over the command.

Another captain who died off the Cape of Good Hope was George Westcott of the *Scarborough*, who had called at Table Bay on his outward voyage to the Coromandel coast and Bengal in August 1745. Westcott suffered from gout and scurvy on the return voyage and died in the early evening of 29 June 1746. The command passed to Philip d'Auvergne. Gout was a not uncommon complaint among captains. William Wells of the *Bedford*, at the Cape on his return from Bengkulu and Bengal in 1742, suffered from it and so, it would seem, did Francis d'Abbadie when he captained the *Portfield*. Two other commanders were too sick at the Cape to attend to their duties: John Cooke of the *Haeslingfield* from Bombay in 1740, for whom the chief mate James Houghton acted, and Matthew Court of the *Caesar* East Indiaman, returning from Bengkulu in 1745.

Joseph Phillips brought the *King William* to a Cape anchorage in April 1742 after her voyage from Madras, where her former captain, James Sanders, died on the afternoon of 4 February. The funeral ceremony was held on the following evening. "Att ½ past 5 PM", reads the log, "Carried Captain Sanders's Corps to the burialplace attended by all the Council and Gentlemen of the place the Military firing 3 Volleys over his grave after which ye Fort fired 20 half minute guns and we 44 which I take to be near his Age every Ship in ye road in their turns firing ye same".

Death also marked the arrival of London East Indiamen at the Cape anchorage. Leonard Maddox brought the *Wilmington* into Table Bay from Madras in December 1740, but fell sick while the ship lay at anchor and died on 15 February of the following year. Mickelfield of the *Colchester* was

present to pay his last respects and the two vessels sailed for home together on 17 April 1741, “to which Place”, as the *Colchester*’s log records, “pray God send us Safe”. John Tedd took over the command of the *Wilmington*. Another captain to die at the Cape was Christopher Howes of the *Somerset*, returning from a voyage to Bombay and Surat with a call on the Malabar coast. Howes died of dysentery on the evening of 18 March 1743 and the funeral is thus recorded in the ship’s log by the second mate Thomas Tolson, who in time would succeed to the captaincy and would visit the Cape in that capacity in 1747 and 1748. On 20 March Tolson wrote: “att 5:P:M: Interr’d the Body of Capt. Chrstr. Howes att which Time we fired 40 half Minute Guns Do. Each English ship in the Bay Fired 10 Guns then Hoisted our Colours close up upon wch. each Ship Saluted Capt. Henry Kent with. 7 Guns we Return’d 15”. Howes was clearly buried ashore and the custom of firing salvoes to indicate the age of the deceased and of lowering flags to half-mast was, as always, punctiliously observed. The new commander, Kent, was to lose another senior man before the *Somerset* reached the Thames. The third mate John Willson died at sea in June. The other ships in the roadstead mentioned by Tolson were Fisher’s *Porto Bello*, the *Tigris*, commanded by John Petre, the *Benjamin*, under the captaincy of Benjamin Way, and the *Admiral Vernon*, commanded by Benjamin Webster. All were returning from Indian ports.

One of the most distinguished servants of the London company to die at the Cape was the returning governor of Bombay, William Wake, who conducted a personally lucrative country trade during his term of office in collaboration with the future Dutch governor general in Batavia, Jacob Mossel. Wake reached Table Bay in poor health aboard Braund’s *Boscawen* on 27 January 1751 and was accommodated in the home of the secretary to the council of justice, Tiemendorf, where he died on 5 February. Wake was buried in the Dutch Reformed church and the funeral was a state occasion, attended by his widow, the outgoing Cape governor, Swellengrebel, his nominated successor Tulbagh, the Danish captain Svend Fenger and many other leading figures, British and Dutch. The Stockholm-born Jochem Outjes of the Dutch company’s *Liefde*, preparing to sail for Europe with Swellengrebel, held Wake’s escutcheon and the coffin was carried by the boat’s crew of the *Boscawen*, whose first surgeon read the burial service according to the rites of the Church of England. Braund was a mourner, as was Wills of the *Elizabeth*, in from Fort St David. Burdett of the *Fort St George* entered Table Bay from the same port on the evening of 27 January, bringing with him Stringer Lawrence, commander of the London company’s military forces in India, and two former governors of the Madras presidency, Nicholas Morse of Fort St George, a descendant of Oliver Cromwell, and a lesser light in the company hierarchy, Charles Floyer of Fort St David, dismissed the service. All three passengers attended the funeral.

A complete list of those who succumbed to sickness on the voyages of the

London company's ships in these years would fill many pages and ordinary crew members would be greatly in the majority. An unscheduled call at the Cape was often defended by captains because of the prevalence of sickness aboard. The voyage of Joseph Collier's *Severn* provides a typical illustration. He decided on his outward run to the Indies in 1746 not to put into Table Bay as he had few men seriously ill and moreover feared the storms which caused so much havoc in the roadstead. He was in any event late in the season. Nevertheless he was soon compelled to seek land. Sickness aboard increased when he reached the Indian Ocean and he decided to anchor in the Comoro Islands. On his return voyage from Fort St David in December of the following year he noted in the log after entering Table Bay: "The Reason of my Putting in here was on Account of my People's being very bad wth. ye Scurvy, two of which died some time before and many others uncapable (*sic*) of Duty". Way of the *Benjamin* bound for Madras and Bengkulu in 1744 noted an increase in sickness on the Cape approaches, when the crew suffered "wth. pains in their breasts and swellings of their knees and (I) very much fear our number of sick will daily increase if we don't soon get into a Port". Although Cape calls were often enough justified the company looked with great suspicion on stops there, especially on homeward runs. They were not in the best interests of the economy of St Helena and the directors had good reason to believe that commanders "make one Pretence or other for putting in, when the reason is for the benefit of *Private Trade*".

The deficiency disease scurvy was the one most frequently mentioned in ships' logs, although there are also references to dropsy and unspecified fevers among casualties at the Cape. It was a fever which caused the death of a soldier Edward Lambert on William Robson's *Kent*, at the Cape in September 1745 on a voyage to Bengal. Scurvy cases responded quickly to hospital care on land and the less seriously affected, as on the *Severn* in 1747, were allowed a day ashore to speed recovery. Extra rations were also taken aboard at the Cape for the sick and William Weston of the *Exeter*, outward-bound for Bombay and China in 1746, purchased 30 sheep there expressly for this purpose.

Collier of the *Severn* was unfortunate enough to lose his surgeon James Baxter at the Cape on a voyage from Borneo in October 1743 and Wells of the *Pelham* was deprived there of the services of his servant Thomas Marsh when outward-bound in October 1745. On the day prior to the departure of William Hutchinson's *Godolphin* for Bengkulu in December 1753 the midshipman Shales King died on board and Samuel Sandell, third mate of the *Beaufort*, returning from Bengal under the command of Thomas Stevens, died at the Cape in April 1742 "of an Inflam(m)ation in his Bowels". These men were buried ashore and the *Beaufort*'s log records that the funeral expenses amounted to 14 rixdollars (R5,60). The standard charge was higher for

visitors than for residents and perhaps for this reason funerals were sometimes conducted at sea, even when a vessel was in port. When a soldier Thomas Meager died at the Cape on the last day of December 1746 aboard Thomas Browne's *Bombay Castle* bound for the Coromandel coast the log for the following day notes: At 3 AM Carry'd the Body of the Deceased a good way out and committed it to ye Deep". Similarly, after the death of a midshipman George Stow at the Cape on 30 March 1745, Joseph Phillips of the Bombay-bound *King William* conducted the funeral service at sea off Green Point.

Not all deaths were the consequence of prolonged sickness. Accidents and drownings took their toll. Although the incident did not occur at the Cape, but in the Canton River, one of the worst accidents recorded in the logs of this period was the injury sustained in December 1755 by William Numan, cooper's mate aboard Browne's *Bombay Castle* which had touched at the Cape earlier in the year. Numan's hand was severed by the discharge of a gun and despite the prompt attention of the surgeon who amputated the arm below the shoulder the unfortunate victim died within a few days.

There were a number of drownings in Table Bay. In March 1753 two soldiers who were indulging in some horse-play on the upper deck of the *Boscawen* fell overboard. One was rescued, though not without difficulty, but the other could not be saved. The body was recovered and the ship's accounts include the item "Digging a Grave for a Soldier - 3 rixdollars (R1,20)". When the *Prince of Wales* was at the Cape in 1744 on her return from Madras under Pelly's command a seaman Robert Johnson disappeared. The captain feared that he had drowned since, as he put it, "I hear he got drunk being it was St Patrick's Day". Pelly was evidently not at home with the festivals of the saints. The accident in fact occurred on St Andrew's Day. Thomas Jones, a soldier on the *Salisbury* bound for Madras, committed suicide in January 1744. He suddenly jumped overboard at five o'clock one morning while all hands on deck were attending to their duties. Although his action was spotted he went straight down and Captain Burrows "supposed he had a weight about him".

There were several lucky escapes. Alexander Hincks, third mate on Robson's *Kent* sailing to Bengal in 1741, fell overboard in Table Bay, but was picked up by the jolly-boat. Equally fortunate was the sailor Anthony Durand on Bootle's *London*, known familiarly as Anthony Jackall. When the ship sailed from the Cape anchorage on 4 May 1742 to continue the homeward voyage from Bengkulu Durand was in the pinnace which was being towed out of the bay. The sea grew rough and he asked to be taken aboard, but was told to wait until daybreak. Soon afterwards the towrope parted and he found himself alone. Durand managed to hoist a simple sail, but another day and night passed before he was able to reach land and make his way to the home

of the burgher Evert Colijn. Charles Birkhead of the *Queen Caroline* took him aboard when he called at the Cape from Bombay a few days later.

Losses through shipwreck among the London company's vessels were not heavy in these years, although there were a number of disasters on the high seas. The *Princess Louisa*, sailing with the *Winchester* which took Clive to Madras, ran aground in the Cape Verde Islands in April 1743 with great loss of life; seven years later the *Duke of Cumberland* bound for China was wrecked off Cape Verde itself. The *Grantham* which accompanied her was able to claw off the breakers and stood by to help, only to see the stranded crew taken prisoner by the Senegalese. A ransom was at length arranged at the French settlement of Gorée to secure their release, but the *Duke of Cumberland's* cargo was lost. Benjamin Robins, mathematician and fellow of the Royal Society, was travelling on the *Grantham* to inspect the Madras fortifications and in those days of Anglo-French rivalry it was deemed expedient to pass him off as a supercargo. Robins was to die of fever in the presidency in August 1751. John Nanfan's *Lincoln*, at the Cape in 1748, was wrecked a year later on the Coromandel coast in a cyclone. She went ashore with another Indiaman from London, the *Winchelsea*, commanded by Christopher Baron, and the stores of both ships were sold "by Public outcry", as the *Lincoln's* log puts it. The *Houghton*, commanded by Walpole, the premier's nephew, came to a sad end almost within sight of home. She was wrecked off Margate on the Kentish coast on her return from Canton in 1752, but Walpole survived to be given the command of a replacement vessel of the same name.

Disasters also occurred in southern African waters. In March 1738 the return ship *Sussex* was hit by a severe storm towards the Cape of Good Hope. Her captain, Francis Gostlin, transferred with most of his crew to another Indiaman, John Dove's *Winchester*, but a seaman John Dean determined to remain with the stricken vessel and a handful of his companions joined him. They succeeded in reaching Madagascar, but after many vicissitudes, including the loss of the *Sussex*, only Dean remained of the salvage party. He was rescued in July 1739 by Thomas Langworth of the *Prince William* and was taken to Bombay where he transferred to the homeward-bound *Haeslingfield*, touching at Madagascar and the Cape in 1740. After Dean reached London he was immortalized in a portrait by Verelst, awarded a life pension for his efforts to save the *Sussex* and rose to the position of foreman of the company's drug warehouse. An action was brought against Gostlin for abandoning a still navigable ship.

Among the shipwrecks on the southern African coast in these years one of the greatest tragedies was the loss of the London company's *Doddington* in the early hours of the morning of 17 July 1755. The vessel sailed from the Downs on a voyage to Madras on 22 April of that year under the command of James

Samson. The passengers aboard included a detachment of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and the cargo consisted of pieces of ordnance, gold belonging to Clive of India, silver bullion and other merchandise. After rounding the Cape the *Doddington* encountered stormy weather. Visibility was poor and a navigational error drove her on to Bird Island in Algoa Bay where she broke up within twenty minutes. Of the 270 people aboard her, only 23 were saved, among them the chief mate Evan Jones, the second mate John Collett, the third and fifth mates William Webb and Small Powell, and a midshipman John Yates. Collett's wife perished in the wreck and was buried on the island with others who had drowned.

The *Doddington*'s jolly-boat was recovered and three men were sent to the mainland in it to seek provisions. One, however, the quartermaster Neil Bothwell, drowned and his companions were robbed by local herdsmen. A farmer Petrus Hendrik Ferreira, who lived near the mouth of the Sundays River and had noticed fires on Bird Island, met a group of Khoikhoi and bought from them a pistol and other goods they had doubtless obtained from the men who had come ashore. Although the matter was followed up no direct evidence came to light that there were shipwrecked sailors on the island and a rescue was not therefore attempted.

Meanwhile those stranded on Bird Island worked for many months, not always harmoniously, to build a sloop in order to effect their escape. They christened the vessel the *Happy Deliverance* and the survivors, now reduced to 22, sailed in her on 18 February 1756 and at length reached Delagoa Bay. There they found the *Rose* galley from Bombay, captained by Edward Chandler, to whom they sold the sloop, although it was later seized at Bombay for the owners of the *Doddington*. Chandler took survivors to Madagascar, but several died on the voyage, including the second mate Collett. At Madagascar, Norton Hutchinson of the *Caernarvon* East Indiaman embarked fifteen of the sixteen men now remaining and carried them to Madras, Powell, the fifth mate, preferring to sail to Bombay in the *Happy Deliverance*. Hutchinson must have heard of the loss of the *Doddington* with much sadness, for he was her previous commander and had called at the Cape on a return voyage from Mokha and Bombay aboard her in March 1754.

The account of the wreck of the *Doddington* and information on the voyage of 1749 of the *Boscawen* through the Mozambique Channel recall the loss of another London East Indiaman, the *Dolphin*, outward-bound in 1748 on a coast and bay voyage. She had evidently gone missing in southern latitudes. The men of the *Boscawen* thought that the ship might have been wrecked on the Baixas da Índia between Madagascar and the mainland; the *Doddington*'s chief mate Jones was convinced by signs of previous occupancy that the *Dolphin* had been lost on one of the islets of the Bird Island group. The vessel, which had visited the Cape homeward-bound from the Coromandel

coast in 1746 under Charles Pigot's command, was never located. It is interesting to note that when news of the *Doddington* tragedy reached London the veteran diver Lethbridge of Cape fame offered his services to recover the bullion aboard her. The offer was turned down, however, and a little more than two years later Lethbridge died. A successful salvage operation would have to await modern times.

Most London East Indiamen carried some passengers, the majority of them military and civilian personnel attached to the various colonial stations, their wives and families. Many men, like Floyer, Lawrence, Morse and Wake, were of high rank; others were of less exalted position, among them the unfortunate James Measures, a deserter from the 3rd Regiment of Guards who was shipped to India on the *Doddington* "by his Majesty's Command" and went down with so many others off Bird Island.

In April 1744 Thomas Hindman carried the former governor of Madras, Richard Benyon, to the Cape in the *Duke* on his return to Britain, the Essex mansion of a prosperous shipowner and a company directorship. He was taken on shore by the yawl of the *Salisbury* East Indiaman and was given the customary salute befitting his rank as he left the *Duke*. Benyon had established extensive private trading interests in India and had worked in close partnership with his Danish opposite number at Tranquebar, Poul Krisk Panck. Three years later the *Somerset* brought the retiring governor of Bombay, Stephen Law, to the anchorage. Law, who was accompanied by his wife and children, had also been an active private trader whose defence of the corrupt chief of the Dutch establishment at Surat, Pieter Laurens Phoonsen, illustrates the honour among thieves which bound those in high places in the east, without reference to nationality.

Thomas Stonestreet and George Percival, late councillors in the Bombay presidency, returned home via the Cape aboard the *Haeslingfield* in 1740 and Lindsay's *Pelham*, which called at the Table Bay roadstead in October 1748 on a voyage to Fort St David and Canton, had as passengers an army major James Mosman, the medical officer at Vishakhapatnam, Dr James Munro, and the merchant William Fazakerley, in addition to the supercargoes for China, George Mandivel and John Goodyear. She also had aboard several Lascars, then increasingly used to man ships on return voyages and taken back to the east as passengers. In the previous year the *Pelham*, returning from Bombay, brought another medical doctor, John Nelson, to the Cape with his Black servant Caesar. Nelson, anxious to speed his journey, transferred there to the Dutch return ship *Eendragt* from Mokha. The *Doddington*, sailing to Bombay in 1748 under Benjamin Mason, carried an artillery specialist William Atkinson and the *Ilchester*, bound for Madras and China in 1754 with John Tedd as commander, had embarked a Captain George Beaver, his wife and two children.

The *Eendragt* to which Nelson and his servant transferred was bringing five men back to the United Provinces as prisoners; London East Indiamen also carried men who had fallen foul of the authorities. William Hutchinson's *Godolphin*, at the Cape in November 1753, brought two Black girls and an Asian youth from Bengkulu, but also took aboard there six White prisoners and a Malay. They had been deported by the governor, Robert Hindley, who sent six of the seven to Britain for attempting to abscond in a company sloop and the seventh to St Helena on a rape charge.

Women passengers travelling alone were not infrequent. The *Pelham*, outward-bound in 1745, brought out a Miss Elizabeth Black and on Le Geyt's return ship the *Portfield*, at the Cape in April 1754, was Lady Ann Russell, widow of the former chief at Kasimbazar in Bengal, Sir Francis Russell. Among the passengers on the *Caesar*, which sailed on a coast and bay voyage in 1740, was a well-connected young lady, Elizabeth Mansell, who embarked for Madras. The ship called at Portsmouth where the commander, Robert Cummings, said farewell to his wife. When that lady saw Miss Mansell she was greatly agitated and through her tears made her husband promise to behave himself on the voyage. If she had any reason to think that he might not, her worst fears were realized.

Elizabeth shared more than the captain's table and the affair must have been in full swing when the *Caesar* called at the Cape settlement in October 1740. Cummings doubtless saw things in a different light as the ship approached Madras, where Miss Mansell had powerful connections and news of the liaison would certainly filter back to England. Elizabeth sought redress for the cooling affections of the captain by bringing a charge of rape against him. Her planned revenge backfired, however, and it transpired in the court case that Cummings had not been the only object of her affections on the ship and that her general behaviour left much to be desired. Robert Cummings was acquitted, but was treated to a serious lecture on the iniquity of taking away the character of a defenceless young woman. His protestation that the young woman in question did not have one to start with was swiftly silenced. Elizabeth Mansell returned to England on Pelly's *Prince of Wales*, calling at the Cape again in January 1742. Pelly was no doubt made of sterner stuff than Cummings and the lady's behaviour more discreet. The events of the outward voyage do not seem to have been repeated.

The Cape of Good Hope provided ships with welcome facilities, but a stop there had other advantages. Before turning to the direct contact between British ships and the authorities and settlers ashore we may fittingly conclude this chapter by taking a look at vessels of the London company's fleet as they lay at anchor in the roadstead on voyages to the east and on others returning to the Thames estuary, for despite company objections Table Bay remained a popular port of call, even on the return voyages which could easily make

use of St Helena. It was not only a question of succour for the sick or the openings for private trade; Cape water was purer than that obtainable on St Helena. For outward-bound vessels there was the special advantage of gaining the latest intelligence of conditions in the east and of finding a greater volume of shipping bound for Europe there which could be used to take letters back to Britain.

A Cape stop was not always an interval of relaxation for crews, who spent a good deal of their time in port keeping everything aboard shipshape. The vessels hired by the London company had a relatively short life as East Indiamen before they were broken up, reconstructed or, like the *Shaftesbury* which Matthew Bookey brought into Table Bay in March 1739 on a voyage to Madras, were sold for other commercial purposes. The *Shaftesbury*, renamed the *Roy de Gabingue*, ultimately sailed out of Nantes in the French transatlantic slave-trade. East Indiamen were designed to undertake four voyages of twelve to eighteen months' duration during an effective period of service of about twelve years. A number made fewer voyages, some being lost at sea or too badly damaged to be fit for further work; a mere handful, among them the *Hardwicke* which visited the Cape in 1743 under John Hallett and again in 1748 and 1749 with John Samson as commander, made five voyages and thus added a few years to their useful life. The overhaul of ships in ports of call was therefore of no small importance, even on voyages which had not subjected them to serious stress. The sails, rigging and other equipment required regular attention in the interests of safety; nor could the hull be neglected. In days of peace this work was carried out as expeditiously as possible, as on Ralph Farr Winter's *Nottingham* which spent two weeks in Table Bay in late January and early February 1738 on her run from Madras to the Thames, or aboard the *Wager*, returning from China under Josiah Hindman in April 1749, which only lay for ten days in the Cape roadstead. During the years of Anglo-Spanish and Anglo-French warfare at sea from 1739, however, ships often spent much longer in port. Pigot's *Dolphin*, for example, was at the Cape from early January until late March 1746 before sailing for home. Others remained in Table Bay for more than three months in the following year.

Most logs give details of the work carried out in port. Sails had to be dried, unbent and mended, broken shrouds and rigging spliced, and spare sails brought out for airing. On John Blake's *Lincoln*, bound for Madras in 1745, these were spread out in the great cabin immediately beneath the round-house abaft the quarter-deck. Passengers used the great cabin, which was not always entirely waterproof in heavy seas. When Francis Cheyne brought the *Protector* to the Cape on a voyage to the Malabar coast in April 1752 the seams of the cabin had to be caulked. The crew had specific duties. On the *Hardwicke* in 1748 the bos'n's gang blacked the mastheads and those under the gunner had the task of painting the ports. Others were employed on such miscellaneous

jobs as the “making of Points and Gasqueths”, as the log of Way’s *Benjamin* states in October 1744. The sick were put on such light duties as picking oakum for caulking, as we learn from the log of the *Royal George*, at the Cape in 1745 on a coast and bay voyage under the command of Thomas Feild, after a delayed start and a refit at Spithead following a collision.

Caulking, painting, tarring the rigging, overhauling the butts, blacking the yards and wale, and coating the masts with tallow, oil and turpentine were among the many tasks undertaken, in addition to bringing chests and hammocks on deck in order to clean out the living quarters and restowing cargo and provisions both to trim the ship and to make room for fresh supplies. Considerable attention was given to the hull above and below the water-line. For much of this work the vessel had to be heeled or careened and a stage constructed by the carpenters to enable the gangs of sailors to carry out the necessary operations. Hard scrubbing removed most of the barnacles and marine vegetation, and the woodwork was then usually payed with pitch, tallow and white lead to the water-line and below it with pitch and brimstone. Some commanders had special preferences. Fisher of the *Porto Bello* used tallow on the bottom of his ship in 1741 and Charles Hudson of the *Prince of Orange* from Bengal in 1742 payed the bends or sides of his ship with tar and turpentine “which”, the log records, “makes a very good Coat”. The company’s despatch vessel, the *Swift* snow commanded by John Bell, was heeled when she came into Table Bay from St Helena in April 1747. The bottom was scrubbed and the upper bends payed with pitch and below the water-line with lime. It was labour in vain, however, for “rain coming on wash’d most of it off”. The *Lincoln* was heeled in Table Bay in 1745, but a heavy swell compelled the captain to right her in order to save her from capsizing.

Ships often entered the roadstead in a poor state after a battering from seas off the Cape. The *Hardwicke*’s arrival in early April 1748 is a case in point. A fresh south-easter carried away her fore-topmast, already in a damaged condition. Its fall broke the fore main-topgallant masts and injured the cross-trees. The *Hardwicke* had to heave to and fit a temporary rough-hewed mast. Here was work enough for the crew when she at length made port.

Other ships in the roadstead often helped out with stores, equipment and manpower. Green of the *Stafford* received supplies from John McNemara of the *Rhoda* on his return from China in 1755 and Francis d’Abbadie of the *Neptune* borrowed a smith from Cobham of the homeward-bound *Edgbaston* in 1742 to assist with the fitting of a new anchor. Cobham was able to supply the *Prince of Orange* with an anchor stock soon afterwards. When Wells brought the *Pelham* into Table Bay in early September 1745 he had so many sick aboard that he had to be assisted to an anchorage by other London ships then in port. Blake of the *Lincoln* lent him sixteen men for the

purpose. The *Pelham*'s onward voyage to the east was unexpectedly delayed. She sailed on 7 October, but was back in Table Bay a week later after springing her foremast in a gale.

There was therefore plenty to do to keep all hands busy in harbour and any number of "other Needful Jobbs", as McNemara of the outward-bound *Rhoda* put it in 1748, which have not been detailed here. If there was no other work of importance in view captains could always order small-arms practice, as did Sedgwick of the *London* early in 1746. Despite the long working hours, however, some crew members found occasion for mischief and worse than mischief, whether at the Cape or elsewhere. We shall discuss desertion at the settlement in the next chapter, but there were other problems to harass commanders. How, for example, did Collier of the *Severn* cope with the two soldiers on his ship, John Moore and William Peacock, who elected to turn Moslem when they were at Mokha in August 1746? Wills of the *Elizabeth*, anxious to avoid friction ashore when the poor condition of his ship decided him to put into Delagoa Bay in 1750, was clearly irritated when a midshipman was attacked by a local villager armed with a lance. The severe cut the man received over an eye was the result of his own cupidity. He had attempted to walk off with purchases made without paying a fair price for them. Even senior men could incur a captain's displeasure. The supercargo Richard Wood on the *Portfield* in April 1747 went ashore at the Cape on the eve of the ship's departure for a long return voyage by way of Todos-os-Santos Bay in Brazil and the Portuguese capital, Lisbon. This Wood did, as Francis d'Abbadie noted in the log, "notwithstanding the representations I made to him that it was very Improper at this critical conjunction (*sic*); laying unmoor'd and hove short in Expectation of a Shift of wind". The supercargo at length came back after warning shots had been fired and the pinnace sent to fetch him had returned without him. The captain protested vehemently at the unnecessary delay Wood's action had caused him.

These were not punishable offences, but there were plenty of those and the *Prince of Wales* seems to have had more than her fair share of them at the Cape. In January 1742, outward-bound for Mokha and Fort St George, a seaman Robert Simpson not only absented himself from boat duty, but insulted the captain and his officers. Captain Pelly was called aboard from shore leave to deal with the case and sentenced the man to 39 lashes with the cat. This was a punishment frequently handed out for insubordination. 39 strokes was the old piratical Moses's Law, with reference to Deuteronomy 25 : 3.

Again, on the return of the *Prince of Wales* from Madras in January 1745, Pelly's shore leave was interrupted when he was called on board to preside over the case of William Bramwell, accused of stealing a ducatoon and a silver clasp, the property of a certain John Gooding. Bramwell was found guilty and

sentenced to 33 lashes with what the log describes as “a Catt of Ninetales”. The cat, it may be observed, was not invariably made up of that number of thongs. This was a heavy punishment for such an offence. Cheyne of the *Protector* was more lenient over theft in 1752 and only sentenced the seaman Lawrence Welch to twelve lashes.

A further incident occurred aboard a new *Prince of Wales* which Captain Peck brought to the Cape in April 1752 on a voyage to China. Michael Davidson and George Bingham each received two dozen lashes up the gangway and Peter Dixon twelve lashes for leaving the boat “and behaving in a mutinous manner, and threatening to murder the third mate and Boatswain”. Peck had more trouble at the Cape on another China voyage three years later. On the day of Dupleix’s departure from Table Bay for Europe some seamen swam across from the *Prince of Wales* to the *Bombay Castle*. On their return one of them, Thomas Harrison, was insolent and unco-operative. For this he was put in irons. He was soon joined by a messmate, William Davis, who was caught whispering with the prisoner Harrison when he brought his food. Davis was ordered forward, but refused and was also clapped in irons. A third sailor, John Stiff, received two dozen lashes at the gangway soon afterwards and was sent to join the other two. All three were released, however, before the *Prince of Wales* sailed.

Norton Hutchinson of the company’s despatch yacht the *Swallow* had a drunken and abusive second mate to contend with on his voyage from Britain to the Cape in 1747. Not only did Edward Roach threaten to knock out the brains of the fourth mate George Kent, but he had the temerity to speak ill of the company which employed him. Roach, it is recorded, “had been Drunk allmost ever since our coming in” at the Cape. Violence erupted aboard George Jackson’s China ship the *Essex* in Table Bay on 29 April 1751. The log records that “in the Evening at 8 of the Clock James Irwin Soldier cut off the Left ear of one of the Lascars for which (I) confined him in Irons”. In the following year Benjamin Fisher of the *Drake*, also bound for China, had to put Mr Midshipman Jones in irons for disobedience and for proposing to assault an officer while the ship lay in the Cape roadstead.

One way of getting rid of a troublesome seaman was to transfer him to another vessel. This was the method adopted at the Cape by Nathaniel Hancock of the *Norfolk*, bound for the Coromandel coast, Bengkulu and China in April 1747. The sailor James Redmond was discharged to the *Pelham* for using threatening language to the captain and the supercargo John Forth. Lindsay of the *Pelham* also had some insubordinate crew members on his return voyage from Bombay at that time. Among them were John Collet and Thomas Verney, who each received twelve lashes for general neglect of duty. Verney jumped ship at Lisbon in October 1747 and Collet found himself later an unwilling recruit to a much tougher service, the Royal Navy.

Transfers were also made to help captains in need. Lindsay was able to spare his fifth mate William Gearson when Walter Hooke, master of the company's sloop *Porto Bello* - not the London East Indiaman of that name - was at the Cape in 1747. This was a promotion for Gearson since Hooke wanted someone capable of acting as chief mate. The voyage of the *Porto Bello* sloop had a special significance to which we shall return in a later chapter. She had sailed from Nagappattinam early in November 1746 and was bound like the *Pelham* for the Thames.

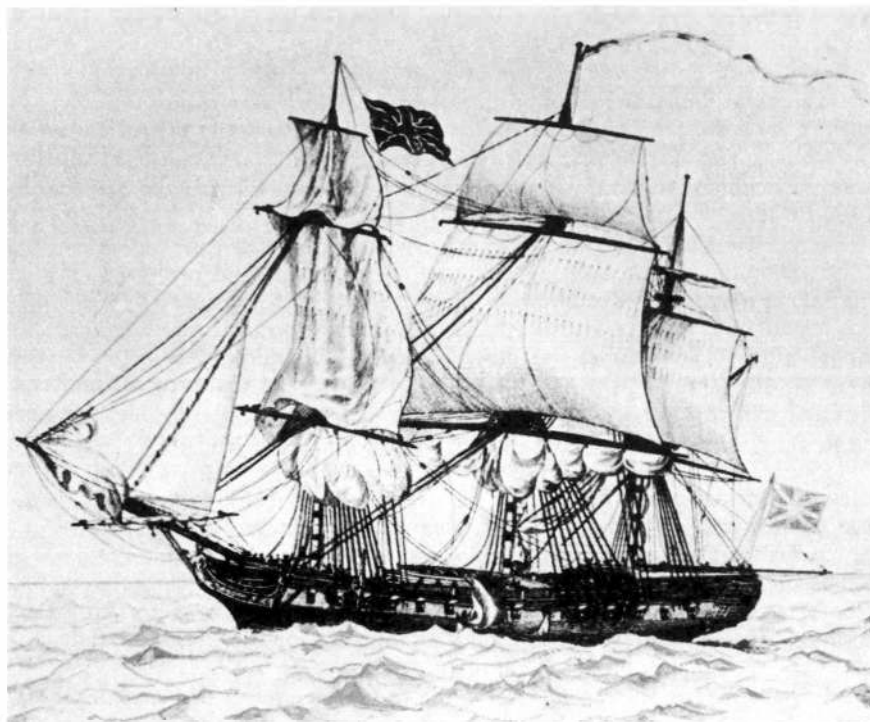
These pages have concentrated on a general view of the London company's shipping in the years 1735-1755. We look more closely now at contacts between British visitors to the Cape and their Dutch hosts at all levels.

4

British East Indiamen and the Cape

The Cape of Good Hope was already a well-known port of call for British ships by the early 18th century. Francis d'Abbadie spoke for other commanders when he brought the *Neptune* into Table Bay in 1741: "So many have given a Description of this Bay and the Land about it", he wrote in the ship's log, "I think it Needless to say any thing More as nothing can be added thereto". Nevertheless daily logs do not entirely neglect the Cape scene, if mainly in the interests of better navigation. Errors of seamanship were not infrequent on British vessels and Stevens of the *Beaufort* mistook Cape Agulhas for the Cape of Good Hope as he approached the anchorage when homeward-bound in 1742. His entry in the log adds that "it may be taken for a general rule that you are not the Length of Cape Good Hope, if you have any Soundings".

Navigational details are for the most part prosaic records of wind, weather and bearings, but Wells of the *Bedford* went further than most in his description of the Cape approaches in 1742. "Green point is extreemly remarkable", he noted - and his spelling has a certain individuality - "it being a flat, low, white sand, and runs out from the Lyon's Tale, on the extreem part of which are Several Gibits, and a little to the W'wards of it, is a fortification ... Penguin also is a very low Flat Island, upon which they hoist dutch colours (as well as upon the Lyon's Rump, and Sugar Loaf). It is however obscured until 7 or 8 miles off but if ships are near it in the night, and they fire two or three Single Guns, Some little time one after another, the dutch will make fires which may be usefull to know, and in some Cases of Extraordinary Service". The Signal Hill flagstaff was a new one, since we learn from Mickelfield of the *Colchester* in February 1741 that an earlier flagstaff had been struck by lightning and destroyed in that month, despite a heavy downpour.



A London East Indiaman taking on a pilot, mid-18th century. Reproduced by permission of the Director of the India Office Library and Records, London

Information for others was the guiding principle in entries such as these. Henry Watts, bringing company despatches from Britain in 1743, gave his opinion on the best place to anchor off Robben Island. "To anchor Under Peng(u)in", he wrote, "you must Bring the flag staff W b(y) S, about Two Miles off Shore. Thair you'd have fine, Clear Ground". The heading of his log is typical of others of the period: "A Journall", he calls it, "of our Intended Voyage by Gods Assistance In the good Snow *Swift* my self Master, Towards the Cape of good Hope, etc. God be our Convoy". In the next decade McNemara of the *Rhoda* found a new anchorage "abreast of the Small Fort within Green Point, the Ground is very good, and in my Opinion its the best Birth (*sic*) for a Ship to lie In, as the Point must break the Sea off in a Gale of Wind". The advice on mooring regularly given by the shore authorities was particularly welcome in bad weather, as were the special instructions issued when the anchorage was congested with shipping.

Climatic conditions at the Cape were of more than passing interest to visiting mariners. Webster of the *Admiral Vernon*, who was there late in 1741 on a coast and bay voyage with Westcott of the *Scarborough* and Robson of the *Kent*, wrote in September that he was "agre(e)ably dec(e)ived in the weather here att this time of the year". Only the sickness of many of his crew had decided him to anchor at all, but since his arrival one fine day had followed another. "Indeed", he added, "all the Gentlemen (ashore) told us when first (we) came in that it is the best time of the year for a Ship to put in though very seldom (do they) have one". The weather was not always so calm in the last months of the year. Le Geyt, then chief mate on Hallett's *Hardwicke*, noted in late October 1743 that 24 hours of hard gales in Table Bay kept all hands on deck day and night in case the ship should part anchors and drive. Henry Hoadly of the *Royal Guardian*, at the Cape on a voyage to Madras and Bombay in December 1739, spoke of an alternation of gales, rain, fog, contrary winds and squalls, and finally of "a great Swell tumbling into the Bay". He wrote that "the People on Shore say they never saw weather like to last so long at this time of the year in their lives and say there has been great Storms at Sea they are Sure". The weather could be cold too in the southern summer. Captain Way of the *Benjamin* remarked in November 1745 as he approached the Cape from Madras that the chill "oblig'd me and several others to make use of our Europe Cloathing". In autumn and winter months Table Bay was particularly to be feared. Memories of past disasters were still fresh and in June 1744 a local boat which had put out to investigate a ship seen off False Bay was lost with all hands. McNemara of the *Rhoda* commented in May 1748 on "a larger Swell from ye NW which makes us uneasy till we are gone as ye Season in so far advanced".

George Jackson, commander of the *Nassau* returning via the Cape from Bombay in 1742, had much to say about the weather conditions in Table Bay in late April and early May of that year. It was so foggy on the morning of

27 April that all shipping was hidden from view and two days later heavy swells made crew members lose their footing and caused some damage aboard. The log entry for the first day of May speaks of “fresh gales and black Cloudy Weather wth. some Rain (and) a Tumbling Sea”. Later that day there were increasing northerly and north-westerly gales with an ugly swell, and on the following morning, “very dark and dirty Weather (with) an hollow Swell”. Such conditions provided valuable experience for a future commander, Benjamin Braund, who sailed as fourth mate, but climbed one rung up the ladder of promotion about a month before the *Nassau* reached the Cape, with the death at sea of the chief mate John Roberts on 19 March 1742.

Duncomb Backwell of the *Northampton*, returning from China, wrote in April of that same year of “thick Dirty Weather” at the Cape and another commander in Table Bay at that time, Phillips of the *King William*, noted that on 2 May the ship’s yawl, then on the beach, was hauled up beyond the normal high water mark to protect it from a howling gale. The precaution was unavailing and the yawl was “stove to pieces and buried in the Sand”. The loss of boats was not unusual in the roadstead as Robert Haldane of the *Prince Edward* recognized in April 1750 on his outward voyage to China. He applied to the shore authorities for the use of Dutch boats for watering, “knowing that they can Dispatch that Business with great Ease, and considering likewise the advantage of neither fatiguing our People, nor Exposing either them or our Boats, to accidents which frequently happen here”. Haldane was to suffer such a loss in February 1755 when returning from Bombay. The *Prince Edward*’s longboat struck a submerged pile in the jetty and was put out of action. High seas and heavy swells often interrupted communication with the shore. A locally-based boat would fly a flag if it was safe to leave the ships, lowering it when conditions deteriorated. This occurred during the visit in 1742 of the *Queen Caroline* and ten years later high winds prevented the return of the provision cutter to the *Protector* lying in the roadstead.

The weather in 1749 was particularly stormy. A strong gale prevented the *Wager* from weighing in order to continue her voyage from China. Captain Hindman therefore cut the cable and ran for the open sea, but was able to get a letter ashore asking that if the anchor should be recovered it was to be sent on to St Helena. Weston’s *Exeter*, on a voyage from Bengal in the same year, had the greatest difficulty in making Table Bay. The commander had not intended to call, but was in urgent need of a stout cable. Every effort was made to help London ships in distress and Weston was not disappointed on this occasion, although cables were in short supply and depleted stocks might inconvenience Dutch vessels in need of similar assistance.

Spares were supplied for cash or against a bill of exchange drawn on the London company. Such equipment, particularly masts, spars, cables and

anchors, assisted a number of ships on their onward voyages, among them the *Princess of Wales*, commanded by Thomas Harry, which put in on 28 July 1748 in great distress after a difficult passage from Bengal with a crew in a bad state of health. Feild of the *Royal George* was similarly assisted on his coast and bay voyage of 1745, as was Isaac North of the *Houghton* at the close of 1748. North, returning from Bengal, had encountered a severe storm on the south-east African approaches and had turned back in a disabled state to winter for more than three months at Madagascar. The *Houghton* and the *Haeslingfield* of 1740 were not the only ships to shelter off the coast of that island; another was the *Kent* which was brought in by Robson from Bengal in 1747. Both the *Haeslingfield* and Robson's command needed cables on arrival in Table Bay. Not all hawsers supplied were new stock. Way of the *Benjamin* purchased one in 1744 which had been recovered from the sea-bed. Cordage too was often in a poor state when ships reached the Cape anchorage, as is noted by Pearse of the *Edgecote* in 1748.

Anchors were frequently needed. Francis d'Abbadie of the *Neptune* lost two in Table Bay in 1742, but was able to buy one replacement from the Dutch company's stocks. Braund of the *Boscawen* also purchased an anchor in 1753. Bressey of the *Fort St George*, outward-bound in 1748, was given an anchor which had been lost by the same ship two years before when John Constant Augustus Acton brought her in from Bombay. George Martin of the *Princess Mary* was not so fortunate in November 1741 when he called on his voyage to China. He was unable to recover the anchor lost by his brother Samuel in the previous April when the *Princess Amelia*, accompanied by the *Winchester*, had tried to enter the bay on a return voyage from Canton, but had been beaten back by strong headwinds and forced to sail on. The *Princess Mary* had missed her passage to China after spending three months in Lisbon. She had been dismasted in a storm.

Some vessels also required new masts and spars. The unexpected return of the *Pelham* in 1745 was to have a new foremast fitted and the *King William* had to be supplied in that year with a mainmast, foremast and yards before she could continue her voyage from Bombay to the Thames by way of Galway Bay. Sedgwick of the *London*, helped in December 1745, had in fact reached the Cape outward-bound in the previous June, but as he had lost all his spars he decided to return to St Helena for a refit, calling at Table Bay on his voyage to Madras and China.

Ships often reached the roadstead in a leaky condition. Lowe of the *Walpole* noted in April 1747 that his vessel was making two inches (5,08 cms) of water an hour after his voyage from Canton and Francis Steward's *Godolphin* took in three times that amount after a similar voyage in 1742. Many of the crew of the *Caesar* were reluctant to continue their homeward journey from Bengkulu in March 1745 after the ship had been holed near Cape Hangklip.

She was, however, only making five inches (12,7 cms) of water an hour and as the marine superintendent Möller and his chief carpenter Barend van Dockum pointed out after an examination, Dutch ships sailed even when leaks were twice as bad. All these voyages were safely completed, but it was always wise to check the condition of the pumps. Robert Misenor of the *Warwick* found his choked with pepper from the Malabar coast when he entered the roadstead in March 1744 and Robson of the *Kent* took on new ones in November 1747 for the further voyage from Bengal. It was as well that he did. A serious leak developed later and a decision was taken at Ascension Island to make for the Irish harbour of Kinsale.

The Cape authorities helped visiting British East Indiamen in other ways. Norton Hutchinson of the ill-fated *Doddington* was grateful to them for sending out a large hoy to help him moor in February 1754 and the *Elizabeth*'s long delay at Delagoa Bay left her in a sorry state when she finally reached the Cape in December 1750. She not only needed essential equipment, having lost anchors and cables, but of her crew of 122, death had claimed 52 and 25 others were sick. A contract was drawn up for the loan of twenty Dutch, German and Scandinavian sailors in the Dutch service to help her get home. Two died in the course of that voyage and another drowned shortly before the ship reached the Thames. The remaining seventeen were discharged at Gravesend in May 1751.

In February 1746 and March 1747 the burgher Bötticher advanced money to Sedgwick of the *London* and Lindsay of the *Pelham* for the purchase of equipment for the ships and food for their crews. Repayment was to be made by the London company to Marthinus Lokerman of Delft. Braund's accounts for the *Boscawen* in 1753 give some idea of the costs involved in a stay at the Cape of average length by a London East Indiaman. The anchor he bought was valued at more than 370 rixdollars (R148); other expenses included live sheep for 260 rixdollars (R104), 30 bags of barley to feed them for 50 rixdollars (R20), Batavia arrack at 80 rixdollars (R32) and the cost of tinning the cook's pan, expensive enough at four rixdollars (R1,60). The price paid for bringing aboard eight boatloads of water was as much as that of the leaguer of arrack purchased. Watering and provisioning occupied much time and we learn from Carter of the *Chesterfield*, bound for Fort St David in 1748, that many hours were spent by a party sent ashore to cut heath to make brooms.

Assistance was not a one-way traffic. Dutch East Indiamen in distress could count on help from British ships, as occurred when Gijsbert Bonekamp courted disaster in bringing the Batavia-bound Rotterdam vessel *Polanen* into Table Bay in September 1745. Boats from British ships towed the Dutch vessel to safety after she had almost run aground. Wine was offered as a reward to the boats' crews, but the present was not accepted by the British

captains. In the same year coal was obtained from British ships to help overcome a temporary shortage following the non-delivery of supplies from the United Provinces. This enabled the company's smithy to continue work.

Goods were sometimes taken to outlying Dutch stations, as was the case in 1744 when Henry Watts of the *Lapwing* sailed to Bengal. The ultimate destination of this ship was Bengkulu, but her captain remained at Fort William as marine superintendent, handing over the command to his chief mate Stephen Kirwan. Letters and despatches were regularly carried by London East Indiamen in both directions. Those transmitted from the Cape to Europe were forwarded by the Dutch company's London agent, in 1742, Gerard Bolwerk. It is interesting to note that among the agents for the Dutch company in English south coast ports from 1735 until his death in 1746 was Isaac Minet of Dover, a name linking Dutch maritime and commercial activities with the Huguenot emigration from the Calais region which provided the Cape of Good Hope with a number of its French-speaking settlers. Minet, born in Calais in 1660, fled across the straits in 1685. The Dutch too carried letters for servants of the London company visiting the Cape. Arneus Lodewijk Berting of the *Slooten*, returning from China to Amsterdam in April 1750, took a letter addressed to the secretary of the company in the British capital, Robert James. The communication was sent by the supercargoes Richard Wood, Robert Mackett and Thomas Smith, bound for Fort St David and Canton aboard Haldane's *Prince Edward*. They were able to give useful information on conditions across the Indian Ocean and noted that they were "extreamly concerned to hear of the great damage done on the Coromandell coast by the late storm".

Shipping news was always of immediate importance to the Dutch company and was not uniformly favourable. The *London*, for example, brought sad tidings in December 1745 of the evident loss on her homeward run to Amsterdam of the *Strijen*, which had called at the Cape on her outward voyage late in 1743, but on her return had been driven out of False Bay and compelled to sail on to St Helena, reaching the island in July 1744 in urgent need of water and provisions. The last information received about her at the Cape came in a letter from the governor of St Helena, David Dunbar, to the burgher Jacob Theodoor Hoedman, written in the following October. Dunbar had done what he could to help, but considered himself ill repaid as the *Strijen* had carried off men from St Helena and had encouraged desertion. He wanted the Cape governor, Swellengrebel, to be made aware of this.

In an age of perilous voyages it is not surprising that ships' logs comment with awe upon the deplorable condition of some of the Dutch vessels encountered at the Cape. Jenkins of the *Harrington* noted the long voyage from Texel of the Amsterdam East Indiaman *Papenburg* which reached the Cape in October 1738 after suffering many deaths among the crew. Most of the survivors were

sick and help had to be provided by the shore authorities. Two stowaways were landed at the settlement and among her seven passengers were two female slaves. Collier of the *Severn* found the Dutch company's naval frigate the *Anna* in Table Bay when he arrived in October 1743. She had experienced a very rough passage from Batavia, but at length reached home safely after a call at Plymouth. Misenor's *Warwick* met the Hoorn ship *Huijgewaard* at the Cape in the previous month, but she had been dismasted in a storm and had to run for False Bay before limping back under jury-masts for repairs.

Congreve of the *Onslow* commented on the tragic voyage of the Delft East Indiaman *Ida*, which lost more than 75% of her crew from scurvy on her outward voyage, including her captain Sijmon de Boer. The *Ida* reached Table Bay at the end of December 1745 after eight months at sea. The *Hardwicke*'s captain, John Samson, saw on 22 April 1748 a stricken Dutch ship in the offing and learned that she had not only lost her masts in a storm, but her rudder and most of her guns as well. Distress signals were made and she was helped into Table Bay by small boats. The ship was the *Weltevreden* of Amsterdam, which had been more than five months at sea on her return voyage from Batavia under Jochem Outjes. The vessel had to be broken up at the Cape. Another which suffered a similar fate after reaching the settlement was the *Duijnhof*, a Hoorn ship homeward-bound. Pearse of the *Edgecote* saw her in May 1748 after she had lost her masts and bowsprit in a cyclone, only saving herself by jettisoning her guns and much of her cargo. The waters were rough round the Cape in that season. Shortly after sailing for Fort St David Pearse recorded "a Prodigious Large Sea which made us Rowl very much".

Despite the many disasters noted in these pages most voyages were accomplished without exceptional difficulties. On arrival and departure from the roadstead the usual courtesy salutes were fired, both between ship and shore and between ships at anchor. Important visitors on board were similarly greeted. In October 1744, when the fiscal, Pieter van Reede van Oudtshoorn, accompanied other Cape officials to Acton's *Fort St George*, Way of the *Benjamin* gave them a seven gun salute on arrival and departure. This was the standard practice as Sedgwick of the *London* acknowledged in January 1746. Haldane of the *Prince Edward* evidently expected shot for shot from the Dutch. When he called on his voyage to China in April 1750 he noted that after he had fired his nine guns he "had but 7 return'd, which it seems is the Treatment Our Company's Ships generally meet with from the Fort at this place". On his return from Bombay in February 1755 he took the matter up with regard to courtesy salutes from the senior Dutch vessel in port. "On anchoring", he commented, "we Saluted with 9 Guns, in return to which According to a Custom which they are endeavouring to Establish not only at this Place, but at their Settlements all over India; we had only 7 from the Commodore of the Road; On going on Shore I complained of this Usage to

the Governour (Tulbagh) in the Strongest terms I Cou'd think of; His Answer was, that he followed his Orders, and Treated the French and all other Companys Ships in the same manner, to which it wou'd have been Needless to make any Reply". It was unusual to be slighted over salutes by a compatriot, but this was the experience of Wells of the *Pelham* at the hands of the warship the *Harwich* in 1745. An apology was, however, forthcoming. The weather was dirty when the *Pelham* sailed into Table Bay and the *Harwich* mistook her for a Dutch East Indiaman, returning only five shots to the *Pelham*'s nine, instead of the expected seven.

There were other disagreements over official practices in the period. Thomas Brown of the *Nottingham*, Cobham of the *Edgbaston*, Cummings of the *Caesar* and Pelly of the *Prince of Wales* complained early in 1742 about the exorbitant price charged for meat supplied to visiting foreigners, considerably in excess of that paid by local residents. The answer of the butchers was that the price was fixed by the administration and the complainants pointed out that if this was in fact the case it was contrary to international justice and in sharp contrast to the attitude of the British authorities on St Helena, where charges above the market price were not tolerated. The Cape's council of policy replied that there was no official price fixing and advised the captains to make the best terms they could with the purveyors of meat. The water supply was under attack by Hoadly of the *Royal Guardian* in December 1739. He was anxious to be off on his outward voyage, but there were long delays in watering as most of the pipes had been taken up for repair. The flow moreover left much to be desired and as Hoadly said, "the water runs very slow to what it used to do".

Another cause of complaint was the local exchange rate for the Spanish dollar. The question was the subject of a letter addressed to the council of policy in September 1745 by all British captains in port, among them the East India commanders Webster of the *Admiral Vernon*, Robson of the *Kent*, Blake of the *Lincoln*, Wells of the *Pelham*, Feild of the *Royal George* and Westcott of the *Scarborough*, all outward-bound vessels. The dollar was valued at eight Dutch shillings, considerably below its intrinsic exchange rate, a circumstance which occasioned visitors a loss in their transactions with the burghers. The British captains wanted a ruling to avoid disputes over general expenses. The Cape government, however, would not change the locally accepted valuation, but advised their guests to try to get the best rate they could for their dollars.

Complaints did not only come from the British side. English beer was a useful commodity to sell and the German-born lessee of Cape malt beer, the former company soldier Hans Jürgen Honk, found his livelihood threatened in 1740 by the lessees of European beers who were buying large quantities of the English product cheaply from British ships and passing it off as a Dutch

import at a reduced price. This was not only damaging to Honk's trade, but not to the benefit of the company in the long run, since the sale price of the local product might have to be reduced to meet the challenge of competition. As Cape beer did not enjoy a particularly good reputation in any case, Honk had a point.

Beer from English breweries could not only be sold at a profit; it also helped to promote good relations with officialdom. Robson of the *Kent* brought some out with him for this purpose in 1745 and on 27 August we read that he "sent 3 hhds (hogsheads) Bear (*sic*) a shore, one for ye Govr one for ye Fiscall and one for the Master Attendance". Swellengrebel, Pieter van Reede van Oudtshoorn and the marine superintendent Möller were doubtless pleased with their gifts. In general the London company had little to complain of in the treatment accorded its vessels at the Cape anchorage in peace and war. In December 1742 the gratitude of the directors was expressed in practical form by the purchase of a gold watch for Swellengrebel, "the Best that hands could make in England". Watts of the *Swift* brought it out in the following April.

In this era of good feelings between British and Dutch there are many instances of cordial relations at the settlement. Mentzel did not much like the acting governor of 1737-1739, Daniël van den Henghel, but "Van de Angle", as Boddam of the *Walpole* called him in January 1739, seems to have impressed visiting commanders from London. Cobham of the *Edgbaston* was present when the former acting governor embarked with Jacob Verleng on the Indonesian-built return ship the *Batavier* in March 1742. Van den Henghel, Cobham wrote, had "always been very obliging to ye English" and as he was sailing as commodore of the Dutch return fleet the British commander lent him a boat to take his goods aboard and fired nine guns in his honour, a courtesy salute echoed by Pelly of the *Prince of Wales*.

Swellengrebel was known to be a stickler for protocol, but several commanders were evidently on good terms with him, Francis d'Abbadie in particular. As commander of the *Neptune* he spent the evening with the governor on the Dutch New Year's Day of 1742 and five years later as master of the *Portfield* paid his personal respects to Swellengrebel on the death of his wife Helena Wilhelmina. The captain had been invited to attend the state funeral, but lameness compelled him to decline with suitable apologies. Browne of the *Bombay Castle*, the only other British ship in Table Bay at the time, represented the London company. Wills of the *Elizabeth* saluted Swellengrebel when he went aboard the *Liefde* in January 1751 for the ceremony of his appointment as commodore of the Dutch return fleet.

Several British commanders and supercargoes were present at the funeral in April 1742 of Elizabeth Blanckert, wife of the Dutch commodore and director general of the company, Joan Paul Schagen, returning with Willem

Vroom on the *Weltevreden*. Among the British mourners were the captains Henry Lascelles of the *York*, Jackson of the *Nassau* and Bootle of the *London*, and the Canton supercargoes Lascoe Hide and Henry Hadley. At the governor's request each British ship fired a salute and lowered its flag to half-mast.

Courtesy salvoes for solemn occasions were always acceptable, but firing could sometimes be overdone. Swellengrebel had to ask British commanders to desist on one occasion in 1742 by loosing off a warning shot from the Castle. More gunfire marked joyous events. Burrows of the *Salisbury* joined in the celebration of the wedding of Lieutenant van Jonkheijn of the *Herstelder* and his Cape bride in February 1744 and in September of the following year the British ships in port fired salvoes in honour of what Robson of the *Kent* describes as "ye Gov'r of ye Capes birth day". On 26 April 1748 (15 April, Old Style), the inhabitants of Table Valley were doubtless surprised by the display of bunting on the British ships in the roadstead and the cheering and gunfire to celebrate the birthday of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, whose chief claim to fame is the severity with which he put down the Stuart rebellion of 1745-1746. Captain Petre, on a coast and bay voyage in the *Tigris* at the end of 1741, marked the new year with a nine gun salute and another local festival celebrated was the annual Cape militia parade on 20 October. Brown of the *Nottingham* saluted the governor on this occasion in 1740, "it being a holladay (*sic*) w'th the Dutch". Four years later Way, commander of the *Benjamin*, recorded that "this Day being the Grand review of the Dutch Militia the Fleet hoisted their Colours and at Noon the *Elizabeth* Capt. (Richard) pinnell fired 21 Guns and the *Fort St George* (Acton) 15 as a Complement (*sic*) to the Governor".

Salvoes marked the movement of Dutch commodores and commissioners. In February 1739 Birkhead of the *Queen Caroline* greeted in this fashion the commodore of the return fleet, Samuel Hoppestijn van Leeuwen of the Amsterdam East Indiaman the *Beukesteijn*, his deputy Pieter Zwanendrecht of the *Nieuw-Walcheren* of Zeeland and the rear admiral Christiaan Bekker of the Delft ship the *Magdalena*. A nine gun salute rang out from British ships when Schagen arrived in January 1742 and a year later Way of the *Benjamin* noted that Governor General van Imhoff's presence at the Cape was celebrated by great bursts of gunfire from all ships in the roadstead including his own and Webster's *Admiral Vernon*. The new governor general of the Indies had arrived from the United Provinces in the *Herstelder*, whose captain on that voyage, Jean Belliveau, a Frenchman from Rochefort in Saintonge, played an important part in the Cape surveys undertaken at that time. In April 1745 Pelly of the *Prince of Wales*, in common with Court of the *Caesar* and Phillips of the *King William*, gave the commodore Jan Albert Sichterman "3 Cheers (*sic*) and 19 Guns" as he rejoined Pieter Sluis on the *Woitkensdorp* for the return voyage to Rammekens.

On 25 January 1742 the returning Dutch governor general, Adriaan Valckenier, reached the Cape with his five servants and thirteen bodyguards aboard Pieter Visser's *Amsterdam*. Francis d'Abbadie of the *Neptune* has left us a detailed picture of the scene as the salutes boomed out across the bay when "Myn Heer Falconier" came ashore to be received on the jetty by Swellengrebel, his council and all the British commanders in port. Valckenier, who "was very much out of Order", was carried in a sedan-chair to the Castle past the ranks of the Cape militia and two squadrons of cavalry. The British commander "had ye Honour also to Compliment him in the Name of all the English Commanders there present to which he gave a Most Corteous (*sic*) and favourable Answer returning us thanks for our Salute and being informed of my Being bound to Bencoolen (Bengkulu) he Intimated that he Intended to write by me after which we withdrew. The Garrison being under Arms upon the Parade March'd before his Window and being ranged in Order of Battle made a very fine Appearance as being a Compleat Body of Men and Saluted him with a triple Discharge of their Small Arms; the Militia Enter'd the Fort Likewise and March'd before him in the Same Order as did also the Horse which made but an Indifferent (*sic*) Figure and so went out of the fort in the Same Order as they Came in". On the morning of 27 January Francis d'Abbadie and his chief officers called on Valckenier to bid him farewell before the *Neptune* sailed. The governor general "gave us Admittance to his bed Side and wish'd us a Good Voyage Desiring the Care of his Letters".

It was, however, Daniël van den Henghel who took over as commodore of the return fleet at the Cape. Watts of the London company's *Swift* brought a despatch from the United Provinces on 11 February ordering the arrest of Valckenier for misgovernment at Batavia leading to the massacre there in October 1740 of thousands of Chinese by Whites and Eurasians who feared a general Chinese uprising. Valckenier was sent back to Batavia in August 1742 on the *Sara Jacoba* to spend the last eight years of his life in prison, protesting his innocence to the end. The *Amsterdam* on which he should have sailed to Europe was wrecked off the Shetland Isles before reaching home. Gabriel Steward of the London company's *East India* despatch yacht learned of the Batavia massacres when he reached the Cape in January 1741. Men aboard Dutch return vessels there "gave an Account of the Chineas and Mallays rising against the Dutch; and that the Chineas had burnt all the Arrack Stills and Sugar Mills and the best part of the Town is Burnt down, and the Dutch have killed 20 000 Chineas and Mallays and that there was 15 000 more in Arms in the Feild, they Say there was not above 500 Dutch killed in all, the Dutch got great Plunder from the Chineas". A little later Steward added "that (the Dutch) killed 5 000 men which (they) had in prison".

Events nearer home were the occasion of more British salutes. Court of the *Caesar* fired nine guns in April 1751 when Tulbagh was officially proclaimed governor at the Cape in succession to Swellengrebel and the British joined

other foreigners in celebrating 100 years of Dutch rule at the settlement in the following year. There were four London vessels in Table Bay when the centenary celebrations were held on 8 April 1752: Gilbert Slater's *Triton*, returning from China, and the *Edgecote*, *Drake* and *Prince of Wales* bound for the same destination. Each vessel fired a 21 gun salute and the senior men aboard joined their Danish and French competitors at the commemorative banquet. The chief mate of the *Drake*, John Haclen, and a member of the boat's crew had good reason to remember the centenary. They were set upon and robbed by some Dutchmen, receiving serious knife injuries.

Acts of violence and petty crime involving British visitors were not uncommon at the Cape settlement. Richard Pinnell, commander of the *Princess Louisa* bound from the Downs and Portsmouth for Bengal in 1737, indicated in a declaration made at the Cape on 20 April that some wine he had bought from the burgher Jan de Wit had been stolen off the jetty and from the ship's boat. Pinnell was one of the rare British officers fluent in Dutch. Another case of theft occurred in 1748. Pieter Janssen, a locally based sailor, stole a blue jacket from a crew member of the pinnace belonging to a British ship in port. The pinnace had come ashore early in the morning of 1 April and was lying on its side above the water-line while the men were eating and drinking coffee on the jetty. The culprit received a five year sentence. An earlier criminal case concerned the Dane Hans Lendenkam of Copenhagen who reached the Cape as a bos'n on a British vessel and became a sailor on the wharf. He was involved in a bar fracas and was deported in 1744.

John Hardcastle, chief surgeon aboard Pelly's *Prince of Wales*, was returning to his lodgings at the home of Jan Rajj's wife Johanna Helena de Coning, late in the evening of 29 February 1744, after spending a few hours with his captain. Hardcastle was accosted on the way by the town patrol and was asked his business in broken English. Whether as a result of a language misunderstanding or excessive zeal on the part of the patrol he was threatened by having a bayonet poked at his stomach and was only saved from arrest through the good offices of Nicolaas Brommert, a burgher who lived nearby. The surgeon was incensed by the rough treatment meted out to him and complained to the authorities. We shall meet his landlord's husband in another context. She was the sister of Debora de Coning, wife of the marine superintendent Möller, and daughter of the former chief of the Cape's short-lived Delagoa Bay settlement, Jan de Coning.

After the *Prince of Wales* had returned from India in December 1744 another incident involving a member of her crew occurred. The quartermaster Roelof Sieber of Portland stayed ashore at the hostelry " 't Laatste Stuiverje". He was evidently a Dutchman and men of his nation such as Cornelis Janssen de Kreeft of Zeeland on the *Somerset* in 1748 were sometimes to be found in

British crews. Sieber spent a convivial afternoon on 5 January 1745 with three strangers, drinking and gambling at the wheel of fortune. After waking up late in the evening he decided to visit two fellow-sailors who were lodging with Catharina Heijlon, widow of the burgher Philippus Simon Constant. As he was walking there he was attacked and robbed by one of his drinking companions, the shore-based sailor Joost Heinrich Lupke of Osnabrück. Lupke was arrested, tried and found guilty of the crime. He was sentenced to a scourging, followed by deportation.

Later in 1745 John Bennet, an officer on the *Lincoln*, gave evidence in a case involving a street fracas. The court required the services of an interpreter who could understand English and the task was undertaken by the writer Pierre la Fon of Amsterdam, whose mother Madeleine Braine, then living in the Dutch city, came from Bordeaux. The affair took place outside the home of Jan de Wit, who was entertaining some British officers at the time. Another guest was Jan de Wit's son Petrus Johannes, who was to continue the family tradition of playing host to visitors from the British Isles. Among those he befriended in later years was Robert Clive.

Overstaying shore leave was one of the many breaches of discipline British commanders had to deal with. In February 1747 the seamen William Garret and James Ball of the *Pelham* received twelve lashes each for running away from the boat on repeated occasions and staying several days ashore without permission. Garret eventually did more than take French leave; he swam to a Dutch ship in Table Bay and got clean away. Ball was later arbitrarily transferred to the naval service. The *Pelham*'s bos'n John Gough refused to punish the men and for that and other shortcomings was found "utterly incapable (*sic*) of his Duty" and was demoted in favour of the bos'n's mate John Hall.

Four sailors aboard the *Durrington*, Gabriel Guilford, William Foster, Thomas Truman and Francis Crafts, were reprimanded in May 1748 for staying ashore overnight. They each received twelve lashes and because they were "very Pert and Saucy" were also clapped in irons. A similar case occurred on the *Chesterfield* at the Cape in 1752, when the seaman William Bell, "who hath absented himself without leave", was placed in irons.

Shore leave was a privilege, not a right, and George Cuming of the *Royal Duke*, at the Cape on a voyage to Fort St David in 1748, noted on 29 April that he only "gave Liberty to 12 of our People to go ashore". McNemara of the *Rhoda* was pleased with the rapid improvement in health of his sick crew in 1755, even though they remained on board. He knew, he said, that "the Shore would be of Infinite Service to them but (was) afraid to trust them out of the Ship". The commander nevertheless lost several men at the Cape by desertion, going ashore expressly to look for them, but only finding one.

Desertion, as with the ships of all nations visiting distant ports, was common-

place. Most of those involved were ordinary sailors and soldiers, but the *Severn* lost a midshipman, Samuel Wilson, in this way at the Cape in December 1747 and her fifth mate James Headwell a few months earlier at Fort St David. Deserters from British ships sometimes reached the Cape on Dutch vessels. Such a man was the Swede Andreas Dolander of Gothenburg, who left a London ship in China and stowed away on the East Indiaman *Enckhuijsen*. He left the ship at the Cape in 1742 and was there drafted on to the homeward-bound *Rust en Werk* lying in Simons Bay. It was a fortunate change of vessel. The *Enckhuijsen* was lost on her homeward run. Some men may have drowned while attempting to desert, as would seem to have been the case with a soldier aboard the *Portfield* in April 1747.

Brutal captains and officers doubtless drove some men to escape; others, like Zacharias Berg and Barend Sluttli of the *Swift* in 1743, were clearly not British in origin and perhaps found the Cape a congenial society. All those left ashore were not deserters. Matthew Patterson of Fisher's *Porto Bello*, for example, who had been signed on at Batavia, was too sick to travel when the ship left Table Bay in March 1746. Similarly when Johan Splinter Stavorinus took the Dutch ship *Arnesteijs* out on her homeward voyage in August 1741 he carried a British paying passenger Robert Heatlie, left behind by a London vessel. Several future Cape burghers arrived on British ships of the East India Company in these years. A German burgher of 1749, John Konrad Schmidt of Ansbach, reached the Cape on Richard Boulton's return ship the *Beaufort* in 1736; another colonist, Jan Hendrik Repmond, disembarked from the *Hardwicke* in 1743. Johan Christian Grundlingh of Görlitz arrived in March 1745 on the *Caesar*. He first enlisted in the company's military unit before applying for citizenship in 1749. Another man, Johan Jorsen, was left by an unnamed British vessel in 1754 and applied for citizenship in 1763. Some men were discharged at the Cape, among them the seaman Michael Fitzgerald of the *Pelham* in 1745 and the bos'n George Cox of the *Protector* in 1752. The circumstances are not elaborated upon in the relevant ships' logs.

The authorities were sometimes asked to help recover escapees. When the *Onslow* was at the Cape in January 1746 six men took the opportunity of deserting, but five of them were eventually taken prisoner about fifteen English miles (24 Km) inland by the "Kaffirs" of the fiscal, Pieter van Reede van Oudtshoorn. The fiscal's men were suitably rewarded by the *Onslow*'s supercargoes, May and Swynfen. A sixth man, John Whitehall, eluded capture, but his companions were given eighteen lashes each and were put in irons for their impudence and as a warning to the rest of the crew.

On the last day of December 1741 Francis d'Abbadie of the *Neptune* appealed to Swellengrebel for similar assistance in the recovery of two deserters from the *Princess Mary*. The governor, we are told, assured the commander "that he would in no ways encourage them and would have

them Apprehended and Sent Immediatly (*sic*) on board which was done Accordingly". William Bookey of the *Shaftesbury* bound for Bombay in 1754 was, however, unsuccessful in recovering six missing men with local assistance. They included the fifth mate John Jewel, a midshipman Joshua Tough and the seaman John Bell. The log reports that Bookey was "Obliged to leave 'em behind" when he weighed on 3 September, but the *Sandwich*, returning from Bombay in March of the following year, took Tough and Bell aboard, together with other Britishers in the port settlement. The *Shaftesbury* of 1754 was the second ship of its name to call at the Cape in the years 1735-1755 and the names of the commanders indicate the family tradition in the East India service.

Those aboard contemplating desertion often showed considerable resourcefulness. Among the many who slipped away when their ships reached Table Bay were three soldiers on John Nanfan's *Clinton*, bound for China in 1753. They cut the longboat adrift from under the stern of the ship and made for the shore. The boat was later discovered beached in the westernmost part of the bay and spare hands were sent to recover it. The small craft had, however, been "almost tore to Peices (*sic*)" and the surf made it impossible to get it off.

Another escape in the longboat was made from Hancock's *Norfolk* in March 1747. When the boat was missed the crew of the *Norfolk* were mustered and the soldiers Michael Fielding, Dennis Murphey, Morris Traner, Harman Sclater and Adam Felruff were found missing. They had landed near Green Point, but Sclater gave the game away and all but Felruff were arrested in the town-ship. The informant was exonerated, but the others were put in irons and given 24 lashes with the cat o' nine tails. Early in April 1742 three men from the *Bedford* made for shore in the jolly-boat. Francis Cooper and John Underhill escaped, but William Stone thought better of it and returned to the ship after dark.

The *Ilchester*, commanded by John Tedd and bound for China in 1754, lost two soldiers, John Sheppard and James McDonald, "who (were) thought to have swam away in the night, Their Cloath(es) being found in the Head". Less successful were John Lenigar and Robert Cross of the *London* in December 1745. The former "swimmed" to the Dutch company's *Herstelder*, but her captain, Jan Mijsters, sent him back. Cross tried to swim too, but was spotted under the *London*'s bowsprit and forced to climb back on board. Among those who successfully hid themselves when on shore were Patrick Halfpenny of the *Portfield* in 1747 and the sailors Stephen Dean, George Foster and Walter Neilson of the *Prince of Wales* in 1752. McNemara's reluctance to put sick men ashore for hospital treatment in 1755 is understandable. A soldier from the *Pelham*, George Artridge, managed to desert in that way in September 1745, as did another soldier, Peter Stevens, in December 1746. Stevens served on Charles Gilbert's China-bound East Indiaman, the *Lynn*.

With so many deserters in the settlement, visiting London ships' captains could usually find men among them willing to sign on under a new master. These sailors were of many nationalities. In 1741 the *Colchester* took aboard a seaman Magnus Robinson, together with eleven Dutchmen who were to work their passages back to Europe from the Cape. The *Salisbury*, whose surgeon Gilbert Mattison had deserted at Madras and had to be replaced there by another, John Eric Cash, took on five sailors at the Cape early in 1744, among them John Keith and John Saunders. In the same period the *Edgbaston* embarked another five men, one of whom, Antonio Scavani, was evidently an Italian. Of these, one, Gabriel Peterson, was discharged at Mokha and the other four deserted in the east. Three of the seven men shipped by Jackson of the *Essex* in December 1746, William Stapleton, Richard Carpenter and James MacDaniel, also deserted later in the voyage home.

Of those signed on at the Cape by William Parks of the *Marlborough* in 1753, one seaman, William Inglis, "ran" at Madras and another, John Massey, was discharged in China on medical grounds, "having hurt his Testacles (*sic*)". Abraham Dominicus, returning from Bengkulu and the Coromandel coast on the *Delawar* in January 1754, picked up a British soldier, Stephen Orra, at the Cape and took him on to St Helena. Orra had been brought to the Dutch settlement from Madagascar after being left behind on the island in the previous year by the London vessel the *Egmont*. Sailors left on Madagascar, either by accident or by their own choice, were not infrequently found by passing ships. Dominicus had taken a Dutchman off the *Marlborough* and an Irishman from a French ship when he was at Madagascar in 1752 and the carpenter Jürgen Frantz of Danzig (Gdansk), a deserter from the Cape's slaver the *Brak* in 1741, was returned to the settlement by the *Swift* snow in November 1743, when Thomas Stevens was taking the little despatch vessel from that island to St Helena.

Sailors signed on at the Cape and elsewhere by British captains were paid the normal wage of £2-5/- (R4,50) a month, as appears from the log of the *Lincoln*, when the seamen Christian Hesse and John Miller were shipped at the settlement for the onward voyage to the Coromandel coast in 1748. Not all new recruits to the service survived the voyages. The seaman John Phillips, who embarked on the *Pelham* in 1747, died before the ship reached the Thames.

Despite every effort to prevent desertion from the Dutch service many succeeded and more still made the attempt, but failed. It was the day-dream of men whose lives were hard, whether in the company's employment, in captivity, among the burgher population or among those condemned to slavery. Others again looked to the possibility of desertion as an escape from retribution for crimes committed, or merely as a great adventure. The slaves often turned their thoughts towards the island of Madagascar, home of so

many of them. Passing British ships sometimes called there and it must have seemed more than a remote possibility that this route could provide an avenue of escape from bondage.

One who was making his way to the Cape settlement in 1738 with the aim of boarding a British ship was the slave Januarij from Nagappattinam on the Coromandel coast of India. He had, with some companions, committed theft in the Drakenstein district and was captured on a farm before he reached the sea and possible freedom. Januarij was branded and sentenced to three years' hard labour in chains. A Singhalese convict, Tikiriappoe, came closer to escape in 1750. Francis Fowler had brought the *Duke of Newcastle* in on 1 May from the Coromandel and Malabar coasts because he needed provisions, having lost all his livestock in a severe storm in the Indian Ocean. The convict was one of those detailed off to load replacement stock and took the opportunity of hiding himself aboard. He was discovered, however, and returned to the shore, where he was given a whipping and had ten years added to his sentence.

Apprenticeship could seem a form of slavery to a young White boy. Bernardus van Billion, stepson of the signaller and future burgher from Uddevalla in Sweden, Carl Gustav Tregard, was put on heavier work in 1745 than his delicate constitution could stand. Although he did not translate his dreams into reality, escape from drudgery at the Cape by embarking on a foreign ship was never far from his thoughts.

There were circumstances when a commander might turn a blind eye to the presence of stowaways aboard his ship, as with the five Englishmen found on the *Sandwich* in 1755, deserters from a Dutch vessel in Table Bay. British nationals were doubtless welcome and crew shortages could be made good. On the whole, however, East India captains tried not to antagonize the Dutch authorities, whose general helpfulness extended to the recapture of deserters from British vessels. Cobham of the *Edgbaston* gave special instructions to his officers to search the ship for possible stowaways before he sailed for home in April 1742. Despite this precaution three men from the Dutch service managed to evade the search party. In December 1744 Anthonij van der Velde and three companions took the pinnacle of the outward-bound *Nieuwland* and made their way to a British ship at anchor in Table Bay. They were returned to the port authorities, but alleged that they had no intention of deserting. Their story was that they were going ashore to complain about the cruelty of the bos'n's mate of the *Nieuwland*, but that the current had taken them instead to the British vessel.

Other would-be deserters did not get beyond the jetty. Anton Adréasson from the Swedish island of Gotland came ashore in 1744 from the Dutch East Indiaman *Crabbendijk*, bound for Batavia under Frans Gassels. After a

lively evening carousing he attempted to board a British ship, but was found by the patrol in that vessel's boat and was later sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour after a scourging. In the following year a German soldier in the Castle garrison, Christian Ludwig Clots of Hanover, took his violin to enjoy a musical evening at the home of the burgher Abraham Lever. On the way he met a British sailor who sold him a pair of breeches for cash and a bottle of wine. The two men then visited the bar of the "Free Black" Anthonij from Bengal, where they consumed the liquor. While Clots was there, a mate from the *Kent* came into the bar to round up his men for a return to the ship. The German accompanied them to the shore where he stripped off his uniform and donned English clothes. Knowing that the patrol would search the boat he hid under the jetty, but was discovered and taken prisoner. Clots was given a three year sentence and it emerged at his trial that he was as accomplished an escapee as he was a musician. He had been one of Valckenier's bodyguards when the *Amsterdam* reached the Cape in 1742, but deserted his post and sailed to England on the *Nottingham*, eventually making his way back to the Cape.

A burgher escapee of this period was Huijbrecht Backer from Maaseik in the episcopal principality of Liège. He found it difficult to make both ends meet at Stellenbosch and decided to go to the port settlement to earn some money by trading with visiting ships, leaving his wife Catharina Kleijn behind. He alleged that he got drunk aboard a British vessel which sailed off with him to St Helena. From there he made his way to Batavia in another British East Indiaman, where he was arrested for debt in 1743 with a girl Anna Maria Danielssen while trying to board a third British ship sailing to Bengkulu.

One deserter from Batavia was picked up at the Cape. Jonas van den Berg, a sailor on the wharf at the eastern capital, was guilty of theft and hid himself on the return ship *Reijgersdaal* which sailed from Batavia in October 1745. When the Dutch vessel reached Table Bay at the end of December the London East Indiaman *Onslow* was in port and the stowaway slipped aboard the British ship. His action was discovered, however, and representations were made to Captain Congreve to have him taken into Dutch custody. Congreve only gave way with considerable reluctance, but Jonas van den Berg was at length handed over and was sent back to Batavia on Gillis Dabijn's *Hof d'Uno* to face the music. When the sailor was apprehended on Congreve's ship three deserters from Dabijn's vessel were also found aboard her.

The British were not behindhand in taking advantage of the profits to be made out of private transactions. The trade was extensive, sometimes illegal in terms of local regulations or company procedure, and was seldom recorded. Some instances involving those on British merchantmen are, however, to be found in contemporary documents. There were, for example, occasional disputes which led to civil actions before the Cape's council of justice. In

1744 Heron Powney, a mate on the *Salisbury*, successfully challenged Abraham Lever for the payment of money owing to him. A strong southeaster prevented Powney from coming ashore to put his case in person, but the writer and future burgher Gerrit van Lexmond, who married Raij's widow, the boarding-house keeper Johanna Helena de Coning, acted as Powney's attorney.

In March 1747 Francis d'Abbadie won his case against the burgher orphan master Alexander Coel for payment or restitution of goods sold when the *Portfield* lay at anchor in the roadstead. The transaction involved small books containing sheets of gold leaf purchased in London, which Coel considered to be over-priced. In October of the following year the Dutch sailor Cornelis Janssen de Kreeft on Tolson's *Somerset* brought a complaint against unfair and high-handed practices over wine and brandy sales.

Court actions were naturally conducted in terms of Dutch legal usage, but it is interesting to note, although slightly out of period, that declarations signed for future presentation in London could be made in English and in accordance with English custom in order to give them legal validity in that country. An instance is afforded in 1759 when James Ward brought the *Ilchester* in from Bengal. He swore a statement justifying the measure he had adopted, criticized by some of his men, of throwing overboard goods, including the personal belongings and sea chests of his officers and crew, in order to save the ship in a storm. The declaration before Rudolph Siegfried Alleman and Daniel Heijning was made in compliance with the customs and decrees of the laws of England, by kissing the Holy Bible and the protestation held against it.

Francis d'Abbadie's private trade at the Cape on the *Portfield* in 1747 was considerable. He sent ashore a great variety of goods, including soap, glassware, stockings, lanterns, wood, red lead, iron hoops and tar, purchasing chinaware in the settlement on his own account. Birkhead of the *Queen Caroline* shipped a boatload of Cape wine for himself in February 1739, as well as seventeen bolts of canvas for the ship's use. The captain's private purchases are also mentioned when Sedgwick of the *London* was at the Cape early in 1746 and in the log kept by the chief mate John White of William Hutchinson's *Godolphin* in December 1753. Supplies for the London company's distant establishments were also embarked at the Cape. The *Porto Bello* sloop from Negappattinam loaded goods for St Helena in January 1747 and the *Portfield* sailed in the following April with wine, brandy and arrack for Mokha.

There is evidence enough, particularly in wills and inventories, of articles of British manufacture in private hands at the Cape in this period. Blättermann of Sondershausen had an English snuff-box, the burgher fire-chief from Bielefeld, Herman Combrink, possessed two large English goblets and

Philippe-Rodolphe de Savoye, Dutch company servant and Cape-born son of the early settler from Ath in Hainaut, Jacques de Savoye, owned cutlery from England. Tulbagh's deputy Sergius Swellengrebel had a standing clock sent out to him by the Amsterdam merchants Pye and Cruikshank which may have been of British make. An empty English barrel found at the house of the French-born burgher Mellet links him with commercial dealings with visiting British ships.

It seems probable that there was a fairly regular trade in slaves at the Cape by captains of British ships, although information on this point is sparse for the period. Tolson of the *Somerset*, homeward-bound in April 1747, is known, however, to have sold four male slaves to Tiemendorf of the council of justice for a little more than 300 rixdollars (R120). One, Pampie, was a Malagasy, Titus came from Makasar and Jephta and Jason were from Bengkulu.

The condition of slaves in the colony was given scant attention by British visitors. Francis d'Abbadie of the *Neptune* witnessed a tragic, but not uncommon event in January 1742 and recorded it with little emotion: "This Morning being Execution day a Slave was burnt alive for Setting his Master's house on fire, he was not long in pain, as he was Presently suffocated by the fieriness (*sic*) of the flames". The facts are not quite correct. The Bengali Fortuijn did not commit arson at the home of his owner, Abraham de Villiers, but at Pieter Venter's farm "Alles Verloren" at Riebeeck Kasteel. Unrequited love for a servant-girl Christijn played its part in the crime. The imbalance between the sexes among Cape slaves was a contributory element in slave unrest.

Some visiting captains, among them Lascelles of the *York* in 1742, mention the Cape's own slave-trade with Madagascar and Delagoa Bay as several of them engaged in the trade themselves for their own benefit and for that of the London company. We may note in this context a few details of the Madagascar slave-trade through British eyes. Henry Kent's *Dragon* touched at the Cape in February 1753 before sailing on to purchase slaves on the island for the company's labour force in India. Kent had to contend with an attempted slave escape and his method of preventing a recurrence was as follows: "the Capt... ordered them to be tyed up and gave them a Gentle correction Viz. 6 Stroakes (*sic*) with a Cat each; and told them that if ever they did the like again, he would give them a hundred; they have promised very fair that they will never be guilty of the like again". Venereal diseases were a further problem on the voyage, both among the slaves and the crew. Five of Kent's human cargo were found to be affected and another case was discovered when the captain decided to punish some members of his crew for indiscipline. John Pointer was one of the offenders, but Kent records that he was "ill of the foul disease (*sic*) so have not Ironed him".

Slaves were often purchased in considerable numbers. Jenkins of the *Harrington*, who had prior knowledge of the trade, took 165 slaves from Madagascar to Bombay in 1736 and the *Fort St George* brought 115 to the Coromandel coast in 1750. The fear of revolt was always a very real one. When Abraham Dominicus of the *Delawar* visited Madagascar to buy slaves on his outward voyage in 1752 his unhappy purchases rose up against their captors, killing a linguist used as an interpreter in the commerce, as well as the bos'n's mate Hugh Bennet and an armourer John Salt. The *Delawar's* crew had to open fire on the slaves in order to quell the insurrection, but with 215 captives aboard the captain lived in constant expectation of another outbreak, even when he reached the Madras roadstead.

The slave-trade was only a small part of the London East India Company's commerce east of the Cape of Good Hope. Moreover, commercial activity was, in the years after 1744 at least, increasingly involved in a struggle for political supremacy. The Cape's position in the Anglo-French struggle into which was merged Britain's war with Spain which began on 30 October 1739, remains to be discussed in the history of foreign contacts in our period.

There were more than 210 calls by London East Indiamen at the Cape in the years 1735-1755, with a heavy traffic in both directions. The total is over twice as large as that of the Danes and the French together. This figure excludes some 40 calls by British naval vessels and privateers in those years, sailing in support of the London company's interests east of the Cape of Good Hope. The numbers testify to Britain's growing power in the Indian Ocean region and beyond to China, but also reflect the good relations then existing between that country and the United Provinces, and in a geographical sense, the absence of an adequate refreshment station on the long haul between the homeland and the Indies suitable for calls in both directions. St Helena had its limitations.

But British ships, however preponderant among foreign callers, were far less frequent visitors at the Cape than those of the Dutch East India Company which numbered more than 1 250 at this time. Although these chapters are not concerned directly with the proprietors of the colony at the southern tip of Africa, there are facets of Dutch contact with foreigners from the east and from the west which deserve some attention before we turn to the Cape and its shipping under wartime conditions.

5

The Dutch and foreign contacts, East and West

The Dutch East India Company was, until the later 18th century, the most formidable of the business organizations trading in the east, despite its cumbersome structure of separate chambers in Amsterdam, Zeeland, Rotterdam, Delft, Hoorn and Enkhuizen. Like the Dutch state, it formed a federation protecting regional privilege. The company had its beginnings in a number of small trading associations, the first of which, the Company of Distant Lands, sent out an expedition to Bantam soon after it was founded in 1594. These were amalgamated into a single Dutch East India Company in March 1602 and although progress was initially slow, a factory was soon established at Masulipatnam on the east coast of India, Amboina (Ambon) was taken from the Portuguese and trade relations were forged with Japan. In 1611 a factory was founded on Java destined to become, as Batavia, the hub of the Dutch eastern empire. The firm foundations of this empire were laid by Jan Pieterszoon Coen, twice governor general of the Indies between 1619 and 1629.

The great period of expansion, however, began in the second half of the 17th century, years which also saw the establishment and extension of Dutch power at the valuable refreshment station of the Cape of Good Hope. In these years the Dutch became the dominant European commercial monopoly in Asia, active at Surat and Mokha, in Bengal, on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts and in Ceylon, but particularly firmly entrenched in Indonesia from Sumatra to the western parts of the island of New Guinea and in the southern region of the Malay peninsula. Dutch power in the East Indies was achieved by the destruction of the independence of Indonesian principalities and their conversion into vassal states under Dutch suzerainty thereby

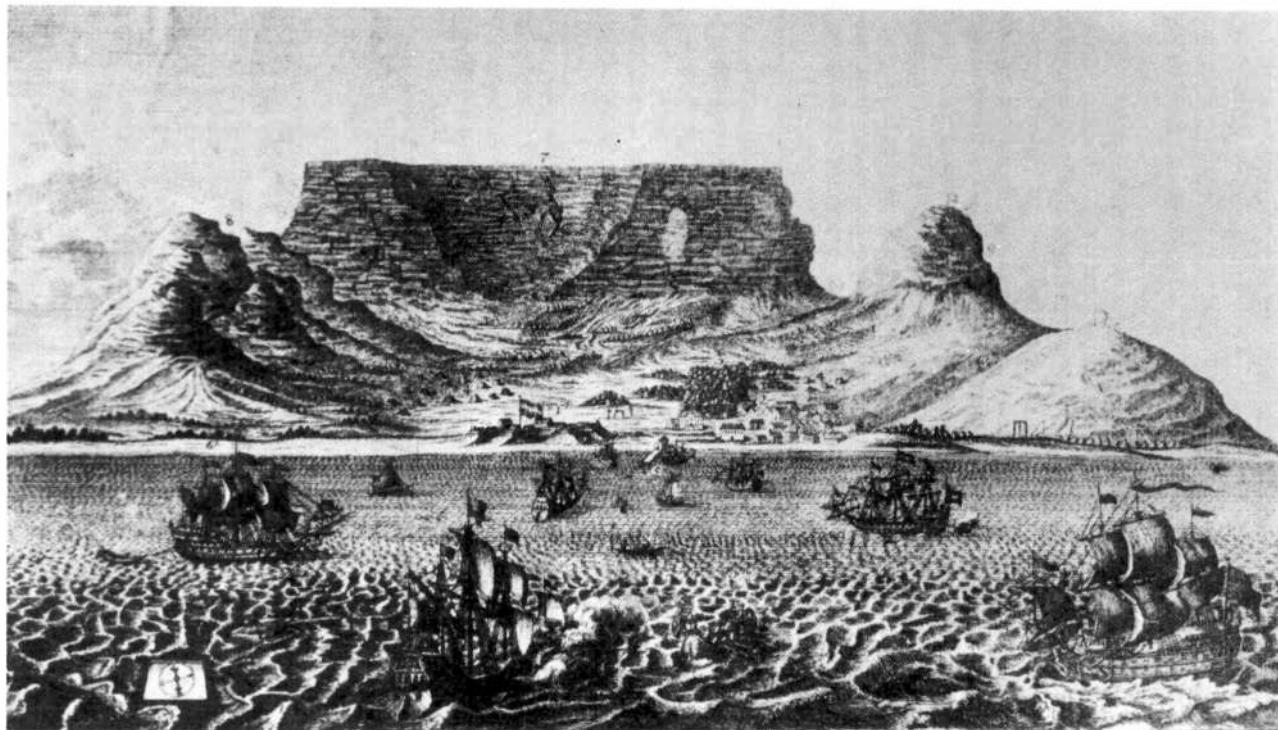


Table Bay and the township below Table Mountain, 1742. An engraving by G.A. Gründler in the Cape Archives, Cape Town (M 150)

guaranteeing exclusive trading rights to the company. With the exception of pepper, the Dutch long held an almost complete monopoly of the valuable spice trade and were able in large measure to dictate the price on the European markets. Although Dutch eastern commerce was in slow decline as our period opens, it was nevertheless still considerable.

As the middle years of the 18th century approached the Dutch East India Company was the most cosmopolitan in composition of all the old established national monopolies trading round the Cape. Its governor general in Batavia from 1735 to 1737 was Abraham Patras from Grenoble in France and among those of European origin on the company's ships and in its shore establishments were men from most of the countries of Europe and indeed from even further afield. Of those serving at the Cape not a few by 1735 were colonial-born, either in the settlement itself or in other parts of the Dutch eastern empire, notably Batavia and Ceylon. In addition to the strong German and Scandinavian element among company employees generally, there were also many from the southern Netherlands, from Switzerland and from France and southern Europe. The names of English speakers are less frequently encountered in the Dutch records, but there were men in the service of the company from all parts of the British Isles in the period and even some from the British colonies across the Atlantic. Like their native Dutch comrades, most of the foreigners filled lowly posts, but others, often better educated than the mass, rose to greater heights. One German surgeon, Georg Wilhelm Raksche of the East Indiaman *Oud Berkenrode*, filed his official report of 1747 in Latin as he was under the mistaken impression that there would be none at the Cape capable of reading it if he wrote it in his own tongue.

The vast majority of the Dutch East India Company's servants remain mere entries in the muster rolls of ships and shore stations. Those of humble rank who stand out do so because of some exceptional circumstances such as an appearance in a court of justice. We do no more here than mention a few men from those countries whose shipping has been discussed in earlier chapters: Britain and her colonies, Denmark and France.

Among the possible English speakers we may note Samuel Griman of Philadelphia, who was transferred at the Cape in 1751 from the outward-bound *Hof d'Uno* to the return ship *Oostcapelle*. There can be no uncertainty about the land of origin of Thomas Dougall of the *Oud Berkenrode*, who gave evidence at the settlement in 1747 concerning the non-delivery of goods. The names of two fellow-countrymen also appear in the records for these years: John Peterson from the Shetland Islands, a prisoner on Robben Island in 1754, and Edward Champion from the same part of Scotland, who served on the little *Schuijlenburg* which for seven years until she was wrecked in 1756 operated out of Table Bay. Champion was a witness to a street fight. There were many Danes in the Dutch service. One of them, Peter Jansen Gravensten

of Copenhagen, an officer on the *Saamslag*, plotted in 1750 to desert to the Portuguese in the Azores. A plan by soldiers at the Cape to make their way to Portuguese territory had been unmasked in the previous year.

One of the most controversial of company employees at the Cape was the French soldier Etienne Barbier of Bazoches-en-Dunois. He was arrested and brought to trial for seditious activities in the interior and executed in November 1739. The insurrection he attempted to foment indicated a degree of dissatisfaction with government policy among the farming community, with particular regard to alleged support for the Khoisan, inimical to the interests of the White settlers. A number of Frenchmen at the Cape were expiating other crimes. Antoine Nicolas of La Rochelle did hard labour on the battery in 1744 and Jacob le Sueur from Berry was sentenced to eighteen months' work on the fortifications in the same year. Emmanuel Melgard of Castelnauudary suffered a similar punishment in 1740. Some succeeded in escaping. François Edouard of Dunkirk, serving a life sentence, managed to reach the United Provinces where he signed on as a cook on the *Noordwolfsbergen*, only to be recaptured when that vessel reached the Cape in March 1736. Bertrand de Merre from Villeneuve, a soldier in the Ceylon garrison, was sentenced to 35 years' imprisonment on Robben Island for stealing company property. He escaped from detention when the *Crabbendijk* entered Table Bay in February 1751 and seems to have evaded subsequent detection.

Desertion, insubordination and fighting were as common among the crews of Dutch ships as they were on foreign vessels. A Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, sailing on the outward-bound *Patmos*, deserted at the Cape in 1746, but was recaptured in the Swellendam district in the following year. His lack of Dutch probably made it difficult for him to avoid arrest. Jean-Baptiste Dugué from Bayonne, serving in 1742 on the *Papenburg* bound for Ceylon, was involved in a fight at the Cape settlement in which a man was killed and a sailor on the *Saamslag* in 1751, Joseph de Marsonnat, was guilty of seditious talk and disrespect for the Calvinist faith. Not a Frenchman, but a former employee of the French company, Jean-Baptiste Espligant of Antwerp had deserted from both the French and the Dutch and was set to work on the battery when the *Ouwerkerk* reached the Cape from Batavia in 1741. Another employee of the Dutch company, Hieronimus Franciscus de Hautepenne de la Tour of Louvain in Brabant, claimed to be of ancient French royal lineage. He served on the Zeeland ship *Ritthem* which reached the Cape in June 1735, but after the vessel had left Europe it was discovered that Hautepenne de la Tour was a plausible rogue and the Batavian authorities were warned to keep an eye on him.

Jan Hugo Captijn of the *Arnesteyn* had a difficult French passenger on his voyage from Bengal in 1747. Jean-Thomas-François Villejosselin de la Motte

of Saint-Malo was a French company official whose pugnacious manner and contempt for his hosts resulted in his imprisonment on board in irons. He vehemently protested his innocence when the ship reached the Cape and a solution to the quarrel was found there by transferring him to the *Polanen* for the rest of his homeward voyage.

This is a catalogue of sins and it does not place the French in true perspective. The great majority of those from that country who were connected with the Dutch company were assets, not liabilities to the service. Among them were several who made their mark at the Cape. Grandpreez, secretary to the council of policy, has already been mentioned in connection with La Caille's visit to the colony. He spoke fluent Dutch with a strong French accent and was married to Louisa Adriana Slotsboo, daughter of the Danish garrison captain Kaije Jesse Slotsboo of Haderslev. Grandpreez evidently had aspirations to even higher office, but it would seem that he was not the easiest of men to get along with. The chief surgeon at the hospital was Renaud-Berthault de Saint-Jean of Sancerre, who died in 1763 after long service. He had been a merchant perfumer in his younger days. Also of French parentage was Daniel Rousselet-Brousson from Amsterdam who served in the civil administration and took part in the Madagascar slave-trade as a commissioner. At lower levels too there were men of ability. The gunner Joseph Arsandeau of Les Sables-d'Olonne exercised his talents as a teacher in the country districts before 1736. One French visitor, the engineer and surveyor from Artois, Jean-François Masson, married a Cape girl Gezina Kock in 1732 and was at the Cape again in 1744 on the return ship *Domburg*, when he sold a Bengali slave Anthonij whom he had brought with him.

Most of the burghers who reached the Cape in the 18th century arrived as company employees on Dutch ships. The majority were Dutch or German, but other nationalities were also represented. A Frenchman was the locksmith Guillaume-Henri Bossau of Bayonne who arrived on the *Ruijven* in 1741. Other French speakers were Taillard of Tournai, a soldier on the *Getrouwigheid* whose stormy Cape career has already been touched upon, the Swiss silversmith Pierre Sandoz of Neuchâtel, a soldier on the *Amstelveen* in 1748 who subsequently left the colony to escape his creditors, and a compatriot Jean Sauchy from Rougemont in the Vaud who reached the Cape in 1742 on the East Indiaman *'s Heer Arendskerke*. Scandinavian burghers included Michael Cornelissen of Haderslev, a sailor on the *Parel* in 1739, Christopher Jansen Pasterup of Copenhagen who came as a seaman on the *Herstelder* in 1745, the Swede Diderich Wilhelmi of Stockholm, a corporal on the *Hof d'Uno* in 1749, Sverus Cornelissen, a sailor on the *Liefde* in 1750, and Ludvig Hanssen of Holstein who arrived as a corporal on the *Sparenrijk* in 1755.

Jacobus Möller, marine superintendent at the Cape from 1725 until his death

in 1748, has already figured in these pages. He was the Cape-born son of the burgher councillor Heinrich Christoffel Möller of Hamburg and his family came to have a Danish connection. Möller's daughter Jacoba married the former Batavia burgher Harrier Protté Felchenhauer from Bergen in Norway at the Cape in 1749 and later settled with him in Copenhagen. Felchenhauer looked after the younger members of the Möller family and the marine superintendent's son Jacobus was able to obtain a commission in the Danish navy in 1754 as a lieutenant. He later returned to the Cape as a burgher. An older brother Jan Simon Möller died in 1753 when serving as a cadet on the Dutch vessel *Wimmemum*, sailing between the Cape and Batavia. The *Wimmemum* had an unfortunate end. In the following year she was attacked by pirates off the Malabar coast and exploded after catching fire. Felchenhauer's concern for his wife's family gives the lie to the insinuations of prying neighbours at the Cape before his marriage. Their hostility stemmed from the fact that he was already living with Jacoba, an arrangement which Felchenhauer felt was none of their business. It was wrongly assumed that this irregular union was interfering with the education of Jacoba's eleven year old sister Debora Margaretha, merely because she had ceased to attend school classes in needlework and elementary subjects, and had not recently been seen in church.

Many men and women in Cape society were well-connected and had personal and mercantile interests beyond the Dutch borders. The coat-of-arms of the former governor Adriaan van Kervel was sent to the Cape in 1739 as a memorial by a relative Alexander van Kervel, agent of the prince-bishop of Liège, and the Swellengrebel and Johannes Bacheracht of the administration were associated with Dutch trade at Archangel in Russia. Hendrik Swellengrebel had business dealings with a merchant John Siefken of London and his cousin Sergius entrusted the disposal of his stock in the English South Sea Company to Pye and Cruikshank of Amsterdam and a governor of the Bank of England, Batholomew Burton. Sergius Swellengrebel's wife was Anne Fothergill of St Albans in Hertfordshire who at her death in 1764 left some of her possessions to her sister Jenny Roper, then living in London. Margaretha Hendrina, daughter of the German-born Cape wine licensee Johann Zacharias Beck, was in 1759 to marry Alexander Grant, a military captain in the London company's service. She settled in Scotland and remarried Buchan Hepburn there on the death of her first husband. The fiscal Pieter van Reede van Oudtshoorn was the great-nephew of William Ferdinand Carey, Lord Hunsdon, with whom he was in close family contact, and the De Vlamings were linked by marriage with William, Earl of Cadogan, an Orangist supporter and envoy to the United Provinces who had extensive Dutch estates.

The Anglo-Dutch alliance was still a strong one at this period and was further strengthened at political and social levels by the election of a national stadt-

holder in 1747, to which we shall refer in the next chapter. The anonymous Englishman who touched at the Cape in December 1736, evidently on the outward-bound *Nieuwerkerk*, was perhaps among kindred spirits at Constantia, although far distant from the “Leonora” to whom he addressed himself in verse:

“So pass my days in unenjoy’d delight,
Absent from thee; so flies the chearless night,
When crown’d by mirth appears the social bowl,
And the rich *Capian* grape dilates my soul”.

There was in those years an echo of another domestic link between the Cape and England at a different level. In March 1729 the “Free Black” Maria of Madagascar, widow of Zacharias Roet and then married to the writer at the slave lodge Pieter Amorini, made a will leaving her inheritance to her son Thomas James Campbell, living in London. He had been taken to England by William Hamilton, captain of the slave ship *Arabella*, which last called at the Cape in December 1718 with a cargo of 240 Malagasy slaves for the South Sea Company’s factory at Buenos Aires. Campbell was able to claim his inheritance from a half-forgotten Malagasy past. News that the matter had been attended to was brought to the settlement in 1738 by John Flower, commander of the *Montagu* East Indiaman, and a passenger aboard her, Abram Robarts.

Dutch ships, like their British, French and Danish counterparts, brought the Cape colony into touch with many distant regions, although most Dutch voyages linked the United Provinces with Batavia directly, with less numerous sailings to and from Ceylon, China and Bengal. There was one further link beyond Batavia which the Dutch alone among the trading nations of the period enjoyed: that with Japan. The *Shellagh* of the Zeeland chamber, returning from such a voyage in April 1741, brought examples of Japanese weights to the Cape. Contact with the Japanese in Nagasaki harbour was restricted, although prostitutes were generously provided on the permitted island of Deshima to keep Dutch crews contented. The company in the United Provinces had been slow to inaugurate direct commercial relations with China, which until after 1729 were in the hands of the country traders. Greater profits from the tea trade might have helped to arrest the decline in the company’s fortunes as the 18th century progressed. The only other Dutch vessel at the Cape with an unusual point of departure was the *Eendragt* of 1747 which had sailed from Mokha in December of the previous year.

Closer contact with the Chinese in Canton led to a request in 1751 from the emperor of China, Ch’ien-lung, for a pair of ostriches and a lion and lioness. The request was duly passed on to the Cape authorities. Interest in the local flora and fauna, and in those of other Dutch settlements in Asia and in the

West Indies, was evinced in 1749 by the Leiden Academy, anxious to build up a collection for scientific study. The Cape sent three cases of specimens on the *Diemen* in April 1750, but noted the need for a competent botanist in the colony. The German superintendent of the company's garden in Tulbagh's day, Johann Andreas Auge, was already at the Cape, but had evidently not yet established his reputation.

There was also Dutch contact, not necessarily authorized, with the New World. Jan Tuinman of the *Oosthuijsen*, following the example set by the *Huijs te Foreest* some years earlier, decided to call on the Brazilian coast in order to conduct some private trade of his own. The five months that he spent there and at Surinam nearly ended in disaster, with a shortage of food and water, much sickness, many deaths and widespread desertion. Tuinman had left Texel on 22 May 1750, but did not reach the Cape until 18 November of the following year, an interval of almost eighteen months. The *Huijs te Foreest* spent two months at Pernambuco in 1740. Another ship, the *Meervliet*, which called at Todos-os-Santos Bay in December 1753 when outward-bound lost twenty sailors there from death or desertion. The *Bredenhof*, sailing from the Cape to Ceylon, was wrecked off the Mozambique coast in 1753. Some of the crew got back to Zeeland in the following year by way of Brazil and Lisbon, but her captain, Jan Nielson, died on 6 January 1754 off the Cape aboard the *São Francisco*, bound for Bahia.

By far the most frequent calls, however, were made by Dutch ships, voluntarily or involuntarily, on European coasts and particularly on the south coast of England. These included a number of accidents and shipwrecks, and where the company had foreign agents, as in certain English ports and at Dunkirk in France, their responsibilities included the care of crews, bullion and goods recovered. The loss off the Shetlands of the *Amsterdam* on which Valckenier travelled to the Cape in 1742 has already been recorded; another vessel which went down with all hands was the outward-bound *Hollandia*, wrecked off the Scillies in July 1743 at a place located in recent years. The Goodwin Sands claimed the *Meermond* in 1736 and the *Rooswijk* in 1740, both bound for the Indies; the *Bethlehem* from Zeeland was stranded on the Flemish sandbanks off Ostend in the year 1741. The *Boot*, returning from Batavia and the Cape in 1738, was wrecked in the Channel between Plymouth and Dartmouth, an incident which cost her skipper Jacob van Duinen and his chief officers their jobs; in January 1749 a new *Amsterdam*, with many sick aboard, ran ashore outward-bound between Hastings and Beachy Head. Most of her silver bullion was subsequently recovered.

Ships were sometimes stranded on the English Channel coast through faulty navigation, or called for necessary repairs. The Delft East Indiaman *Overschie*, bound for Batavia, ran aground near Portsmouth in 1749 through the incompetence of an English pilot, but was refloated after her cargo had been

taken ashore; some nine years earlier the return ship *Dregterland*, which had passed the Cape by, ran ashore near Ramsgate and also had to be unloaded before she could be made ready for sea again. The *Huijs te Persijn*, outward-bound from Rotterdam, spent almost a month off the North Foreland from the end of December 1744. Assistance had to be obtained from Margate to fit a new rudder and she endured storms, sickness and desertion before she was able to sail on.

Many calls were made at English south coast ports from the Straits of Dover to Falmouth and especially at Portsmouth and Plymouth. Sickness was a major problem, even with outward-bound ships. The *Ketel* of Rotterdam, later sold to Spanish merchants in Manila, spent some four months in Portsmouth in 1744 and her captain, Cornelis Quack, had to rent a house on an island in the harbour to accommodate her many sick before he was able to sail on to the east. Desertion and the attentions of the press-gang plagued many captains. Leendert de Bruin of the *Overschie* lost 232 sailors, soldiers and craftsmen through desertion when his ship was at Portsmouth in 1749, a staggering 85% of the ship's complement. Replacements were sent from Delft to enable him to continue his voyage. Insubordination was also common enough. When the *Beukesteijn* called at Plymouth in 1738 a soldier Otto Frölich of Königsberg (Kaliningrad) got fighting drunk on local gin and in the following year three intending deserters from the *Gaasperdam* in Torbay planned to murder Captain Klaas Meelhoop and burn the ship. The Enkhuizen East Indiaman *Osdorp* spent more than two months at the Downs in 1750 after losing her rudder. A mutiny broke out and nineteen men had to be taken over by a warship before the voyage could be resumed.

Dutch ships also appeared in other harbours in the British Isles. The returning *Polanen* put into Milford Haven in 1748 and several vessels called at Lough Swilly in Donegal, among them the outward-bound *Batavier* in 1740. The Spanish coast saw a major disaster in January 1752 when the return ship *Wapen van Hoorn* went down off Cape Finisterre. Her captain, Jacob Greef, and 52 of his crew were saved. In May 1742 the outward-bound Enkhuizen vessel the *Watervliet* ran ashore at Gravelines on the French coast, but without the loss of crew or cargo. A similar fate befell the returning *Ananas* in October of that year and again without loss. She ran aground near Boulogne-sur-Mer.

The small hooker the *Hector*, destined for the local shipping needs of the Cape, had an erratic start to a voyage which began in November 1743 under the captaincy of Jan Raij. After following a somewhat undecided course down the English Channel the vessel reached Morlaix Bay, although it was thought that the *Hector* had already rounded Ushant and was lying off the Bay of Biscay. High standards of navigation, however, were unlikely from a skipper who drank twelve bottles of wine a day and his uncertain temper did nothing to preserve good order aboard. When the ship put into Morlaix it was decided

to remove Raij from his command and a new man, Gerrit Bot, was sent for from the United Provinces. He it was who brought the *Hector* to the Cape in May 1744, but of the original crew one man had died at Morlaix and nine others deserted there. It is a reflection of the cosmopolitan nature of Dutch crews of the period that only one of the deserters came from the home country. Five were from northern Germany, one from Stockholm, another from Naples and a third, Jacob Brader, from London. Raij was tried at the Cape and found guilty of incompetence and brutality. There was a single dissenting voice, that of the skipper's brother-in-law, the marine superintendent Möller. Raij decided to appeal and sailed to Batavia for the purpose, Möller standing surety for him. The appeal succeeded and Raij was appointed deputy to Möller on the Cape establishment. He died, however, before he could return to the settlement. It would appear that Raij had friends in high places as well as useful family contacts.

Stowaways, particularly if they were men with seafaring experience, could help to offset crew losses through death and desertion. A number were found on Dutch vessels in this period. Women too sometimes hid themselves aboard ship or enlisted under the disguise of soldiers. One girl from Rotterdam, Maria van de Giessen, was found on the outward-bound *Huijs te Persijn* in 1745. George de Bons, the ship's clerk, gallantly offered to marry her. Not all were Dutch girls. One of the two soldiers found to be women on the *Brouwer*, outward-bound from Enkhuizen in 1752, came from Emden. Both completed the voyage to the Cape as passengers and were set ashore when the vessel reached the settlement. On 13 December 1743, while the *Woitkensdorp* was still in the North Sea after sailing from Texel, the ship's provost Daniel Berrangé - a surname later to be found in Cape burgher rolls - discovered two women disguised as military personnel. One, Rosaria le Fèvre, was from Ypres in Flanders; the other, Johanna Elizabeth Spelling, came from Zell. They had enlisted under the Christian names Josephus and Johann. They were landed at the Cape, where the German girl remained. Rosaria asked to be repatriated. Two stowaways were discovered on the *Bredenhof* after the East Indiaman had left the Cape for Batavia in October 1748. One was the wife of a sergeant in the military branch.

There was some movement of Asians as stowaways or as unauthorized sailors on Dutch ships. A Javanese reached the Cape on the provision ship *Strijen* in this clandestine manner in 1741, but was discovered and deported; ten years later three men, Thomas Steeg from Ceylon, Francisco from the Malabar coast and a Bengali known as Jan, were allowed to sail to Europe on the *Liefde*. They returned to the Cape as sailors, presumably on the same ship, early in 1752. One Cape "Free Black", Augustus from Bengal, joined the crew of the *Huijs te Marquette*, perhaps on her visit outward-bound in 1744. Esperance, the Bengali wife he left behind, was petitioning for the dissolution of her marriage on grounds of desertion in 1752.

The *Sloterdijk*, which reached the Cape from Texel in January 1750, was involved in the movement of stowaways from her intermediate Atlantic port of call. She brought with her a number of slaves from the Cape Verde Islands, but the Cape authorities decreed that they were to be deported to the United Provinces for eventual return to their point of departure. One of them, sent to Europe in September 1750 on the *Ouwerkerk*, claimed that he was not a slave and enlisted as a sailor on the outward-bound *Hercules* under the name of Manoel Lop. He was apprehended when the ship reached the Cape in December 1751 and again deported with another illegal immigrant. A similar case occurred a few years later when a Portuguese woman who had left Lisbon for the Cape Verde Islands, but found conditions there little to her liking, hid away on the *Brouwer*, which reached the Cape in October 1759.

The Cape Verde Islands were regularly used as a refreshment station by outward-bound Dutch East Indiamen and many men deserted from the company's service there. The *Saamslag* lost thirteen men in this way in 1742; eight soldiers and five sailors ran away from the *Batavier* in the same Portuguese island group ten years later. Crew shortages were sometimes made good there by transfers from other ships or by enlisting stranded men. In 1745 the *Shellagh* took over 43 soldiers and sailors from the *Schoonauwen* and in the following year the *Maarsseveen*, *Bosbeek* and *Sijbecarspel* embarked seventeen French seamen.

Dutch ships often carried men, women and children of Asian and African origin, many of them brought to the Cape as slave purchases, political exiles or criminals banished there to serve their sentences. The records are full of the names of convicted persons from the east who sought either pardon and repatriation before their sentences had expired or who wished to return home because they were unable to earn a living in the settlement after their release. They came from Java, Bali, Sumbawa, Celebes (Sulawesi), Bengal and many other regions of Dutch influence. A number were Chinese, often banished for no more serious crime than illegal entry into the port of Batavia. The freed Chinese, La Caille informs us, were particularly disliked by the burghers who considered them as receivers and purveyors of goods stolen by slaves. This criticism Mentzel disallowed and it is certain that few were real criminals and most both honourable and friendly. If some dealt in stolen wares, then their purchases were more likely to have been made from soldiers and sailors on passing ships than from slaves.

Some convicts had been at the Cape for more than half a lifetime; others who requested to be sent home had been free men for long years after their release. The arrival at the Cape of Governor General van Imhoff in 1743 produced a rush of requests for repatriation and from that time onward a number were sent back on vessels bound for Batavia, including a few who had received life

sentences. Many, however, remained in the settlement. In religious belief Moslems predominated, but there were also Christians, Buddhists and Brahmans. Religious practices of Indian origin do not appear to have taken root at the Cape, but the Moslem religion retained many adherents. The priests Said Alochie and Hadji Mattavan reached the Cape on the *Fortuijn* in June 1744 as prisoners from Batavia. Said Alochie of Mokha was to play an important part in the spread of Islam at the Cape in the 18th century.

The political exiles were either sent to the settlement from their eastern territories as security risks or at the behest of relatives for whom they presented a personal or dynastic threat. They were kept apart from the Cape community, living on an allowance and able to maintain their families and retinues of servants and slaves. As residents of Robben Island or in such isolated homes on the mainland as the old mill house at Stellenbosch they made little impact on Cape society. Some had their requests to return to the east refused; others were permitted to leave or were freed at the Cape to earn a living. The local climate did not always agree with elderly exiles, as appears from the appeal of the Javanese prince Loring Passir to be allowed to leave for Batavia with his wives and children in 1735. He had been exiled in 1715 with others of his family at his father's request and was first accommodated at Stellenbosch and later at the Cape. An order for the return of the body of Radin Djourit, prince regent of Madura, who died in June 1748 could not then be complied with and he was buried at the Cape in the Moslem fashion without a coffin. The remains were evidently returned later. The prince's reign had been a turbulent one and he had eventually fled to Banjarmasin where he was allowed to board Congreve's *Onslow* in order to escape to Bengkulu, but had to be surrendered to the Dutch.

Asians, both slave and free, travelled as passengers on Dutch ships in both directions. On the *Huijs te Rensburg* which reached the Cape from Europe in March 1749 were a Bengali woman Abigael and her child Christina. Slaves usually accompanied their owners and sometimes embarked or disembarked at the Cape. There was some traffic in slaves between Ceylon and the colony for company use and between the East Indies and the Cape both ways for private sale or in the settlement of estates. Slaves were also deported for various offences committed in the east.

Slaves travelling to the United Provinces from the Cape with their owners included the Batavian woman Cathrijn, who accompanied Daniël Josephus Slotsboo on the *Haarlem* in 1748, and the girl Pegie from Calicut, who sailed with Gerrit van Lexmond and his family on the *Overschie* in the same fleet. A male slave sold in Batavia in settlement of a Cape estate, Philis from Mandar on the island of Celebes, was brought to Simons Bay by Gerrit Reijndertsz. Vos, captain of the *Rijnhuijsen*, in July 1743. Among the slaves banished to the Cape between 1740 and 1750 were the Batavian woman Aurora, freed at

the end of her ten year sentence there, Kalimpo, slave of a Balinese chieftain, who was taken over by the company at the Cape at his own request, and the slave of another Indonesian, Candeuw Boeton, who had received a sentence of ten years in chains for dressing as a woman and impersonating a midwife. Boeton, however, died on the voyage across the Indian Ocean.

Slaves bought as an investment and subsequently sold included two Cape-born girls, Martje and Candasa, purchased early in 1751 by a Chinese Jasp Tjionko from the retiring governor, Swellengrebel. Tjionko was on the eve of repatriation to Batavia and when he reached the eastern capital he sold his purchases to Cornelis Quack, then captain of the *Voorsigtigheijd*. The Chinese made money on the deal and Quack also disposed of them at a profit, together with their brother Adonis. Before the end of 1751 the girls changed hands twice more and the final price paid was more than five times the amount received for them by Swellengrebel. Jasp Tjionko later claimed that he had sold Martje and Candasa in order that Quack should free them, but that the Dutch captain had been more interested in their cash value. A female slave Susje, purchased in Batavia by Jan Martens, skipper of the *Rotterdam*, was sold by him when he returned to the Cape in April 1752. The surgeon at the settlement Jan Haszingsh traded extensively and the purchases he made included slaves imported on the Bengal return ships *Brouwer*, *Diemen*, *Oostcapelle* and *Ruijskensteijn* between 1749 and 1755. Slaves were brought to the Cape in this way in the charge of captains and other officers of ships bound for the homeland.

Slaves did not always make the voyage without resistance. Two who reached False Bay on the company's returning warship the *Hoop* in June 1745 broke their chains and absconded; two others, Januarij of Nias and his Buginese companion Baatjoe, who belonged to Abraham Zwart, captain of the return ship *Casteel van Tilburg* of Hoorn, planned to murder the Whites aboard and steal a boat to sail back to the East Indies. The plot however was foiled before the *Casteel van Tilburg* reached the Cape in early November 1748. Long voyages to freedom across the Indian Ocean, however impracticable, were the dream of many a slave and incarcerated criminal. In 1751 Robbo of Butung, off the south-east coast of Celebes, was one of fifteen criminals on Robben Island who conceived the idea of murdering all the Whites on the island and sailing off in the direction of Indonesia. The Singhalese slave Tikriappoe, doubtless the same man who tried to stow away on the *Duke of Newcastle* in 1750, was later that year caught entering the Simons Bay warehouse and perhaps had escape to his distant homeland in view. He had made his way there after breaking out of the slave lodge in the settlement.

In 1753 the Cape government decided to write off 44 slaves from the company's books and no doubt some of them had made good their escape by sea. One of the Dutch East India Company's Cape slaves, Thomas, absconded

in 1741 and took ship to the United Provinces. There he joined the crew of the Rotterdam East Indiaman *Hartenlust*, but was recaptured when she touched at the Cape in August 1743. He had enlisted as Thomas Jansz. The slaves of two colonists had similar experiences. The Cape-born slave Joseph, belonging to the burgher Bergstedt from Sweden, sailed from the settlement on the return ship *Everswaard* in March 1741. He came back as a sailor on the Zeeland East Indiaman *Duijnenburg*, but was apprehended when she reached False Bay in May of the following year. He said that he had not intended to run away, but had been carried off in a drunken state. About the same time as the recapture of Joseph, a slave Arend of the Cape belonging to the burgher Jacob Cruger smuggled himself aboard a Dutch return ship. He too gave himself a Dutch surname in the United Provinces and as Arend van den Velden joined the deck crew of the *Shellagh*, only to be taken into custody when she called at the Cape in March 1743. Arend's excuse was that he suffered under a harsh master. Both men were sentenced to two years' hard labour in chains.

The main source of company slaves for the Cape in the period was Madagascar, with a few brought in on these voyages from Delagoa Bay. The pressing need for a stronger labour force in the colony led to the despatch by the Zeeland chamber of the three-masted hooker the *Brak*, expressly for the slave-trade. She reached the Cape on 2 September 1740 under the command of Jacobus van der Spil of Middelburg and with Gillis Dabijn as chief mate, calling briefly in the Cape Verde Islands on her outward voyage. Preparations were immediately undertaken for an early departure and the *Brak* sailed for Madagascar in late October of that year. The maiden voyage as a slave ship was a fiasco. Navigational errors led to the abandonment of the venture even before Madagascar was sighted and the *Brak* returned empty-handed to Table Bay. The next voyage, however, was more successful. Van der Spil took the little vessel out in May 1741, returning in the following December with more than 70 slaves, most of them adult males and therefore suitable for the hardest tasks in the port settlement. These were obtained by barter or for cash at Tuléar and Bombetoko Bay on the west coast of the island.

Difficulties, however, were encountered by the chief trade commissioner with the *Brak*, Otto Lüder Hemmy. There were British, French, Portuguese and Arab competitors in the trade; merchandise brought and presents bestowed were not always acceptable and Hemmy discovered that Malagasy potentates preferred strong liquor to Cape wine and dismissed the cloth offered as only suitable for toilet paper. Promises moreover were not always fulfilled and the *Brak* was not big enough to make much of an impression on the Malagasys. They preferred to do business with men who arrived in larger vessels and were always looking for a chance to incite rebellion on little ones in order to take possession of the ships, their cargoes and their guns. Nor was it possible on so small a ship to keep the hatches battened down. The air

below decks became so stale that the slaves had to be brought on deck to avoid suffocation. Moreover, officers and seamen lived in such close proximity that it was difficult indeed to maintain that discipline which alone would make the transport of unwilling passengers a relatively easy task.

The Cape authorities could do nothing about the *Brak* and had no other vessel available for the trade. The comments on commercial relations, however, were taken seriously and it was hoped that the Malagasy rulers would find the *Brak* better supplied when next she reached the coast. The third voyage began on the morning of 25 April 1742, Hemmy again acting as chief trade commissioner, assisted on this occasion by Rousselet Brousson. Van der Spil remained in command. The *Brak* reached St Augustine's Bay on the south-west coast of Madagascar on 26 May after a stormy passage. Trading began early in June at Tuléar, the local king arranging to sell slaves for cash in Spanish *reales*, at a top price of what in modern currency represents R4,75. Sellers of lower rank, however, were prepared to conduct business by barter. Three muskets, twelve Dutch pounds (5,8Kg.) of gunpowder, five pounds (2,5Kg.) of lead shot and 30 flints would purchase a slave of either sex and other trade goods included assorted beads, brandy, iron pots, dishes, spoons and mirrors. A factory for the trading season was established on land and the *Brak* remained offshore as a floating prison for the purchases.

By 18 July the traders had acquired 21 slaves, but early in the morning of the following day an event took place which set back the programme. A number of slaves on the *Brak* succeeded in freeing themselves and jumped overboard. Six were pulled out of the water, but seven were never seen again and perhaps drowned. The ringleaders were severely punished and the remaining slaves bound more tightly. Trading continued at Tuléar until October, the negotiations involving the consumption of huge quantities of the company's seemingly inexhaustible supplies of brandy. By 4 October there were 28 slaves below decks on the *Brak*. In addition to the would-be escapees, six more had died within hailing distance of their homeland. Four more would succumb after the *Brak* left Madagascar, one as the ship reached Table Bay.

There were deaths among the Whites of the expedition as well, including that of the captain, early on 30 August. He was buried ashore and Gillis Dabijn assumed command with the *Brak*'s future captain François Pennink as chief mate. There were also desertions. A young deck-hand Gijsbert van Melkenbeeke of Ressegem in Flanders ran away in September and was not recovered. In the following month two more men from the southern Netherlands absconded: the smith Melchior Boone of Louvain and François Aling of Bruges. They were, however, captured and suitably punished. To offset losses by death and desertion four soldiers from the London East Indiaman the *Salisbury* were taken aboard in August. They complained of

ill-treatment at the hands of Captain Burrows, but one of them tried to escape from the *Brak* with the aid of home-made navigational instruments. He was discovered, punished and set ashore. The other three, William Ramsey from Barbados, George Hall of Cirencester and Joseph Thorp of Hull, joined the crew of the hooker after swearing an oath of allegiance to the Dutch company.

The *Brak* left Tuléar on 10 October and after some ineffectual attempts to find another trading region on the coasts of the island sailed to Delagoa Bay, where four more slaves were purchased, as well as a quantity of ivory and ambergris. On 29 November Dabijn sailed for home, reaching Table Bay on 23 December 1742. It had not been as rewarding a voyage as the previous one, but the nineteen men, six women and three children who entered the slave lodge represented a useful addition, actual and potential, to the labour force of the colony and had been secured at a modest profit. Dabijn was to take the *Brak* out on an even more successful voyage in 1743, when 99 slaves were brought back, with only fourteen losses. It was not until 1751 that the directors of the Dutch company gave permission to the Cape authorities to sell some of the slaves purchased on Madagascar to burghers, but it would seem that a little private trade was carried out by company men on these voyages at an earlier date. Rousselet Brousson, for example, sold a Malagasy slave he had called Roselijn early in 1743 and in the previous year he had received a cash advance from his captain while the trade on Madagascar was in progress.

The middle years of the 18th century saw several schemes of economic reform mooted in the United Provinces which envisaged colonial participation. A Zeeland project suggested the importation of Cape wine and wool on a large scale, using hired ships if necessary. Any surplus could be disposed of in Britain. Other schemes embraced the representation of Cape burghers through regional chambers of commerce and in one of these proposals of the early 1750s the former Cape governor, Swellengrebel, was expected to play an active part. Although such plans foundered on the rocks of vested interest, they were clearly in line with the desire expressed by Cape burghers in January 1751 for the free trade their fellows in Batavia enjoyed. There is no doubt that direct participation in the Madagascar slave-trade was a prime objective in this attempt to lift the colony from the economic doldrums.

The *Brak*'s decaying timbers, although locally repaired, made her unsuitable for continued service in the slave-trade and after the outbreak of the Anglo-French war at sea in 1744, the flawed neutrality of the United Provinces made voyages into a region of predominantly French influence undesirable. With the coming of peace, however, the demand for slave imports increased. The *Schuijlenburg* was used in the Madagascar trade in 1752; so too was the *Drie Heuvelen*, which reached Table Bay in March 1753 under Gotlieb Silo

and sailed for Madagascar some two months later, returning to the Cape in the following December before resuming her voyage to Batavia in February 1754.

Britain and France would then soon be at war again; this time with more decisive result. The struggle of the 1740s was only a prelude. Something of the events of those earlier years as they involved the United Provinces, the ships of the Dutch company, the Cape settlement and the fortunes of the principal participants remains to be discussed in the next chapter.

6

Cape shipping and the war at sea

News reached the Cape of Good Hope of growing tension between Britain and Spain in letters sent out by the Dutch company's London agent Bolwerk on the *Royal Guardian*, which anchored in Table Bay on 5 December 1739. Some six weeks later Thomas Coates brought the *Defence* in from Mokha. He heard from Dutch outward-bound ships in the Cape roadstead that war had been declared. There was always the danger that France too might be involved and as the *Saint-Géran* was also at the Cape, Coates and his supercargoes John Wallis and Thomas Thomson addressed an urgent appeal to Governor Swellengrebel and his council of policy. They feared that Porée de la Touche of the *Saint-Géran* had sinister motives and requested that the French ship be detained until the *Defence* had been given sufficient time to get well on her way. This favour was asked on the grounds of "the established Alliance and Amity which has been so long subsisting between the Crown of Great Britain and the Most High and Mighty States of Holland". The Dutch, however, wished to remain on friendly terms with all nations and could not therefore entertain such a request. They nevertheless made one gesture of special friendship. The *Defence* had sailed for home with insufficient ammunition to meet a war situation. The Cape authorities could, however, supply her needs. The *Oostrust* had been forced to run for Mossel Bay on her voyage from the Cape to Batavia late in 1739 and had been brought back to Saldanha Bay in a leaky state. She would never sail again and her store of ammunition provided the Cape with an unexpected surplus.

Coates was unnecessarily alarmed in January 1740. It would be some years before France was involved in the hostilities now beginning between European powers. War with Spain did not affect the Cape directly, nor was East India

The Boscauwen expedition at the Cape, 1748. Water-colour of 1752 by Mattheus Sager in the Africana Museum, Johannesburg

shipping seriously troubled. Dutch vessels were urged to keep together and crews were maintained, as far as possible, at peak efficiency. British ships began to assemble at the Cape and at St Helena to sail in convoy for safety and despatch vessels were sent out by the London company to the rendezvous points with instructions for shipping. The first of them to touch at the Cape was Steward's *East India* yacht in January 1741. The use of these small ships impressed the Dutch company which in October of that year sent out a similar vessel, the galliot *Rozenbeek* commanded by Nanning Broeder, who died as captain of the outward-bound *Eendragt* in 1745. Broeder brought the latest news of the political situation to the Cape, but his real mission was to inform the Cape government that Valckenier was to be arrested. In this, however, he was forestalled by the London company's *Swift*.

The East India Company of London had tried in 1706 during the War of the Spanish Succession to have an official agent accredited to the Cape, but had been unsuccessful. However, the close friendship between the United Provinces and Britain after the Anglo-Spanish war had broken out in 1739 opened the door there to temporary representation at least, in order to give instructions to passing ships between visits of the despatch vessels. An arrangement to this effect was concluded with the Dutch company in 1740 and Steward remained behind when the *East India* yacht sailed in February 1741, handing over the command to Robert Kellaway for the voyage to St Helena. When the *Lapwing* called at the Cape early in 1744 with Kellaway as second mate, it was his turn to stay at the Cape with orders for British vessels. He remained until May, when he was granted a passage at his company's expense on the Rotterdam return ship the *Polanen*.

The Anglo-Spanish war led to the promulgation of certain instructions for Dutch captains. They had to carry a special pass to be shown to any Spanish ships which might intercept them, in order to proclaim the neutral status of their vessels, and secret orders, divided among several ships to ensure safe delivery, were placed in lead caskets for quick disposal overboard to prevent them from falling into unfriendly hands. In view of the expected shortage of saltpetre in Europe as a result of the Anglo-Spanish conflict and the impending War of the Austrian Succession on land which began with Prussia's invasion of Silesia in December 1740, the Dutch directors ordered the purchase of additional supplies on the Coromandel coast and in Bengal.

Dutch relations with their British friends were not always free from strain. There were protests over British interference with Dutch trade into Cadiz in 1741 and complaints two years later that British attacks on Spanish ships just outside the Batavia roadstead interfered with legitimate commerce. Thomas Gilbert of the *Duke of Dorset* took a Spanish vessel in the Manila-Batavia trade in 1741.

More serious, however, and destined to become a feature of British action

throughout the war at sea, was the experience early in 1743 of the Zeeland East Indiaman the *Cleverskerk*, whose captain Anthonij Marijnissen died on the further voyage from the Cape to Batavia. While still in the North Atlantic the *Cleverskerk* met with the warship *Severn*, sailing from Leghorn to Barbados. The Dutch captain was ordered to heave to and his ship was boarded by two naval lieutenants who demanded to see the *Cleverskerk*'s papers and despite protests pressed two seamen into the British service. One was John Osborn of Weymouth, but the other, Robbert Jansz., was booked as from Rotterdam and would seem to have been Dutch. Calls in English waters were equally dangerous. The Delft ship *Tolsduijn*, which reached the Cape in April 1744 under Maarten van der Meer, had been forced by contrary winds to anchor in the Downs in December of the previous year. Eleven seamen and several soldiers were pressed into the Royal Navy there.

London East Indiamen were by no means immune from impressment. Captain Townshend, bringing the *Augusta* home from China and the Cape in 1743, joined a convoy of East Indiamen at St Helena which sailed for the Channel under the protection of the naval fifth rate the *Dover*. When they reached the English coast the *Dover* ordered her charges to heave to under her stern. The press-gang then got busy, but did not have things all its own way. The crew of the *Britannia*, an East Indiaman returning in the convoy after a voyage from Bombay and the Malabar coast under John Somner, took hold of the ship's small-arms and a fight ensued in which seven men were killed before the sailors on the East Indiaman surrendered. In the Margate road a few days later naval officers boarded the *Augusta* for the same purpose, but her crew had suspected trouble and many of them had made for the shore. Six sailors were pressed and Townshend had to hire men at Deal to take the vessel into the Thames. The *Augusta* had already made a contribution to the *Dover*'s crew before these incidents, as the seamen James Hughes, Elias Bell and Joseph Pain had been transferred to her at St Helena, "thay being Disordely (*sic*)". The iniquitous practice of impressment was an additional hazard for merchant seamen and life below decks was no bed of roses for those who found themselves in the Royal Navy. The novelist Tobias Smollett, drawing on personal experience, makes this abundantly clear in his account of a similar and contemporary episode in *Roderick Random*.

The Anglo-Spanish war and hostilities on the European continent which might yet spread further afield made the Cape look to its defences. Plans were drawn up in January 1741 to counter the surprise landing of any enemy forces. A signalling system by gun and flag was introduced to warn of danger and the burghers of the interior were to send 50 men each month for port defence. Sea lines were decided upon, but the extension of the fortifications was not undertaken until after the visit of Governor General van Imhoff in 1743, in which year the corner-stone of a new post, Fort de Knokke, was laid east of the Castle. The burgher forces were reorganized, the "Free Blacks" and slaves

were to play a part in defence and the garrison troops were kept up to strength. To release fit men for active service a "Corps des Invalides" was formed in 1743. Alleman succeeded the elderly Johann Tobias Rhenius of Berlin as captain of the garrison in 1741 and the need for competent subordinate officers was stressed by the council of policy. Van Imhoff looked closely at defence requirements, deputing Lieutenant Colonel Barbonés of Berlin to inspect the artillery and making valuable suggestions on the deployment of the land troops. The visiting governor general and commissioner not only initiated work on the seaward defences, but also used the services of the engineer captain, Pierre Bellidore, to draw up plans for the better protection of the Castle. In April 1743 Lieutenant Claude Faraguet's report on the guns was laid before the council of policy.

The Anglo-Spanish war, however, passed the Cape by, except for the arrival in Table Bay on 23 March 1744 of the 60 gun *Centurion* of the Royal Navy under the command of Commodore George Anson. She was returning from Canton, where Anson had lodged with Captain Townshend of the *Augusta*. The *Centurion* received a great welcome from the London East Indiamen *Warwick* and *Salisbury*, then in the roadstead, but Misenor of the former ship remarked that Governor Swellengrebel was much annoyed that Anson returned an inadequate salute to the Dutch warship *Standvastigheijd* of the Rotterdam chamber, outward-bound under Willem de Wijs.

The *Centurion*, laden with treasure, principally from the Spanish Acapulco galleon *Nuestra Señora de Covadonga* taken off the Philippines, was returning from a world cruise which had been otherwise costly indeed in men and ships. Aboard her was a galaxy of future British naval talent. Her officers included the artistic Peirce Brett, who was to become an admiral and a lord commissioner of the admiralty, the Scot John Campbell, later a vice admiral and governor of Newfoundland, another future vice admiral and Yorkshire member of parliament, Peter Denis, son of the Huguenot clergyman Jacob Denis of La Rochefoucauld and his English wife Martha Leach, Augustus van Keppel of Dutch origin, later Viscount Keppel, admiral and first lord, and Hyde Parker, who began his career on the lower deck and died a vice admiral. Also aboard were two brothers and future captains from Guernsey, Philip and Thomas Saumarez. The former died in action off Brest in October 1747 and Thomas fought with distinction in the Seven Years' War. The *Centurion's* schoolmaster, Pascoe Thomas, "teacher of the Mathematics", published an account of the voyage in 1745 and the dignified Joseph Allen of Wexford, who sailed as a surgeon's mate and returned a full surgeon, gained a doctorate in medicine and became master of the celebrated English public school, Dulwich College. The purser John Rule obtained rapid promotion and by 1746 had been given the post of clerk of the survey at the senior naval dockyard at Deptford.

The *Centurion* remained in Table Bay until 14 April 1744 before sailing for

England and a triumphant homecoming. The Cape made a very welcome respite from the rigours of an extraordinary voyage and provided a ready market for the sale of private goods. Lawrence Millechamp, supernumerary purser, spoke highly of the settlement, its ordered government and its industrious people. It is from his pen too that we have a rare glimpse from a passer-by of the Khoikhoi in an urban setting. He found their standards of hygiene deplorable, but felt that in other respects they had been much maligned. They made excellent and honest servants and displayed great skill in the management of cattle and horses.

Pascoe Thomas, who described the mainland as “Caffararia”, found the Khoikhoi “a nasty beastly People”. His sympathies lay with the slaves and he shows a sensitivity both to the trade and to the manner of executing wrongdoers rare in contemporary writings. Local officials, he felt, treated those brought to the country badly, but this was only to be expected. “Surely”, he wrote, “every one may thank God, he does not live under the Tyranny of the Dutch Republic”. Many company slaves were then at work on the construction of “a most prodigious Pier”, chained together by the legs in groups of six, eight or ten. He noted that in the slave lodge the sexes were separated and that adjoining it was “a Prison for the Lewd and Dissolute”. The schoolmaster’s description of the Cape was not always based on his own observations, but he commented that “the living on Shore (was) very extravagant, and (that) a Man had need to have a great Stock of Money, and a very good Income, to indulge himself in that Satisfaction long”.

Anson was able to purchase an anchor, a cable, rigging and other supplies, and also received assistance in kind from the *Salisbury*. The sick were sent ashore to recuperate and the ship was heeled, scrubbed and payed with tallow. 40 men, British and Dutch, were signed on to improve the manning position and water and livestock taken on board for the crew. Laurens Siewertsz. of the *Bosbeek*, outward-bound from the United Provinces for the Amsterdam chamber, had further trouble with deserters while the *Centurion* lay at anchor in Table Bay. He had lost eight men when he had put into Portsmouth in December 1743 and another four tried to return to Europe with Anson. They were discovered on the British vessel, however, and sent back to their own ship by the port authorities who refused them any more shore leave.

Although the news had not yet reached the Cape, France had declared war on Britain on 15 March 1744 while Anson was making for the anchorage. Information about this extension of the maritime struggle was brought to the settlement on 14 September by Hendrik Bossen of the unfortunate *Nieuw Vijvervreugd*, later to explode in the Batavia roadstead. This new development was not entirely unexpected, despite the assurance of Aubin du Plessis of the *Argonaute* in March 1743 that general peace in Europe was just round the corner. There had been rumours of both French participation and Dutch

involvement for some years at the Cape. Now that France was committed to a struggle with Britain involving the sea route round the southern coasts of Africa local defences were put on an emergency footing involving all sections of the population on land and the crews of the coastal vessels based on Table Bay. Work on the protective breakwater was suspended in order to complete the shore defences and the Imhoff battery was constructed to cover their junction with the Castle. Alleman laid plans to prevent a surprise attack which went further than the earlier measures and the small garrison at Saldanha Bay was instructed to keep a watchful eye on the sea approaches. A detachment was also sent to guard St Helena Bay. A blackout had already been introduced in 1742 to mislead enemy ships and the secret signals for friendly vessels were changed more frequently. Further refinements to the defensive system were carried out by Major Izak Meinertzhagen when he came out in March 1746 on the *Sara Jacoba* to take charge of the company's land forces at the Cape. The returning administrator Daniël Nolthenius also devoted attention to the Cape defences in 1748, promising more gunners from the United Provinces and advocating a battery to protect the winter anchorage in False Bay.

Although France was regarded as the prospective enemy the Cape reflected the official Dutch policy of neutrality. Dupleix indeed made it clear to Governor General van Imhoff in January 1745 that he had no desire to disturb good relations between the French and Dutch companies in the east, or at sea on either side of the Cape, even if war should break out between the two nations. Dutch neutrality permitted East Indiamen of that country to carry both French and British nationals on their voyages, as on the *Cleverskerk* which anchored in False Bay on her return from Batavia in June 1746. There were, however, in that period of uncertainty, fears of a possible attack on the colony and reports of activities which might be considered subversive. Late in 1744 French ships were rumoured to be in the vicinity of Saldanha Bay and in the same period a group of foreigners with horses and a slave boy aroused suspicions at the Groenekloof inland. They were evidently Englishmen.

Attack from the sea on the Table Bay defences was Swellengrebel's great anxiety. The arrival in the roadstead on 23 August 1745 of four merchantmen and two warships in battle array caused the garrison to spring to arms. However, the ships turned out to be the London East Indiamen *Scarborough*, *Lincoln*, *Kent* and *Admiral Vernon* bound from Portsmouth for the Indies under the protection of two naval fourth rates. One, the *Harwich*, commanded by the Jerseyman Philip Carteret as commodore of the small fleet, had Hyde Parker of the Anson circumnavigation as a lieutenant; the other, the *Winchester*, was under the command of Lord Thomas Bertie. The convoy remained at the Cape until early October and Swellengrebel ordered that the precautionary measures taken on its approach should remain in force

during the visit, even though the ships were British. The London company showed similar concern at St Helena and all Dutch visitors there were instructed to identify themselves clearly to avoid being fired upon.

London East Indiamen were well-armed and quite capable of giving a good account of themselves in battle. Many indeed were issued with letters of marque permitting them to act independently against the enemy. The *Lincoln* had been granted such letters in November 1744 for action against both French and Spanish vessels; at the same time letters of marque were issued to the *Scarborough* and the *Kent* for engagements against the French only. Britain, however, already had a naval squadron in the Indian Ocean under Curtis Barnet by late 1744 and the *Harwich* and the *Winchester* provided him with welcome reinforcements. The stay at the Cape enabled Carteret and Bertie to prepare for the anticipated fray ahead. The *Harwich* needed repairs, as she had been in a storm just before entering Table Bay and a bolt of lightning had carried away her main topmast and shivered the mainmast. Three sailors had been killed and several others injured. Carteret obtained assistance from the port authorities and from his consorts. Tents were set up on shore for the naval sick and the usual problems with potential deserters were encountered. Information came to Carteret's ears that several men from the British fleet had hidden themselves on a Dutch ship. A search party was sent aboard her and four men were found, two from the *Harwich* and one each from the *Lincoln* and the East Indiaman *Pelham*, also in harbour. Carteret and Bertie associated themselves with the general British complaint of a poor monetary exchange at the Cape, but relations with the Dutch were amicable enough. The naval vessels joined in the celebration of Swellengrebel's birthday and on the eve of departure the governor, leading officials and the captains of all the other British ships came aboard the *Harwich* for a leave-taking ceremony, the arrival and the departure of the guests being marked by salvoes of guns.

Relations were not always as cordial between British and Dutch on the high seas and in English ports; the earlier experiences of the *Cleverskerk* and the *Tolsduijn* at British hands had their parallels. On the evening of 28 December 1744 the outward-bound *Hof van Delft*, commanded by Jan Bloem, encountered the *Merlin* sloop of the Royal Navy under the captaincy of David Brodie in the North Atlantic. A sharp fight ensued in the darkness until a second naval ship reached the scene, the fourth rate *Weymouth*, commanded by Warwick Calmady. Brodie evidently believed in acting first and asking questions later, but the identity of the Dutch East Indiaman was at length established and on the following day Captain Bloem was invited to meet the commander of the squadron of which these ships formed a part, Vice Admiral Thomas Davers, whose flag flew on the 70 gun *Prince Frederick*. Bloem, who knew no English, conducted what must have been a rather halting conversation in French, with the *Prince Frederick's* captain, Harry

Norris, as interpreter. The affair ended on a happy note. The *Hof van Delft* sailed on for the Cape and Batavia, and the British squadron made for the West Indies, where the *Weymouth* was wrecked shortly after her arrival and Davers was soon to succumb to yellow fever. A link with the Cape past is provided by one name in the *Hof van Delft*'s crew list, that of the ordnance officer, Jan van Riebee(c)k.

Cornelis Salomonsz. of the outward-bound Hoorn ship the *Lis* also had a brush with British sea power a few weeks after sailing from Texel. On 24 August 1745 he fell in with two British privateers, the *Thomas* and the *Elizabeth*. During interrogations two sailors succeeded in deserting to the privateers, whose captains refused to return them. The *Lis* sailed on, but on 29 August was compelled to heave to by the 50 gun *Falkland*, a warship out of Liverpool commanded by William Dabris. A boarding party searched the Dutch vessel, broke open one of her money chests and generally acted in a high-handed manner. The chief sailmaker on the *Lis*, an Englishman who had been asked for by the privateers a few days earlier, was pressed on to the *Falkland* before the Dutch East Indiaman was able to resume her voyage to the Cape and the Indies.

French men of war also posed a threat to Dutch merchant shipping. Dirk Quast of the Enkhuizen East Indiaman *Huijs ten Duijne* reported at the Cape in May 1745 that he had been intercepted at night off the Canaries by seven French warships. The French threatened to open fire unless he sent an officer aboard one of their vessels. Quast accordingly despatched his chief mate and the man was detained until dawn, when the French demanded to see the Dutch captain's papers. The mate was returned and the *Huijs ten Duijne* permitted to continue her voyage. These French ships must have been the major part of the squadron under Charles de Tubières de Caylus, taking him to his new appointment as governor general of the Windward Islands. At about the same time the Rotterdam ship *Huijs te Persijn*, outward-bound under Jan Koning, was fired upon by a French vessel soon after leaving the Downs. The *Shellagh* was taken by the French after sailing from Japan in 1748 and the *Huijgewaard* which left Texel in May of that year reported on arrival at the Cape in the following September that soon after sailing she had encountered a French ship under British colours. A fight followed in which the Dutch East Indiaman had much the better of the exchanges in the opinion of her captain, Huibert van der Linde. This incident took place in the last days of hostilities in European waters when an agreed armistice was beginning to take effect.

Dutch ships in the Channel ran an even greater risk of losing men to the British by impressment after the start of the Anglo-French war. Six seamen and four soldiers on Jan de Jong's Zeeland East Indiaman *Westhoven* were pressed into the Royal Navy when the ship put into Portsmouth in September

1745 on her voyage to the east. A similar occurrence marred the early sailing of the Rotterdam vessel the *Bevalligheijd* in January 1748. The ship missed her convoy off the Dutch coast and it was decided to join another at Portsmouth consisting of merchantmen for the East and West Indies sailing down the Channel under the protection of the *Oxford* fourth rate commanded by Edmund Toll. Two men of the *Bevalligheijd*'s crew, Dirk van Lis of Newcastle upon Tyne and Dirk Jansz. of Bristol - British subjects, despite their Dutch names - deserted to the *Oxford* and the skipper of the Dutch ship, Arie van der Meer, sent his chief mate, Eijnaard Vroom, to try to recover them. Toll, however, said that he would only hand over deserters who had come from naval vessels. He asked whether there were any more Britons on the *Bevalligheijd* and followed up the question by sending a search party. With the help of one of the deserters several other sailors and soldiers were pressed and violence was used to overcome their resistance. The names of some suggest a Dutch origin, but among the remainder were the sailors James Fa from the Orkneys and Joseph Philip of Leeds, and the soldiers Joseph Brown from Antrim and Thomas Jackson of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Impressment continued to plague the crews of London East Indiamen, both at home and abroad. Lawrence of the *Elizabeth* lost men at the start of his voyage to the east in 1747 and impressments on to naval convoy ships were not infrequent. Phillips of the *King William* put into Galway Bay on his return voyage in 1745 and was finally escorted to the Nore by Ormond Thomson in the 44 gun *Pool*. Thomson pressed thirteen of the *King William*'s crew, but - exceptionally - gave Phillips fourteen men in return, doubtless less suited to naval life. Hooke's little *Porto Bello* sloop from the Coromandel coast was chased into Milford Haven by a French privateer in April 1747 and before reaching Deptford lost five men by impressment to the *Rose* sixth rate on convoy duty. Hereford of the *Edgbaston* had to sacrifice men for naval duty to Curtis Barnet's squadron in Indian waters and although impressment was illegal in foreign ports, William Preston of the *Basilisk*, a naval bomb-ketch taking part in a voyage yet to be discussed, pressed a man from William Pinnell's *Stretham* East Indiaman at the Cape in May 1748.

The progress of the War of the Austrian Succession was followed at the Cape with more than passing interest, although news brought by visiting ships was not always accurate. The fall of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island to the British in June 1745 was not of immediate importance to the Dutch, nor was the course of events from the Young Pretender's landing in Scotland in August of that year to the failure of the Stuart cause at Culloden in April 1746. Peirce Brett of the *Anson* voyage was wounded in a gallant attempt as commander of the *Lion* to head off the Stuart prince in July 1745. Dutch neutrality was, however, compromised from the beginning of the Anglo-French war by the provision of warships under treaty obligations dating back to 1678 to assist the Royal Navy in home waters and particularly to prevent

a French invasion of Britain. This help, of doubtful value to Britain, supplemented the convoy work of the Dutch navy which included the escorting of East Indiamen home from the Shetlands, a duty as much designed to limit opportunities for private trade as it was to preserve the safety of the ships.

Other events were of closer concern to the Dutch company's Cape outpost. The successes of Dupleix and La Bourdonnais in India, for example, and the surrender of Madras by the London company on 21 September 1746 affected commerce round the Cape. The unsuccessful British attempt to take Lorient in the following month was also of significance to those with mercantile interests in eastern waters, for the loss of the French company's Breton headquarters would doubtless have disrupted the trade of that nation. The French advance in the southern Netherlands and the fall of such towns as Tournai, Ghent and Bruges after Maurice de Saxe's victory over Cumberland at Fontenoy in May 1745 threatened the Dutch frontier. Mutual recriminations concerning the extent of British help and the contribution of the Dutch garrisons of the barrier fortresses did nothing to strengthen Anglo-Dutch ties. A more serious menace to the United Provinces was contained in the French declaration of 13 April 1747. France was determined, without going to war with the Dutch, to separate them from Britain and her allies. Saxe, by this time well established in the southern Netherlands, launched an attack on the Dutch territories south of the Scheldt which soon fell into French hands. Lowendal forced the capitulation of Bergen-op-Zoom and besieged Maastricht, which surrendered in the following year.

Britain, however, helped to save Zeeland from the French and the United Provinces gained a degree of unity in 1747 when the Prince of Orange and Nassau became, as Willem IV, stadtholder of all seven provinces, grand admiral and captain general of the army. In December 1748 he was appointed chief director of the Amsterdam chamber of the East India Company and on 16 April of the following year headed the entire company, a position he also filled with regard to West Indies trade. News of Willem's recognition as national stadtholder was brought to the Cape by Jan Tuinman of the *Brouwer* in November 1747 and was greeted there with enthusiasm. The appointment was essentially a response to external pressure and marked a resurgence of Orangist power under the leadership of Willem Bentinck van Rhoon, as much English as he was Dutch. When the French threat receded after the war, however, the stadtholder proved too conservative to inspire any real unity of purpose or to promote the reforms which many felt were so urgently required. Willem IV died in October 1751 and was succeeded by his infant son Willem V, under the tutelage of the dowager regent Anna, daughter of George II of Great Britain. From that time the pro-British Orangists had to contend with the increasingly Francophil sympathies of the merchant class and urban oligarchs.

During the years 1744 - 1748 the Dutch feared that the French might launch a full-scale onslaught from Europe on the Cape or on shipping in its vicinity, although in the early years of the conflict with Britain this formed no part of French policy. Nevertheless any information, however vague, which might tend to confirm Dutch suspicions was listened to with close attention at the Cape. One who brought such news was the soldier Jacob le Fort of Dieppe who joined the garrison troops in November 1744 from the outward-bound *Huijs te Foreest*. Earlier that year Le Fort had been in French military service at Dunkirk, on guard at the house of Alexandre-Thomas du Bois de Givry, commander of the port. There he overheard a conversation at a dinner party at which the guests included the Young Pretender, Louis-Philippe, duke of Chartres, Joseph-Marie, duke of Boufflers, and Maurice de Saxe. Also present was the captain of a French warship, a Zeelander from Flushing who had served as a mate with the Dutch East India Company, but who had left in protest against alleged unfair treatment. The captain not only discussed the defences of the island of Walcheren, but also those of the Cape. He knew how to capture the southern African settlement and the force required. A direct assault might be difficult, but there were several localities where a landing would be relatively easy and he pointed these out to the others on a map he had brought with him. The conversation must have taken place shortly after the abandonment of French plans to invade England and there is no doubt that Le Fort's account was genuine. Would the French put this theory to the test? It was rumoured that they were then equipping ships specially for an expedition to the East Indies and it was felt that an attack on the Cape might be a first objective.

Information at a higher level reached the Cape too late to be of any significance in a war which was drawing to a close. A squadron under Antoine d'Albert du Chesne left Brest in January 1748 to link up with other vessels for an offensive in the Indian Ocean. Albert's own warship the *Magnanime* was intercepted off Ushant early in February and compelled to surrender to the *Nottingham* and the *Portland* of Hawke's fleet. She was taken to Plymouth and later incorporated into the Royal Navy. Instructions found aboard the *Magnanime* indicated that one aim of the squadron was to capture all Dutch ships found beyond the Cape of Good Hope. The British informed the states general which in turn passed the contents of the French instructions on to the Dutch East India Company for transmission to the Cape settlement and the Indies.

The Anglo-French war at sea did not cause many casualties among East Indiamen of the London company. Of the Cape callers of our period only the *Princess Mary* was lost. She fell into French hands at the capture of Madras after a strenuous resistance offered by her captain Robert Osborne. A few weeks later the ship was wrecked in a cyclone which struck the roadstead. When the storm abated she was merely a waterlogged hulk with only her

bowsprit remaining of her masts and spars, and with her cargo of saltpetre completely submerged. There were other losses to the French. In 1747 the *Princess Amelia* sailed unsuspectingly into the Madras roadstead and was captured, and the *Anson* was taken off Bombay. An echo of hostilities on the Coromandel coast comes from the log of the *Fort St George* in October 1748. It notes tersely: "Cha's Dunn's head shott off by a Cannon Ball". It was not until the early years of the Seven Years' War that a company ship was lost to the French off the southern African coast when the *Grantham* from Madras was brought into Table Bay as a prize by ships of Anne-Antoine d'Aché's squadron when they came to the Cape from the Mascarenes to provision.

The French company in contrast had heavy casualties during the War of the Austrian Succession. Barnet's squadron, divided into two groups, inflicted considerable damage on French shipping before the end of 1744, including the capture of the *Favori* at Achin by Edward Peyton of the *Medway* and John Moore of the little *Dolphin*. The French vessel was later incorporated into the squadron as the *Medway's Prize*. An even greater success attended Barnet on 5 February 1745. Carrying his flag on the 60 gun *Deptford* and accompanied by George, Earl of Northesk in the *Preston* he cruised near the Bangka Strait under Dutch colours with his ships disguised as merchantmen. There they encountered three French return ships from China, the *Dauphin*, commanded by Butler, the *Jason*, under Jacques Magon de la Mettrie, and the *Hercule* of Captain Dufresne de la Villeherbe. There was a sharp engagement with losses on both sides before the French vessels struck. Among the casualties on Butler's *Dauphin* was the merchant Poivre who lost an arm. The prizes were taken to Batavia where they were sold to the Dutch with their costly cargoes of tea, porcelain and other goods at well below their market value.

These three French ships were no strangers to the Cape. Chévery had brought the outward-bound *Hercule* into Table Bay in 1742 on her previous voyage to the east and the *Dauphin* and the *Jason* had called there early in 1744, outward-bound on this unfortunate trading mission to China. The *Hercule* and the *Jason* were rechristened by the Dutch and sailed for Europe in March 1745. The former, renamed the *Toevalligheid*, made no Cape call, but the *Jason*, now the *Oplettendheid* and under the command of Hendrik Bommer, anchored in Simons Bay on 15 June 1745 and remained in port for more than five weeks. The French authorities, not surprisingly, took a serious view of the Dutch action at Batavia and the Dutch East India Company agreed to make reparation. However, failure to adhere to the settlement arranged with the French company led to diplomatic pressure before the matter was finally disposed of.

Among other French losses as a result of British naval activities we may note the destruction of the *Maurepas* in June 1745. She was run ashore and burnt

at Senegal by Captain Sanguinet to prevent her falling into British hands. Two other vessels suffered a similar fate in that year to avoid capture by ships of Barnet's squadron. The *Elisabeth* was set ablaze off Karikal and the *Pondichéry* destroyed at Tranquebar. This second incident in a neutral harbour brought into play the Franco-Danish alliance. The Danes opened fire on the British, but a retaliatory shot killed one of the garrison and injured two others. The crushing defeat suffered by La Jonquière in his engagement with Anson's fleet off Cape Ortegal on 14 May 1747 lost the French company three valuable ships, the *Apollon*, the *Philibert* and the *Thétis*, sailing as part of the main fleet and under the escort of Jacques-François Grout de Saint-Georges of Saint-Malo who was appointed to take them to the Indies. All eighteen French ships which took part in the action were captured. This victory was in marked contrast to the mediocre tactics of Barnet's successors in the Indian Ocean, Edward Peyton and Thomas Griffin, in their contests with La Bourdonnais and Bouvet de Lozier.

The third ship taken by Barnet at the Bangka Strait, the *Dauphin*, came into the hands of Batavia burghers, but was transferred to the Dutch company and renamed the *Straat Banca*. Her brief career as a Dutch ship has a link with Cape visitors of late 1744. On 4 May of that year the London privateers *Fame* and *Winchelsea*, together with a small ship the *Caesar*, sailed from the Thames in search of prizes. The *Fame*, a 54 gun vessel with a complement of 360 men under the command of Philip Comyn, was a captured Spanish ship the *San José* and the largest of close on 100 British privateers at sea in these years. The *Winchelsea*, captained by John Gerard, carried 36 guns and 200 men and the little *Caesar* had 10 guns and a crew of 24 under John Ayres.

Barnet's naval squadron had sailed two weeks earlier, rounding the Cape to Madagascar after taking a Spanish privateer and her prizes in the Cape Verde Islands. It is evident that the British privateers had designs on the French China ships, but Barnet was there before them. Comyn and Gerard took two French vessels in the Atlantic and brought them into Lisbon before continuing their southward voyage. They reached the Cape on 28 November 1744 with the latest news of the war and sailed again on 7 December, six days before the arrival of the *Caesar*. Ayres stayed until Christmas Day, leaving for an undisclosed destination and apparently playing no further part in the enterprise. The larger vessels also sailed without divulging their plans, but they made for Batavia where they fell in with a project conceived by the governor general, Van Imhoff.

The governor general's scheme stemmed directly from the capture by Anson of the Acapulco galleon off the Philippines in 1743 which resulted in the suspension by Spain of silver shipments from the New World. Van Imhoff sought to turn Spanish discomfiture to Dutch advantage by establishing commercial relations with the Spanish empire in the Americas and after the

failure of an official approach to Manila with this end in view, hit upon the idea of opening up trade with the New World without Spanish concurrence. An expedition was therefore assembled and an agreement reached with the captains of the *Fame* and the *Winchelsea* privateers to provide protection for four merchantmen, one of them the *Straat Banca*. Comyn of the *Fame*, who knew the region well, was to take charge of the navigation and the privateer captains were to receive 20% of the profits accruing. The Dutch East India Company kept a low profile in the undertaking, which was made out to be essentially a private venture, as indeed it was in part.

Van Imhoff's plan miscarried. The ships sailed from Batavia on 24 June 1745 and after taking steps to disguise their real purpose from the Manila authorities made their way to Macau on the coast of China to load more goods. They finally set off for the Americas on 14 September, but soon ran into a typhoon. The expedition was abandoned on 20 October and the six vessels limped back to Batavia between November 1745 and February 1746. The *Fame* had been dismayed and structurally damaged in the typhoon and Comyn sold her with her guns and stores at Batavia on 22 March 1746, embarking on the *Winchelsea* which had also suffered in the storm, but which was able to sail for home on 4 September. We catch a glimpse of this abortive expedition from Frémery of the French East Indiaman the *Philibert*, returning from China in 1746 and warned to watch for the privateers. Parker of the London company's *Augusta* had also seen the earliest arrivals at Batavia and was informed that the *Fame* had sighted French ships bound for China off the Ladrões, but had avoided an engagement.

This was not the end of the Dutch governor general's project. Van Imhoff sent out a smaller expedition in 1746 without British help, once again using the *Straat Banca*, but under yet another name, the *Hervattinge*. The Americas were reached on this occasion, but the enterprise was a complete fiasco and served only to embroil the Dutch further with a furious Spanish government. Van Imhoff might, perhaps, have managed to inaugurate a limited clandestine trade with the Americas, but his methods could scarcely have persuaded Spain to formulate a more flexible commercial policy in order to accommodate the Dutch. Certainly, the governor general's decision to enlist the help of British privateer captains in his project when Britain was at war with Spain was unwise. It was not Van Imhoff's only close association with his British friends in the period. Four cadets from the recently established marine academy at Batavia had embarked as volunteers with Barnet and Lord Northesk and were present when the French China ships were taken in the Bangka Strait; two more accompanied the British commanders to the Coromandel coast later in 1745.

The *Winchelsea* privateer, now under the command of John Corner, reached Table Bay on 12 January 1747 after touching at Madagascar. On the same

day Hooke brought the *Porto Bello* sloop in with the disturbing news of the fall of Madras in the previous September. Also in the roadstead were four London East Indiamen: Browne's *Bombay Castle*, destined for Madras, but necessarily diverted, Francis d'Abbadie's *Portfield*, outward-bound for Bombay, Surat and Mokha, the *Pelham*, returning under Lindsay from Bombay, and Hancock's *Norfolk*, on the same voyage as Browne. Lindsay had already heard the bad news about Madras unofficially, as he had called on the Malabar coast on his return voyage. Hooke wasted no time at the Cape and sailed off for England on 26 January with despatches from Governor John Hinde on the Coromandel coast. These he sent overland to London in the charge of his second mate after his unscheduled stop in Milford Haven.

It was at this juncture that two French privateers bound for home were nearing the Cape coast from the Mascarenes. They were the *Apollon*, carrying 50 guns and 550 men under the command of Baudran de la Mettrie, and the *Anglesey*, with 48 guns and a crew of 430, captained by Gervais de la Mabonnays. Despite their insistence on royal status - the ships were in fact ceded by Louis XV for privateering and were later to be given to the French company - they had been fitted out by private interests. The *Apollon* had been equipped by Antoine Walsh of Nantes, who was born in Saint-Malo to an Irish Jacobite ship's captain in the French service, Philip Walsh of Dublin, and his wife Anne Whyte of a Waterford family. The *Anglesey* was a former British naval frigate, surrendered to the *Apollon* on 3 May 1745 by her senior surviving officer Baker Phillips after a fierce fight. This unfortunate lieutenant was repatriated by his captors, sentenced to be shot for dereliction of duty and faced a firing-squad aboard the *Princess Royal* at Spithead on 30 July 1745 with remarkable composure. The celebrated execution of Admiral Byng in the next decade for his failure at Minorca had its precedents. The *Anglesey* was quite the most spectacular of the 43 prizes brought to Port-Louis and Lorient by the French in the war of 1744-1748 and was handed over to Walsh and another merchant of Irish background, Pierre-André O'Heguerty of Paris. O'Heguerty, born in Dinan to the refugee Daniel O'Heguerty from the Londonderry region, had first-hand experience of the Mascarenes where he had served in the administration. Both he and Walsh played an active part in the attempted Stuart restoration in Britain and the latter accompanied the Young Pretender to Scotland where he remained for several weeks.

Hancock of the *Norfolk* made ready to sail on 30 January 1747, but on the same day a report came from Robben Island that a ship with French colours had been sighted. The British commander was all for going out to attack the enemy and Lindsay of the *Pelham* noticed that the *Winchelsea* privateer had "got up yards and Topmasts", and had bent her sails in preparation for a fight. The French vessel - it was the *Apollon* - anchored under Robben Island and sent a landing-party ashore to ask for water and provisions, mentioning

that she had a consort in the vicinity. Help was deferred until instructions had been received from the authorities on the mainland and when the *Pelham* sent a boat to check on the situation, the *Apollon* weighed and stood to sea. Hancock was anxious to know what attitude the governor would take with regard to French visitors and was told by Swellengrebel that since the United Provinces and France were not at war the usual courtesies would be extended to these and all French ships. He added, as Hancock reported it, "that we were not to Molest her (the *Apollon*) on any Conditions whatsoever". Browne of the *Bombay Castle*, commodore of the British company vessels in the roadstead, called a meeting of commanders and counselled caution, sending a party of sailors to the summit of Lion's Head to see whether there were in fact two French ships off the bay.

On 1 February the senior French captain Baudran de la Mettrie addressed letters to the governor asking whether the ships could anchor without fear of Dutch reprisals and pointing out that they only wanted food and water, and had no intention of causing trouble. They later alleged that their food supplies were low because a plague of locusts had destroyed the crops on the Ile de France. They were granted freedom of the port, although the Dutch feared their motives and resolved to keep a close watch on them. The British commanders also suspected an attack and after the *Apollon* and the *Anglesey* had come in on the following day they kept their guns primed at night to guard against surprise. The French captains insisted on their rights as royal ships and were much displeased at a salute of only seven guns in reply to their nine. They sent a deputation to Swellengrebel to demand satisfaction and as Francis d'Abbadie of the *Portfield* comments, the governor "was actually obliged to fire 9 Guns from the Fort to pacify them who Shew'd great warmth on this occasion".

The French were in no haste to leave and did not put to sea until 27 February, by which time they were in a fit condition to patrol the approaches for several weeks and thus to keep the British bottled up in Table Bay. They were there throughout March, flying Dutch or British flags and sometimes interfering with Dutch company ships entering port. The British grew impatient and it was in these circumstances that Nelson, the medical doctor travelling on the *Pelham* with his servant, transferred to the Dutch *Eendragt* for a quicker passage home. The captains of the British company ships requested the Cape authorities to use a local vessel to cruise off the coast in order to warn approaching British shipping of the danger from the enemy. They were prepared to pay for this service and to place a few men on the ship to facilitate communication. The British captains also asked permission to fly Dutch colours in port should the French come in again. They pointed out that Dutch interests were also involved since that nation had a heavy investment in the London company. The flag issue was not considered and the other request was turned down because the two local vessels were urgently needed for the transport of goods to False Bay.

There were still alarms as late as 7 April 1747, when a Dutch ship the *Huijs te Rensburg*, commanded by Ficco Eijbo van Rheede, commodore of the return fleet and a naval man, reported that his ship had been hailed and shadowed by two unidentified vessels showing no colours. However, the possibility of breaking the blockade was suggested on 31 March when Tolson brought the *Somerset* into the roadstead from Bengkulu. The *Portfield* was the first away on 3 April and on the following day the *Bombay Castle* left with the *Winchelsea* privateer. The *Norfolk* sailed on 14 April, a day ahead of the *Pelham* and the *Somerset*. As Lindsay of the *Pelham* was leaving he spied a ship approaching the bay and prudently added French colours to his British ones. The newcomer, however, proved to be the *Swift* despatch snow. Captain Bell of the *Swift* gave Lindsay and Tolson instructions to make straight for St Helena.

The French vessels took no prizes at the Cape, but they seriously delayed the regular trade of the London company and effectively prevented communication with passing ships regarding French action in India. The British East India commanders, their strength reinforced through the presence of a powerful privateer, would seem to have displayed excessive caution and Swellengrebel was surprisingly conciliatory to the French and less than helpful to his allies. The *Apollon* and the *Anglesey* were to pass the Cape again when they came out to help Bouvet de Lozier in his skilful navigation of the Indian Ocean in 1748. The former British naval vessel was laid up at Brest in July 1749 and the *Apollon* at the same port in March 1750.

Almost a year later, on 31 March 1748, Thomas Lake brought the British warship the *Deptford* into Table Bay. She was returning to the scenes of her former glories with Barnet's squadron, from which she had been detached with the *Dolphin* in 1746 to escort six East Indiamen to Britain. The *Deptford* was on this occasion the vanguard of a considerable force which was to bring the Cape into closer contact with the Anglo-French maritime and colonial struggle in the east. She had been sent on ahead from the Cape Verde Islands to announce the imminent arrival of the fleet. The expedition of which the *Deptford* formed a part had its origin in complaints voiced by the London East India Company in May 1747 that the naval forces in the Indian Ocean had not done enough to protect trade and that unless a powerful fleet were sent out with military support the French would gain the upper hand. The company was willing to provide transport and to place its vessels under naval command. The capture of Madras in 1746 and the presence of strong reinforcements sailing with La Jonquière made it clear that the French now attached the greatest importance to winning the war in the Indian Ocean. The British government therefore acquiesced in the plan and began to prepare an expeditionary force. The Dutch were invited to co-operate and after some initial reluctance offered some of their outward-bound East Indiamen and a military contingent to support any attack made on the Mascarenes and were

willing to provide soldiers to fight alongside the British on the Coromandel coast.

The choice of a supreme commander occasioned some debate. Admiral Sir Peter Warren had his supporters, but Anson and Vere Beauclerk of the admiralty were not in favour. The man at length selected and promoted to real admiral was Edward Boscawen of Cornish stock, destined to make his mark in the first years of the Seven Years' War. Boscawen, wounded in the shoulder in the battle with La Jonquière and known affectionately as "Wrynecked Dick" or "Old Dreadnought", was a firm disciplinarian, but with a kindly concern for the welfare of the men under his command. His appointment as commander-in-chief by land and by sea was unusual for a naval officer; he was, moreover, junior to Griffin, still active in the eastern theatre. His instructions, drafted by the London East India Company, were to take if possible the Ile de France and to do as much injury as he could to French interests in the Mascarenes generally, on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, and in Bengal. Horace Walpole, who loved gossip, suggested that Anson had secured Boscawen's appointment in order to blight a rival's career, since Boscawen had stolen the limelight in the victory over La Jonquière. Walpole, however, did not like Anson and was not above retailing rumours of the famous circumnavigator's alleged sexual inadequacy. What is certain, however, is that Boscawen sailed from Portsmouth on 15 November 1747 under a considerable handicap. The departure of the expedition was long delayed, the French were well aware of its objectives and no up to the minute intelligence awaited Boscawen at the Cape concerning the strength of French defences to the east. The admiral was compelled to pay out good English gold in order to glean what he could in that regard from those at the Dutch settlement and later on the Coromandel coast with information to sell.

Boscawen raised his flag on his old command, the 74 gun *Namur*, now captained by Samuel Marshall. He had with him, in addition to the *Deptford*, four other ships of the line. The largest was the 64 gun *Vigilant*, under the command of William Lisle, accompanied by another 60 gun ship the *Pembroke*, commanded by Thomas Fincher. There were also two 50 gun fourth rates, Joseph Knight's *Ruby* and the *Chester*, under the captaincy of a future rear admiral from Cornwall, Richard Spry. To these were added three smaller warships: John Lloyd's *Deal Castle* sixth rate, Preston's bomb-ketch the *Basilisk* and the *Swallow* sloop, commanded by John Rowzier. Artillery was brought by the *Young Eagle*, captained by James Quallet, and provisions on the *Porto Bello* sloop under William Ireson and a small snow the *St Francis*, hired for the purpose when Boscawen reached Madeira and manned by fifteen sailors under the command of David Wilkinson. A hospital-ship the *Apollo*, armed with twenty guns and captained by Robert Wilson, completed the naval contingent, the largest of its kind to date to be sent into eastern waters. It is a measure of Boscawen's concern that he issued

instructions before sailing that a recently invented air purification machine be fitted in the hospital-ship for the comfort of the sick and injured.

There were fourteen London company East Indiamen with the expedition. The ships we have encountered before in these pages and all the commanders save Edmund Cooke of the *Admiral Vernon*. One of the London vessels, the *Hardwicke*, sailed ahead of the main fleet from the Cape with letters, despatches and supplies for Griffin's squadron in India before continuing her voyage to China. The company ships transported a specially raised Irish and Scottish military contingent of about 1 000 soldiers in twelve companies, together with their baggage and equipment. There were also some 800 marines on the expedition and an artillery detachment. The troops were not all of the highest calibre and included rebels, deserters and even highwaymen whose sentences had been remitted for volunteering to serve in the east.

Boscawen's flagship was sighted off the entrance to Table Bay on 7 April 1748 and within a few days all but one of the naval vessels had anchored in the roadstead and nine of the East Indiamen: the *Admiral Vernon*, the *Chesterfield*, the *Delawar*, the *Elizabeth*, the *Hardwicke*, the *Rhoda*, the *Royal Duke*, the *Royal George* and the *Stretham*. The remaining company ships, the *Durrington*, the *Edgbaston*, the *Edgecote*, the *Fort St George* and the *Lincoln*, did not arrive until 26 April and the little naval sloop the *Swallow* only put in an appearance on 17 May, when she was helped to an anchorage by boats from other ships in the fleet and given every assistance to prepare for an early departure. The *Swallow* had been delayed on the Portuguese coast when the *Vigilant* required attention and had sprung her mainmast. She had put into Lisbon where a new mast was fitted, but further trouble of the same kind necessitated a call at Gibraltar. The *Swallow* had also visited Madeira before sailing for the Cape.

Boscawen commanded a formidable armada and it is small wonder that Swellengrebel and the commissioner Nolthenius took a hard look at the garrison and the defences, even though this was a friendly fleet. The enormous fire-power of the British ships cannot have passed unnoticed. The naval vessels alone carried well over 400 guns between them and the armament of the fourteen East Indiamen ranged from the 40 guns on the *Royal Duke* to the 26 carried by the *Delawar*. In manpower there were more than 6 000 soldiers and sailors aboard the visiting ships and over 5 000 on those which arrived in the first wave in early April 1748. The *Namur* alone had a complement of 715 and the other ships of the line carried between 350 and 480 men. The Cape garrison then numbered about 1 300, by no means all of them fit or trained to fight. Those on the British ships considerably outnumbered the entire population of Table Valley and at its maximum exceeded that of the adult male population of the whole settlement, Khoisan alone excluded. This includes the slaves, of doubtful loyalty. It is true that there were fifteen

homeward-bound Dutch East Indiamen in the roadstead when Boscawen himself arrived, and three others sailing to Batavia, but what if the visitors had been a hostile force and the roadstead almost empty of friendly shipping?

The Cape was the assembly point for the projected Anglo-Dutch assault on the Mascarenes and the final choice of Dutch ships and of troops to embark on them was made there. The Dutch ships all reached the Cape from the United Provinces between 31 March and 25 April 1748, some with a considerable number of deaths on the outward passage. One of those chosen, Arie van der Meer's *Bevalligheijd* of Rotterdam, had sailed for some time in company with the *Hardwicke*, whose captain, Samson, noted the high incidence of sickness aboard her. The *Bevalligheijd* was the ship which suffered the depredations of the press-gang off Portsmouth. Accompanying her on the Boscawen expedition were the *Vosmaar* of the Zeeland chamber, commanded by Willem van der Heijden, and four ships from Amsterdam: the *Eijndhoef*, under the command of Jan Otto, the *Slooten*, whose captain, Berting, we have met on his return voyage, the *Sloterdijk* of David van Elteren and the *Tolsduijn*, commanded by Bastiaan Verdoes. Jochem Beck's *Fortuijn* was to have been one of the six, but the troops she brought were divided up among the others and she sailed direct to Batavia early in May with despatches from Swellengrebel and Boscawen.

The selection of men to form the Dutch military contingent of 600 involved some juggling with the forces available. A number of those who had come out from the United Provinces for the purpose were unfit and exchanges were made between the ships and the Cape garrison. The Cape also provided a contingent of its own. These 50 men under the captaincy of Jan Coenraad Warneke represent South Africa's first military contribution to a war overseas. Supreme command of the Dutch land and sea forces was vested in the local army chief Meinertzhagen, with Bacheracht as the civil administrator.

Swellengrebel was instructed to give Boscawen every assistance, including the provision of food and water, equipment for the ships and the free use of slaves, draught oxen and horses should the admiral require them. Facilities for nursing the sick were provided to supplement the accommodation on the *Apollo* and the troops and marines, divided into three battalions, were taken ashore to camp and to perform military drill twice daily on the slopes behind the company's garden. The Dutch soldiers were also exercised at a separate encampment near the Castle. Although no French ships were captured in Cape waters, the British were authorized to take prizes and to bring prisoners to the settlement. A strong south-easter delayed disembarkation, but when Boscawen went ashore on 10 April, accompanied by many of the captains of the naval fleet, he was saluted with fifteen guns from the Castle and, as Samson of the *Hardwicke* recounts, "Honoured with the Governour's Coach and six horses which had waited for him some time". The admiral lodged with

Swellengrebel and met all the prominent local officials and the visiting commissioner Nolthenius.

Table Bay had never before seen so many ships at anchor and with an overcrowded roadstead and the possibility of worsening weather at that season, the departure of the Dutch return fleet was hastened. It left for home on 24 April, a day before the arrival of the secret sailing orders which had to be rushed out to the departing ships while there was still time to reach them. Meanwhile provisioning, watering and cleaning ship were carried out as expeditiously as possible on the vessels bound for the east with Boscawen. Live sheep were bought for slaughter and salting, and the provisions and livestock embarked included such unusual items as ducks and a she-goat and her kid. The warship *Deal Castle* took aboard more than the equivalent of 15 000 litres of wine. For the farmers and retailers of the settlement it was a most profitable period. The great demand for bread persuaded the farmers to hold out for higher grain prices and the government had to intervene to prevent profiteering. Some even sought to steal an advantage by working on the Sabbath, but this was frowned upon. Crews on the naval vessels had money to burn. Early in May the agent victualler came aboard each ship with the "short allowance money", amounting to 19 shillings (R1,80) for every man. It was, however, generally a time of hard work, enlivened by the celebrations to mark Cumberland's birthday.

John Grant, an army lieutenant who came out on the *Royal Duke* with one of the Scottish companies, has left us his first impressions of the Cape. He took a favourable view of the garrison and the defences, but he was chiefly impressed by local productivity. "This is a very fruitfull place", he wrote in his diary, and went on to note the abundance of fruits and wine, bestowing particular praise upon the "Sweet Lusscious wine" made at Constantia. He preferred the red wines of the Cape to the whites and also found the local fish of special interest, many of which were new to him. "The Dolphine", he added - and marine biology was obviously not his strong point - was "the most beautifull". The settlement had much to commend it. "In short", Grant concluded, "a man can have every thing at the Cape of Good hope that he can have in England and a great many things much Cheaper, I mean eatable(s) and Drink".

There was much sickness and several deaths occurred, including that of the midshipman Robert Graves of the *Chester*. The surgeon of the *Basilisk* died on the hospital-ship and on 28 April the log of the bomb-ketch records: "Sold ye Dead Mans Cloaths at Auction to ye Vessels Company". Visits to the most notorious brothel ashore, the slave lodge, did nothing to improve the health of seamen and soldiers, and Boscawen belatedly took steps to solve the problem. On 1 May Lake of the *Deptford* "read an order from the Admiral, prohibiting any of the People belonging to the Fleet of going to the Companys Slave House".

Death and sickness necessitated transfers from ship to ship; men were also moved for disciplinary reasons. A surgeon's mate of the *Namur* was promoted surgeon of the *Basilisk*, Boscawen ordered the transfer of the *Lincoln's* chief mate, Anthony Hammond, to the *Vigilant* and Benjamin Brewford, quartermaster on the *Rhoda*, was put aboard the flagship. John Davis, a seaman on the *Delawar*, was moved to the *Deptford* "for many Misbehaviours" and the warship provided the East Indiaman with a replacement, Hance Doran.

There were also desertions and attempted desertions. A sailor on the *Chesterfield*, Patrick Ashmore, left the ship's boat when it went ashore and made his way to the British army camp where he enlisted in one of the military companies. Three soldiers, two British and one in the Dutch service, faced firing-squads for desertion. The soldier in Dutch employ who was executed, Jacob Burrij of Zürich, was one of three who were recaptured. They were forced to draw lots to see which one should incur the supreme penalty for the sins of them all. Johann Winter of Wesel and Pieter Vleeshouwer from Warneton in the southern Netherlands were spared by the draw. The British used a similar method. Five deserters were caught by local people and of these one received 500 lashes and the other four were sentenced to be shot. They too drew lots to select two for the firing-squad. The lucky ones were pardoned and a general amnesty was declared to encourage other deserters to return to camp.

The articles of war had to be read on naval vessels before punishments were meted out and Lake of the *Deptford* seems to have had a particularly undisciplined crew aboard. On 23 April William Jenkins and Joseph Roberts were punished for drunkenness and for overstaying shore leave and six days later Charles Benstead was sentenced to run the gauntlet for theft and inciting a riot on shore. On 15 May a marine, Thomas Bradbury, incurred Lake's wrath by becoming so drunk that he lost his coat at the military camp. Over-indulgence in liquor was the least of the sins of the *Deptford's* bos'n John Storey. He was first confined for abusing the third lieutenant in his cups, but after making a sufficient apology was set at liberty. Two weeks later he was in more serious trouble for attempting sodomy with a boy, Alexander Mills, and for conspiring to desert in a ship's boat with the seaman John Barker. A court-martial was held aboard the *Vigilant* and Storey and Barker were found guilty. The bos'n was demoted, denied any future advancement and transferred to another ship "to serve before the mast". Barker was sentenced to twenty lashes "alongside of each of his Majts (Majesty's) Vessels now lying in Table Bay". The court-martial also tried the junior surgeon's mate of the *Apollo* for an unspecified misdemeanour.

The Boscawen expedition brought one man back to the service of the Dutch East India Company. The *Vigilant*, like the *Swallow* sloop, had called at

Lisbon on the outward voyage and there a former company employee Demetrius Dominicus Kephala, evidently of eastern Mediterranean origin, was taken aboard by Captain Lisle. Kephala was landed at the Cape to be sent on to Batavia.

Boscawen gave a farewell dinner to the governor and chief officials at the Cape aboard the *Namur* on 11 May and eight days later the armada put out to sea. The Dutch company had attempted to enforce secrecy by placing an embargo on suspect shipping leaving the Cape for the east while Boscawen's fleet was at anchor there. There was, however, only one other foreign ship in the roadstead during this period, Sommer's *Kjøbenhavn*, bound for Tranquebar in the service of the Danish Asiatic Company. She reached the Cape on 5 May and sailed after the departure of the Anglo-Dutch armada. Boscawen had a tedious passage to the Ile de France, parting company with three of his Dutch auxiliaries and the *Porto Bello* sloop before he made landfall on 4 July 1748. A coastal reconnaissance was undertaken by engineers, but lack of information on the strength of the French garrison, a strong wind and determined fire from coastal batteries decided the admiral against attempting a landing and after four days he sailed off for his next objective, the Coromandel coast, leaving the Dutch East Indiamen, by that time four in number, to continue on their way to Batavia.

The campaign by sea and land in India, again with Dutch assistance, was equally inconclusive. Boscawen reached Ford St David early in August where he joined forces with Griffin's squadron, leaving his predecessor to return to Britain to account there for his conduct of the war. Boscawen proceeded to attack Pondicherry, but was thwarted by a spirited defence. In the course of the land operations Stringer Lawrence was captured by the French who in turn lost an outstanding military leader Louis Paradis, killed in action. The monsoon was at hand, sickness was rife and no progress was being made. A council of war was therefore held and on 11 October the siege of the French colony was lifted.

Although Boscawen did not receive the news until November, an armistice had been arranged in the War of the Austrian Succession with effect from the previous May as a preliminary to the signing of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle of 18 October 1748. The treaty, which generally restored the *status quo*, including the retrocession of Madras to Britain and of Louisbourg to France, solved nothing and merely provided a breathing-space before the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1756. William Brett of the *Tartar* sixth rate brought news of the armistice out to the British in India, calling at the Cape on 27 September 1748, where advance information had already been received from Van der Linde of the *Huijgewaard* and Willem van Westrenen of the *Lekkerland*, both outward-bound for the Amsterdam chamber. News of the definitive peace treaty came with the arrival on 14 January 1749 of two

French ships bound for China and carrying acceptable passes signed by the Prince of Orange. These vessels, Jolif du Colombier's *Montaran* and the *Duc de Béthune* under the command of Jean-Jacques de la Chaise, had sailed from Port-Louis five days after peace had been signed. They were the first French company callers at the Cape for almost five years. Official notification of the peace was brought by Ficco Eijbo van Rheede of the *Oud Carspel*, an Amsterdam East Indiaman which had sailed early in November 1748 and after a call at the Downs later that month reached the Cape on 1 March 1749. The end of hostilities led to a welcome relaxation in the defence regulations in force at the settlement.

Slowly the warriors returned. Meinertzhagen and his officers were back in the colony in 1749, the commander to face such unrest among the garrison over conditions of service that he wished he were in Batavia over again. In April of that year Griffin arrived from Ceylon on his flagship the *Princess Mary*, a 60 gun warship commanded by William Holmes. With him were Hyde Parker on the *Lively*, Lord Thomas Bertie on the *Winchester*, William Boys commanding the *Pearl* and Nicholas Vincent of the *Medway's Prize*. Boys was carrying Peyton, whom Griffin had suspended, back to England as a prisoner and Vincent was to see the Cape under less happy circumstances in the next decade when he was landed there from the *Grantham* after her capture by the French in the Seven Years' War. It is interesting to note that both the *Pearl* and the *Medway's Prize* had made up their crews with Lascar and Portuguese seamen in India.

Griffin stayed with Swellengrebel until the end of the month and on Sunday, 20 April permission was granted for Anglican divine worship in the Dutch Reformed church after the close of the usual morning service. The chaplain of the *Princess Mary* officiated. The company's hospital was in demand as there was much fever and many cases of scurvy among the crews, and several deaths had occurred. Griffin had intended to lodge the sick with burghers, but found their demands for payment excessive. He therefore left it to his secretary John Harman to make alternative arrangements. Some of the fever cases were doubtless attributable to contaminated water. The contents of the casks aboard the *Winchester* were found to be alive with vermin. Holmes of the flagship was evidently a stern disciplinarian as the repeated log entries of floggings for drunkenness and neglect of duty indicate. Bertie of the *Winchester*, who died later on the voyage home, no doubt earned the gratitude of his ship's company by paying out prize money at the Cape for two paddy boats captured off Madras on 17 August 1747. Aboard his ship was a Londoner William Stuart who joined the Cape garrison staff as a soldier before becoming a burgher at Stellenbosch in October 1753, when he planned to follow his trade as a tinsmith. Stuart died perhaps in the smallpox epidemic of 1755.

Griffin's squadron sailed on 2 May after a visit from senior officials to the flagship. The admiral was to be censured by a court-martial for his poor performance in Indian waters and his prisoner Peyton died later that year before any enquiry into his conduct could be made.

Boscawen was asked to remain on the Coromandel coast after news of the armistice had been received and his presence did much initially to keep the peace in the uneasy atmosphere of Anglo-French involvement in Indian affairs. Moreover it was not until August 1749 that Madras was formally handed back to the London company. It was to remain a subordinate station to Fort St David until 1752. Boscawen was in charge of the administration of Madras until his departure for home in October 1749. His fleet, however, suffered a major disaster in a cyclone off Fort St David in April of that year. Boscawen's flagship the *Namur* foundered with great loss of life while the admiral and his captain were on shore. Another survivor was the ship's chaplain, Robert Palk of Devonshire, who became governor of Madras in 1763. The *Apollo* hospital-ship and the *St Francis* snow were also casualties and the *Pembroke* was driven ashore where she broke up, losing Captain Fincher and most of the crew.

On 7 May 1749 the Yorkshireman Hugh Palliser, future admiral and governor of Newfoundland, brought the *Sheerness* sixth rate into Table Bay from Portsmouth on his way to the Coromandel coast with despatches for Boscawen. An experiment in dietary reform was made on the voyage. Palliser's crew prevailed on him to limit the amount of salt meat issued as an anti-scorbutic measure. The fact that sickness was minimal and that only one man died, clearly as a result of treatment for a venereal infection, suggested quite wrongly that here was a cure for scurvy. Boscawen, who swore by orange marmalade as an anti-scorbutic, was on the right track. The *Sheerness* returned to the Cape from Fort St David on 17 December 1749, sailing for home where she was to be laid up. Her log on the approach run shows imagination. The mountain top behind Mossel Bay resembled "a bump (*sic*) on a Camils back" and Hangklip had the appearance of a gun quoin.

Palliser's ship was still in the Cape roadstead when Boscawen arrived on 7 January 1750 with his flag on the *Exeter* fourth rate commanded by Harry Powlett, later Duke of Bolton, who was to be involved in charges and counter-charges over Griffin's conduct in the Indian Ocean. Powlett, parliamentarian, vice admiral and governor of the Isle of Wight, came to be known as "Captain Sternpost", an unflattering nickname gained for his failure to rejoin Hawke's squadron in 1755 when in command of the *Barfleur* on the excuse that damage to that member inhibited the sailing qualities of his ship.

Boscawen's squadron, with some command changes since the units had first served in the east, straggled in between 7 and 16 January, carrying with it

men of the military contingent the admiral had brought out with him. Entering Table Bay with the *Exeter* were the *Harwich*, now commanded by Richard Tiddeman, who drowned at Manila in 1762, the *Basilisk* bomb-ketch under the command of Andrew Cockburn and the 40 gun *Eltham*, to which Lloyd had been promoted.

Tiddeman had some difficulty in anchoring and fired distress signals as his ship drifted towards the shore. He was, however, able to avert the danger. Lake of the *Deptford* also arrived with the first ships, but could not enter the bay immediately. On 10 January Spry sailed in with the *Chester*, accompanied by Quallet of the *Young Eagle* and Timothy Nucella of the 60 gun *York*. Preston, now in command of the *Deal Castle*, did not reach the roadstead until 16 January. Sickness and death again marked the arrival of the squadron and there were also further changes in command. Nucella, who had been wounded in the head in a duel fought in the east in which he had killed his marine officer opponent, had to resign his command at the Cape to Cockburn of the *Basilisk*. He was not fit enough to continue his homeward voyage until early May, when he embarked on Fowler's London company ship the *Duke of Newcastle*. James Gilchrist took over from Cockburn on the bomb-ketch. The two London East Indiamen in port with the British squadron, the *Chesterfield* and the *Durrington*, were also in bad shape. The former, with few men able to stand, had to be assisted to an anchorage by the naval vessels and the *Sheerness* helped to make up her crew.

Grant, the Scottish lieutenant in the Boscawen expedition, evidently disappointed in his hopes of wealth from his visit to India, was again at the Cape in the *Eltham* of the returning naval force. This gave him the opportunity of adding to his first impressions. He found the local population very sociable by nature and was impressed by the fluency in English of many of them. His comments on the indigenous peoples, described by him as "Hontentotes", are of a kind with earlier descriptions. They wore animal skins, he states, "the Gutts of which they wrapt round them, and when dry eat by way (of) provisions". One among them was "of monstrous Size, about seven foot nine Inches (2,36m.) high and thick in proportion". This would seem to have been pure invention, but Grant adds that "If I had this monstrous Hontentote in England I would soon make (up for) the India misfortunes by make(e)ing a fortune of him".

The *Sheerness* left with the *Durrington* on 28 January and the main naval force sailed a week later, leaving the *Chesterfield* to follow before the end of February. These were the British vessels which helped in the repatriation of the survivors of the wrecked French company ship the *Centaure*. Soon after sailing Boscawen told Tiddeman of the *Harwich* to make for Ascension Island from St Helena where he might expect to meet the *Sheerness*, collecting turtles. Lloyd of the *Eltham* carried despatches to Lisbon and from

there undertook convoy duty to protect merchantmen from a threatened attack by Barbary pirates. The *Harwich* had insufficient medical supplies at the Cape for the long voyage home and her store of them had to be replenished. The ship carried a nurse, Hannah Giles, who had been signed on in India in October 1749 and was discharged at Portsmouth. The *York* had been fortunate to escape serious damage when lying in Table Bay. A fire took hold in one of the beams of the fo'c'sle deck, but was luckily soon extinguished. Boscawen retained a link with the Dutch settlement. A flock of Cape sheep grazed on his Surrey acres and Constantia wine was stored in his cellars.

It was not until the end of December 1751 that more British warships appeared at the Cape. These were the four vessels of William Lisle's squadron returning from Bombay where they had been engaged in operations against Maratha pirates off the coast. The first ship to enter Table Bay, Knight's *Ruby*, anchored on Christmas Day. She and her consorts had visited Madagascar before sailing to the Cape and soon after leaving the island towards the end of November the *Ruby* had been dismasted in a storm. Lisle arrived in the *Vigilant* on the following day, but it was not until 28 January 1752 that Brett of the *Tartar* and William Mantell of the little *Syren* joined the larger vessels. Lisle was escorted to the town house of the new governor, Tulbagh, but he was in poor health and was taken to the hot springs in Hottentots Holland (Caledon) to recuperate. His condition deteriorated, however, and he died on the night of 1 February 1752 at the farm of the widow Catharina Pasman. Lisle's body was brought back to Jan de Wit's house in the settlement and on 5 February he was buried with full honours in the Dutch Reformed church, the chief surgeon of the *Vigilant* reading the Anglican burial service. The mourners included the governor and members of the councils of policy and of justice, the officers of the naval ships and the victualling agent Alexander Macpherson, and Gabriël Keijser of the outward-bound *Bevalligheijd*, the Dutch commodore, who carried Lisle's escutcheon. Guns fired from the ships and from the shore, and flags hung at half-mast.

William Lisle was not the only fatality on the British ships and the sick were so numerous that a tented hospital had to be erected on the shore. One death at least was the result of an accident. Valentine Hardgrove of the *Tartar* fell from the fo'c'sle and was drowned in the bay. On the afternoon of 26 February the squadron weighed and stood for the open sea, the *Vigilant* under her new captain John Rowzier, formerly of the *Swallow* sloop. There were no salutes, doubtless an echo of Boscawen's recent instruction to ignore them at Dutch ports.

The war was over, the warships were returning, but the seeds of another conflict had already been sown. The old easy-going relationships among

foreigners in the Far East were harder now to establish and the fighting at Canton between French and British sailors in 1754 was more than a trivial quarrel over rights to recreational zones, but also a reflection of Anglo-French hostility at national level. The comments of commanders of London East Indiamen at the Cape reveal a growing uneasiness at this period. William Wilson of the *Suffolk*, writing home from the colony in March 1753 on a voyage to China, noted that there were five French vessels in Table Bay. They were "all outwd bound and full of Soldiers, artificers and women (and) they say they have 22 Ships out this year the least carry 150 Passengers; they say likewise there is six Ships of war com(e)ing Out some of which Carry 70 Guns. The Dutch are apprehensive they intend to make a settlement at Celone (Ceylon)". Here was a build-up of forces in the Mascarenes and India, using the China ships the *Auguste*, commanded by Jean Christy de la Pallière of Saint-Malo, and Sanguinet's *Puisieulx*, together with those bound for the Indies: the *Maurepas* of Buisson de la Vigne, the *Silhouette*, commanded by Deschiens de Raucourt, and the *Duc de Parme*, under Ladvoat de la Crochais of Dinan.

Purling of the *Sandwich* found three French ships in Table Bay when he returned from Bombay early in 1755: Tripier de Barmont's *Gange*, bound for Pondicherry and Bengal, the *Duc de Penthièvre*, sailing to the former port under Estoupan de Villeneuve, and the China ship the *Duc de Chartres*, commanded by Gaultier de la Palissade. The first two were carrying a large number of military recruits to the Coromandel coast, although Purling was told by French officers that all was peaceful in Europe "and that great hopes were entertain'd that Affairs between the two Company's in the East Indies, wou'd be very shortly Amicably accommodated". The British commander had come into the roadstead with Haldane of the *Prince Edward* not only to provision ship, but also to find out what the political situation then was. The French reply does not seem to have reassured him for when he sailed on 22 February he noticed that two of the French vessels were following him out of the bay. He therefore "turn'd all hands to and made a Clean ship, not knowing what their designs might be".

Purling's apprehension was not ill-founded. Britain too was building up her forces and in 1754 the 39th Foot was transferred from Ireland to Madras, the first regular army unit from the United Kingdom to serve in India. In June 1755 Boscawen opened the naval war with an action off Newfoundland. This hostile act in time of peace was a prelude to Britain's declaration of war on France on 17 May 1756. With this the real struggle for mastery in North America, in the Indies and on the high seas began in earnest. The Seven Years' War was to be a British triumph.

Conclusion

1755 was in many ways a watershed in the history of European expansion round the Cape to the Far East. It saw new developments in monopoly trade, and the inauguration of a period of a considerably increased volume of shipping in South African waters. The Asian world too was on the threshold of a war which would change the relative strengths of the major trading nations.

Of these the Danes remained much the least significant, despite the marked increase in the number of ships from the Sound which continued to find the Cape of Good Hope a convenient intermediate port of call. In the latter years of the 18th century Denmark shared in the great upsurge in the tonnage of foreign shipping at the Cape. In 1783 alone there were 26 Danish callers, more than in the entire period of Swellengrebel's governorship from 1739 to 1751. An even clearer perspective may be gained by comparing figures over longer periods. There were, for example, more Danish ships at the Cape in the years 1781-1789 than in the entire first three-quarters of the 18th century.

The expansion of the holdings of the Danish Asiatic Company on the eve of the outbreak of the Seven Years' War was maintained in the next two decades. In 1763 a factory was established at Balasore in Orissa and nine years later another was obtained at Patna in Bihar. Danish establishments in India became increasingly expensive to administer, however, and the Asiatic Company came to rely for its profits on the returns from the lucrative China trade. Canton became the destination of the majority of ships despatched from Copenhagen and in 1772 the company relinquished its monopoly of Indian commerce, turning its colonies over a few years later

to royal control. The Asiatic Company enjoyed handsome profits while Denmark remained neutral in international conflicts, but the Anglo-Danish war of 1807-1814 saw a rapid deterioration in the company's position from which it never recovered. Tranquebar and Serampore, first occupied by Britain in the brief conflict of 1801, were again in British hands from 1808 until they were evacuated in 1815. The Asiatic Company was wound up in the following decade, years which were also marked by the approaching end of Danish colonial rule in the Indies. By 1824 the Danes had withdrawn from the Malabar coast, in 1827 Patna was disposed of and in 1845 Tranquebar, Serampore and Balasore were sold to the London company. The colonists were evacuated from the Nicobar Islands in 1848 and twenty years later that Indian Ocean island group came under British control.

As with the Danes, the increase in French shipping at the Cape in the later years of the 18th century was not paralleled by any upsurge in French fortunes in the Indies. The advent of free trade had something to do with this rise in shipping figures; more important were the naval and military considerations which sprang from changed political alignments. Increasingly cordial relations with the Dutch led to a formal alliance in March 1781 during Britain's war with her North American colonies. This brought a French squadron under Suffren de Saint-Tropez to the Cape to defend Dutch interests and during the three years in which France garrisoned the settlement, there were in fact more French vessels at anchor than visiting Dutch ships. The 55 French vessels at the Cape in 1782 approached the full total of French callers there in the years we have discussed in previous chapters. The increase had begun at an earlier date. From 1772 to 1792 there were never fewer than twenty French visitors in port annually and from 1781 until 1790 they were the most numerous of the foreign callers in each year.

Britain's success in the Seven Years' War permanently shattered French dreams of empire in the Indian sub-continent and contributed to the eclipse of the Company of the Indies. Between 1766 and 1770 the French colonies were handed over to royal administration, the company's monopoly was abolished in August 1769 and liquidation proceedings were begun in the following year. A new company was, however, founded by the minister Calonne in 1785, but without control of the colonial dependencies. The French Revolution brought it to a speedy end. Its monopoly was abolished in 1790 and it was suppressed by decree in October 1793. The liquidation of both companies was not completed until 1875. The drain on resources caused by the French effort in the Seven Years' War was not the only reason for the failure of the older company. Maladministration and the expenses of government played a part; so too did the relative neglect of the China trade and the pressures against monopoly rights.

Although the French took Fort St David and invested Madras in the Seven Years' War their own territorial losses were considerable, including the

capture of the major centres, Chandernagore and Pondicherry. The settlements in India were restored at the end of the conflict in 1763, but French political power was greatly reduced. British supremacy was so firmly established that the French possessions of the sub-continent were easily overrun by Britain in the war of 1778-1783 and again in those which followed the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon I. On each occasion they were returned to their former rulers when hostilities ceased. French colonies on the sea routes also fell to the British. The Seychelles were first successfully attacked in 1794 and were finally taken over when the French island bases in the Mascarenes fell in 1810. Of all these, only Réunion - the former Bourbon - was handed back to France, although the French tradition survives in the others.

Later French expansion east of the Cape of Good Hope from Madagascar to Indo-China forms part of the general European drive for empire in the 19th century and with the passing of the age of imperialism little remains to France of the colonial past. Of the settlements of the Company of the Indies Réunion alone provides a link with our period; the surviving French territories of the Indian sub-continent - Pondicherry, Chandernagore, Karikal, Yanam and Mahé - were ceded to an independent India in 1952 and 1954.

The minor companies of Sweden, Prussia and Austria which traded round the Cape in the later 18th century made no lasting impact on the Asian scene and the last vestiges of Portugal's eastern empire of old, Macau apart, were engulfed by the rising tide of nationalism after World War II. The legacy of the great Dutch commercial monopoly to the Kingdom of the Netherlands has also passed from the political map. The Dutch East India Company endured in its federal and oligarchical form until the era of the Batavian Republic, although its profits had long been declining. It was nationalized by decree in December 1795, dragging out a tenuous existence under a new constitutional dispensation into the first years of the 19th century.

No serious inroads were made into the vast territorial holdings of the Dutch before 1795, although political power was lost in Bengal during the Seven Years' War and Nagappattinam on the Coromandel coast fell to Britain during Dutch involvement in the War of American Independence. The association of the Netherlands with France in the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, however, occasioned disastrous losses. Both Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope were taken by Britain in 1795, the former to remain in British hands and the latter to revert to Dutch rule from February 1803 until January 1806, when the British returned permanently. Nor did the Indonesian empire remain inviolate. There were British gains in the Moluccas, in Malaysia and elsewhere, culminating in the surrender of Batavia in 1811 and the occupation of Java.

Dutch hegemony in Indonesia was restored in 1814 and was made more compact by the treaty with Britain of 1824 which provided for the cession to

the Netherlands of the old trading post of Bengkulu on Sumatra in exchange for the firm establishment of British power in Malaysia, including Singapore. The Dutch East Indies survived Japanese occupation in World War II but succumbed to the new spirit of nationalism aroused during the years of global conflict. Sovereignty was transferred to the Republic of Indonesia in 1949 and the last Dutch possession in the region, the western portion of the island of New Guinea, was incorporated into the new state in 1963, after a brief period of administration under United Nations auspices. The old empire of the Dutch East India Company has disappeared, but nowhere is the heritage stronger than in the present Republic of South Africa, embracing the former Dutch settlement of the Cape of Good Hope.

Britain's imperial tradition survives only in the Commonwealth link and in the cultural and linguistic imprint left by those who forged the chain of empire. Of the settlements of the East India Company in the middle years of the 18th century only St Helena remains as a colonial appendage. It was Britain, however, which emerged as the most powerful force in the east during the 19th century. Already by 1763 the London company had become much more than a trading corporation and was actively involved in the extension of political control. Its independence in this field was first curbed by the Regulating Act of 1773 which introduced a measure of government supervision from Britain and also raised the status of the governor of Bengal to that of governor general of India, to whom the governors of Madras and Bombay were subordinate. By the India Act of 1784 the company's powers were further restricted and a department in London was created to handle Indian affairs. The governor generalship became a ministerial appointment with enhanced prestige. After 1793 the East India Company no longer had a complete monopoly of Indian trade and in 1813 commerce with the region was thrown open altogether. The China tea trade remained a company monopoly until 1834, in which year the charter was renewed on the undertaking that the East India Company would withdraw entirely from commerce and concentrate its energies on administration. At the same time St Helena became a crown colony.

There followed a period of aggressive imperialism, in part dictated by fear of Russian command of the land approaches to the sub-continent. In addition coaling stations were obtained for the use of ships in the age of steam and a tight hold was taken of Burma across the Bay of Bengal. The company's charter was renewed in 1854, but the Indian Mutiny of 1857 led directly to the assumption of full jurisdiction over Indian affairs by the British government. The East India Company was relieved of its remaining possessions, its military forces and its administrative functions. Its marine, the Indian Navy, was disbanded in 1863 and its charter finally expired on 1 June 1874, never to be revived. The subsequent history of India merges with that of the full flowering of late Victorian British imperialism; the granting of

independence within the Commonwealth to India and Pakistan in 1947 marked the beginning of the end of empire.

Modern imperialism and the nationalist back-lash are the products of forces set in motion by the early drive for commercial advantage and this account of foreign contacts with the Cape as the 18th century advanced looks back at one stage in a developing process from the vantage-ground of a convenient half-way house. It is, however, more than an unfinished chapter of history. It is a narrative of people of many races, of hardships endured and perils confronted on the tall ships which sailed the southern oceans. These voyagers were the agents of European expansion and often enough its hostages, and most of them made no lasting imprint on the history of the times. Their experiences, however, are none the less worthy of record. They helped moreover to bring the Cape into the mainstream of great events, contributed to its emergent social patterns and gave the little port on Table Bay its unique and abiding variety.

List of sources

This is not a comprehensive bibliography, but is designed to give some idea of the sources on which this study is based and to provide a useful guide for those who may wish to explore the subject further.

1. GENERAL

The major archival source for the period is the material, much of it on microfilm, housed in the Cape Archives, Cape Town. Basic documents are to be found in the C series (Archives of the Council of Policy, 1652-1795). In a few instances the numbers cited differ from those now used to designate certain documents and reflect the classification applicable when the material was placed on film. Of particular importance are the following: C 25 - 49, Resolutiën, 1730-1757; C 135-160, Bijlagen, 1734-1760; C 235-255, Requesten, 1729-1756; C 351-374, Attestatiën, 1734-1757; C 443-454, Inkomende brieven, 1732-1755; C 484-489, Inkomende secrete en particuliere brieven, 1730-1779; C 521-540, Uitgaande brieven, 1734-1755; C 576-580, Uitgaande secrete brieven, 1748-1775; C 609-629, Dag register, 1731-1759.

The CJ series (Archives of the Council of Justice, 1656-1838) also contains much scattered information. The files include CJ 338-366; CJ 661-682, Criminele processtukken, 1711-1756; CJ 1046-1070, Civiele processtukken, 1733-1755; CJ 2975-2983, Verklaringen, 1733-1756; CJ 3031-3042; CJ 3084-3096, Gemengd, 1730-1762.

The unpublished portion of H.C.V. Leibbrandt's transcript of the Requesten (LM 15-17) is useful, completing his *Precis of the Archives of the Cape of*

Good Hope. Requesten (Memorials) 1715-1806 (2v., Cape Town and London, 1905; 1906). Publication of the resolutions of the council of policy was initiated in 1957. Volumes for the years 1716-1743, *Resolusies van die Politieke Raad*, V-X (Cape Town, etc., 1964-1984) are valuable both for the text and for G.C. de Wet's editorial annotations.

Dutch documents available on microfilm at the Cape Archives are an important source. These include the Swellengrebel familiearchief, 1700-1790, housed in Hilversum (ZH 1/2/1) and the following series from the Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague: KA 271-275, Resolusiën en bijlagen, Heren XVII, 1738-1751 (ZA 1/2/11-1/2/12), KA 300-351, Haagsche Besoignes, 1653-1794 (ZA 1/1/1-1/1/2) and KA 3242-3296, Brieven en papieren van de Kaap, 1738-1752 (ZA 2/3/23-2/3/31).

The best general text on the Cape in the period is that by R. Elphick and H. Giliomee, eds, *The shaping of South African society, 1652-1820* (Cape Town and London, 1979). A.J. Böeseken's contributions to C.F.J. Muller, ed., *Five hundred years; a history of South Africa* (rev. ed., Pretoria, 1977) are illuminating and the first volume of M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson, *The Oxford history of South Africa* (2v., London, 1969; 1971) may be consulted with profit. The older history by George McCall Theal, *History of South Africa*, IV (facsimile ed., Cape Town, 1964), contains much factual detail. Essential reading are the recollections of the company employee O.F. Mentzel, *A geographical and topographical description of the Cape of Good Hope*, ed. by H.J. Mandelbrote, Van Riebeeck Society, 1st series, 4, 6 and 25 (3v., Cape Town, 1921 - 1944), and *Life at the Cape in mid-eighteenth century. Being the biography of Rudolf Siegfried Alleman*, trans. by M. Greenlees, Van Riebeeck Society, 1st series, 2 (Cape Town, 1919).

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2. DENMARK

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3. FRANCE

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'Inventaire des archives de la Compagnie des Indes', *Bulletin de la Section de Géographie, Comité des Travaux historiques et scientifiques* (XXVIII, 1-2, 1913, 160-251), is a mine of information on voyages of the period. I am indebted to the archivist at Lorient, M. René Estienne, for further assistance since my visit there. Published sources include A. Martineau, ed., *Correspondance du Conseil supérieur de Pondichéry et de la compagnie*, III and IV (2v., Pondicherry and Paris, n.d.).

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4. Britain

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In addition to the material cited in section 1, the following documents in the Cape Archives, Cape Town, refer to aspects of the subject-matter of the chapter on Dutch foreign contacts: C 661-662, Scheeps- en andere journalen, 1707-1770; C 798-799, Gemengd, slaven, bannelingen, enz., 1714-1796; CJ 2562-2568, Vonnissen, bannelingen, 1722-1789; CJ 3180; 3182-3183, Scheeps-consumptie, 1708-1752; CJ 3186; 3188; 3190, Bandieten en bannelingen, 1722-1795; MOOC 3/9-3/12, Inkomende brieven, 1737-1763; MOOC 4/3, Uitgaande brieven, 1738-1757; MOOC 14/7-14/64, Boedelrekeningen, bijlagen, 1738-1785; VC 42-44, Monsterrollen, 1727-1758.

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Three contributions on shipboard conditions are of importance: M. Boucher, 'The Cape passage; some observations on health hazards aboard Dutch East Indiamen outward-bound', *Historia* (26, 1, 1981, 24-36), C.R. Boxer, 'The Dutch East Indiamen; their sailors, their navigators, and life on board, 1602-1795', *The Mariner's Mirror* (49, 2, 1963, 81-104), and J.R. Bruijn and J. Lucassen, eds, *Op de schepen der Oost-Indische Compagnie; vijf artikelen van J. de Hullu ingeleid, bewerkt en voorzien van een studie over de werkgelegenheid bij de VOC*, *Historische Studies*, XLI (Groningen, 1980). For the Cape calls of Dutch East Indiamen, their captains and other details of the voyages enumerated see J.R. Bruijn *et al.*, eds, *Dutch-Asiatic shipping*

in the 17th and 18th centuries, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote serie, 166 and 167, II and III (The Hague, 1979).

For Dutch free trade ideas consult J. Hovy, *Het voorstel van 1751 tot instelling van een beperkt vrijhavenstelsel in de republiek*, Historische Studies, XXI (Groningen, 1966), and M. Boucher, 'Dutch commerce and Cape trade in mid-18th century', *Kleio* (XII, 1-2, 1980, 14-17). The lines by an English visitor to the Cape are in A.M. Lewin Robinson, 'From Afric's lonely shore; verse from the Cape in 1736', *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library* (34, 3, 1980, 80-87). The poem was later plagiarized and the original writer remains unknown.

A French translation of the report on the *Brak's* voyage of 1741 to purchase slaves on Madagascar is in A. and G. Grandidier, eds, *Collection des ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar*, VI (Paris, 1913). For the expedition of the following year see M. Boucher, 'The voyage of a Cape slaver in 1742', *Historia* (24, 1, 1979, 50-58). On slavery at the Cape see V. de Kock, *Those in bondage; an account of the life of the slave at the Cape in the days of the Dutch East India Company* (2nd ed., Pretoria, 1963) and R. Ross, *Cape of torments; slavery and resistance in South Africa* (London, etc., 1983).

6. The war years

Of particular interest regarding the calls of British warships at the Cape and the campaigns waged in the Indian Ocean are Adm. 1/160, Admirals' letters, East Indies, 1744-1839 (for Griffin and Boscawen), and Adm. 51, Captains' logs (Public Record Office, London). Other pertinent collections include Ms. 37/9221, Richard Tiddeman papers (National Maritime Museum, London), HA 67: 461/228, Albemarle Mss. I, 1: Naval papers of Admiral Viscount Augustus Keppel; log of Anson's voyage, 1740-1744 (Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich branch), and GD 248/413, Seafield Muniments: Journal of Lieutenant John Grant during the East India expedition under Admiral Boscawen, 1748-50 (Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh). I am indebted to Prof. C.F.J. Muller for further information on the Boscawen expedition.

The best general history from the British angle is H.W. Richmond, *The navy in the war of 1739-48* (3v., Cambridge, 1920). There is also considerable detail in R. Beatson, *Naval and military memoirs of Great Britain from 1727 to 1783*, I and III (reprint, Boston, 1972) and in J. Campbell, *Naval history of Great Britain, including the history and lives of the British admirals* (8v., London, 1813). George Anson's own volume, *A voyage round the world in the years 1740-4*, compiled by Richard Walter, chaplain on the *Centurion*, Everyman's Library, 510 (London and New York, n.d.), is not the last word on the famous circumnavigation. Other works consulted include Pascoe Thomas, *A true and impartial journal* (London, 1745), L. Heaps, *Log of the*

Centurion based on the original papers of Captain Philip Saumarez (London, 1973), Boyle Somerville, *Commodore Anson's voyage into the South Seas and around the world* (London and Toronto, 1934), L.A. Wilcox, *Anson's voyage* (London, 1969) and G. Williams, ed., *Documents relating to Anson's voyage round the world 1740-1744*, Navy Records Society, 109 (London, 1967). On the Royal Navy see also D.A. Baugh, *British naval administration in the age of Walpole* (Princeton, 1965).

For French naval action consult G. Lacour-Gayet, *La marine militaire de la France sous le règne de Louis XV* (2nd ed., Paris, 1910). There are several important works on Dupleix, of which the most exhaustive is that by A. Martineau, *Dupleix et l'Inde française* (4v., Paris, 1920-1928). See also P. Cultru, *Dupleix: ses plans politiques, sa disgrâce; étude d'histoire coloniale* (Paris, 1901), and the biography of his wife by Y. Robert Gaebelé, *Créole et grande dame; Johanna Bégum, Marquise Dupleix (1706-1756)* (Pondicherry and Paris, 1934). For La Bourdonnais, P. Crepin, *Mahé de la Bourdonnais; gouverneur général des Iles de France et de Bourbon (1699-1753)* (Paris, 1922) should be consulted. Works on Dupleix's British adversary include R. Garrett, *Robert Clive* (London, 1976).

On Anglo-Dutch relations see P. Geyl, *Willem IV en Engeland tot 1748 (Vrede van Aken)* (The Hague, 1924). Van Imhoff's links with the British in the practical instruction of Dutch sea officers are discussed in F. de Haan, 'De „Academie de Marine" te Batavia 1743-1755', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (XXXVIII, 1895, 551-617). For the Dutch governor general's attempts to forge commercial ties with the Spanish colonial empire in the Americas see A.K.A. Gijsberti Rodenpjl, 'De mislukte pogingen van G.G. van Imhoff tot het aanknoopen van handelsbetrekkingen met Spaansch-Amerika in 1745 en 1746', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (73, 1917, 502-557). An article by W. Ph. Coolhaas in the same journal, 'Zijn de Gouverneurs-Generaal van Imhoff en Mossel juist beoordeeld?' (114, 1958, 29-54), examines the Dutch position in an age of French and British expansion.

The Cape and international warfare in the company period is the subject of G.A. le Roux's unpublished study, 'Europese oorloë en die Kaap (1652-1795)' (M.A. dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, 1941). On defence see P.E. Roux, *Die verdedigingstelsel aan die Kaap onder die Hollands-Oosindiese Kompanjie, (1652-1759 (sic))* (Stellenbosch, 1925), and his unpublished work, 'Die geskiedenis van die burger-kommando's in die Kaapkolonie, 1652-1878' (D.Phil. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1946). J. Burman, *The bay of storms*, cited in section 1, also contains information on the Cape defences. For Van Imhoff's comments on the problem see *The Reports of Chavonnes and his council, and of Van Imhoff, on the Cape. With incidental correspondence*, Van Riebeeck Society, 1st series, 1 (Cape Town, 1918).

Episodes at the Cape are discussed in M. Boucher, 'Privateers at the Cape in 1744 and 1747: incidents and implications', *Historia* (28, 2, 1983, 6-13).

Index to foreign callers, 1735–1755

This is not a complete listing, but enumerates only the voyages of foreign vessels mentioned in the text. Unless otherwise stated vessels were owned by the various national companies trading with the Indies and China, or sailed in their service. Abbreviations: A, Angola trade; Coy desp., Company despatch ship; N, Naval vessel; P, Privateer; Port., Portuguese; W, Wrecked on Cape coast; WIG, West India and Guinea Company. The figure 2 indicates a new ship in the same service.

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Achille</i>	French	1750	E. Lobry	50
		1753	A. Lévesque de Beaubriand	50
<i>Admiral Vernon</i>	British	1741, 1743, 1745	B. Webster	64, 78, 84, 86, 121–122
		1748	E. Cooke	134
		1747	Gervais de la Mabonnays	130–132
<i>Anglesey</i> (P)	French	1747	R. Wilson	133–135, 137, 140
<i>Apollo</i> (N)	British	1748	Baudran de la Mettrie	130–132
<i>Apollon</i> (P)	French	1743	L. Aubin du Plessis	52, 120
<i>Argonaute</i>	French	1743	A. Townshend	23, 59, 118, 119
<i>Augusta</i>	British	1743	T. Parker	59
<i>Auguste</i>	French	1743	J. Christy de la Pallière	143
<i>Baleine</i>	French	1750	L. Béard du Désert	48, 51
<i>Basilisk</i> (N)	British	1748	W. Preston	124, 133, 136, 137
		1750	A. Cockburn; J. Gilchrist	141

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Beaufort</i>	British	1736	R. Boulton	90
		1742	T. Stevens	65, 76
<i>Bedford</i>	British	1742	W. Wells	63, 76, 91
<i>Benjamin</i>	British	1743, 1744, 1745–46	B. Way	64, 65, 71– 72, 78, 80, 83, 86
<i>Bombay Castle</i>	British	1746–47, 1755	T. Browne	66, 74, 85, 130–132
<i>Bornholm (N)</i>	Danish	1752 1754	G. Sivers A.N. le Sage de Fontenay	27–28 28–29
<i>Boscawen</i>	British	1751, 1753	B. Braund	12, 61, 64, 66, 80, 81
<i>Caesar</i>	British	1740, 1742 1745, 1751	R. Cummings M. Court	70, 84 63, 80–81, 86, 87, 90
<i>Caesar (P)</i>	British	1744	J. Ayres	128
<i>Centaure (W)</i>	French	1750	G. de la Butte- Frérot	25, 45–46, 51, 141
<i>Centurion (N)</i>	British	1744	G. Anson	119–120
<i>Chester (N)</i>	British	1748, 1750	R. Spry	133, 136, 141
<i>Chesterfield</i>	British	1748, 1750, 1752	E. Carter	46, 81, 89, 134, 137, 141
<i>Christiansborg Slot</i>	Danish	1746	R. Kierulf	19
<i>Clinton</i>	British	1753	J. Nanfan	91
<i>Colchester</i>	British	1741	R. Mickelfield	62, 63–64, 76, 92
		1744	C. Campbell	62
<i>Comte de Toulouse</i>	French	1738	R. Butler de Trovern	37, 38
<i>Condé</i>	French	1735 1739	J. Morellet T. Herbert de la Portebarré	36, 51 37, 42–44
<i>Dauphin</i>	French	1744	R. Butler de Trovern	44, 51, 127
<i>Dauphin (2)</i>	French	1754	L. de Saint- Médard	44
<i>Deal Castle (N)</i>	British	1748 1750	J. Lloyd W. Preston	133, 136 141
<i>Defence</i>	British	1740	T. Coates	115

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Delawar</i>	British	1748, 1750	W. Steevens	4, 61, 134, 137
		1754	A. Dominicus	92
<i>Deptford (N)</i>	British	1748, 1750	T. Lake	132, 133, 136, 137, 141
<i>Diane</i>	French	1754	T. Rapon de la Placelière	49, 50
		1755–56	J. Kerlero de Rosbo	49, 50
<i>Docqven</i>	Danish	1744, 1749, 1750	P. Nielsen Roed N. Haagensen Due	17, 25 20
<i>Doddington (W)</i>	British	1748	B. Mason	69
		1754	N. Hutchinson	68, 81
		1755	J. Samson	67–69
<i>Dolphin</i>	British	1746	C. Pigot	68–69, 71
<i>Dragon</i>	British	1753	H. Kent	96
<i>Drake</i>	British	1752	B. Fisher	74, 87–88
<i>Dronning Juliane Maria</i>	Danish	1755	S. Fenger	16
<i>Dronningen af Danmark</i>	Danish	1745	P. Nielsen Roed	19, 20
<i>Dronningen af Danmark (2)</i>	Danish	1749, 1751	J. Werner Ackeleye	19, 25
<i>Duc de Béthune</i>	French	1749	J.-J. de la Chaise	138–139
<i>Duc de Chartres</i>	French	1739	L. Drias	49
<i>Duc de Chartres (2)</i>	French	1755	J. Gaultier de la Palissade	143
<i>Duc d'Orléans</i>	French	1739	J. de la Chesnaye	38
<i>Duc d'Orléans (2)</i>	French	1755	E. Lobry	49, 52, 74
<i>Duc de Parme</i>	French	1751	J.-C. d'Argy de la Châtre	37, 51
		1753	C. Ladvocat de la Crochais	143
<i>Duc de Penthièvre</i>	French	1755	A. Estoupan de Villeneuve	143
<i>Duke</i>	British	1744	T. Hindman	69
<i>Duke of Dorset</i>	British	1742	T. Gilbert	117
<i>Duke of Newcastle</i>	British	1750	F. Fowler	93, 110, 141

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Durrington</i>	British	1748, 1750	R. Crabb	60, 89, 134, 141
<i>East India</i> (Coy desp.)	British	1741	G. Steward	61, 87, 117
<i>Edgbaston</i>	British	1741–42, 1744	S. Cobham	62, 72, 84, 85, 92, 93
		1748	J. Hereford	62, 124, 134
		1753	E. Tiddeman	62
<i>Edgecote</i>	British	1748, 1750, 1752	J. Pearse	61, 80, 83, 87–88, 134
<i>Elefanten</i> (W)	Danish	1748	J. With	20, 24
		1749, 1750	A. Evensen	20, 21
			Grimsta	
<i>Elizabeth</i>	British	1744	R. Pinnell	86
		1748	A. Lawrence	62, 124, 134
		1750–51	E. Wills	62–63, 64, 73, 81, 85
<i>Eltham</i> (N)	British	1750	J. Lloyd	141–142
<i>Essex</i>	British	1746, 1749, 1751	G. Jackson	20, 74, 92
<i>Exeter</i>	British	1746, 1749	W. Weston	65, 79
<i>Exeter</i> (N)	British	1750	H. Powlett	140, 141
<i>Fame</i> (P)	British	1744	P. Comyn	128–129
<i>Fort St George</i>	British	1744, 1746	J.C.A. Acton	80, 83, 86
		1748	W. Bressey	61–62, 80, 97, 127, 134
		1751	R. Burdett	62, 64
<i>Fredericus Quartus</i>	Danish	1735	C. Thaae	29
<i>Gange</i>	French	1755	Tripier de Barmont	143
<i>Glorieux</i>	French	1751	J.-B.-N.-D. d'Après de Mannevillette	39
<i>Godolphin</i>	British	1742	F. Steward	80
<i>Godolphin</i> (2)	British	1753	W. Hutchinson	23, 65, 70, 95
<i>Grafton</i>	British	1735	R. Hudson	57, 60
<i>Grevinden af Laurvig</i> (WIG)	Danish	1737	J.N. Holst	29–32
<i>Haeslingfield</i>	British	1740	J. Cooke	63, 67, 69, 80
<i>Hardwicke</i>	British	1743	J. Hallett	71, 78, 90
		1748, 1749	J. Samson	60, 71, 72, 83, 134, 135

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Harrington</i>	British	1736, 1738	R. Jenkins	58, 59, 82–83, 97
<i>Harrison</i>	British	1735	S. Martin	57
<i>Harwich</i> (N)	British	1745	P. Carteret	84, 121–122
		1750	R. Tiddeman	141, 142
<i>Hercule</i>	French	1742	J. de Chévery	52, 127
<i>Houghton</i>	British	1748	I. North	80
<i>Ilchester</i>	British	1746, 1754	J. Tedd	5, 69, 91
<i>Jason</i>	French	1744	J. Magon de la Mettrie	127
<i>Oplettendheijd</i>	Dutch	1745	H. Bommer	127
<i>Kent</i>	British	1741, 1745, 1747	W. Robson	65, 66, 78, 80, 81, 84, 86, 94, 121–122
<i>King William</i>	British	1742, 1745	J. Phillips	63, 66, 79, 80, 86, 124
<i>Kiøbenhavn</i>	Danish	1748	C. Sommer	5, 18, 138
<i>Kongen af Danmark</i> (W)	Danish	1744–46	P.J. Derdeijn	17–19
<i>Kongen af Danmark</i> (2)	Danish	1752	J. Beckmand	25
<i>Kronprinsessen af Danmark</i> (W)	Danish	1746, 1747, 1750, 1751, 1752–53	E. Sporing S. Fenger	19, 23–26 20, 21–23, 25, 64
<i>Lapwing</i> (Coy desp.)	British	1744	H. Watts	82, 117
<i>Lincoln</i>	British	1745	J. Blake	71, 72–73, 84, 89, 121–122
		1748	J. Nanfan	67, 92, 134, 137
<i>Lively</i> (N)	British	1749	Hyde Parker	139
<i>London</i>	British	1742	M. Bootle	63, 66–67, 85–86
		1745–46	W. Sedgwick	63, 73, 80, 81, 82, 91, 95
<i>Lynn</i>	British	1746	C. Gilbert	91
<i>Lys</i>	French	1742	Chantelou	52
<i>Lys</i> (2)	French	1755	A. Lévesque de Beaubriand	50

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Maréchal de Saxe</i>	French	1752	J. Lars de Les-couët	40, 41, 50
<i>Marie</i>	French	1739	J.-B.-C. Bouvet de Lozier	38
<i>Marlborough</i>	British	1753	W. Parks	92
<i>Maurepas</i>	French	1753	J.-P.-G. Buisson de la Vigne	37, 143
<i>Medway's Prize (N)</i>	British	1749	N. Vincent	139
<i>Montagu</i>	British	1738	J. Flower	62, 104
<i>Montaran</i>	French	1749	J. Jolif du Colombier	5, 47–48, 138–139
<i>Namur (N)</i>	British	1748	S. Marshall	133, 134, 137, 138, 140
<i>Nassau</i>	British	1742	G. Jackson	78–79, 85–86
<i>Nécessaire</i>	French	1752	Trémolu	39–40, 41
<i>Nellebladet (N)</i>	Danish	1752	J. Hansen Reichardt	27–28
<i>Neptune</i>	British	1754 1741–42	O. Hansen F. d'Abbadie	28–29 60, 72, 76, 80, 85, 87, 90–91, 96
<i>Norfolk</i>	British	1747	N. Hancock	74, 91, 130–132
<i>Northampton</i>	British	1742	D. Backwell	79
<i>Nottingham</i>	British	1738 1740, 1742	R. Farr Winter T. Brown	71 84, 86, 94
<i>Onslow</i>	British	1743, 1745–46	R. Congreve	58, 63, 83, 90, 94, 109
<i>Pearl (N)</i>	British	1749	W. Boys	139
<i>Pelham</i>	British	1745	W. Wells	62, 65, 70, 72–73, 80, 84, 90, 91, 122
<i>Pembroke (N)</i>	British	1747, 1748	G. Lindsay	62, 69, 74, 75, 81, 89, 92, 130–132
<i>Phénix</i>	French	1748 1744	T. Fincher J.-B. Gardin du Brossay	133, 140 47
<i>Philibert</i>	French	1739	E. Lobry	38, 51

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Philibert</i> (2)	French	1752	Mamineau-Brunet	41
<i>Portfield</i>	British	1747	F. d'Abbadie	60, 63, 73, 85, 90, 91, 95, 130–132
<i>Porto Bello</i>	British	1754 1741, 1743, 1746, 1747	Carteret le Geyt B. Fisher	60, 70 60, 64, 72, 90
<i>Porto Bello</i> (Coy desp.)	British	1747	W. Hooke	75, 95, 124, 129–130
<i>Porto Bello</i> (N)	British	1748	W. Ireson	133, 138
<i>Prince de Conti</i>	French	1737	J. Danycan	37–38, 39
<i>Prince Edward</i>	British	1750, 1755	R. Haldane	79, 82, 83–84, 143
<i>Prince of Orange</i>	British	1742	C. Hudson	72
<i>Prince of Wales</i>	British	1738, 1742, 1744, 1744–45	J. Pelly	60, 66, 70, 73–74, 84–86, 88, 89
<i>Prince of Wales</i> (2)	British	1752, 1755	W. Peck	37, 74, 87–88, 91
<i>Princess Louisa</i>	British	1737	R. Pinnell	88
<i>Princess Mary</i>	British	1738, 1741	G. Martin	80, 90–91
<i>Princess Mary</i> (N)	British	1749	W. Holmes	139
<i>Princess of Wales</i>	British	1748	T. Harry	79–80
<i>Prins Christian</i> (hired from WIG)	Danish	1753 (twice)	J. Maartensen Grønborg	22–23
<i>Prinsesse Charlotta Amalia</i>	Danish	1743 1745	R. Kierulf N. Hansen	23, 25, 26, 27 18
<i>Prinsesse Louise</i>	Danish	1742 1752	Gram S. Hvas J. With	23 23
<i>Prinsesse Vilhelmine Caroline</i>	Danish	1753	M. Jacobsen Rønne	21, 22, 26–27
<i>Prinz von Preuszen</i>	Prussian	1755	L.C. Groene- wee	6
<i>Protector</i>	British	1752	F. Cheyne	71, 74, 79, 90
<i>Puisieux</i>	French	1753	J.-J. de San- guinet	39, 143
<i>Queen Caroline</i>	British	1739, 1742	C. Birkhead	67, 79, 86, 95
<i>Renommée</i>	French	1754	J.-F.-M. de Surville	44
<i>Rhoda</i>	British	1748, 1755	J. McNemara	72, 73, 78, 89, 91, 134, 137

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Rigernes Ønske</i> (hired from WIG)	Danish	1753 (twice)	J.C. Hove	22–23
<i>Royal Duke</i>	British	1748	G. Cuming	89, 134, 136
<i>Royal George</i>	British	1745, 1748	T. Feild	72, 80, 84, 134
<i>Royal Guardian</i>	British	1739	H. Hoadly	78, 84, 115
<i>Ruby</i> (N)	British	1748, 1751–52	J. Knight	133, 142
<i>St Francis</i> (São Francisco, hired by N)	British	1748	D. Wilkinson	133, 140
<i>Saint-Géran</i>	French	1740	C. Porée de la Touche	45, 115
<i>Salisbury</i>	British	1744	C. Burrows	47, 66, 69, 86, 92, 94–95, 119, 120
<i>Sandwich</i>	British	1755	J. Purling	60, 91, 93, 143
<i>São João Baptista</i> (A)	Port.	1735	J. da Costa	6–7
<i>Scarborough</i>	British	1741, 1745	G. Westcott	63, 78, 84, 121–122
		1749	P. d’Auvergne	60
<i>Severn</i>	British	1743, 1747	J. Collier	65, 73, 83, 90
<i>Shafesbury</i>	British	1739	M. Bookey	71, 91
<i>Shafesbury</i> (2)	British	1754	W. Bookey	91
<i>Sheerness</i> (N)	British	1749, 1749–50	H. Palliser	140, 141
<i>Silhouette</i>	French	1753	L.-C. Deschiens de Raucourt	48, 143
<i>Somerset</i>	British	1743	C. Howes; H. Kent	64
		1747, 1748	T. Tolson	64, 69, 88, 95, 96, 132
<i>Stafford</i>	British	1755	J. Green	63, 72
<i>Stretham</i>	British	1748	W. Pinnell	124, 134
<i>Suffolk</i>	British	1753	W. Wilson	143
<i>Swallow</i> (Coy desp.)	British	1747	N. Hutchinson	74
<i>Swallow</i> (N)	British	1748	J. Rowzier	133, 134, 137–138, 142

Ship	Nationality	Year	Captain/Commander	Page
<i>Swift</i> (Coy desp.)	British	1742, 1743	H. Watts	78, 85, 87, 90, 117
		1743 (2nd visit)	T. Stevens	92
		1747	J. Bell	72, 132
<i>Syren</i> (N)	British	1752	W. Mantell	142
<i>Tartar</i> (N)	British	1748, 1752	W. Brett	138, 142
<i>Tigris</i>	British	1741–42, 1743	J. Petre	64, 86
<i>Tranquebar</i>	Danish	1745	R. Jansen	18, 24
		1754	C. Fenger	24
<i>Treize-Cantons</i>	French	1752	J.-B.-N.-D. d'Après de Manneville	39–40, 41
<i>Triton</i>	British	1752	G. Slater	87–88
<i>Triton</i>	French	1744	I. Bart	46–47, 50, 51
<i>Vigilant</i> (N)	British	1748	W. Lisle	133, 134, 137–138
		1751–52	W. Lisle; J. Rowzier	142
<i>Villeflix</i>	French	1750	F. le Fol de la Londe	49
		1752	M.-A. Selle	40, 41, 44, 51, 52
<i>Wager</i>	British	1738, 1742, 1744	C. Raymond	60, 62
		1749	J. Hindman	71, 79
<i>Walpole</i>	British	1739	C. Boddam	61, 85
		1747	B. Lowe	23, 24, 80
<i>Warwick</i>	British	1744	R. Misenor	81, 83, 119
<i>Wilmington</i>	British	1740–41	L. Maddox; J. Tedd	63–64
<i>Winchelsea</i> (P)	British	1744	J. Gerard	128–129
		1747	J. Corner	129–132
<i>Winchester</i>	British	1744	G. Steward	61, 62, 67
		1745	J. Samson	62
<i>Winchester</i> (N)	British	1745, 1749	Lord Thomas Bertie	121–122, 139
<i>York</i>	British	1742	H. Lascelles	85–86, 96
<i>York</i> (N)	British	1750	T. Nucella; A. Cockburn	23, 141, 142
<i>Young Eagle</i> (N)	British	1748, 1750	J. Quallet	133, 141

General Index

- Accidents 13, 66, 78, 142
 Agents, foreign 25, 26–27, 48
 Agriculture 47–48
 Albert du Chesne, A. d' 126
 Algoa Bay 39, 68
 Alleman, R.S. 3, 4, 95, 119
 Anchoring ship 29–30, 78, 141
 Angola 7
 Anson, G., Lord 119–120, 128, 133
 Ascension Island 10, 141
 Austrian Netherlands 7, 16, 50, 112, 125
 Austrian Succession War 6, 8, 9, 11, 27,
 36, 37, 52, 71, 97, 113, 115–143
 Azores 10, 12, 101
- Bacheracht, J. 103, 135
 Barbier, E. 101
 Barnett, C. 122, 127, 129, 132
 Barrington, C. 29–32, 42
 Batavia 6, 8, 10, 24, 25, 43, 59, 62, 64,
 83, 87, 93, 94, 98, 100, 103, 104,
 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 114, 117,
 127, 128, 129, 146
 Bekker, C. 86
 Belliveau, J. 86
 Bengal 5, 7, 8, 10, 16, 27, 28, 36, 37,
 38, 52, 53, 55, 58, 60, 62, 63, 66, 79,
 80, 82, 88, 94, 95, 96, 101, 102, 107,
 108, 143
 Bengkulu 23, 55, 58, 59, 60, 65, 70, 74,
 80, 82, 87, 96, 109, 132, 147
 Benyon, J. 69
 Bergstedt, M. 3, 31, 111
 Bestbier, J.L. 3, 9, 31, 37, 40, 46
 Beutler, A.F. 39, 40
 Blanckenberg, M.M. 26
 Blanckert, E. 85
 Blättermann, H.L. 3, 95
 Bombay 21, 35, 53, 58, 59, 60, 62, 64,
 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 74, 78, 83, 97,
 127, 130
 Bonsack, H.E. 25
 Boscawen, E. 133–138, 140
 Bossau, G.H. 102
 Bötticher, J.F.W. 3, 81
 Bouvet de Lozier, J.B.C. 38, 128, 132
 Brazil 7, 10, 17, 38, 39, 62, 73, 105
 Breakwater plan 12, 43
 Bresler, J.C. 21
 Brett, P. 119, 124
 British Isles 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16,
 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 33, 51,
 53–97, 100, 103–104, 105–106, 112–
 113, 114, 115–143, 145, 146, 147–
 148

- Burgher trade 8–9, 21, 26, 31, 32, 42, 47, 71, 94–95, 113
- Cadiz 36
- Cadogan, William, Earl of 103
- Cape Agulhas 45, 76
- Cape ceremonies 25, 86–88
- Cape descriptions 36–37, 76, 78, 120
- Cape Verde Islands 10, 14, 17, 29, 67, 108, 128, 132
- Carey, William Ferdinand, Lord Hunsdon 103
- Carnspeck, D.G. 4
- Ceylon 4, 10, 13, 14, 24, 46, 100, 101, 105, 107, 110, 146
- Chandernagore 35, 146
- Channel Islands 60, 119, 122
- Ch'ien-lung 104
- China 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 25, 28, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 44, 48, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69, 71, 74, 79, 80, 82, 83, 88, 90, 91, 92, 104, 118, 128, 129, 139, 143, 144, 147
- Chinese 4, 49, 87, 108, 110
- Christian VI 16, 19
- Clive, R. 61, 62, 67, 68, 89
- Combined operations, 1748 132–138
- Combrink, H. 95
- Complaints of visitors 52, 83–85, 122
- Convicts 4, 5, 101
- Convoys 117, 118, 121, 124
- Coromandel coast 7, 8, 10, 14, 20, 23, 24, 27, 29, 35, 36, 46, 53, 62, 63, 67, 68–69, 74, 82, 92, 93, 97, 124, 127, 129, 130, 133, 138, 140, 146
- Country trade 64, 69, 128
- Court cases 94–95
- Crime and punishment 5, 9, 18, 25, 51, 73–74, 88–89, 101, 108–109, 137
- Cumberland, William Augustus. Duke of 86, 125, 136
- Dabijn, G. 111, 112
- Damage to ships 72, 80–81, 82–83
- Dean, J. 67
- Death 12–13, 20, 22, 28, 29, 51, 59, 61–64, 65–66, 85–86, 136, 139, 140, 141, 142
- De Coning family 88, 95
- Defence of Cape 1, 3, 118–119, 121–122
- Delagoa Bay 11, 68, 73, 88, 96, 111, 113
- Denmark 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14–32, 33, 97, 100–101, 102, 138, 144–145
- De Ruijter, H. 41
- De Savoye, P.R. 96
- Deserters from ships 5, 24, 49–50, 51, 100–101, 106, 137
- Deserters from shore 24–25, 50, 92–94
- De Villiers family 51, 96
- De Wet, J.C. and others 9, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31
- De Wit family 3, 30–31, 89
- Drakenstein 8, 41, 93
- Dupleix, Marquis J.F. and family 8, 27, 49, 52, 74, 121, 125
- Eijbo van Rhee, F. 132, 139
- English Channel 10, 105–106, 123–124
- English products 95–96
- Escape attempts 50, 90–91, 110–111, 112
- Exiles 4, 108–109
- Exploration 38, 39–40
- False Bay 12, 17, 20, 82, 83, 111, 121
- Felchenhauer, H.P. 103
- Fire at sea 12, 20, 142
- Flora and fauna 41, 47–48, 104–105
- Floyer, C. 64, 69
- Fort St David 46, 55, 62–63, 64, 65, 69, 81, 82, 83, 89, 90, 138, 140, 145
- Forty-five, The 124, 130
- Fothergill, A. 103
- France 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 25, 27, 28, 32, 33–52, 60, 71, 82, 86, 89, 97, 100, 101–102, 106, 108, 113, 114, 120–143, 145–146
- Free Blacks 1, 5, 107, 118–119
- Funerals 21, 63–64, 65–66, 85–86, 142

- Genes de la Chancelière, M. de 42–43
 Germans 3–4, 6, 7, 9, 16, 20, 31,
 40–41, 90, 100, 102, 105, 107
 Gifts 25–26, 30, 85
 Godeheu de Zaimont, C.R. 52
 Gouritz River 20
 Grandpreez, J. de 40, 102
 Grant, J. 136, 141
 Griffin, T. 128, 133, 138, 139, 140
 Grout de Saint-Georges, J.F. 128
 Grové, A. 3
 Grundlingh, J.C. 90

 Hardcastle, J. 88
 Haszingsh, J. 110
 Hauptfleisch, J.G. 24–25
 Hawke, E., Baron of Lowton 126
 Heijning, D. 95
 Hemmy, O.L. 4, 111, 112
 Hinde, J. 130
 Hop, J.H. 9
 Horak, J.A. 20

 Immigrants 1, 3, 4
 Impressment 117–118, 123–124
 India 4, 9, 10, 21, 24, 27, 36, 52, 59,
 62, 64, 88, 93, 109, 138, 139, 143,
 146, 147–148
 Indonesia 4, 10, 11, 16, 35, 53, 85, 98,
 108–110, 146, 147
 Interlopers 7–8
 Invasion fears 118–119, 120–122, 126,
 134–135

 James, W. 60–61
 Japan 98, 104
 Jenkins' Ear, War of 6, 59
 Jones, E. 68

 Khoisan peoples I, 8, 41–44, 68, 101,
 120, 134, 141
 Kock, G. 102

 La Bourdonnais, B.F. Mahé de 47, 125,
 128
 La Caille, N.L. de 39, 40–42, 48, 102,
 108
 La Fon, P. 89

 La Jonquière, Marquis J. de 128, 132,
 133
 Lambrechts family 7, 49
 Lascars 69, 139
 Law, S. 69
 Lawrence, S. 64, 69, 138
 Lens, F. 27
 Le Roux, J. 3
 Lethbridge, J. 58, 69
 Letters of marque 122
 Lever, A. and J. 31, 94, 95
 Liège 94, 103
 Lisbon 9, 10, 38, 46, 73, 74, 105, 108,
 128, 134, 138, 141
 Lodgings at Cape 4, 27, 30, 37, 51, 64,
 88, 89
 London 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 20, 23,
 24, 37, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 67, 69, 70,
 72, 82, 94, 103, 107, 112, 119, 122,
 130, 132, 141, 143, 145, 147
 Loppin, C.F. 49
 Lorient roadstead 9, 36, 37, 38, 39, 44,
 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 130, 139
 Loring Passir 109
 Louisbourg 10, 124, 138

 Macau 129, 146
 Macrae, J. 11
 Madagascar 4, 10, 11, 29, 30, 31, 32,
 33, 35, 36, 62, 67, 68, 80, 92–93, 96,
 97, 102, 104, 111–114, 129, 146
 Madeira 46, 133
 Madras 24, 29, 47, 49, 53, 58, 60, 62,
 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 73, 78,
 80, 92, 125, 126, 127, 130, 132, 138,
 140, 143, 145
 Malabar coast 6, 10, 16, 21, 27, 28, 35,
 36, 55, 63, 71, 81, 93, 107, 118, 130,
 133, 145
 Manning of ships 29, 81, 92, 120
 Mansell, E. 70
 Marriages 46–47, 86
 Masson, J.F. 102
 Mathews, T. 11
 Mauritius 9, 10, 36, 39, 40, 44, 45, 46,
 47, 48, 49, 51, 127, 130, 131, 132,

- 133, 135, 138, 143, 146
 Meijer, F. and family 8–9
 Meinertzhagen, I. 3–4, 121, 135, 139
 Melck, M. 3
 Mellet, A. 51, 96
 Mentzel, O.F. 4, 40–41, 42, 108
 Millechamp, L. 120
 Mining 9
 Mokha 7, 10, 16, 36, 55, 62, 68, 69, 73, 95, 104, 109, 130
 Möller, J., and family 17, 30, 41, 81, 85, 88, 102–103, 107
 Monson, W. 24
 Morlaix 106–107
 Morse, N. 64, 69
 Mossel Bay 20, 22, 23, 25, 115, 140
 Mossel, J. 41, 64
 Mozambique 31, 105
 Mühlenfort, D. 24
 Muller, E. 41
 Müller, F.D. 9

 Naval vessels 11, 23, 27–29, 115–143
 Navigation 9–10, 11, 37–39, 76, 78
 Needer, J. 30, 42, 43
 Negappattinam 24, 52, 75, 93, 95, 146
 Nelson, J. 69, 70, 131
 Nicobar Islands 28, 145
 Nolthenius, D. 121, 136
 Norway 10, 17, 25, 29
 North America 3, 11, 55, 100, 143, 145
 O’Hegerty, P.A. 130
 Orangists 103, 125
 Ostend Company 7, 16, 49
 Palk, R. 140
 Panck, P.K. 69
 Paradise, L. 138
 Passengers 14, 24, 48–49, 69–71
 Patras, A. 100
 Pennink, F. 112
 Percheron de Mouchy, L.A. 48
 Percival, G. 69
 Peyton, E. 127, 128, 139, 140
 Pfeil, D. 3
 Philippines 27, 106, 117, 119, 129
 Phipps, W. 60
 Phoonsen, P.L. 69
 Piracy 11, 59, 61
 Poivre, P. 47–48, 127
 Pondicherry 8, 35, 37, 38, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 137, 143, 146
 Population 1, 3–4, 5
 Portuguese shipping 6–7, 9, 10, 11
 Prehn, H.J. 3
 Privateers 5, 14, 128–132
 Radin Djourit 109
 Raji, J. 88, 95, 106–107
 Religion 5, 8, 14, 19, 49, 109
 Repmond, J.H. 90
 Réunion 9, 10, 35, 36, 41, 46, 47, 48, 49, 127, 130, 132, 133, 135, 143, 146
 Rhenius, J.T. 119
 Robben Island 23, 50–51, 55, 78, 100, 101, 109, 110, 130
 Rosendaal, C. 7, 8
 Rousselet-Brousseau, D. 102, 112, 113
 Russell, Lady Ann 70
 Said Alochie 109
 Sailing routes 5, 9–10
 St Helena 9, 10, 11, 21, 55, 59, 70, 71, 72, 80, 82, 84, 92, 94, 97, 117, 122, 132, 141, 147
 Saint-Jean, R.B. de 102
 Saldanha Bay 12, 17, 29, 33, 34, 115, 121
 Salutes 43, 44, 83–84, 86, 87–88
 Sandoz, P. 102
 Sauchy, J. 102
 Saxe, Maurice de 125, 126
 Schmidt, G. 8
 Schmidt, J.K. 90
 Schonamille family 7–8, 49
 Seamen, loan of 75, 81, 92, 120
 Services, Anglican 8, 64, 142
 Seven Years’ War 6, 27, 36, 138, 139, 143, 144, 145
 Seychelles 36, 146
 Shagen, J.P. 85, 86
 Shipping disasters 11–12, 17–19, 20–23, 25, 43, 44–46, 67–69, 105, 106

- Shipping, Dutch 5 and *passim*
 Shipping interest 56–57, 60–61
 Ships, repair of 4, 27, 70–73, 122
 Sichterman, J.A. 86
 Sickness 12–13, 20, 22, 27, 29, 31, 38,
 40, 63, 64–65, 71, 72, 91, 106, 120,
 122, 133, 134, 135, 136, 139, 141
 Simons Bay 4, 5, 22, 25, 90, 109, 110,
 127
 Slave lodge 4, 136
 Slave-trade 10–11, 26, 29–32, 46, 71,
 96–97, 102, 104, 111–114
 Slavery 1, 4, 5, 8, 42, 45, 46, 92–93,
 96, 108, 109–111, 118, 119–120
 Smal, J.G. 22
 Social life 4–5, 85
 Spain and empire 27, 58–59, 97, 106,
 115, 117–120, 128–129
 Stadtholder 12, 41, 103–104, 125
 Stellenbosch 8, 31, 41, 139
 Stonestreet, T. 69
 Stowaways 107–108
 Stuart, W. 139
 Supercargoes 16, 29, 30, 52, 58, 60, 69,
 73, 82, 86, 90, 115
 Supplies 23, 25, 43, 70, 79–80, 84, 120,
 130–131, 135
 Surat 35, 53, 54, 64, 69, 130
 Sweden 3, 6, 7, 9, 16, 20, 29, 64, 90,
 93, 102, 107, 111, 146
 Swellendam 19, 20, 40, 101
 Swellengrebel, H. 1, 3, 8, 17, 18, 19,
 21, 30, 42, 47, 64, 82, 85, 87, 90–91,
 103, 110, 119, 121–122, 131, 135–
 136
 Swellengrebel, S. 44, 96, 103
 Table Bay 4–7, 8–12, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23,
 24, 25, 29, 35, 36, 37, 39, 43, 47, 50,
 52, 57, 58, 60, 63, 64, 65, 66, 69, 74,
 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 88, 94, 100,
 101, 113, 115, 129, 131, 134
 Taillard, J. 50, 102
 Taverns 4–5, 88–89, 94
 Ten Damme, H.W. 1, 3
 Thomas, P. 119, 120
 Thomson, J. 5
 Tiemendorf, J.F. 4, 64, 96
 Tjionko, J. 110
 Trade 4, 6, 7, 8–9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18,
 21, 33, 42, 55, 56–58, 69, 128–129
 Tranquebar 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21,
 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 69, 128,
 145
 Tregard, C.G. 93
 Trinidad 10, 38
 Tulbagh, R. 8, 17, 39, 40, 41, 44, 64,
 84, 87, 96, 142
 United Provinces 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,
 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 22, 32, 33, 42–43,
 47, 48, 51, 70, 97, 98, 100–114, 115,
 120, 124, 125, 126, 135
 Valckenier, A. 87, 94, 105, 117
 Van den Henghel, D. 30, 38, 42, 43, 85,
 87
 Van der Heijden, H. 26
 Van der Spil, J. 111, 112
 Van Imhoff, G.W. 8, 41, 86, 108, 118,
 121, 128–129
 Van Jonkheijn, C.E.P. 46–47, 86
 Van Kervel, A. 30, 103
 Van Leeuwen, S. Hoppestijn 86
 Van Lexmond, G. 95, 109
 Van Reede van Oudtshoorn, P. 17, 83,
 85, 90, 103
 Vasserot, David, Baron 49
 Villejosselin de la Motte, J.T.F. 101–
 102
 Violence 29, 31, 74, 88, 97, 100, 101–
 102, 106, 110
 Visser, E.T. 46–47, 86
 Von Dessin, J.N. 4, 40
 Von Reenen, J. 3
 Wake, W. 21, 64, 69
 Walsh, A. 130
 War at sea 5, 115–143
 Warneke, J.C. 135
 Weather conditions 12, 22, 38, 67, 78–
 79, 106

West Indies 29, 31, 48, 58, 105, 118,
123

Wiid, S.J. 23

Wilhelmi, D. 102

Wine 41, 59, 81–82, 95, 111, 113, 136,
142

Wolter van Nimwegen, D. 47

Young Pretender (Charles Edward) 124,
126, 130

Zwanendrecht, P. 86

