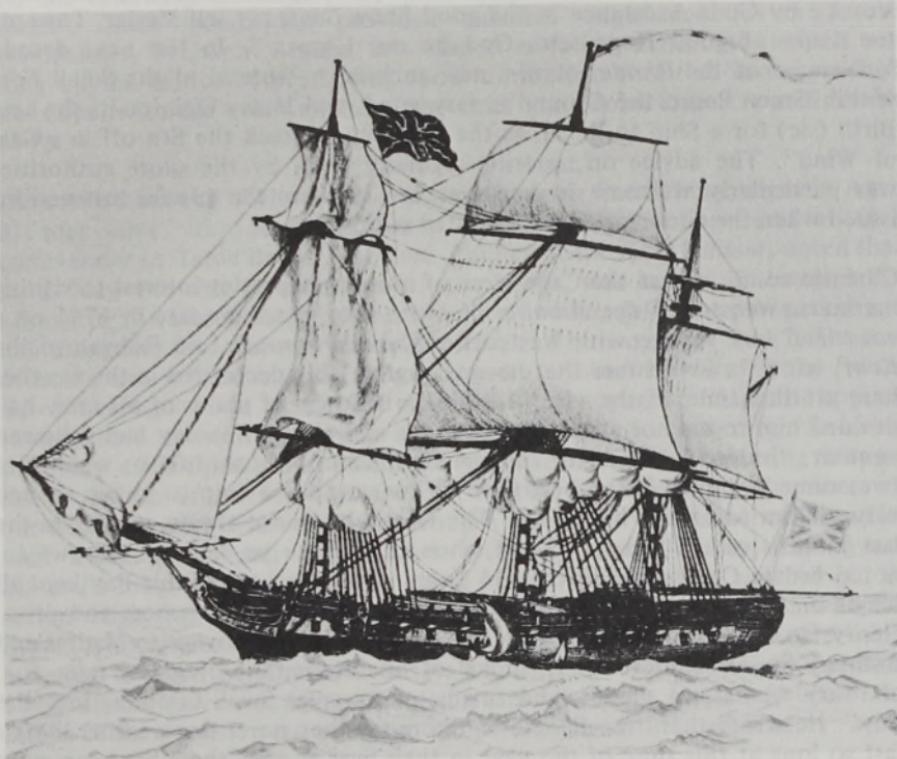


British East Indiamen and the Cape

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 extrem 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 yould 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 Bering 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

ick 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 he *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 *Weltvrede* 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 Governor (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 Chears (sic) and 19 Guns" as he rejoined Pieter Sluis on the *Woitkensdorp* for the return voyage to Rammekens.

On 25 Janaury 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 Indeferent (*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 Hengel 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 *Cæsar* 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 Raij'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 uncapable (*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 Sluttl 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 *Arnestijn* 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 Repond, 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

hem 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 1735-755 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 township. 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

any 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 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 Billon, 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 pinnace 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

744 Heron Powney, a mate on the *Salisbury*, successfully challenged Abraham Lever for the payment of money owing to him. A strong south-wester prevented Powney from coming ashore to put his case in person, but he writer and future burgher Gerrit van Lexmond, who married Raji'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 Daniël 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, glass-ware, 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 Tiemannendorf 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 fiersness (*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 desease (*sic*) so have not Ironed him".

slaves were often purchased in considerable numbers. Jenkins of the *Jarrington*, 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.

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

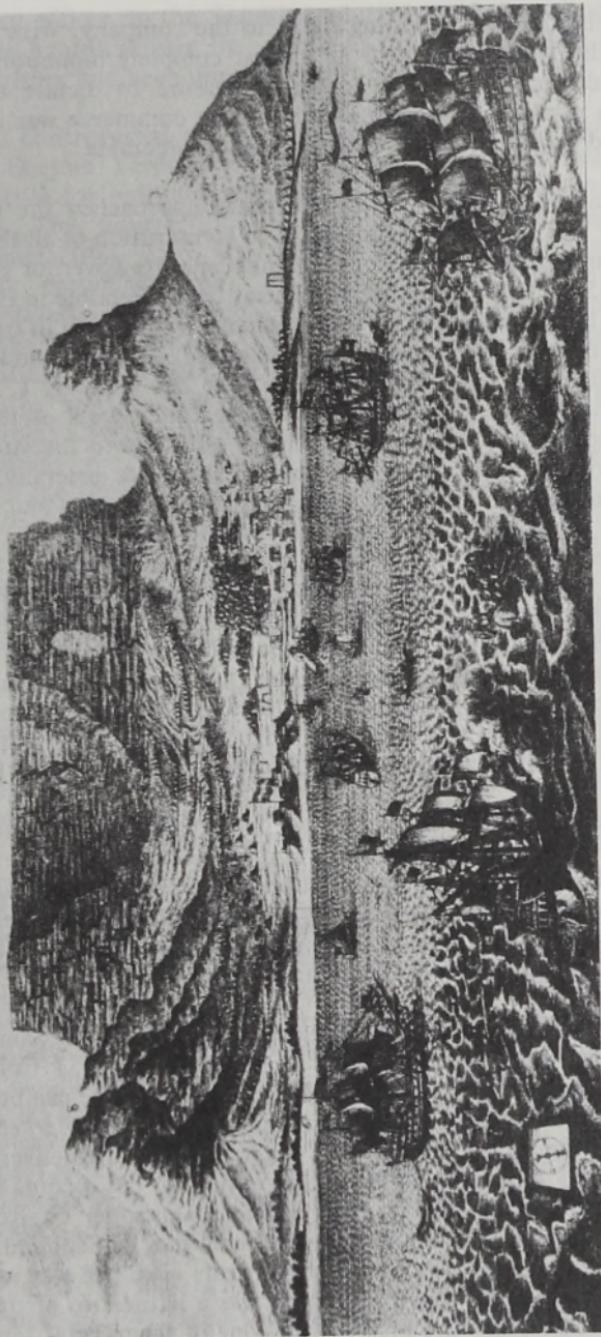


Table Bay and the township below Table Mountain, 1742. An engraving by G.A. Grundler in the Cape Archives, Cape Town (M 150)

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 Castelnau-dary 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 Maronnat, 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 Kajje 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 *Getrouwigheijd* 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 *Wimmenum*, sailing between the Cape and Batavia. The *Wimmenum* 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 clearless 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 Rajj 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. Rajj 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. Rajj decided to appeal and sailed to Batavia for the purpose, Möller standing surety for him. The appeal succeeded and Rajj was appointed deputy to Möller on the Cape establishment. He died, however, before he could return to the settlement. It would appear that Rajj 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 *Woitkendorp* 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 Fèbre, 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 *Voorsigtigheid*. 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 Haszingh 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 Malagasy. 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.