



# Jan van Riebeeck in his own words

Contents - December 1651 and January 1652

We start this month with the first issue of our new newsletter: "Jan van Riebeeck in his own words: Edition 1". This free newsletter by Ipic Education gives you a look back, exactly 370 years ago, to the words in the daily journal of Jan van Riebeeck. Enjoy, feel free to forward and refer your friends. If you prefer the Dutch and Afrikaans version, request your copy [here](#).

Yours sincerely,  
Rian Maartens (Executive Editor)

## This newsletter is extracted from:

"JOURNAL KEPT BY THE SENIOR MERCHANT JAN ANTHONISSEN VAN RIEBEECK<sup>1</sup> WHO SAILED AS COMMANDER WITH THE SHIPS DROMMEDARIS, REIJGER AND GOEDE HOOPE<sup>2</sup> FROM TEXEL FOR ABO DE BOA ESPERANCE IN THE SERVICE OF THE GENERAL UNITED DUTCH CHARTERED EAST INDIA COMPANY UNDER THE CHAMBER OF AMSTERDAM<sup>3</sup>"

*Who was Jan van Riebeeck and what is the source? See the detailed introduction [here](#)*

14 – 30 December 1651

## On board the ship *Drommedaris*

14<sup>th</sup> About 2 hours after midday, the weather being unsettled, squally and rainy and the wind westerly, the said Riebeeck departed with his family from the city of Amsterdam. Previously at eleven o'clock he had taken his final leave of the Hon. Lords Directors at the counting-house as well as at the slaughter-house of the aforesaid Chamber<sup>4</sup>. On the

16<sup>th</sup> he came on board the ship *Drommedaris* in the *Balgh*<sup>5</sup>, having on the previous Monday at a full meeting of these Lords Directors in the presence of all the skippers, Claes Both, Reijnier Egbertssen, Davit de Coninck and Jan Hoogsaet, obtained leave to proceed on his way. He had received orders to hoist the flag on the ship *Drommedaris* and to take command of the departing ships according to an extract

1. In 1647, when Jan van Riebeeck was dismissed from the Company's service, he had already attained the rank of Merchant. His appointment as Commander of the victualling station at the Cape carried with it the rank of Merchant and Chief (*koopman en opperhoofd*) and the salary of a Senior Merchant. See Godée Molsbergen, Jan van Riebeeck, p. 72.

2. i.e. *Dromedary*, *Heron* and *Good Hope*: Van Riebeeck's well-known little fleet. The *Drommedaris*, the largest of the three ships, was the flagship, in which Van Riebeeck himself sailed. She was approximately 200 tons, and though insignificantly small according to present-day standards, would have been considered a reasonably large ship in the mid-seventeenth century. The *Reijger*, a flyboat, was considerably smaller; the *Goede Hoop*, a yacht, was much smaller again than the *Reijger*. See e.g. Leipoldt, Jan van Riebeeck—a Biographical Study, p. 98; Oosthoeks Encyclopaedie VI, p. 593; and Kuipers Encyclopaedisch Woordenboek, II, p. 676.

3. The Dutch East India Company had been organised into six "Chambers"—Amsterdam, Zealand, Rotterdam, Delft, Hoorn and Enkhuizen, of which Amsterdam was by far the largest and wealthiest. Cf. Art. 1 and 2 of the Charter of the Company. Cornelis Cau, Groot Placaet-Boeck vervattende de Placaten, Ordonnantien ende Edicten van de Doorluchtige, Hoogh Mog. Heeren Staten Generael, etc., I, p. 530. See also Klerk de Reus, Geschichtlicher Ueberblick der administrativen, rechtlichen und finanziellen Entwicklung der niederländisch-ostindischen Compagnie (Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen, Deel XLVII, 3de stuk), pp. 19—26. Texel was the harbour from which the ships of the Chamber of Amsterdam usually sailed to the East Indies.

4. The slaughter-house is described by Dapper in his *Historische Beschrijving der Stadt Amsterdam* (p. 450). He says: *Ter zijde of achter dit Oost-Indisch-huis op de Kloveniers burghwal, heeft men ook het slachthuis, van deze Maetschappij, daar in tegens den herfst eenige duyzent ossen geslacht, die dan in tonnen gepakt en zoo na de gewesten gezonden worden.* The "Honourable Lords Directors" mentioned by the diarist were, of course, the Directors of the Chamber of Amsterdam.

5. According to Godée Molsbergen the *Balgh* was the stretch of sea between the island Wieringen and the mainland of North Holland. Jan van Riebeeck, p. 74, footnote 2.

## Summary:

- Van Riebeeck's departure from Amsterdam
- Visit of Directors Roch and De Lange
- Van Riebeeck's deputy appointed
- Arrival at Texel
- Departure of the fleet
- Pernambuco trader encountered
- Mediterranean and Lisbon fleets
- Crankness of the *Drommedaris*



from a resolution of 4 December by the distinguished meeting of the aforementioned Hon. Lords Directors<sup>1</sup>. This extract was taken to Riebeeck in Texel by the two commissioned Directors Roch and De Lange<sup>2</sup>, and handed over to him.

*Sunday 17th* The said Riebeeck sailed to the ship *Walvis*<sup>3</sup> in which were the Hon. Roch and the Hon. De Lange, and informed Their Honours that the gardener Hendrick Boom<sup>4</sup> had come on board our ship by mistake and that we were provided with neither water nor beer for the voyage.

Shortly after we had returned, the aforesaid Hon. gentlemen themselves came on board the *Drommedaris* and ordered the construction of a small cabin beyond the pantry for the gardener for the use of his family. After this Their Honours, having issued some further orders, left again.

*18th* Fair weather with southerly wind. Received a lighter alongside, the skipper being Jacob Gerritsen, with sundry provisions and firewood for the voyage and for the officers' quarters and daily use. These were all taken over and received in good order to-day, with the exception of one anker of brandy, according to the advice forwarded by letter to the Directors at Amsterdam, as can be seen from the copy in our letter-book.

*19th* Wind as before with rough weather. At midday, the weather having abated somewhat, the Hon. Roch brought the box with papers<sup>5</sup> on board, together with the muster-roll of the crew.

*20th* In the morning fine, favourable weather, the breeze as above. Quickly checked the muster-roll and found our crew to be complete and correct, with the exception of a boy who had come aboard without the knowledge of the Directors, and was therefore sent away.

To-day the Hon. Roch once again came on board, bringing with him the extract from the resolution<sup>6</sup> passed by the Hon. Directors of the Chamber of Amsterdam

1. This extract from the resolution of 4 December 1651 is to be found in C. 409: Letters Received, 1649—1660, p. 37. Cape Archives.

2. The Company often availed itself of the services of *gekommitteerde bewindhebbers*—directors who received special commissions and who usually acted together in pairs, as Roch and De Lange had done here. See e.g. Klerk de Reus, *Geschichtlicher Ueberblick*, etc., pp. 34—37.

3. *Whale*.

4. Hendrick Boom, who came out as a gardener, later became one of the first free burghers and also one of the first burgher councillors. Amongst the fourteen signatories to the first burgher petition (22 December 1658) his name stands second. In the place where his signature should have been, appears a mark—like various other free burghers and many people in Europe at that time, he was unable to write. Cf. *Journal*, 23 December 1658.

5. The box with papers, as one would expect, contained various documents, amongst other regulations against illegal private trading, lists of tools and charts, instructions for officials, invoices of goods and an instruction regarding the fire-hose. But it contained also articles of a different nature, such as the key of the medicine chest, and a model rudder which could be constructed in time of need. Godée Molsbergen, *Jan van Riebeeck*, p. 75, note 1.

6. See note 1 above.



on the 4th instant to the effect that aforementioned Riebeeck should fly the flag on the *Drommedaris* and have command over the departing ships. He brought also the original letter and order<sup>1</sup> of the same Chamber that in the event of his death the skipper, Davit de Coninck, should carry on in his place as Commander at the Cape.

At about noon, the pilots being on board, we set sail from the *Balgh* before a southerly wind for Texel, where, praise God, we arrived in the evening together with the *Reijger* and came safely to anchor in 9 fathoms.

21st Fine weather with a fresh breeze from the south.

22nd *Idem* and calm. Last night the yacht *Goede Hoope* also arrived in Texel from the *Balgh*, anchoring close to us. The skipper of the yacht, Sijmon Turver, having come on board our ship, 50 reals of eight<sup>2</sup> in specie were counted out to him to be used for necessary refreshments according to instructions of the Hon. Lords Directors. For this amount he passed a receipt to Riebeeck and promised to render account.

In the evening a slight breeze sprang up from the N.E.

23rd In the morning calm and the breeze easterly. Later in the day, the breeze freshening gently, the entire fleet of merchant vessels set sail from Texel, some reaching the open sea but many having to remain inside and drop anchor.

At midday the Hon. Roch and the Hon. De Lange came on board and gave us our final orders to set out to sea, namely the three of us, *Drommedaris*, *Reijger* and *Hoope*, as soon as we had the pilots on board, without waiting for the *Walvis* and the *Oliphant*<sup>3</sup>. These two ships, to their regret, could not get out of the *Balgh*, much less join us, owing to the low water.

During the night another lighter with sundry provisions came alongside.

Sunday 24th In the morning the wind was easterly and the pilot came aboard. We set sail at about noon in the name of the Lord with the *Drommedaris*, *Reijger* and *Hoope* in company with a great fleet of merchantmen, and in the evening an hour

1. This original letter and order, according to which David de Coninck would succeed Van Riebeeck as Commander of the Cape should the latter die, is to be found in C. 409: Letters Received, 1649—1660, p. 25. Cape Archives. On account of the danger and the duration of the long voyage, it was customary for the Company to provide in this way for successors to their high officials abroad. Sometimes provision was made for a second, a third and even a fourth successor. See e.g. Van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek*, 1602—1811, I (1602—1642), pp. 20—21 (Instruction for Pieter Both, 1609).

2. The real (or Spanish real) of eight is a silver coin which had been imported by the Portuguese into the East and remained a unit in the monetary system of the Dutch East India Company in its Eastern possessions. It was accepted as legal tender also in the Netherlands. Towards the middle of the seventeenth century its value stood at 2 guilders 8 stivers, i.e. about 4/9½ to-day, if we reckon 10 guilders to the English or the South African pound. Cf. for instance *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, II (edited by S. de Graaff and D. G. Stibbe), p. 794—under *muntwezen*.

3. The ships *Walvis* and *Oliphant* (*Elephant*) were originally part of Van Riebeeck's fleet. However, they left Holland ten days after his departure, had a disastrous voyage and arrived in Table Bay about a month after Van Riebeeck. See *Journal*, 7 May 1652; Godée Molsbergen, *Jan van Riebeeck*, p. 75; and Leipoldt, *Jan van Riebeeck*, p. 98.



after sunset all, praise God, fortunately reached the open sea outside Texel. We then set our course S.W. and S.W. by S. towards the Heads<sup>1</sup>.

25th Christmas Day. The wind still east, sometimes half a point to the south and now and then as much to the north, blowing freshly. Estimate to have sailed 26 miles<sup>2</sup> from Texel on a south-westerly course and to be between the *Polder* and the *Gom*<sup>3</sup>, where towards evening the whole fleet had to lie to the wind. All night we kept between 20 and 23 fathoms in order to avoid the peril of the Flemish shoals.

26th Wind as before, but rather slack. The entire fleet was fairly dispersed, the flute *Reijger* as well as the yacht *Goede Hoop* becoming separated from us. During the day it became calm, so that not much progress was made. At about noon, however, we sighted the point at Calais<sup>4</sup>, which we gauged towards evening to be S.S.W. and also S.W., 4 to 5 miles away. We estimated that our progress since yesterday could not have been more than 10 miles on a south-westerly course.

In the evening still calm. Hailed a Pernambuco trader<sup>5</sup> who requested to join us and informed us that one glass ago<sup>6</sup> he had seen on our starboard the flute and the yacht aforesaid, which had wandered somewhat amongst the large number of ships.

At about 4 glasses of the first watch we had a gentle breeze from N.N.W. which enabled us, praise God, to pass the Heads during the dog-watch<sup>7</sup>.

1. Van Riebeeck was now sailing into the open sea. For a comprehensive map of his route to the Cape, see the end of the book and for detailed maps of particular stages, see pp. 5—6 (The maps and descriptions are by Prof. P. Serton.)—The Heads mentioned in the Journal are the Straits of Dover.

2. Dutch miles. 1 Dutch mile = approx. 4 English miles.

3. See in connection with "the *Polder* and the *Gom*", Denucé and Gernez, *Het Zeeboek*—an anonymous sixteenth-century manuscript in the City of Antwerp library (Dirck Zael is given by the publishers as the probable writer of the original document). The *Polder* is one of the most northerly of the Flemish shoals: *dese poller van den dijck leyt omtrent n.w. van duynkercken*. *Het Zeeboek*, Chart XIV—XV. The name *Polder* for this shoal appears also on another chart of the seventeenth century. See P. J. Blok, Michiel Adriaanszoon de Ruyter, p. 72 (reproduction of the *Pascaart van de Noord Zee van Texel tot de Hoofden*, from the *Zee-Atlas* of Pieter Goos, 1675). The *Gom* (or *Goem*) is the present Goodwin Sands. Denucé and Gernez, *Het Zeeboek*, Chart XVI—XVII. In the cited *Pascaart* from the nautical atlas of Pieter Goos the *Gom* is shown as *Goeyng Sandt*. The place indicated in the Journal as "between the *Polder* and the *Gom*" would therefore be in the most southerly part of the North Sea, directly opposite the entrance to the Straits of Dover. For the elucidation of certain points in connection with this note, my thanks are due to Dr. P. Serton, Professor of Geography in the University of Stellenbosch.

4. Cape Gris Nez.

5. The Journal has: *Parnambocqs vaerder*, i.e. a ship proceeding to Pernambuco in Brazil. Pernambuco was at that time in the possession of the Netherlands West India Company. Colenbrander, *Koloniale Geschiedenis*, II, pp. 6—11.

6. i.e. half-an-hour ago. A *watch* lasted four hours and was equal to eight glasses.

7. Dog-watch: 12 midnight—4 a.m. The other watches were:—

Day-watch: 4 a.m.—8 a.m.

Morning watch: 8 a.m.—12 midday.

Afternoon watch: 12 midday—4 p.m.

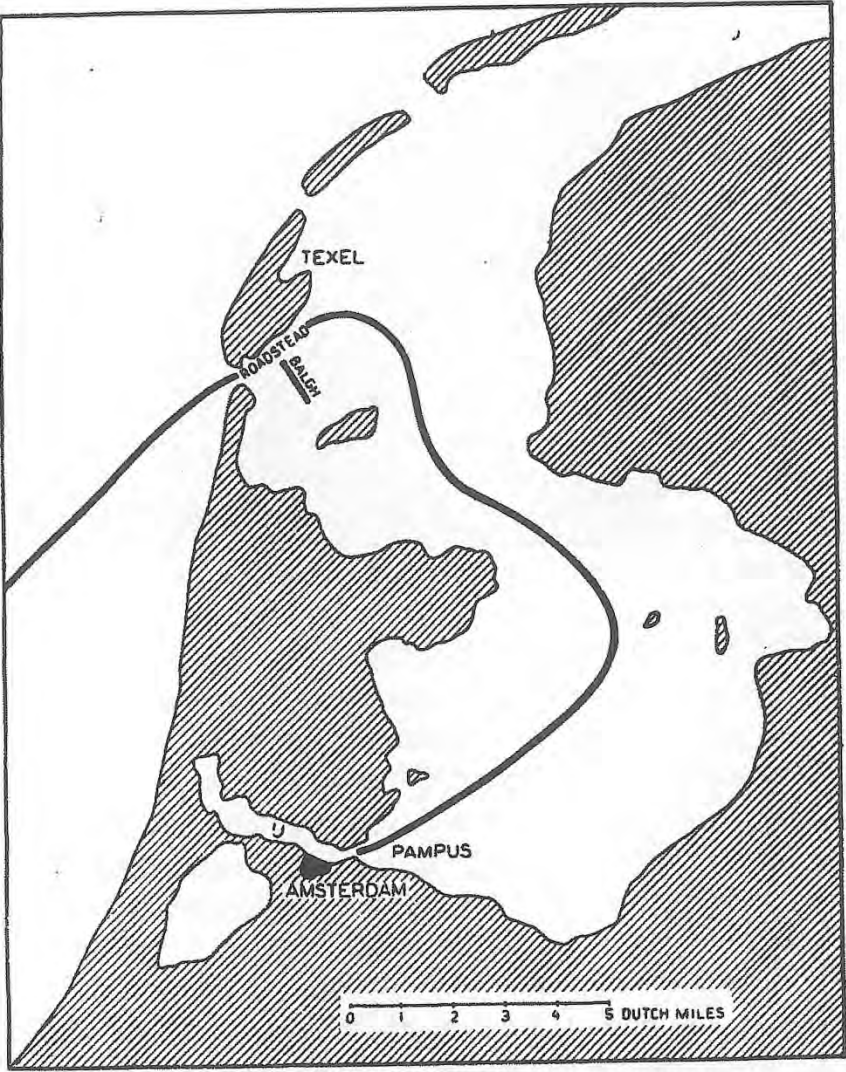
Evening watch: 4 p.m.—8 p.m.

First watch: 8 p.m.—12 midnight.

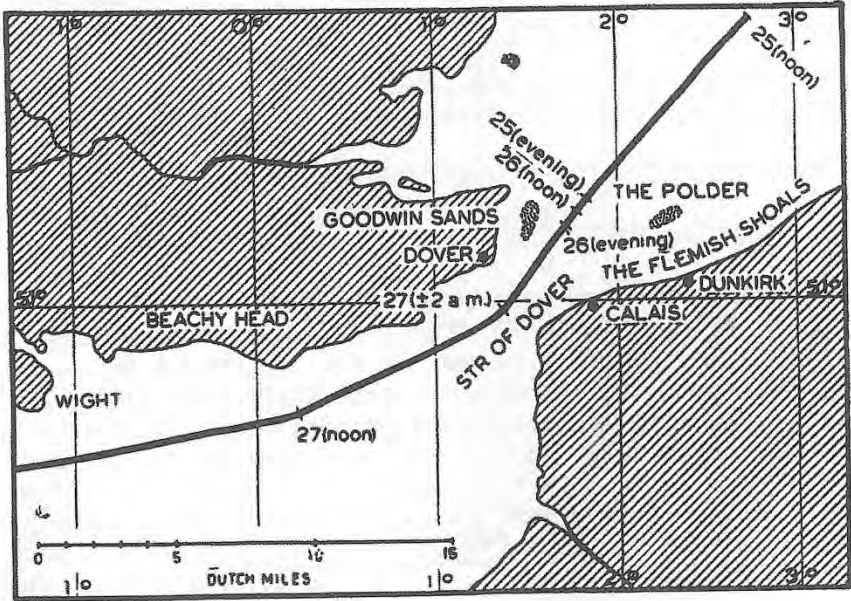
The English watches differed somewhat from the Dutch, Cf. e.g. *Imperial Dictionary*.



BEGINNING OF THE VOYAGE



PASSING THROUGH THE STRAITS OF DOVER







27th In the morning a fresh N.N.W. wind. The flute and the yacht once more with us to leeward on our port side. Hailed the yacht and gave orders that the officers of the *Reijger* be told to see to it that they watched us and remained with us. The boyers and Rouen traders<sup>1</sup> sailed in large numbers towards the French coast; and we sailed W. by S. and W.S.W., with the coast of England 2 to 2½ miles to the windward of us. Together with the entire Mediterranean and Lisbon fleets<sup>2</sup>, which were waiting one for the other, we continued on our way and made good progress, passing Beachy Head<sup>3</sup> at midday, and the Isle of Wight during the first night watch in fine weather and under a cloudy sky.

28th Wind northerly; fair progress. Saw no land in the morning, but in the evening sighted what we presumed to be Start Point<sup>4</sup>. Wind from the N.W.; quite fresh and fine weather. Sent the chief mate with the sloop to take the signals to the *Reijger* and *Hoope*. Estimated to have sailed this day 29 miles on a W. by S. course.

29th Wind as before, but veering to the west at midday with hazy and misty weather, so much so that we could not keep above S.W. and would apparently therefore come very near to the French coast between the Casquets and Ushant<sup>5</sup>. Unable to sail beyond Ushant by keeping this course, we resolved to go on the other tack towards the coast of England. We did so (it being 5 glasses after noon), the wind being mostly N.W., now and then suddenly changing a point or two to either side, so that we were steering approximately N.N.W. and obliquely towards the English coast on our starboard.

Estimate to have sailed this day 16 miles on a S.W. by W. course.

30th Wind still W. and W.N.W., blowing very strongly. We found our ship to be so cranky that we could carry no sail, and fearing great difficulty on account of this, summoned the officers of the *Reijger* and the *Hoope* on board<sup>6</sup>. All present,

1. The Journal has *Rouaensvaerders*, i.e. ships sailing to Rouen near the mouth of the Seine in France.

2. The Journal has: *straetse ende lixboase vlote*. *Straetse vlote* would be a fleet sailing through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean. See Godée Molsbergen, Jan van Riebeeck, p. 71, note 6.

3. In the Journal: *hoeck van Bevesier*, in the seventeenth century a popular Dutch name for Beachy Head. Cf. e.g. Denucé en Gernez, *Het Zeeboek*, Chart XVI—XVII.

4. In the Journal: *'t land van Goudtstaert*, Start Point in Devonshire. *Ibid.*, Charts XX—XXI, where the name *Goutstart* appears.

5. The Journal has: *de Kiscas ende Eijssant*. The *Kiscas* are the Casquets, west of Alderney. Cf. Denucé and Gernez, *Het Zeeboek*, Chart XXVIII—XXIX: *dese kiskas s.o. te s. van u, aldus omtrent 2 mijl daar of. Heijssant* (or *Eijssant*) was the usual Dutch form for Ouessant (Ushant). In this connection Prof. Serton states: "A straight line from the Casquets to Ushant, two advanced island positions, forms a sort of safety margin: as long as the skipper remained outside this, he was safe; once he came inside, it became doubtful whether he would succeed in rounding Ushant when a westerly wind blew."

6. This was a meeting of the Broad Council, which was the highest authoritative body of the fleet and consisted of the Commander, as Chairman, and the most important officers of the *Reijger* and the *Goede Hoop*. See minutes of this meeting, C. 1: Resolutions, Council of Policy,

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including our ship's officers, declared that it was not possible to stand up against rough weather with such a cranky ship and that she could easily be overturned by a heavy swell. On account of this we resolved unanimously, though reluctantly yet of necessity, to seek a harbour on the coast of England and to obtain there as much stone for ballast as we might deem necessary for properly steadying the ship.

We therefore altered our course to N. and N. by E. and each went back to his ship; but in the evening, shortly after the end of the first watch, had a N.N.E. wind. Not being able to reach the English coast we used this favourable wind and sailed outward along the channel, W. and W. by N., in the hope that the Almighty would let us keep this favourable wind until we were beyond the peril of enemies, when we could bring some cannon below for steadying the ship.

*Sunday ultimo* Wind still northerly, blowing strongly, but veering slightly to the east; course W. and W. by S., with brisk progress.

In the evening the wind began to blow much more strongly, so much so that the topsails had to be taken in. At about 8 glasses of the first watch there was such a heavy swell that the ship was flung completely on its side, to no small consternation of all those on board who, owing to the crankness of the ship, had grave fears of her capsizing. From this the Almighty has preserved us on this occasion; but we were very much exposed to this danger as the storm continued all night with such hard squalls from the N. and N.N.E. that we could barely make progress under reefed courses without bonnets.

1–30 January 1652

On board the ship *Drommedaris*

JANUARY 1652

*Primo New Year's Day.* Wind N. and N.N.E., still equally strong, tempestuous and squally, with hail, snow and rain. Continued with small mainsails as above running before the wind on a W.S.W. course. We could not properly determine our position at midday, but estimated it to be lat. 49 deg. 2 min. N. and long. 9 deg. 37 min. We progressed this day 30 miles.

*2nd* Fine, calm weather, wind N. and W.N.W., course S.W.; at times calm, but mostly a moderate breeze so that at noon we estimated to be at lat. 47 deg. 37 min. and to have advanced 30 miles this day; long. as in margin<sup>1</sup>.

During the night the wind at times somewhat changeable, but on the

*3rd* at the break of day (course being as before) a fine topsail breeze began to

1651–1663, p. 2. Cape Archives. These minutes are in Van Riebeeck's own handwriting. Compare the handwriting with that of other documents which he himself wrote, namely (a) a letter dated 15 March 1660 to the Chamber of Amsterdam regarding his own personal affairs, a photographic copy of which I obtained for the Cape Archives from the State Archives at The Hague; and (b) a "Secret Signal", dated 28 March 1661, in connection with the arrival of the Company's valuable return ships in Table Bay, in C. 410: Letters Received, 1660–1668, p. 216. Cape Archives.

1. In the margin it is given as 7 deg. 40 min.

**Summary:**

- Ship in danger of capsizing
- Pirate sighted
- Progress of the voyage
- Death of carpenter
- Departure of the Brazil and Guinea traders
- Canary Islands
- Health of the crews
- Cape Verde Islands
- Stormy weather



blow from the north; owing to the crankness of the ship, however, we had to take in the topsail and lower the mainsail, to our great regret. The other ships were nearly all the time carrying full topsails, and to the great retardation of the voyage had to wait for us. It is most deplorable that in the Fatherland the servants or dockhands of the Hon. Company pay so little attention to the clear instructions issued by the Hon. Directors regarding the loading and stowing of the ships. As a result of this the Company's property as well as so many souls are exposed to danger; for hardly had a substantial wind filled the sails than the ship would heel over so much to the one side as if she wanted to capsize. We thus sailed in great anxiety, and if Almighty God had not favoured us with a fair wind for sailing down the Channel, we should of necessity have had to seek a harbour in England for taking in ballast, to the great retardation of our voyage and the disservice of the Company.

At noon, the wind having moderated somewhat, we hoisted the topsail again, and successfully determined our position at 45 deg. 6 min. lat., 6 deg. 28 min. long. This day made good 22 miles on a S.W. by S. course.

Towards evening we saw a sail waiting for us; but having recognized us it sailed obliquely away, for which reason we surmised it to be a Turkish, Biscayan or other pirate<sup>1</sup>.

4<sup>th</sup> Wind westerly and also northerly; course S.W. and S.W. by W.; at noon we were at lat. 43 deg. 40 min. and had sailed 27 miles on a S.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. course. Estimated to be opposite Cape Finisterre<sup>2</sup>.

5<sup>th</sup> In the morning, wind W.S.W. and blowing so strongly that we had to take in the topsail and lower the mainsail. According to our estimate, we were not more than 14 to 15 miles from the coast. As the wind began to shift about more and more and as we feared that it might continue blowing so strongly and contrarily for some time that we might be driven right on to the coast, we thought it fit to change in good time to the other tack in order to get beyond Finisterre again, there to find more open sea.

But hardly an hour after we had tacked about, the Lord God made the rough weather subside and gave us a favourable W.N.W. wind, with which we tacked about once more and proceeded on a S.W. by W. course in order with this suitable weather to sail past the Barlaijes<sup>3</sup>. To this end we put the topsail up again.

Estimate to be at lat. 42 deg. 26 min. and this day to have sailed 20 miles on a S.S.E. course. During the night the wind shifted to N.W., a topsail breeze.

1. It was not exceptional for Turkish and other pirates to be in the Bay of Biscay at this time. Godée Molsbergen, Jan van Riebeeck, p. 79.

2. On the north-westerly coast of Spain.

3. According to the latitude given—approximately 40 deg. N.—these are obviously the Berlenga Islands on the coast of Portugal. This group of islands, like the Casquets and Ushant, form a fixed point which had to be taken into account long in advance in order to avoid trouble later on.



6<sup>th</sup> Wind once more W. by S. and W.S.W., a moderate topsail breeze.

7<sup>th</sup> Wind W.N.W., squally; determined lat. at 39 deg. 20 min. and to have sailed 26 miles on a S.W. by S. course. Estimate the Barlajjes to be 35 to 36 miles away E. and E. by N.

To-day Tijmon Janssen of Amsterdam, carpenter, died of dropsy which he had developed in the Fatherland<sup>1</sup>, and in the evening was lowered overboard according to the practice at sea; other than this, praise God, we know of no particular sickness among the men.

During the night, wind as before but somewhat stronger, so that we were able to sail with the mainsail only.

8<sup>th</sup> Stiff wind as before; put the topsail up again, with great anxiety however. At noon determined our position to be lat. 37 deg. 42 min., long. 2 deg. 5 min., and to have sailed 28 miles S.S.W.

To-day we are beyond Cape Vincent<sup>2</sup>. Towards evening it began blowing somewhat strongly so that the topsail had to be taken in, and at night the wind gained such force that during the first watch the mainsail and the mizzen were lowered.

9<sup>th</sup> Since the dog-watch, a fresh N.W. topsail breeze. At noon determined our position to be 35 deg. 52 min. lat. and 1 deg. 9 min. long. Estimated to have sailed 29 miles S.S.W.

10<sup>th</sup> Squally, westerly wind. At noon found our position to be 33 deg. 30 min. lat. and 0 deg. 24 min. long.; estimated to have sailed 36 miles S.W. by W. and S.S.W., so that in the evening reckoned to be opposite Madeira<sup>3</sup>, but saw no land.

11<sup>th</sup> Wind and weather as before. Determined our position to be 31 deg. 6 min. lat. and long. *ut supra*, and to have sailed 38 miles south.

During the afternoon the Guinea trader, *Liefde*<sup>4</sup>, desired to part from us. The Brazil trader<sup>5</sup> had done this without warning notwithstanding that while still at the Heads it had sought and obtained our convoy and company with the promise to take letters from us via Brazil and have them delivered to our Lords Principals. We can now only get these ready for delivery by the Guinea trader via the Canaries, where it will first call.

1. This was the first death to occur in the *Drommedaris* during the voyage.

2. Cape St. Vincent, the south-westerly point of Portugal.

3. With the Portuguese island Madeira on their starboard, they were now sailing opposite the north-west coast of Africa.

4. This is the first time mention is made of the *Liefde* (lit. *Love*), a ship on her way to the Guinea coast. From the lines which follow, it would appear that she had joined Van Riebeeck's fleet *omtrent de Hooffden*, i.e. in the Straits of Dover.

5. i.e. the *parnambocqs vaerder* under discussion on 26 December 1651. See p. 4, note 5.



JANUARY 1652

12<sup>th</sup> It was mostly calm during the day, so the merchant and the skipper of the Guinea trader came aboard our ship; to them we gave our dispatch to the Hon. Directors of the Chamber of Amsterdam, the contents of which can be seen in our letter-book<sup>1</sup>. At noon found our position to be 29 deg. 50 min. lat. and 41 min. long. and to have sailed 19 miles S. by E.

13<sup>th</sup> Wind westerly. Saw the Canary Islands, to wit Lanzarote, Graciosa, Alegranza and Fuerteventura<sup>2</sup>, where the aforementioned little flute, *Liefde*, parted from us firing one shot in salute to which we replied likewise. Her intention is to call first at the Grand Canary where she will seek an opportunity of transmitting our letters to the Fatherland.

Estimated our position to-day to be 28 deg. 56 min. lat., long. *ut supra* and to have sailed about 14 miles.

In the evening the wind shifted to N.W. Set our course W.S.W. and W. by S. in order to sight Grand Canary and Tenerife and to pass in sight of them.

During the night, after the first watch, we saw Grand Canary and lay to a while until fully the first half of the dog-watch was over, when we passed within 1½ miles of it, sailing S.W. and S.W. by S.

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> In the morning at break of day the wind came from the N.E. with which we passed aforementioned Canary Island on the E. on a S.W. by S. course about 1½ miles off-shore; also Tenerife on which we saw the peak<sup>3</sup> from afar, and, praise God, a fine gentle N.E. breeze held so that we hope to have caught the trade-wind. We found our position to be 27 deg. 8 min. lat., 40 min. long.; sailed about 26 miles this day.

Also saw a strange sail, not Dutch; presumed it to be a Turkish vessel, which dared not approach us but passed behind us as close to the wind as possible in a north-westerly direction.

15<sup>th</sup> In the morning, wind easterly, course S.W. by S. At noon, lat. 25 deg. 48 min., middle-longitude 359 deg. 26 min.; advanced 26 miles.

16<sup>th</sup> Slack easterly breeze. At noon lat. 24 deg. 30 min., long. 358 deg. 14 min.; sailed 26 miles S.W. by S.

17<sup>th</sup> Slack breeze from N.E., lat. 23 deg. 54 min., long. 357 deg. 48 min.; sailed 11 miles on course *ut supra*.

18<sup>th</sup> Wind and course as before, blowing moderately, so that at noon reached lat. 22 deg. 20 min., long. 356 deg. 38 min. and advanced 29 miles.

1. This letter is signed by Van Riebeeck and David de Coninck. They mention the crankness of their ship—*de ranckete onses schips*—, the death of Tijmon Janssen, a shortage of smith's coal, satisfactory progress on the voyage and the good health of the crew (*Godeloff noch redelijck volcq*). See C. 493 : Letters Despatched, 1652—1661, pp. 1—2. C.A.

2. All well-known islands of the Canary Archipelago.

3. Pico de Teyde, approximately 12,220 feet in height.



JANUARY 1652

19th Topsail breeze from N.E., course as above. At noon reached lat. 20 deg. 30 min. and sailed 33 miles.

20th Wind and course as before. At noon we found ourselves at lat. 18 deg. 34 min. N. and long. 353 deg. 57 min., so that if we maintain this progress we hope with God's guidance to reach the Salt or Cape Verde Islands<sup>1</sup> to-morrow. We thought it advisable to summon on board the officers of the flute *Reijger* and the yacht *Hoope* to enquire after the health of their men, whether perhaps anybody was suffering from illness, as in this case it might be necessary before passing these islands to call at one of them for refreshments. The officers, upon our signal, having come on board, we ascertained that none of the ships, praise God, had any sick men, at any rate nothing serious enough to retard our voyage by calling at the islands<sup>2</sup>. It was unanimously agreed to pass them by and with all possible diligence to pursue our voyage in order to attain Cabo de boa Esperance in good time, to which end may the Almighty grant us His holy guidance. Amen.

This day advanced about 35 miles.

Sunday 21st Course and wind as above. At noon lat. 16 deg. 56 min., long. 352 deg. 32 min., and sailed 32 miles. Sighted one of the Salt Islands named Ilha de Zal<sup>3</sup> about 4 miles from us.

Towards evening set our course S.S.E. to see the other islands as well.

22nd Wind *ut supra*. Sighted Ilha de Mayo<sup>4</sup> 3 miles to the south of us and passed it to-day; adjusted our course to S. by E. At noon were at lat. 15 deg. 16 min., long. 353 deg. 14 min. and sailed 26 miles S. by E.

23rd Lovely breeze as before. At noon were at lat. 13 deg. 15 min., long. 353 deg. 26 min. and sailed 30 miles S. by E.

24th Wind N.N.E., a fine breeze, course *ut supra*. At noon lat. 11 deg. 44 min., long. 353 deg. 45 min. and sailed 24 miles.

25th Easterly wind and course as before. Lat. 10 deg. 10 min., long. 354 deg. 4 min. and advanced 24 miles.

26th Wind E.N.E., course as above. At noon lat. 7 deg. 53 min. N., long. 354 deg. 32 min.; this day advanced 35 miles.

In the evening some thunder and lightning.

27th Slack wind from N.E.; course *ut supra*; waves began rolling from the S.E.

1. The Cape Verde Islands were formerly also known as the Salt Islands, owing to the large quantity of salt found there.

2. A meeting of the Broad Council was therefore also held in connection with the health of the crew. See minutes C. 1 : Resolutions, Council of Policy, 1651—1663, pp. 3—4. C. A. These minutes, like those of the first meeting of 30 December 1651, are in Van Riebeeck's own handwriting.

3. Sal, an unimportant island belonging to the Cape Verde group.

4. Mayo, another island of the Cape Verde group.

## JANUARY 1652

At noon estimated to be at lat. 6 deg. 15 min., long. 354 deg. 52 min. and to have sailed 25 miles.

In the evening thunder and lightning. During the night heavy showers and S.E. winds with rain; *Item*

*Sunday 28th* East wind. At noon estimated to be at lat. 5 deg. 23 min., long. *ut supra* and to have sailed about 13 miles. Towards evening had a moderate north wind and set our course S.S.E.

*29th* In the morning north wind as before, course S.S.E. At noon estimated to be at lat. 3 deg. 58 min., long. 355 deg. 27 min. and to have sailed 23 miles.

During the night stormy weather with thunder, lightning and variable winds which at times were rather strong.

*30th* In the morning northerly wind, a gentle breeze; course *ut supra*. At noon found lat. 3 deg. 42 min. N., long. 355 deg. 40 min. and sailed 9 miles.

*Ultimo* Calm and variable weather, intermixed with short, rainy squalls. Estimated lat. 2 deg. 58 min., long. 355 deg. 58 min.; sailed S.S.E. 12 miles.

### Next Edition...

February and March 1652

Highlights to look forward to:

- Slow progress
- Fear of Prince Rupert
- Death of Chief Surgeon's child
- Skipper Turver visits the *Drommedaris*
- Cannon taken below deck
- Reasonable progress
- Water ration reduced
- Determination of course

### Final Words...

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Editor: Marissa Knibbs

Tel: 021 975 2617

E-mail: [marissa@ipicgroup.com](mailto:marissa@ipicgroup.com)