

## PRIVATEERS AT THE CAPE IN 1744 AND 1747: INCIDENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

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The war at sea between Britain and Spain (1739-48) and Britain and France (1744-48), forming part of the greater Austrian succession struggle, has been seen in Cape history largely in terms of the military defences of the settlement and of the unsuccessful attempt by the British admiral, Edward Boscawen, to reverse French gains in the Indian Ocean region in 1748 with the aid of Dutch auxiliaries. The maritime war, however, affected the Dutch East India Company's southern African colony in other ways and we select two incidents in these years in order to assess their wider implications.

For the background to the first of them we must consider the voyage round the world of George Anson's naval fourth-rate, the *Centurion*, which put into Table Bay on 22 March 1744 to refit, refresh and take on extra seamen for the long haul to European waters and a triumphant homecoming in Portsmouth harbour.<sup>1</sup> Two returning London East Indiamen were in Table Bay to give Anson an enthusiastic welcome: the *Salisbury* from Madras, commanded by Christopher Burrows, and the *Warwick* from Bombay and Anjengo on the Malabar coast, whose captain, Robert Misenor, was clearly relieved to make port, since his hand pumps were choked with the black pepper which formed the bulk of his cargo.<sup>2</sup> The arrival of the *Centurion* also caused quite a stir on shore and the only jarring note was struck by Anson's failure to give gun for gun in the exchange of courtesy salutes between ship and shore, "at which," Misenor informs us, "the Govr was much affronted."<sup>3</sup>

The voyage of the *Centurion* was undertaken in the swashbuckling tradition of an earlier age and had more in common with the exploits of Sir Francis Drake than with naval strategy as the 18th century advanced. The expedition in which the *Centurion* took part was costly in both men and ships; nor did it do Spain a mortal injury. The heavy losses were only partly offset by the rich haul brought back by Anson to Britain and by the public rejoicing at a time when the naval war was increasing in intensity. For while Anson lay at the Cape, the Anglo-French struggle began, a contest which was also to involve the Dutch, despite their official neutrality. In the continuing war there was to be no further "dissipation of naval strength in predatory voyages."<sup>4</sup> Prizes were still taken, but operations mounted with the sole purpose of preying on enemy commerce were in the hands of the owners of privateers. France, Britain and Spain had many such vessels on the world's oceans.<sup>5</sup> We may take a last look at the *Centurion* at

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1. See B Somerville, *Commodore Anson's voyage into the South Seas and around the world* (London and Toronto, 1934), pp 264-265. All dates in this article reflect the Gregorian calendar, not adopted by Britain until 1752.
  2. L/MAR, Ships' Logs: 478A, *Salisbury*; 585B, *Warwick* (India Office Records, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, henceforth IOR).
  3. L/MAR: 585B. The governor was Hendrik Swellengrebel.
  4. H W Richmond, *The navy in the war of 1739-48* (Cambridge, 1920), I, p 100.
  5. British East Indiamen often carried letters of marque authorizing them to attack enemy shipping (Richmond, *Navy*, III, p 181).

the end of an era as she rode at anchor in Table Bay. Aboard her was a galaxy of future British naval talent and a tired crew, enjoying a brief respite of the rigours of a long cruise. One man, the supernumerary purser, Laurence Millechamp, has left us a picture of a well-ordered colony, with an industrious population served faithfully by honest and able Khoikhoi servants. He says nothing about slavery, but his favourable comments on the Khoikhoi are a corrective to earlier descriptions of them.<sup>6</sup>

The most valuable part of the *Centurion's* treasure had been seized when she captured the Manila-bound Acapulco galleon *Nuestra Senora de Covadonga* off Cape Espíritu Santo in the Philippines on 1 July 1743. This was a blow to Spain and resulted in the suspension of shipments of silver to the Far East from the mines of the New World and a consequent shortage of specie from commercial transactions in India and south-east Asia. Moreover, the Spanish authorities had to guard against the possibility of a British attack on the Philippines and with the threat of further disruption of eastern trade should France enter the war, had sought to counter the isolation of Manila by opening that port to neutral Danish commercial interests. This decree of 1742 was not acted upon until 1745, when an international consortium headed by the French governor-general Dupleix carried out a successful trading venture under cover of the Danish flag. The voyage clearly demonstrated the fact that European merchants in the east, of whatever nationality, were quite prepared to ignore wars between states in the quest for personal gain.<sup>7</sup>

When hostilities between Britain and France began in 1744, the British effort in eastern waters was concentrated upon crippling the new enemy. Soon after the declaration of war, a small naval squadron under Curtis Barnet sailed for the East Indies to protect British trade and attack French shipping. Two weeks earlier, on 4 May, the London privateers *Fame* and *Winchelsea*, together with a smaller ship, the *Caesar*, set out from the Thames in search of prizes. The *Fame*, a fifty-four gun vessel with a complement of 360 men under the command of Philip Comyn, was a captured Spanish ship, the *San José*, and the largest of the ninety-eight British privateers at sea in those years.<sup>8</sup> The *Winchelsea*, captained by John Gerard, carried thirty-six guns and 200 men and the little *Caesar* had ten guns and a crew of twenty-four under John Ayres.

Barnet's squadron rounded the Cape to Madagascar, after taking a Spanish privateer and her prizes in the Cape Verde Islands. The *Fame* and the *Winchelsea* captured two French ships in the Atlantic and brought them into Lisbon before continuing their cruise southward. They reached Table Bay on 28 November 1744 with the latest war news and sailed again on 7 December, six days before the arrival of the *Caesar*.<sup>9</sup> Ayres stayed until Christmas Day, leaving for a secret destination and apparently playing no further part in the enterprise. The larger privateers also sailed without disclosing their plans,<sup>10</sup> but it is evident that both they and Barnet hoped to

6. G Williams, ed, *Documents relating to Anson's voyage round the world 1740-1744*, Navy Records Society, 109 (London, 1967), p 193.

7. H Furber, *Rival empires of trade in the Orient 1600-1800*, Europe and the World in the Age of Expansion, II (Minneapolis and London, 1976), pp 287-288.

8. G Williams, *History of the Liverpool privateers and letters of marque with an account of the Liverpool slave trade* (London and Liverpool, 1897), p 49

9. Not to be confused with the London East Indiaman *Caesar*, commanded by Matthew Court, then loading pepper at Bengkulu in the Indies and calling at the Cape early in 1745. Her log is in L/MAR: 235F (IOR).

10. C 530. Uitzgaande brieven, 1745: to Lords 17, 10 April (Cape Archives, henceforth CA).

intercept the homeward-bound East Indiamen of the French China fleet, the *Dauphin*, the *Jason* and the *Hercule*. The first two of these, under the command of Richard Butler de Trovern and Jacques Magon de la Mettrie respectively, had visited the Cape on their outward run early in 1744.<sup>11</sup> Barnet had the advantage of a quicker passage and after dividing the squadron, made for the Indonesian archipelago, where he lay in wait for the French Indiamen on his ship, the *Deptsford*, in company with George, Earl of Northesk, on the *Preston*. There vessels were disguised as merchantmen and flew Dutch colours. Barnet's vigilance was rewarded on 5 February 1745, when the three Frenchmen were taken after a sharp engagement at the Bangka Strait off south-eastern Sumatra (Sumatra). The prizes were disposed of at Jakarta (Batavia), where the Dutch bought them with their cargoes for a sum well below their real value.<sup>12</sup>

Before returning to the British privateers, certain consequences of Barnet's sale of the French ships at Jakarta remain to be discussed. The *Jason* and the *Hercule* were incorporated into the Dutch East India Company's main fleet, the former being renamed the *Oplettendheijd* and the latter, the *Toevalligheijd*. They sailed for Europe on 12 March 1745, reaching Texel in the following October. The *Toevalligheijd* did not touch at the Cape, but the former *Jason*, under her new name and with a Dutch captain, Hendrik Bommer, made a return visit on 15 June 1745 and lay at anchor in False Bay until 24 July.<sup>13</sup> The French authorities, not surprisingly, took a serious view of the Dutch action at Jakarta. The Dutch East India Company agreed to make reparation, but failure to adhere to the settlement arranged with the *Compagnie des Indes* led to diplomatic pressure before the matter was finally disposed of.<sup>14</sup>

The third French vessel, the *Dauphin*, was first taken over by Jakarta burghers, but was then transferred to the company and rechristened the *Straat Banca*. Her brief career as a Dutch ship was closely linked with the commercial policies initiated by the governor-general of the Netherlands Indies, Gustaaf Willem van Imhoff, and initially with the activities of the British privateers. Van Imhoff's plans stemmed directly from the capture by Anson of the Acapulco galleon in 1743. He sought to turn Spanish discomfiture to Dutch advantage by establishing commercial relations with the Spanish empire and after the failure of an official approach to Manila in 1744 with this end in view, conceived the idea of opening New Spain in the Americas to Dutch trade.<sup>15</sup>

An expedition was therefore assembled and an agreement entered into with the captains of the British privateers, *Fame* and *Winchelsea*, then at anchor in the Jakarta roadstead, to provide protection for four merchantmen, including the *Straat Banca*. Comyn of the *Fame*, who knew the region well, was to take charge of the navigation and the privateer captains were to receive 20% of the profits accruing. The Dutch East India Company kept a low profile in the undertaking, which was made out to be essen-

11. C 618, Dag Register (duplicate), 1743-1745: 20 Jan and 28 Feb 1744, pp 220, 232 (CA)

12. R Beatson, *Naval and military memoirs of Great Britain from 1727 to 1738* (Boston, 1972 reprint), I, pp 272-273.

13. J R Bruijn *et al.*, *Dutch-Asiatic shipping in the 17th and 18th centuries*, III, Rijksgechiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie 167 (The Hague, 1979), pp 376-377.

14. W H Dalgliesh, *The Company of the Indies in the days of Dupleix* (Easton, 1933), pp 206-207.

15. For this scheme and its outcome see A K A Gijsberti Hodenpijl, 'De mislukte pogingen van G G van Imhoff tot het aanknoopen van handelsbetrekkingen met Spaansch-Amerika in 1745 en 1746,' *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 73, 1917, pp 502-557.

tially a private venture to unknown lands beyond Japan. It should be remembered that this was the period of Van Imhoff's stimulation of burgher participation in trade throughout the Dutch Indies from the African coast to the Far East, a liberal policy which, however, excluded the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>16</sup>

Van Imhoff's plan miscarried. The ships sailed from Jakarta on 24 June 1745 and after taking steps to hide their real purpose from the Manila authorities, made their way to Macao to load more goods. They finally set off for the Americas on 14 September, but soon ran into a typhoon. The expedition was abandoned on 20 October and the six vessels limped back to Jakarta between November 1745 and February 1746. The log of the London East Indiamen *Augusta*, which called at the Dutch port on her way to China, provides us with a glimpse of the earliest arrivals. From her captain, Thomas Parker, we learn that the *Fame* sighted French ships off the Ladrões in the course of the voyage, but avoided an engagement and allowed them to sail on to Canton.<sup>17</sup> Van Imhoff sent out a smaller expedition in 1746 without British help, in which the *Straat Banca*, now renamed the *Hervattinge*, again took part. It reached the Americas, but the enterprise was a complete fiasco and served only to embroil the Dutch further with a furious Spanish government. Van Imhoff might, perhaps, have managed to inaugurate a limited clandestine trade with the Americas, but his methods could never have persuaded Spain to formulate a more flexible commercial policy in order to accommodate the Dutch. Certainly, the governor-general's decision to enlist the help of British privateers in his project when Britain was at war with Spain was a serious mistake. It was not Van Imhoff's only close association with his British friends in the period. Four cadets from the recently established marine academy at Jakarta had embarked as volunteers with Barnet and Lord Northesk and were present in the successful action against the French at the Bangka Strait.<sup>18</sup>

The *Fame* privateer had been dismasted and severely damaged structurally in the typhoon of late 1745 and Comyn sold her, with her guns and stores, at Jakarta on 22 March 1746. He embarked on the *Winchelsea* which had also suffered in the storm, but after undergoing repairs, sailed for home on 4 September. She touched at Madagascar and reached Table Bay on 12 January 1747, by this time under the command of John Corner.<sup>19</sup> On the same day the *Porto Bello* sloop came in from the Dutch factory of Nagapattinam (Negapatnam) on the Coromandel coast. She had been despatched by the British authorities in some haste and her master, Walter Hooke, was bringing the disturbing news to Britain that Madras had fallen to the French on 21 September of the previous year.<sup>20</sup> Also in harbour were four Indiamen belonging to the London company: the *Bombay Castle*, commanded by Thomas Browne and destined for Madras, but necessarily diverted, Francis d'Abbadie's *Portfield*, on a voyage to Bom-

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16. For free trade under Van Imhoff see A Das Gupta, *Malabar in Asian trade 1740-1800* (Cambridge, 1967), pp 84-87.
  17. L/MAR: 629C (IOR). Parker had just succeeded the well-connected Augustus Townshend, no stranger to the Cape, who died at Jakarta "of the Flux" on 18 Nov 1745 at the age of twenty-eight. On Townshend see E Cotton, *East Indiamen: the East India Company's maritime service*, ed C Fawcett (London, 1949), pp 180-181.
  18. F de Haan, 'De "Academie de Marine" te Batavia 1743-1755,' *Tijdschrift voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 38, 1895, pp 605-606.
  19. C 532, Uitgaande brieven, 1747: to Lords 17, 14 Jan (CA).
  20. Not the *Porto Bello* of the London Company's main fleet, commanded by Benjamin Fisher, homeward-bound from the Far East in 1746 and outward-bound late in 1747, calling at the Cape on both voyages. Her log is in L/MAR: 615D (IOR).

bay, Surat and Mokha, the *Pelham*, returning from Bombay where her original captain, William Wells, had died and the command had passed to the chief mate, George Lindsay, and the *Norfolk* with Nathaniel Hancock as captain and, like the *Bombay Castle*, intended for Madras.<sup>21</sup> The information supplied by Hooke of the *Porto Bello* was of more than passing interest to Browne and Hancock, although Lindsay of the *Pelham* had heard that Madras was under siege when he called at Tellicherry on the Malabar coast. The master of the *Porto Bello* lost no time at the Cape and sailed with his bad news on 26 January 1747 after taking on Lindsay's fifth mate, William Grearson, as acting chief.<sup>22</sup> Hooke had a lively voyage during which several of his men were impressed for service with the Royal Navy and he was chased by a French privateer into Milford Haven on the Welsh coast.<sup>23</sup>

It was at this juncture that two French vessels bound for home were nearing the Cape coast from the Mascarenes. They were the *Apollon*, carrying fifty guns and 550 men under the command of Baudran de la Mettrie, and the *Anglesey*, with forty-eight guns and a crew of 430, captained by Gervais de la Mabonnays. Despite their later insistence on royal status, they were in fact privateers fitted out by Wailsh and d'Héquerly of Nantes<sup>24</sup> and had come out to the Indian Ocean in the previous year on convoy duty. The *Anglesey* was a former British naval frigate, surrendered to the *Apollon* on 3 May 1745 by her senior surviving officer, Baker Phillips, after a fierce fight. This unfortunate lieutenant was repatriated by his captors, sentenced by court-martial to be shot for dereliction of duty and faced a firing-squad abroad the *Princess Royal* at Spithead on 30 July 1745 "with great composure and firmness."<sup>25</sup> The celebrated execution of Admiral Byng in the next decade had its precedents. The *Anglesey* was quite the most spectacular of the forty-three prizes brought to Port-Louis and Lorient in Brittany by the French during the war of 1744-48.<sup>26</sup>

Hancock of the *Norfolk* made ready to sail on 30 January 1747, but on the same day a report came from Robben Island that a ship with French colours had been sighted.<sup>27</sup> The British commander was all for going out to attack her and Lindsay of the *Pelham* noticed that the *Winchelsea* privateer had "got up yards and Topmasts," and had bent her sails in preparation for a fight. The Frenchman — it was the *Apollon* — anchored under Robben Island and sent a landing-party ashore there to request water and provisions, mentioning that she had a consort in the vicinity. Help was refused pending instructions from the governor and council, and when the *Pelham* sent a boat out to reconnoitre, the *Apollon* weighed and stood to sea. Hancock went to the governor in order to learn the Dutch attitude to French visitors. Swellengrebel told him that since the United Provinces and France were at peace, the usual courtesies would be extended to French ships,<sup>28</sup> adding, as Hancock reports it, "that we were not to molest her (the *Apollon*) on any conditions whatsoever." Browne of the *Bombay Castle*, commodore of all the British company vessels in port, called a

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For arrivals see C 619, Dag Register (original), 1744-1751: 29 Dec 1746 — 11 Jan 1747, pp 524-545 (CA).

22. L/MAR: 607A, *Pelham* (IOR).

23. L/MAR: 615C, *Porto Bello* (IOR).

24. A Martineau, *Dupleix et l'Inde française*, II (Paris, 1923), p 187.

25. Beatson, *Naval and military memoirs*, I, p 297.

26. H F Buffet, *Vie et société au port-Louis des origines à Napoléon III* (Rennes, 1972), pp 148-149.

27. C 619: p 552. Unless otherwise stated, the sources hereafter are L/MAR. 125A, *Bombay Castle*; 541A, *Norfolk*; 607A, *Pelham*; 609A, *Portfield* (IOR).

28. C 619: 30 Jan 1747, p 552.

meeting of the commanders and counselled caution, sending a party of sailors to the summit of Lion's Head (the Sugar-loaf) to confirm that the *Anglesey* was with the *Apollon*.

On 1 February, the senior French captain, Baudran de la Mettrie of the *Apollon*, addressed letters to the governor asking whether the two ships could anchor without fear of Dutch reprisals and pointing out that they only sought water and refreshment, and had no intention of causing trouble.<sup>29</sup> They later gave out that their food supplies were low, since a plague of locusts had destroyed the crops on Mauritius (Ile de France). Freedom of port was accorded them, although the Cape authorities were suspicious of their motives and resolved to keep a close watch against "ongeregelt-heeden off insolentien."<sup>30</sup> The British commanders too realized that it was their vessels which particularly interested the French and after the *Apollon* and her consort entered Table Bay on the following day, ensured that their guns were primed at night to prevent a surprise attack. The French insisted on their rights as royal ships and were highly displeased when the fort only saluted them with seven guns in reply to their nine, the usual response to visiting foreigners, other than naval craft. A deputation went to the governor to demand satisfaction and as Francis d'Abbadie of the *Portfield* tells us, Swellengrebel "was actually obliged to fire 9 guns from the Fort to them who shew'd great warmth on this occasion." Quarrels over salutes were not infrequent at the Cape, but the governor's readiness to give way in this instance had few parallels.

The French were in no hurry to leave and it was not until 27 February that they put to sea again. This was not, however, the end of the story. The *Apollon* and the *Anglesey* had taken full advantage of their stay at the Cape and were now in a fit condition to patrol the approaches for several weeks and thus to keep the enemy bottled up in the bay. They were there throughout March 1747, flying Dutch or British flags and from time to time molesting Dutch company ships entering port as a reminder to the British that they were still in the neighbourhood. There was an understandable impatience on board the London company's vessels.

On 9 March a medical doctor travelling on the *Pelham*, John Nelson, transferred to the Dutch East Indiaman *Eendragt* with his Black servant, Caesar, in order to get home more quickly. Later in the month the captains of the British company ships submitted a request to the Cape authorities that one of the small hookers lying in the roadstead be sent out to cruise off the coast in order to warn approaching British ships of the presence of enemy vessels. They would be happy to pay for this service and to place one or two of their own people on the hooker to facilitate communication. The British captains also requested permission to fly Dutch colours in port should the French again approach the bay. It was pointed out that Dutch interests were also involved, as that nation had much capital invested in the London company. The request, however, was turned down on 21 March. The flag issue was not considered and as there were only two small craft available at the Cape, they were urgently needed for the transport of goods to False Bay.<sup>31</sup>

The long period of enforced idleness at the Cape enabled Francis d'Abbadie of the *Portfield* to ply a considerable private trade in a variety of commodities from glassware and stockings to red lead and iron hoops. Idleness also led to mischief. A

29. C 450, Inkomende brieven, 1746-1747: 70 and 71 (CA).

30. C 532: to Batavia, 7 Feb 1747.

31. H C V Leibbrandt, *Precis of the archives of the Cape of Good Hope. Requesten (Memorials) 1715-1806*, I (Cape Town and London, 1905), pp 418-419.

number of men on the British ships deserted and although most were recaptured, a few remained at large. Patrick Halfpenny of the *Portfield* was still absent when the vessel finally sailed and a seaman, William Garret of the *Pelham*, got away by swimming to a Dutch ship. He had earlier received twelve lashes for leaving the ship's boat on several occasions and staying on shore without permission. Others on the *Pelham* were punished for similar misdemeanours. Lindsay's bos'n, John Gough, refused to carry out the sentences imposed on Garret and a companion in crime, James Ball, and was relieved of his post as "it was agreed he was utterly incapable (*sic*) of his Duty." Five soldiers from the *Norfolk* absconded in the longboat and landed near Green Point, but one informed on the others and as a result three more were picked up in the township and were given twenty-four lashes with the cat-o'-nine-tails. A sailor on the same vessel, James Redmond, was discharged and sent abroad the *Pelham* for using threatening language to his superiors.

The few deaths recorded occurred soon after the ships reached port. A sailor on the *Pelham*, Charles Begesta, died on 17 January 1747 and Francis d'Abbadie of the *Portfield* "sent a Shore to Sick quarters John Goodread one of the Soldiers, who was very ill of the Scurvy in Hopes he would Recover being a young man." Goodread, however, died soon afterwards on 6 January. A soldier on the *Bombay Castle*, Thomas Meager, died on the last day of 1746 and on the following morning members of the crew "carry'd ye Body of the Deceased a good way out and committed it to ye Deep." Funerals ashore did take place, but they cost money. Losses by death and desertion at the Cape were not heavy at this time, although Lindsay of the *Pelham* found it necessary to take on seven men there, including a replacement for the sailor, Michael Fitzgerald, discharged presumably to the *Bombay Castle*. The newcomers were both Dutch and British and it is interesting to note that two of the seven did not complete the voyage. The substitute for Fitzgerald, John Phillips, died and one of the others, Daniel Mills, "was Prest aboard (*sic*) the Centurion."

There were alarms as late as 7 April 1747, when a Dutch ship reported that she had been hailed and shadowed by two unidentified vessels showing no colours. However, the possibility of breaking the blockade was suggested on 31 March, when Thomas Tolson brought the *Somerset* into Table Bay with pepper from Bengkulu for the London company and arrack and slaves for the Cape on the captain's own account. Four slaves, from Bengkulu, Makasar and Madagascar, were bought by the secretary to the council of justice, Johann Friedrich Tiemmendorf.<sup>32</sup>

The *Portfield* was the first away on 3 April, after Francis d'Abbadie had remonstrated with a thoughtless supercargo, Richard Wood, who went ashore in the previous evening, "notwithstanding the representations I made to him that it was very Improper at this Critical conjonction (*sic*). " Shots had to be fired and the pinnace sent to fetch him. On the next day the *Bombay Castle* left with the *Winchelsea* privateer and on 14 April the *Norfolk* put to sea. The *Pelham*, with a cargo for home, waited for the *Somerset*, also with full holds. They sailed on 15 April, doubtless hoping that the Frenchmen were well ahead of them. Lindsay was evidently short of ready money and arranged a loan with the burgher Johann Friedrich Wilhelm Böttiger for the purchase of

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32. CJ 3035, Obligatiën, enz, 1744-1748: 42, 10 April 1747 (CA). Trade with British captains could lead to litigation. Francis d'Abbadie had to take the Cape orphan master, Alexander Coel, to court to obtain full payment for the "boekjes verguldsel" he had brought from Britain. The case is in CJ 841, Rechtsrollen en Notulen, Civiel, 1747: 16 March, pp 31-36 (CA).

equipment and to pay for the victualling of his crew.<sup>33</sup> When the *Pelham* sighted a ship approaching the bay she prudently added French colours to her British ones, but the new arrival proved to be the London company's despatch snow, the *Swift*. Her captain, John Bell, gave Lindsay and Tolson instructions to make straight for the island of St Helena.<sup>34</sup>

The French privateers took no prizes at the Cape, but their presence seriously interrupted the regular flow of trade of the London East India Company and effectively prevented any communication with passing ships concerning French successes in India. Of the British it may be said that the four armed merchantmen in Table Bay, supported by a privateer, displayed excessive caution. How can the attitude of the Dutch be assessed? Although neutral in the international conflict, they were yet the friends and allies of the British. The Cape authorities, however, were less than helpful in the matter of the hooker. Swellengrebel was circumspect by nature and moreover had not the power to take forceful action in the manner of Van Imhoff. He was known to be a stickler where protocol was concerned, but adopted a surprisingly mild approach in response to the French protest over salutes. There was little fear of French retaliation should the governor refuse them, for Baudran de la Mettrie knew that he and his consort were only there on sufferance.

Swellengrebel had indeed been thanked and rewarded by the London Company for his help in other circumstances;<sup>35</sup> he would also co-operate fully when Boscawen was at the Cape. Nevertheless, the impression is gained here, and in other comment by British East India commanders during his term of office, that he was not always held in the highest esteem by his foreign visitors. His difficult position during the war years must, however, be remembered; moreover, he had suffered a personal loss in the death of his wife, Helena Wilhelmina ten Damme, on 30 December 1746.<sup>36</sup>

The rest is no more than a footnote to the maritime struggle during the War of the Austrian Succession. The subsequent history of the *Winchelsea* remains obscure, but the *Apollon* and the *Anglesey* were handed over to the *Compagnie des Indes*, returning to the Indian Ocean to serve with Bouvet de Lozier in his skilful cruise of 1748 in support of his countrymen in the Carnatic. The *Anglesey* was laid up at Brest in July 1749 and the *Apollon* at the same port in March 1750.

33. CJ 3035: 41, 27 March 1747.

34. L/MAR: 626D, *Somerset* (IOR).

35. A Hallema, 'Een vergeten Kaapsche gouverneur: Hendrik Swellengrebel (1739-51),' *Indische Gids*, 54, 1932, p 13.

36. For the funeral on 3 Jan 1747 see C 619: pp 530-541. Browne of the *Bombay Castle* attended, but Francis d'Abbadie of the *Portfield* was affected with lameness and was unable to do so. He visited the governor, however, to express his sympathy.