

THEY PLANTED THE CAPE — III

VII

Van Riebeeck reported to the Lords Seventeen that a remarkable harvest had been won for the season 1658-59, and writing in January 1659 assures them "that matters are in a desirable state here . . . so that at present we not only have abundance, but can also depend upon ourselves alone, and are beginning to have something over . . ." He describes the granary he has built at Rondebosch as "like a small church". (It measured 108 feet by 40 feet.)

To make good this gratifying information he sent 131 bushels of wheat to Batavia in the outward-bound fleet "as a sample".

The reaction of the Seventeen to the discovery from the return fleet's papers that ships had carried to the Cape 60 lasts of rice was less gratifying: "That you are already so well advanced in rearing grain that you need not be assisted from outside any longer is pleasant news, for it has been very inconvenient, to the return ships especially, to carry your supplies. The last fleet, we see, brought you 60 lasts of rice. This cannot continue any longer, and you may look upon that as the last you will get."

Actually, it was another case of stuff being carried on to St. Helena. Van Riebeeck protests that he received only 16 lasts. Fortunately, Batavia was better informed about the real state of affairs, and, though not guiltless of comment, sent supplies of rice to Van Riebeeck to the end, and afterwards to his successor. The Governor in Council had written after he had read Cuneus's report: "We are convinced that you are conscientiously doing your best."

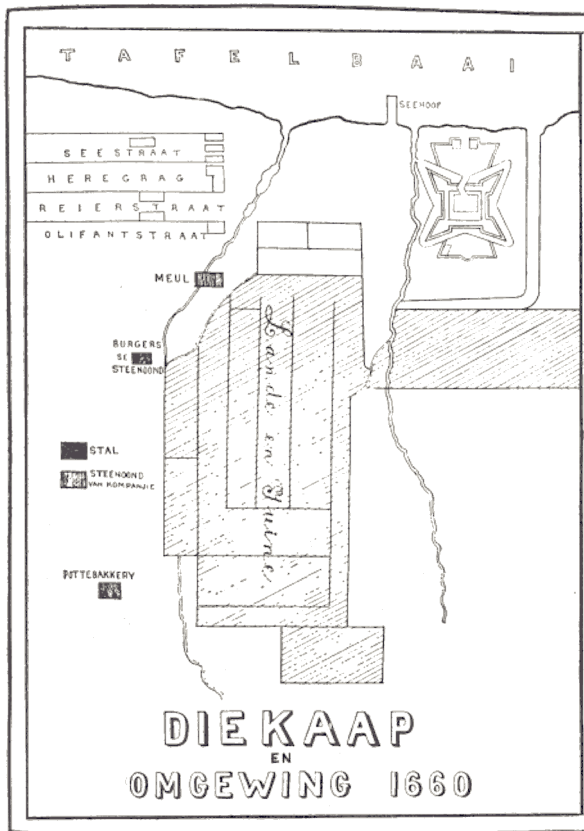
The Seventeen, in the same despatch as the above, remarked upon yet one more industry which Van Riebeeck might take in hand, that of distilling brandy. When abundant corn was available they would send him the requisite machinery. He is also informed in this despatch that the English have occupied St. Helena, so that this source of supplies is now closed to the Cape.

The actual analysis of the 1658 harvest was as follows: 400 bags of wheat, of which the farmers produced rather over 189 bags; the Company's land 196 bags, and *Bosheuvel* the rest. Van Riebeeck had fully 12 morgen under grain at *Bosheuvel*; the farmers 74 morgen. Of other grains a negligible amount of barley was produced, but rye established itself as content.

The epoch-making event at this juncture occurred on the 2nd February 1659 when wine was pressed for the first time at the Cape. "The fleet arrived," recorded Van Riebeeck in the journal, "just in time for the young wine and the old beer." From his description we gather that the ripe grapes were mostly muscadel and "other white, round grapes", which modern experts identify as *Sanvignon blanc* (Steen), *Hanepoort*, and *Palomino* (Fransdruij). They were produced from three young vines planted two years before. Other grapes — "Spanish grapes" — were

“still quite green”. From the three vines he procured 12 quarts of *must*. Alas, neither the fleets nor Batavia offered encouraging comment upon the flavour. “Ships’ officers,” the Seventeen remark grimly in their next depatch, “report very unfavourably on the vineyards.”

On the 18th February 1659 the Ensign Herwerden died. He deserves a little monograph to himself, but he only concerns us here in his capacity as superintendent of the Company’s agricultural pursuits. His promotion from the rank of sergeant to ensign was a bribe offered to him to keep



him in the service at the Cape, on the understanding that it would not release him from sergeant’s duties, nor from the extraordinary variety of his pursuits other than military. His death necessitated a division of his labours: Superintendence of all the works fell to the fiscal, Gabbema. Under him Corporal Pieter Cruijthoff, with the rank of Corporal of cadets, was given the special charge of keeping an eye on the grainfields. Cruithoff

was one of the men of the garrison who did good work bartering inland. Pieter Everaarts, another traveller, became sergeant.

Eighteen ships arrived in the outward-bound fleet this year. (One of them was on its way to the Southland (Australia) to seek the wreck of the Company's yacht "Draeck". Their crews numbered upwards of four thousand men. One hundred and ninety-five had died. Add to this half-a-dozen return ships, and we are given some idea of what Van Riebeeck had to provide in the way of green stuff for the cure of scurvy, and why the breeding of stock could not keep pace with the drain on bartered beasts, although by this time contact with Hottentots inland, and with those of them who drove cattle down to Cape pastures, was steadily widening. Van Riebeeck records in his April despatch of 1659 (in defending himself against ships' complaints about supplies), his having supplied the outward-bound and return ships of the previous year with 143½ oxen and 352 sheep, besides "an abundance of all kinds of vegetables and ground fruit". (Ground fruit meant principally melons.)

In this despatch he also urges that the Seventeen shall send out to him as immigrants "at least twenty lusty farmers' daughters, or other ordinary peoples' daughters", as distinct from sophisticated young women "from large mansions, who may imagine they will become great ladies here". The freemen need wives. "Working with unmarried men is very unstable".

Among the 35 freemen of all occupations, plus thirty-five *knechts* serving them and living in their community, there were at this time only eleven wives and Herwerden's widow. Sixteen freemen and eighteen *knechts* were on the farms, including Van Riebeeck's *Bosheuvel* and *Uijtwijk*. There were still only three men with wives. We can imagine the discomfort of their miserable little dwellings. They were a difficult body of men to keep in hand, and Van Riebeeck was a driver, not a leader. A familiar type, energetic, ambitious, self-respecting, but not intuitive.

In May 1659, when sowing time came round again, the Hottentots, led by the master brain of Doman, made a more determined bid to rid their grazing land of the farmers. Doman threatened to fire the crops when they were ripe. They raided several farms and drove off stock. A freeman who fired upon the raiders lost his life, and on another occasion a *knecht* was killed. Van Riebeeck mustered the burgher militia which Van Goens had designed, and freemen manned the watch-houses Duijnhoop and Corenhoop. Garrison men were sent out to track down marauders, and took toll of Hottentot lives. The affair became chaos, because certain of the freemen, resentful of the tight hold kept upon them, remained in friendly contact with the Hottentots, continued the forbidden barter, and warned them of the approach of garrison men and even taught one or two how to use a gun. Subsequently, Van Riebeeck bitterly blamed the freemen as a whole for behaviour which contributed to the outbreak.

The Commissioner Sterthenius reported that 119 head of stock was stolen. That was not as serious financially as it sounds. Freemen paid

the Company for stock at the rate of five cents for a sheep and twenty cents for cattle, reflecting the trifle which the Company paid the Hottentot in barter goods. "Cattle," remarked the Seventeen at this time, "costs the Company hardly anything."

A reflection upon the discontent of the place was the increasing number of stowaways in the fleets. Seventeen stowed away in the return fleet of 1659, and several more in the outward-bound fleet. Ships' officers failed to control this disorder. In 1659 ships personnel brawled in the streets, inviting people to stow-away. When the fiscal boarded a ship on the point of sailing to search it, its skipper threatened to fling him overboard if he did not remove himself.

In spite of these disruptions, agriculture suffered less than the reader might suppose. Early in August Van Riebeeck is writing in the journal: "Now is the time for olives and various other Dutch and Indian fruit trees to be planted and grafted, by means of which the orchards of the Company, and those of others, will be considerably enlarged this year, especially with thousands of orange, apple, and lemon trees. Most of this work is taking place in the Company's and the Commander's private orchards, the other farmers being chiefly occupied with grain-farming and vegetable-gardening, so that they may raise the quickest growing produce, and have speedy returns."

Van Riebeeck surrounded his own grain field and vineyard with a strip of sweet potatoes 24 feet wide as a fire-path. This, he explains, is the season when Hottentots usually set fire everywhere to dry herbage and grass. He had ditched and fenced the Company's orchard at Rondebosch in July to keep the cattle out, and had published a proclamation warning the farmers, not for the first time, to cease tramping and driving over the seed lands. Henceforth, they would be fined.

In August and September three more little watch-houses went up along the freemen's lands: *Keert de Koe*, *Hou den Bul*, and *Kijckuijt*. In November, when the raid on the freemen's stock occurred, Van Riebeeck in Council decided to fence in the settlement. This was the beginning of the famous wild almond hedge, a fragment of which, along the top of the *Bosheuvel*, has become a national monument. The fence itself ran from the Salt River, behind the watch-house *Keert de Koe*, in an arc behind the farms on the east bank of the Liesbeek, thence to the top of the *Bosheuvel*, and running along the hill took an angle down to the forest, which the freeman Leendert Cornelis worked, and which in later days came to be called Kirstenbosch. The fence was constructed of poles 8 feet high, placed 6 feet apart, their bases scorched to lengthen existence; and crossed with a double row of rails. The farmers were required to labour at this project, and to ride timber from the forest, or if they wished they might cut timber free of charge for their own portion of the fence, provided that they did not enter the Company's forest or Leendert's. They dug their toes in about all this, and the sergeant was sent to read the riot act.

By March of the following year the fence was completed. The next step was to plough a 12 feet wide strip along it from the site of the projected post for the mounted guard (at Mowbray) to Leendert's forest. The strip was closely planted with blackberry and thorn, and sown with wild almond kernels, so that by the time the fence rotted the almonds would have become a thick bush, and an impenetrable barrier provided in the more vulnerable part of the settlement. A gateway was made between the watch-houses *Keert de Koe* and *Kijckuijt* where the Hottentots were obliged to assemble if they wanted to enter the settlement. The guard-house for the mounted cavalry guard was built in the following May, made possible by the acquisition of more horses, and the maturity of a few foals.

A resolution in Council in October leased the Company's mill to the freeman Wouter Cornelis Mostert. He could not afford to buy it, as he had hoped to do. He was given a monopoly of milling. In any event, he was the only man at the Cape at the time who understood milling. The Company agreed to pay half the cost of repairs.

November 1st 1659 was recorded as another horticultural red-letter day: "Today," ran the journal, "the first Dutch rose to be grown at the Cape was picked from a rose-bush brought here last year." Cherry and medlar trees were in blossom, and on December 13th the "first ripe cherry grown at the Cape was picked from a tree planted in the [Company's] garden at least three years ago."

Of the 1659 harvest Van Riebeeck wrote enthusiastically in the journal on December 2nd and 3rd. In spite of the Hottentot disturbance, which he called a "war", all was well: "Grain-growing is so far advanced here, praise be to God, that we have enough to eat". It is even possible to bake for the garrison and Company's labourers 40 lbs. of bread a month, and to release two of the Company's cooks as freemen bakers. To the Seventeen in January 1660 he writes of an "abundant harvest of corn". In the analysis, recorded in calmer mood during the following October, we find the Company's 50 morgen of grainland had produced just under 27 lasts of grain, and the freemen farmers were expected to deliver something less than 6 lasts all told. "The responsibility, therefore," comments Van Riebeeck, "still devolves principally upon the Company's farming and assistance. One of the chief causes of this is that the free burghers largely squander their grain, instead of delivering it in repayment of their debts to the Company. However closely we attend to this, we are unable to prevent the practice." ("Squandering", simply meant their keeping the bulk of their output for their own uses.)

However, when the commissioner Pieter Sterthenius arrived with the return fleet, he was satisfied that 32 lasts of grain — the amount, all told, acquired by the Company, was a good effort. He recommended Van Riebeeck's "good zeal", as did Cuneus, but suggests a less tight rein on the freemen — who had a word with him.

He was horrified by a worse exhibition than ever of the stowaway scandal, and exclaimed to Van Riebeeck: "Commander! these people complain very much and unanimously of hunger. I perceive you may expose yourself to personal danger!" The mob flung the gardeners out of the Company's garden, tearing out of the ground what they wanted, and destroying the rest. On the foreshore they smashed up the little Cape-built sampan. 18 freemen and their knechts, 20 Company's servants and three convicts stowed successfully away.

There was a postscript to Van Riebeeck's despatch to the Seventeen. His two little sons were to sail with the fleet under the charge of one of the skippers, to be educated in Amsterdam. Their parents never saw them again.

VIII

April 1660 concluded the additional three years of Van Riebeeck's contract. He wrote painfully in his despatch of May begging again to be released. With Sterthenius's warning in mind, he suggested that "many reasons might be adduced for the Commander's transfer: "Hatred of the Commander might be a great cause of the people's dislike of the place". "None the less, he had willingly borne it so long for the sake of the Company's service". "Freemen," he added, "are nicely beginning to make their fortunes."

Meantime, he turns as stoutly as ever to the immediate task. The outward-bound fleet had brought Jacob Huybrechtsen of Rosendael, "an expert in garden matters", as the Seventeen described him, and in May he succeeded Marten Jacobssen (who became a freeman), as master gardener. In July manure is being transported from the Robben Island pastures. Incidentally, we hear that "hundreds of rabbits" are running there now, and snakes are a nuisance. For one thing, they would pull the baby rabbits out of their burrows and swallow them. Presently, gardeners are grafting Dutch fruit trees, and orange and lemon, on to young wild trees in the forest. In September a new orchard was planted out at Rondebosch above the Company's forest. "Hundreds of shoots" went to the farmers, and they were assured that "vines could easily be planted after the grain was sown. Moreover, vines could be grown in the poorest soil". The struggle goes on with bush and ground fruits, but they were never an unqualified success. We recall William Burchell's remark in 1811 when he was recording in the first three chapters of his *Travels* — fascinating reading, by the way, for Capetonians — "Strawberries, plums, raspberries, and cherries are met with only in the gardens of the curious; the last had hitherto been found to succeed nowhere but in the division of the Cold Bokkeveld; for (European) gooseberries and currants the climate is considered too warm . . ." Well, we have found out how to grow strawberries at the Cape without much trouble, but currants "black and white" still elude us, and European gooseberries.

Hops were another plant with which Van Riebeeck had some trouble, though we hear of them after his departure growing man high. Beer was being made of dried hops, but the Seventeen grudged the space they took up as cargo, though they were urgent that beer should be made. They had ordered: "You are to pay particular attention to the cultivation of hops." This year hop plants arrived in rather better condition than before and Van Riebeeck reports that he has planted them according to the Seventeen's instructions. The instructions ran: "As there is very little difference between the heads and the roots you are to remember that all the heads are on that side of the boxes which is a little burnt or marked . . . Plant them so deep in the ground that the tops are just covered by soil. The root is to be downwards and the head upwards . . ."

There was a poor harvest of grain in 1660 though the farmers brought to the Company for sale approximately 339 bags of wheat, but "no other grain", records Van Riebeeck, "they kept the rest for themselves". Company's land produced 310½ bags, and Van Riebeeck at *Bosheuvel* 331 bags. He also reaped his first crop of barley — 94 bags — "on the Commander's estate called *Uijtwijck*. It was exceptionally fine, fat grain," he wrote, "but it was badly beaten out last night by the S-SE wind." (Incidentally, we observe from these remarks that he still regarded *Uijtwijck* as his private property; though we hear no more about it at the time of his leaving the Cape when *Bosheuvel* was on the market.)

The commissioner in the return fleet for 1661 was Andries Frisius. The sum total of his remarks upon the state of agriculture "endeavours to do justice to Van Riebeeck, and at the same time not to disguise the failure of extravagant hopes. He reports that Van Riebeeck is "doing his duty faithfully in every way"; that he found the colony "on the eve of progressing very much". Peace had been made with the Hottentots, and abundant cattle coming in. On the other hand: "Agriculture will not yield as much as has been expected . . . the soil has proved not to be as good as it had looked on the surface. According to the farmers not more than 300 morgen was suitable for grain, of which 250 had been ploughed. 105 morgen of this total was cultivated by the farmers on nine farms. The remainder, in two plots, had yet to be given out to freemen. Every third year land must lie fallow. Frisius reckoned that little more than 50 lasts would be harvested this season, whereas the Cape required 100 lasts to feed itself. Thus, it would be necessary to import rice from elsewhere. However, "the farmers were faring better than formerly", he wrote, and were not complaining as before, except that the corn for bread was rationed. (Van Riebeeck subsequently denied the latter, but in his Instructions to his successor in May 1662 we find his statement that the freemen are allowed per head 50 lbs. of corn, meal or rice every month, slaves and children included, out of the Company's stores. As we know, the farmers contributed grain to the Company's stores, for which they were credited against their debit accounts. Possibly, they reasoned that seizure for debt should stop short of bread corn. Yet, we have heard, too, that they kept

what grain they needed for themselves. So that there is no getting to the bottom of their complaint to Frisius.)

Frisius advised, as other commissioners had advised, that the free-men should be given a slacker rein. Pasturage, he found was poor, so poor that in summer cattle would drop on the veld and in the kraals for want of adequate feed, and were too "withered" to be worth slaughtering. "All the best pasture," he writes, "has been broken to the plough." Cattle removed to Robben Island did better. The fort garden covered 21 morgen, and could still be enlarged. The 3-4 morgen "under the Wintbergh" (Rondebosch) promised success in the rearing "of all kinds of fruit trees".

During the course of the rest of the year 1661 we hear a great deal about the progress of vineyards and orchards, especially of their progress at *Bosheuvel*, for indeed Van Riebeeck incontestably established the healthy foundation of this branch of horticulture. He is awaiting now with no little anxiety the arrival of his successor. The Company has appointed his uncle, Gerrit Govertsen van Harn, to succeed him, and he should have arrived with the outward-bound fleet of 1661, but died on the way. Van Riebeeck dared not, he wrote, leave in charge at the Cape anyone at present there and take ship to Batavia, but he wrote privately to the Governor General at Batavia imploring him somehow to relieve him. Batavia sent an encouraging reply, but could send no one earlier than the return fleet of 1662.

Journal and despatches contain much sales talk. Van Riebeeck wishes the Company to take over *Bosheuvel*. In his despatch of May 4th 1661 to the Seventeen he enumerates the vines and fruit trees which he has planted, and the Journal of the 18th July records those at *Bosheuvel*. The freemen do not figure in the list. "Vine and tree-planting," he writes, "must be done almost wholly by the Company, unless the Company's officials here, if they have the means, take the matter further in hand as the Commander has done, and who went to considerable expense to do so." (Elsewhere he records that the amount he spent was f.3000, the equivalent of R500, which we must multiply considerably to arrive at its value today.) Growing in the gardens of the Company and "in full growth" he lists 832 vine stocks (of which two are inside the fort against the wall), and 80 bearing in the fort garden; 750 rooted plants, independent of cuttings which in September next year will certainly number not less than 100. Planted from pips there are growing 1,003 citrus and apple trees obtained from Batavia, St. Helena, Spain, Amboina, Madagascar and Italy, of which 163 St. Helena trees are already beginning to bear. One of them has two lemons on it "as large as half a fist, and thirty other smaller". On the 25th July 1661 Van Riebeeck and his wife picked the first two lemons to ripen at the Cape. They were from a small tree growing in the Company's garden. He also numbers 450 rooted layers, and "young sprouts" to the number of 460, all awaiting transplanting in September. From Holland 228 fruit trees are flourishing — quince, peach, apricot, pear and cherry.

A "Morello" cherry was already bearing a little. Layers of olive are also waiting to go in, and apple trees await grafting.

He also reports upon his imported European forest trees. Alder trees are growing well in the Rondebosch nursery, and oak trees are bordering the vineyard there, which holds "about 100 old and young stocks". Ash trees "are growing finely round the Company's garden above the fort". (He reports later that the Rondebosch vineyard and orchard feel the wind, so that they are being used only as nurseries. *Bosheüvel* is the land most free of wind, and most suitable to the Company.) Laurel and rose bushes are flourishing in the Company's garden — 31 rose trees, to be exact.

On July 18th three members of the Council, the junior merchant, the fiscal, and the sergeant went out to *Bosheüvel* on Van Riebeeck's behalf to examine the place with a view to the Council's taking it over for the Company. They returned fully endorsing Van Riebeeck's opinion that the Company should buy it. Without it, the Company would be obliged to take up other land for the extension of vineyards and orchards. The Commander, as he was leaving the Cape had no intention of planting this season, and it was "high time", if the Company was to have more land, to choose it now, in time for September planting. "Our experience," runs the record, "has made it more and more apparent that large-sized fruit trees will not grow either in the Company's gardens near the fort, nor anywhere in the Table valley." Again, the freemen farmers make no effort. "So far hardly anyone seems to have a single healthy vine growing near his house or on his ground from the hundreds of cuttings which have been given to them every year."

The Council passed a resolution which transferred the property of *Bosheüvel* to the Company. In the event, the Company resisted this gesture. Batavia expressed the opinion that the Company would not be prepared to pay much, for, as it appeared, "no one else wants it, and it would only go to waste again." Yet, besides its grain fields and other ploughed land, the orchard contained some 2,400 young fruit trees, and "thousands of young vines of reasonable growth". It was a pity that the Company should reject the purchase. Probably, the Seventeen and the Batavian Council decided that in the end it would be taken over by a freeman at some trifling cost, from whom the Company would purchase his produce at its own price. So much more satisfactory than investing the Company's capital and paying for labour!

After Van Riebeeck's departure this is what happened. In November 1665 the freeman farmer Jacob Cornelis Rosendaal bought it, a man with whom Van Riebeeck had latterly been in partnership. After the Hottentot disturbances of 1659 Rosendaal's partner, the Prussian Otto Janz, returned to the Company's service as superintendent on Robben Island, and Van Riebeeck placed investment with Rosendaal. Rosendaal paid 1,600 guilders for *Bosheüvel* (R208-68). In 1674 he was granted a licence to make and sell wine there, and thus became the first wine farmer at the Cape. He built a new dwelling-place. The Company had kept the farm in order

pending its sale. We read of "gentlemen in the return fleet" of 1663 who visited the Company's lands, including *Bosheuvel*.

The Seventeen reacted peevishly to Frisius' report. "The condition of the Cape," they wrote to Van Riebeeck, "by no means agrees with what you have annually boasted of . . . Now we are unexpectedly told that you will have to be supplied with rice . . . which has not a little annoyed us." Nor are they pleased with "indications" in his despatches that he is "gradually tending towards building a town and enlarging the colony . . . the idea should be abandoned."

IX

The Governor at Batavia kept his promise and Van Riebeeck's relief arrived with the return fleet in 1662. His name has been handed down in South African history as Zacharias Wagenaar. Actually, his name was Wagner. He was a German-born son of the magistrate of Dresden. The first squadron of the return fleet passed by the Cape, either of intention or frustrated by wind. He arrived in a ship of the second squadron on April 2nd. Two days later he rode out with Van Riebeeck and the commander of the second squadron, to make examination of the Settlement. The first two Dutch apples celebrated the occasion by ripening now. The record describes them fondly: "They came from a little tree no more than 8 feet high in the Company's nursery orchard" (presumably at Rondebosch). "The type of apple is known as a wine apple. They were growing side by side, touching one another; there was not a grain of difference in weight between the two." In the same orchard the medlars were ripening on several trees.

A fortnight later he visited Robben Island where 170 sheep, 7 goats and about 300 pigs were "finding their own living". Kids, he was told "appear off and on". He decided that this stock should be left to carry on the good work. On the mainland Van Riebeeck had 278 head of cattle and 487 sheep. The freemen farmers between the lot of them (on eleven farms) were running 300 head of cattle, 800 sheep and 100 pigs. "Taking all together," records Van Riebeeck, "the place is well supplied." The trouble is lack of sufficient pasture. When the Saldanha Hottentots come down, welcome though they are as bringing the opportunity to barter for stock, the Cape is at its wit's end for pasture. Possibly this had something to do with the quarrelling that went on among the farmers over boundaries. (This remained a familiar pastime in the Cape Colony.) Van Riebeeck confided to Wagenaar that they could not be induced to leave beacon poles in the ground. They continually tossed them away. Wagenaar would have to insist that they ploughed a furrow between their properties.

Van Riebeeck prepared an elaborate document of "Instructions" for his successor, together with a Cape Gardener's Almanac (Caepsen Hoveniers Almanack) that he himself had compiled. He wished everything to be done in accordance with the directions in his almanac, if the fleets were to have an abundance of supplies from the Company's gardens between

mid-February and the end of May. The master gardener Jacob Huijbertssen of Rosendael had recently died, and an "energetic young man of sober habits", Harman Gresnich of Utrecht, who had served in the Company's gardens for six years had been appointed in his stead. He describes fruit trees as "already growing here in great numbers". He particularly emphasises the value of the surviving olive. Last year he had planted olive stones from "that valuable and useful tree". The Seventeen in their despatch dated 30th September of last year "earnestly impressed upon us" that the olive should be assiduously cultivated. Vineyards, he states, do not promise less than the fruit trees. In his last despatch sent to the Seventeen from the Cape, dated 30th April, he describes the ravages of the birds in the vineyards. They wrought such havoc that in two or three days whole vineyards were eaten completely bare. "What was left was hurriedly cut, ripe or not, and unfit for making wine. However, he wrote, he had managed to produce from stock 3 years old a small cask of wine with which he regaled the return fleet's officers "that they might be able to report to you." (Unfortunately, the officers' report was anything but complimentary, as the Seventeen in due course announced.) "If," his despatch advises, "the grapes have to be picked unripe to rescue them from the birds they will have to be converted into brandy and vinegar." A century and a quarter later the birds were still at it. Mentzel in his *Description of the Cape* describes the scene, and birds have now been joined by dogs: "Boys and slave children have to be employed to walk up and down all day long cracking long whips to scare them away."

As for the harvest: Van Riebeeck had written of the corn at the end of the year that it stood "beautifully in the ear". Barley was ripening, especially in the grainfields at *Uijtwijk* "where corn", he recorded, "always ripens first every year." The wheat he described as "a fairly good crop". Some of the freemen, he thought, would be able, besides supplying their own needs, to deliver grain to the Company in payment of their debts. He proved again to be too optimistic. Writing his last despatch after Wagenaar had arrived we find: "If the wheat raised were not sold and squandered by the freemen it would alone come very near the quantity required for this residency." He adds: "If we had not opposed it, all the freemen would have left the country and come to live near the fort." The whole total of grain raised amounted to only 191 lasts of wheat and 15½ lasts of other grain. In his Instructions to Wagenaar he states: A capacious depot for grain will not be required as it is estimated that the land will not produce much corn. It will be necessary to supplement this need from outside, which goes much against the grain of their Honours . . . " For this reason Their Honours had ordered in a despatch dated the previous August that no more men were to be released from the Company's service unless especially as grain farmers. The Instructions inform Wagenaar that no more than 20-30 morgen of land between *Bosheuvel* and Leendert's forest remain to be granted as suitable for grain, and it is too hazardous to experiment outside the present circle of settlement; the cost of protection

would be too high. The present community of freemen, farmers and men employed in other occupations, amounted to 40. They had 15 wives between them and 22 children. They employed 54 *knechts*. Not a grand total after five years of experiment.

In actual fact, the only private farm that was a flourishing concern was *Bosheuvel*. In that last despatch of his Van Riebeeck wrote: "During the period of our administration we have completely realised the object of Your Honours by having the cultivation of grain in our own hands, as well as that of the gardens for the purposes of refreshment . . ." What had not been effected, nor shewed any near prospect of being effected, was the solvency of the farmers, and of their relieving the Company, in accordance with its whole intention of their keeping themselves independent of Company's loans, and of relieving the Company of agricultural pursuits by also producing enough to supply the garrison and the fleets.

None the less, Van Riebeeck had laboured under great difficulties, even with the possibility that all would be in vain, because while he laboured the search went on for some other place to serve as a refreshment station which was less dangerous of approach and anchorage, and with a more comfortable prospect of agricultural success. In his despatch to the Seventeen when awaiting his release on the 4th May, 1661, and among much other business he listed the vineyards and fruit trees which he had managed to establish, a cry from the heart escaped him:

"Commander Van Riebeeck speaking now for himself will take leave of his work with pleasure and joy — work successfully done between nine to ten years passed by him here — and depart to a place where he hopes no longer to be subject to so many various discontented tempers, which are never satisfied, and under the eyes of our High Government in India further to earn and enjoy the latter's and Your Honours' favour by means of his good services."

At noon on May 6th Zacharias Wagenaar was formally introduced to the community as Commander; his commission was read by the secretary to the Council from a balcony of the fort. On the following day, Sunday, the Company's servants of the Secretariat and a company of burghers escorted Van Riebeeck and his family to the flute "Mars" of the outward-bound fleet. On the moonlit night of the 8th she sailed in company with a sister ship, the flute "Amstel", for Batavia.

Wagenaar's almost immediate gesture in office was a resolution in Council to moderate the prices of food and drink so that "these poor people", the freemen, should have a helping hand.

Links with Van Riebeeck did not immediately disappear. His son Abraham visited the Cape between November 17th and December 8th 1676 whilst outward-bound for Batavia. He had taken his degree in law at Leyden University and had entered the Company's service as a junior merchant. Tragically, while he was at sea between the Cape and Batavia his father died. His mother had died twelve years before and his father had married again.

In the return fleet of 1710 we have the visit of Van Riebeeck's granddaughter, Abraham's child, Joanna Maria. As widow of the Governor of Ceylon she had married, as his third wife, Joan van Hoorn, Governor General of the Netherlands Indies. He was now on his way home after retirement. Abraham had succeeded him in office. Dr. Godée Molsbergen in his biography of Van Riebeeck *De Stichter van Hollands Zuid-Afrika* has printed her letters from the Cape to her parents. There we find that she sent them pears wrapped in paper and bits of cloth; some bags of seed, and a little sack of chestnuts, "not yet completely ripe", but a proof of fruit from the chestnut trees which her grandfather had planted among other fruit trees on "a farm named Bosheuvel".

M. Whiting Spilhaus.

Bibliography.

The story of the planting of the Cape has been recorded from Van Riebeeck's Journal, and the official correspondence, Resolutions and Plakkaaten, Instructions of Commanders and Commissioners' reports.

Dr. Hoge's books have been consulted on the subject of German names.

Dr. E. C. Godée Molsbergen's *De Stichter van Hollands Zuid-Afrika, Jan van Riebeeck* has provided biographical matter which is acknowledged in the text.