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Leeuwin 1622–2022 Commemorative Edition



The 400-ton VOC yacht Leeuwin (Lioness) discovered the south-west corner and southern coast of Australia in March, 1622. Watercolour painting by Ross Shardlow, 2022.

Artist's Collection

***Leeuwin 1622—Ross Shardlow**

***Skipper of the Leeuwin No Longer a Mystery—Nonja Peters**



ROSS SHARDLOW

Marine Artist and Maritime Historian

Ross is a marine artist of international renown. He has enjoyed Artist in Residence status at prestigious locations such as Mystic Seaport in the USA, and his illustrations for Peter Jeans' *Ship to Shore* were surely central to that publication's Library of Congress Award. Ross has gained many awards and accolades including a Gold Medal at the Australian Print Awards.

Ross is somewhat less widely known as a researcher of Maritime History, but his career as a marine artist is built on a foundation of thorough, solid, and expert research. Ross was awarded Member of the Order of Australia in 2020 for services both to visual art and to maritime history. Though Ross did not learn the techniques of historical research at an academic institution, he has always had the benefit of his wife Barbara's professional skills as a research librarian. They are a formidable team. Their research published in the *MHA Journal* on subjects such as Perth's waterfront and the short-lived early settlement near Woodman's Point are paradigms of meticulousness combined with brilliant insight.

Ross started on his career as a marine artist when asked to paint an artist's impression of a proposed sail training ship – *Leeuwin II*. He soon discovered that there was no real design for the masting and rigging of the ship, so he set about drawing a suitable rig ... and did so to great effect. It is an undertaking that very few people have the expertise to undertake. Some years further into his burgeoning career he was asked to produce artist's impressions of the proposed *Endeavour Replica*, and in order to do so he necessarily researched, reconstructed, and documented in great detail the probable rig and outward appearance of the ship. The *Endeavour Replica* is to a very significant extent a result of Ross's research.

Ross's portrait of the original *Leeuwin* is, like all his ship portrayals, researched to the tiniest detail and faithful to the aesthetic genius of the traditional shipwrights. *Leeuwin* has the double honour of having one of the world's major capes named after her, and of being portrayed by Ross Shardlow AM.

NONJA PETERS

Historian and Anthropologist

Nonja Peters, PhD (UWA 1999) is a historian, anthropologist, museum curator, and public speaker whose current interests lie in the maritime, military, migration and mercantile connections between Australia and the Netherlands from 1606, and Dutch impact on the SE Asian region since 1602. Her migration research focus is sense of place, identity and belonging, and the digital preservation of Dutch-Australians cultural heritage in home and hostland.

Her principal research aim is to bridge the gap between academia and the public. She achieves this by transforming research results into formats the public can consume, platforms where migrants stories are told and heard. She is the author of books, journal articles and documentary films and curator of many museum exhibits and government reports. She works internationally with academics, research institutes, heritage organizations and local communities in Australia and the Netherlands. In 2006, she was awarded a Dutch knighthood and in 2003 a Centenary medal. This year she was inducted into the WA Women's Hall of Fame for her work on preserving Dutch-Australian cultural heritage.

Peters spent the last five years in the Netherlands where she was visiting professor at the University of Amsterdam, researching immigrant entrepreneurship. In 2019, she was guest curator at the Westfries Museum (Hoorn) a Golden Age museum, preparing the exhibition *The Dream of Cornelis Chastelein*. In 2020–21 she was guest curator at the Indisch Herinnerings Centrum (IHC), The Hague, to produce the exhibition *Depokkers: A Colonial Tale Unravels*. She also published a book with each exhibition. The most recent book is: *The Christian Slaves of Depok: A Colonial Tale Unravels*, 2022. Throughout 2021, she was a guest researcher at Huygens Institute for Dutch History in Amsterdam and, with her colleagues, produced the exhibition: *Moving People Stories, Australia the Netherlands*. It went on display on 8 June 2022, at the residence of the Australian Ambassador in The Hague, to celebrate the 80 years of diplomatic relationship between the two countries. This exhibition will go into the National Archives in both countries.

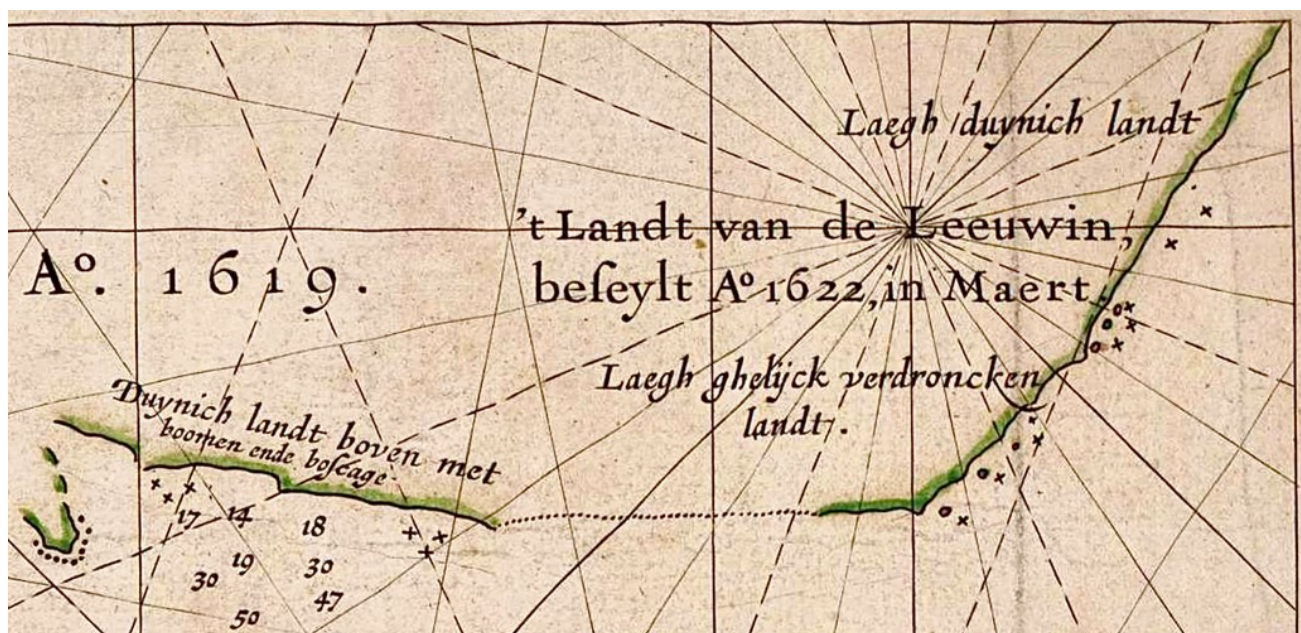
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LEEWIN 1622

By Ross Shardlow AM FASMA



Detail from Hessel Gerritsz's chart of 1627 of the west coast of Australia oriented with North to the left. Dedel's Land discovered in 1619 is on the left (north). Leeuwin's Land discovered in 1622 is on the right (south).

Collection - National Library of Australia: Hessel Gerritsz

In March 1622, the VOC ship *Leeuwin* (Lioness) made the first recorded European landfall on the south-west corner and southern coast of Australia. Historians writing about early discoveries of Australia usually preface their dissertations with: 'relatively little is known of the voyage of the *Leeuwin* of 1622'. In the 400th anniversary year of this memorable event, Ross Shardlow shines a new light on the *Leeuwin*.

In his book *Australia Unveiled: the share of the Dutch navigators in the discovery of Australia*. (Amsterdam, 1976), eminent historian of cartography Günter Schilder laments little is known of *Leeuwin*'s discoveries as her journal has been lost, but from a few documents and letters from the VOC we can glean some details about her existence, the most significant being the fortuitous inclusion of *Leeuwin*'s name on a chart published by Hessel Gerritsz in 1627 showing the west-coast of Australia that records, 't Landt van de Leeuwin, beseylt A° 1622, in Maert' (the Land of the *Leeuwin*, sailed along in the year 1622, in March). Gerritsz's chart shows the land that *Leeuwin* sailed along extending to latitude 35° south. The sailing instructions issued by the Council of Batavia to Abel Tasman in 1642 also confirmed that in 1622 the VOC ship *Leeuwin* was in latitude 35° south when she unexpectedly discovered land on the west-coast of the great unknown Southland.

The Dutch East India Company's Shipping: 1595–1795 (Huygens ING, 2011), reveals *Leeuwin* set sail from Texel in northern Holland on 20 April 1621 and arrived at Batavia in the East Indies after a long voyage of thirteen months on 15 May 1622. Günter concludes the delay of the long voyage 'greatly annoyed the officials of the VOC,' while J. E. Heeres in his *The Part Borne by the Dutch in the Discovery of Australia 1606–1765* (London, 1899), states the *Leeuwin* arrived after a very long voyage, 'of which the Governor-General and High Council did not fail to complain'. Schilder explains why the *Leeuwin* was delayed:

The voyage had taken more than a year, mainly because of bad navigation, for another ship of the VOC, De Gouden Leeuw, which had sailed from the Netherlands in the same month, made the passage in four months. The Leeuwin had been delayed first of all on the coast of Africa when she entered the deep Gulf of Guinea. Later on her voyage to the East Indies she had come upon the coast of Australia.

Regrettably, less scrupulous scholars quickly embellished Schilder's remarks about the captain of the *Leeuwin* greatly annoying the officials in Batavia and came up with their own version explaining how the captain was reprimanded for causing the delay through his bad navigation, and how his name was removed from history and how he was relegated to anonymity. A bit harsh perhaps – and also



untrue. I have no doubt the captain knew precisely where he was and why he was there.

A Glimmer of Light on the Leeuwin:

My interest in the *Leeuwin* was heightened in the late 1990s when I submitted an offer to take out a lease on the Leeuwin Lighthouse and keeper cottages for use as a marine art studio. Though my bid was unsuccessful, I did meet some remarkable people including Bill Gates, historian and late lighthouse keeper at Cape Leeuwin. A keen and very capable historian, Bill did not accept the story of the *Leeuwin*'s captain being relegated to anonymity – and neither did I. Bill pursued his own enquiries and received the following reply from C. P. P. van Romburgh, M. A., Information Officer at the Netherlands Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, August 1999:

The ship Leeuwin was owned by the chamber of Amsterdam of the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie or VOC), her tonnage was 400 tons. The ship sailed from the island Texel in the Northern part of Holland on April 20th 1621 to Batavia (Indonesia) via the Gulf of Guinea and the West coast of Australia. The Leeuwin arrived on May 15th 1622 in Batavia.

The Leeuwin made several trips to the East, her last voyage was in 1632 to Pulicat [India] and stayed in the indies and was laid up [laid up] in 1640.

There are however no pictures or other drawings of the ship.

Bill also knew about a Dirk Gerritsz Krul, master of a ship called *Leeuwin* and wondered if this might be the same master and same *Leeuwin* that graced our shores in 1622. In June 2002, I had a chance meeting with Dr Maarten van Boven, Director of National Archives of the Netherlands at The Hague. Maarten was planning a trip to Western Australia to see his daughter and asked if he could call at my studio to see my work, he also asked if there was anything he could look up for me in the Dutch National Archives. I asked if he had anything on the VOC ship *Leeuwin* of 1622 and Captain Dirck Gerritsz Krul. Maarten replied:

Your question about the history of the Leeuwin was a reason for my colleagues to search in our VOC-archives and we've found very interesting never published things. I send you as an attachment the report of our expert Trix van Hooff.

REPORT RESEARCH LEEUWIN,
by Trix van Hooff.

National Archief Nederland 07 June 2002

The yacht Leeuwin, with a volume of 400 tonnes, was fitted out by the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC and left from Texel on 20 April 1621. There is no information about the construction of the yacht.

According to Dutch Asiatic Shipping, there were 250 people on board. The name of the captain is not mentioned, which was not uncommon in those years. The Leeuwin arrived in Batavia via the Gulf of Guinea and the West coast of Australia on 15 May 1622.

The following information can be found in the Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber from 1620 (VOC 228):

22 October 1620:

The managers of the wharf are told to look for a suitable ship that can be used as an "advice yacht." These yachts were small, fast yachts that were used to transfer messages and orders or for reconnaissance.

4 January 1621:

Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest, son of Simon Michelsen, presents himself as captain on the advice yacht of the Chamber.

11 January 1621:

The "adviso" yacht Leeuwin will be fitted with a crew of 175 men.

12 January 1621:

The Board of the VOC (the "Gentlemen XVII") decided that this yacht will take 7 chests with Reals to the Indies. On 24 February this was changed to 10 chests!

11 March 1621:

The crew of the Leeuwin will be contracted on Tuesday (= 16 March). The drum will be sounded on Monday [for the crew to go aboard]. Sending some girls or women along with the Leeuwin will be postponed/extended until autumn.

9 April 1621:

It turns out to be difficult to find enough Reals. However, 3 chests with unminted silver are loaded on board.

The question remains: was Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest captain on the Leeuwin during its outward journey? Looking at the resolutions



Kaap Leeuwin Gable Stone: Dating from the 15th century, Dutch gable stones are carved tablets set into the gable ends and façades of buildings to visually identify the resident and/or their occupation. The Kaap Leeuwin stone, now preserved in a 'brick wall' monument in Amsterdam, can be dated back to the 17th century. At first glance the meaning of the stone is obscure but becomes clear if read as a rebus, a puzzle in which hidden words are represented by a combination of letters, pictures and symbols. Lying in the foreground is a lioness (leeuwin) and behind her is a wooden beacon used as a landmark for shipping known to the Dutch as a cape (kaap). Also represented on the stone is a ship anchored off a rocky headland showing the coat of arms of Amsterdam on her stern. The rebus can therefore be read as: 'Cape Leeuwin – named after the ship Leeuwin'. This is the oldest (and only) picture I know of depicting the VOC yacht Leeuwin.

Originator: Adriaan de Jong. Research: Elly Spillekom. Photo: Rikus Kraayer

of 4 and 11 January 1621, this does seem plausible. Unfortunately, the name of the captain is not given anywhere else, so it cannot be verified.

On 15 May 1622 the Leeuwin finally arrived in Batavia. Unfortunately, the diary/day-register of Batavia Castle for this year is missing. It would have included a reference to the arrival of the Leeuwin, perhaps even with the name of the captain.

In the Resolutions of the Governor-General and High Council of the Indies in Batavia of 18 May 1622, it is mentioned that the Leeuwin arrived on 15 May (VOC 658).

On 6 September 1622 the same Governor-General (Jan Pieterszoon Coen) and the High Council dispatched a letter to the Board in the Netherlands, also mentioning the arrival of the Leeuwin (VOC 1076, folio 3–26): "The Leeuwinne and the Gouden Leeuw (Golden Lion) departed from the Netherlands together, the one arriving here four months later and the other 13 months later, which is a big difference indeed. The reason why the Leeuwinne and others have made such a long journey and ended up stuck in the Bight of Guinea, we understand to be that when heading South from the islands of Cabo Verde

they encountered unfavourable winds which led them to take an easterly course thereby ending up in the Bight before they realized it."

They therefore recommend that the Board of Directors issues an order for all captains to take a westerly course from the islands of Cabo Verde: "We think that they will soon cross the equator and not end up in the Bight. In our opinion, nobody goes there without the intention of arriving there."

In this same letter – which is in fact taken to the Netherlands on board the Leeuwin – they also mention that the Leeuwin departs for Holland on 6 September 1622. The Leeuwin was not to wait for the other retourships/home bound ships, but to return home ahead of the others.

The Leeuwin was loaded with a cargo with a value of 106.659:2:2 guilders. The ship was to sail together with the English ship Cleyne Jeems (Little James), but "we instructed our people not to trust the English/but we have decided not to trust the English."

In a Resolution of the Governor-General and High Council of 31 August 1622 it is decided to appoint Cornelis de Maeijer (or Meijer) as merchant and Dirk Gerrits Crul as captain of the Leeuwin.



We know that this Crul/Krul arrived in Banten on 22 October 1617 as captain of the yacht Tijger. He then remains in the Indies. We know [by the] end of December 1620 he served as captain on the Amsterdam. This means that Crul/Krul cannot have been captain of the Leeuwin when it left Holland on 20 April 1621.

The Leeuwin arrived in Texel on 19 May 1623, via St. Helena.

Crul/Krul makes at least one other trip to the Indies: 3 May 1626 he is captain on the yacht Sloten.

Research: 7 June 2002 / Trix van Hooff,
National Archief Nederland.

Translation: 8 June 2002 / Birgitte van Boven
Translation: 15 August 2007 / WTH.

Voyages and Fate of the *Leeuwin*:

There were at least three vessels named *Leeuwin* sailing for the VOC between 1598–1664. There were also other non-VOC ships named *Leeuwin* sailing at that time, such as the 5th rate man-of-war *Leeuwin* built in 1614, sent to the Mediterranean to fight pirates and was herself captured by privateers in 1627; or there were the ships owned by the Dutch West India Company, such as the yacht *Leeuwin* engaged as a privateer in the Caribbean from 1621–1629, driven ashore by a Spanish galleon that she was trying to capture. The first VOC *Leeuwin* in this period was a vessel of 250 tons, one of two ships on the Second Asia Expedition trading to East India and Sumatra. The *Leeuwin* was commanded by Frederick de Houtman, the same de Houtman that came to the west-coast of Australia in 1619. Frederick's brother Cornelis de Houtman commanded the other ship called the *Leeuw* (Lion). Neither brother returned from the expedition, Cornelis was killed and Frederick captured. The *Leeuwin* returned to the Netherlands in 1600. The second *Leeuwin* (the subject of this paper) was the 400-ton yacht commissioned in Amsterdam in 1620 that made five voyages to the East Indies and came to the south-west and southern coast of Australia in 1622. The third *Leeuwin* was also a 400-ton yacht, 26 guns, but was built in Middelburg and traded to the East Indies from 1653 to 1664 when she was wrecked near Macassar.

Voyages of the 400-ton advice yacht *Leeuwin*:

Voyage 1: Texel to Batavia via the Gulf of Guinea and west-coast of Australia, master Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest, 250 on board at departure from Texel 20.04.1621, at west-coast Australia 03.1622, arrive Batavia 15.05.1622.

Return from Batavia to Texel, master Dirk Gerritsz Krul, from Batavia 06.09.1622, from Cape 06.02.1623, arrive Texel via St Helena 19.05.1623.

Voyage 2: Texel to Pulicat, master unknown, from Texel 08.01.1624, from Cape 11.05.1624, arrive Pulicat 04.08.1624. Return from Masulipatnam to Texel via Mauritius, master Jan Willemsz. van Oostzaner Overtoom, departed from Masulipatnam 25.05.1625, from Pulicat 31.05.1625, from Cape 04.11.1625, call at Plymouth leaking and broken rudder after storm 01.1626, arrive Texel 21.03.1626.

Voyage 3: Texel to Pulicat, master Jan Willemsz, 150 on board at departure from Texel 19.03.1627, from 12.04 to 16.04.1627 at Maio Island, arrive Cape before 06.07.1627, from Cape 15.07.1627, from 22.09 to 07.10.1627 at Anjouan, from 27.11 to 17.12.1627 at Galle, arrive Pulicat 04.01.1628. Return from Batavia to Texel, master unknown, from Batavia 17.11.1628, from 26.12.1628 to 30.01.1629 at Mauritius, arrive Cape 10.03.1629, from Cape 16.03.1629, from 06.04 to 14.04.1629 at St Helena, arrive Texel 11.07.1629.

Voyage 4: Texel to Batavia, master unknown, from Texel 18.02.1630, arrive Cape 06.07 1630, from Cape 15.07.1630, arrive Batavia with 191 on board 23.09.1630. Return from Batavia to Amerlander Gat (the Netherlands), master unknown, from Batavia 08.03.1631, arrive Cape 10.06.1631, from Cape 22.06.1631, arrive Amerlander Gat 09.10.1631.

Voyage 5: Texel to Batavia, master unknown, from Texel 18.04.1632, no stopovers or ports of call, arrive Batavia 16.09.1632 with 147 on board, one death on voyage, stayed in the Indies and was laid up in 1640. Subsequent reports state *Leeuwin* remained engaged in the East Indies-Asian service for the VOC but did not return to the Netherlands. She was laid up in 1640 (possibly in Pulicat near Madras) and sold for scrap.



Captain Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest:

The Resolutions (minutes) of the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC for the 4 January 1621 state: *Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest, son of Simon Michelsen [van Wtgeest], presents himself as captain on the advice yacht of the Chamber.* Maarten van Boven from the National Archives of the Netherlands surmises, *'the captain was most probably Reyer Simonsson van Uitgeest'* – but without verification in a journal or log-book we cannot, in an academic sense, be certain Reyer was the captain. Maarten points out, however, that the Resolutions of the Chamber continue to describe the fitting out of the *Leeuwin* and her crew in some detail, but there is no indication that Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest did not accept the appointment, nor do any other captains present themselves for the position. I have not been able to find another Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest on the VOC captains list. The spelling of the name Wtgeest varies considerably from Wthgeest, Uutgeest, Uytgeest, Uijtgeest, Uytgeest or Uitgeest. Uitgeest is a municipality and a town in the province of North Holland. Curiously, cartographers Willem Janszoon Blaeu and Hessel Gerritsz are both said to have been born in Uitgeest.

There is, however, a Captain Dirck Simonzoon van Uitgeest/Uytgeest, and if we consider the possibility that Reyer is a variant of Rick (as in Richard) and Dirck/Dick is a variant of Rick (as in Richard), then Captain Reyer and Captain Dirck might be one and the same. Captain Dirck Simonzoon van Uitgeest was a Dutch pirate. In 1628, Dirck Simonzoon van Uitgeest commanded a squadron of twelve ships on a privateering commission for the Dutch West India Company targeting Brazil and the north coast of South America to attack Spanish and Portuguese shipping and colonial outposts. Uitgeest was very successful with his venture returning to the Netherlands in April 1629 with over a dozen Spanish and Portuguese prizes with the loss of two vessels from his own squadron. It is a tantalising speculation that if Reyer and Dirck are one and the same, then there is a possibility the reason for the captain not being named on the *Leeuwin* voyage of 1622 (along with the disappearance of the log-books and journals from the same voyage), was not for the shame of a captain being delayed and far off his course, but because the captain might have been a pirate commissioned as a privateer to undertake a covert mission against Portuguese and Spanish interests.

Captain Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest was 'most probably' master of the *Leeuwin* for the duration of the voyage sailing from Texel on 20 April 1621, to the south-west coast of Australia (via the Gulf of Guinea) in March 1622 and arriving at Batavia 15 May 1622. However, as the shipping arrivals ledger at Batavia Castle is missing for 1622, we cannot be certain that Wtgeest was the master of the *Leeuwin* when she arrived at Batavia. On 31 August 1622, while the *Leeuwin* was refitting for her return voyage to the Netherlands, the Governor-General and High Council in Batavia resolved to appoint Captain Dirk Gerritsz Krul as master and Cornelis de Maeijer as merchant. The *Leeuwin* had intended to keep company with the English ship *Little James* on the return voyage, but the High Council decided not to trust the English and instructed Krul to proceed with all haste and not to wait for the other homeward bound retourships. The *Leeuwin* made her departure from Batavia under the command of Captain Dirck Gerritsz Krul on 6 September 1622. It is plausible that Wtgeest also departed on the *Leeuwin*, but as a passenger, not as the master. After leaving the Cape on 6 February 1623, the *Leeuwin* called at St Helena off the west-coast of Africa before arriving aback at Texel 19 May 1623. The reason for her calling at St Helena was not stated.

The Dutch West India Company:

Much has been made of *Leeuwin*'s exceptionally long thirteen-month voyage from Texel to Batavia. Ships normally took about six or seven months to make the passage, while the 550-ton *Gouden Leeuw*, which departed Goeree in South Holland the day before *Leeuwin*'s departure from Texel, took just four months to make the trip – something of a record at that time. Schilder claims the delay *'greatly annoyed the officials of the VOC'* while Heeres affirms they *'did not fail to complain'*. The translation supplied by Dr Maarten Boven at the National Archives of the Netherlands, however, simply noted the Governor-General's attention to the difference in the passage times as, *'a big difference indeed'*, hardly a reprimand. The same letter from the Governor-General and the High Council in Batavia to the Board of Directors in the Amsterdam Chamber also explained why the passage took so long:

The reason why the Leeuwinne and others have made such a long journey and ended up stuck in the Bight of Guinea, we understand to be that when heading South from the islands



of Cabo Verde they encountered unfavourable winds which led them to take an easterly course thereby ending up in the Bight before they realized it.

On asking Maarten van Boven on the subject of the captain's reprimand he said it was his opinion that Captain Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest was NOT reprimanded. Maarten succinctly puts it, '*I don't think the VOC had taken the captain ill [did not think ill of him]. It was all in the game.*' The answer may well lie in the last sentence of the Governor-General's letter to the Board of Directors where he recommended new sailing instructions for all VOC captains to avoid sailing into the Bight of Guinea: '*In our opinion,*' he states, '*nobody goes there without the intention of arriving there.*' That is to say, Captain Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest had every intention of going into the Bight of Guinea, unfavourable winds or otherwise.

The date of *Leeuwin's* arrival in the Gulf (or Bight) of Guinea on the west-coast of Africa is of interest. She left Texel 20 April 1621 and, based on subsequent voyages to Cape Verde, should have taken about a month to get to the Gulf arriving at the beginning of June 1621. Coincidentally, on 3 June 1621 the Dutch West India Company (GWC) was formed and head-quartered at Fort Nassau at the head of the Gulf of Guinea. After the collapse of the Twelve Years' Truce between Portugal-Spain and the Dutch Republic, the GWC was formed and granted a trade agreement that allowed the GWC to seize Portuguese and Spanish shipping and colonies which soon gave the Dutch a trade monopoly over the Americas, West Indies and the African Gold Coast, thereafter known as Dutch Guinea or the Dutch Gold Coast; rich in gold, ivory, pepper – and *slaves*. The *Leeuwin* spent six months in the Gulf of Guinea. It would be difficult to believe she was stuck there the whole time by 'unfavourable winds.' It would not be difficult to imagine the *Leeuwin*, an advice yacht '*used to transfer messages and orders or for reconnaissance*', being sent to the Gulf of Guinea as a despatch and support vessel for the establishment of the Dutch West India Company – something she might not want the Portuguese and Spanish to hear about. There does not appear to be a record of *Leeuwin* calling at the Cape after leaving the Bight suggesting she might have reprovisioned on the west-coast of Africa away from prying eyes as she continued on her next venture, the (unofficial) quest to discover the extent of the Unknown Great South Land.

The Search for the Unknown South Land:

In 1611 Hendrik Brouwer introduced his new route that reduced the sailing time from almost twelve months to six months between the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies. After 1616, when Brouwer's Route became mandatory for all VOC vessels, parts of the Western Australian coastline started to take shape after unexpected discoveries were made by Captain Dirk Hartog in the *Eendracht* in 1616, Captain Haevick Klaasz van Hillegom in the *Zeewolf* in 1618, followed a few weeks later by Captain Leendert Jacobsz in the *Mauritius*. These early discoveries were in northern waters from latitude 27° to 22° south, extending from about Dirk Hartog Island to North West Cape. Postulating that the new unknown land might be part of the fabled Great South Land, and also a hazard to navigation, the Gentlemen XVII in Amsterdam ordered the captains of their ships to look out for the unknown land and to chart and determine the extent of the coast. These were not necessarily 'secret orders', but the VOC did not want the Portuguese, Spanish, English, or any other trading competitor, to find out about it – and certainly did not want them to find out about the Brouwer Route.

On 19 July 1619 Captain Maarten Cornelisz in the *Amsterdam* was sailing in company with Captain Reyer Jansz in the *Dordrecht*, when they made a land-fall on the 'Southland lying behind Java' and anchored in latitude 32° 20' south, about opposite Warnbro Sound (on today's charts) and a long way farther south than the earlier Dutch discoveries. Each ship just happened to be carrying a dignitary aboard, fleet commander and member of the Council Frederik de Houtman on the *Dordrecht*, and Councillor of the Indies Jacob Dedel on the *Amsterdam*. In the language of the day, these ships came upon the land unexpectedly (all of a sudden), not accidentally (unintentionally). De Houtman was a very experienced explorer, navigator, astronomer and now a member of the same Council of the Dutch East Indies that had just ordered their captains to look out for and chart the unknown land. The *Amsterdam* and *Dordrecht* were both cumbersome 800-ton retourships not suited to coastal navigation in heavy weather on a lee shore. As it was not practicable to attempt a landing they worked their ships northwards as close inshore as they dared to chart the land de Houtman named *Dedelsland* (later changed to *d'Edels land*) after the highest-ranking member aboard the ships. On the 29 July 1619 in latitude 28° 26' de Houtman made the important discovery of an extensive group of treacherous low-lying islands that were given the

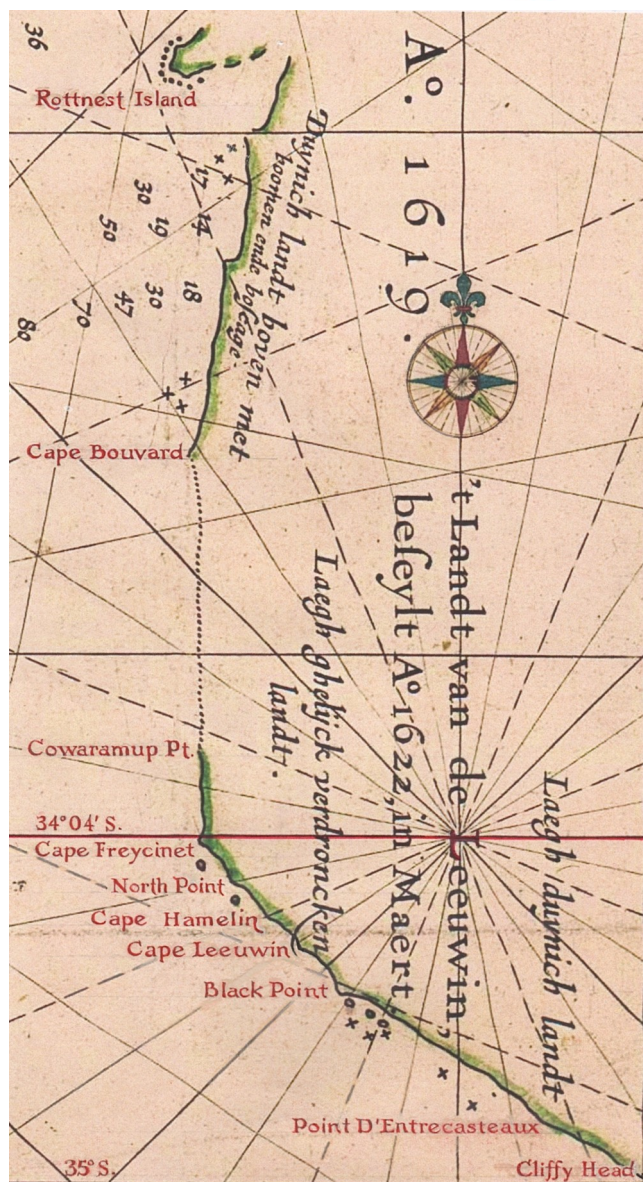


name de Houtman's Abrolhos. The ships continued sailing north until they caught up with Dirk Hartog's *Eendracht'sand* in latitude 27° 40' then held their course north and north-west for Bantam, Java.

The Houtman discoveries were important not only for the extensive charting of the west-coast of Australia, but for the letters de Houtman and Jacob Dedel wrote to the Board of Directors in Amsterdam urging the Gentlemen XVII to do further exploration with a properly fitted out vessel. On the 9 September 1620, the Board of Directors in the Amsterdam Chamber wrote to Governor-General Jan Pieterszoon Coen and the High Council in Batavia asking for a ship to be sent to examine the extent of the Southland from the northern to the southern-most extremities. By the following month, 22 October 1620, the Resolutions of the Amsterdam Chamber recorded they were looking for a suitable ship to be fitted out as an 'advice yacht' and to be named the *Leeuwin*. Coen received his instructions in Batavia at the beginning of 1621 but answered, *'this year it will not be convenient to explore the Southlands behind Java'*. The Gentlemen XVII would not have received Coen's reply by the time the *Leeuwin* set sail from Texel 20 April 1621; but it seems the Amsterdam Chamber had already decided how they would play their part in the exploration of the Southland. After the establishment of the Dutch West India Company in the Gulf of Guinea, *Leeuwin* was sent on a voyage of discovery to determine the southern extent of the Southland. Following in the wake of de Houtman, *Leeuwin* approached the unknown coast in latitude 35°, two degrees farther south than de Houtman's landfall in 33° near today's Cape Bouvard. The master of the *Leeuwin* had every intention of being as far south as he was, and he was not there by mistake, accident or poor navigation. The only thing 'unexpected' was the sudden but hoped for discovery of the land falling away to the eastward. This expedition was not just a search for the fabled Great South Land, it was also a search for the fabled Great South Sea – a trade route favoured by the Dutch that would give them access to Portuguese and Spanish interests in the Pacific and the Americas; that is to say, access to pillage Portuguese and Spanish shipping.

The Land *Leeuwin* sailed along in March 1622:

The *Leeuwin* made her landfall in latitude 35° south, which (if dead-accurate as the Dutch navigators were quite capable of doing) would place her at what we now call Cliffy Head close to Point Nuyts near Walpole on the south-coast of



Leeuwin's Land oriented with North at the top of the chart. Today's place names are shown in red and correctly align with the latitude on Gerritsz's chart. Note the east-west rhumb line (shown in red) emanating from the letter L of Leeuwin and crossing the coast at Cape Freycinet. Dedel's Land (1619) is at the top of the chart.

Australia. As there are no place names on the chart '*Leeuwin* sailed along' I shall interpose current names determined by latitude on Gerritsz's chart. The *Leeuwin* headed north-westwards from Cliffy Head making a running survey along the coast far enough offshore to diminish the broad headland of Point D'Entrecasteaux to a mere bulge but still able to observe the conspicuous *Laegh duynich landt* (low-lying land with dunes), today's Meerup & Yeagarup Dunes. The chart suggests *Leeuwin* stayed well out to sea to skirt the offshore islands and reefs that run out from the cape that now bears her name and consequently missed discovering the safe anchorage of Flinders Bay. It is fair to say, however, the land described on the chart as *Laegh ghelijck verdroncken landt*



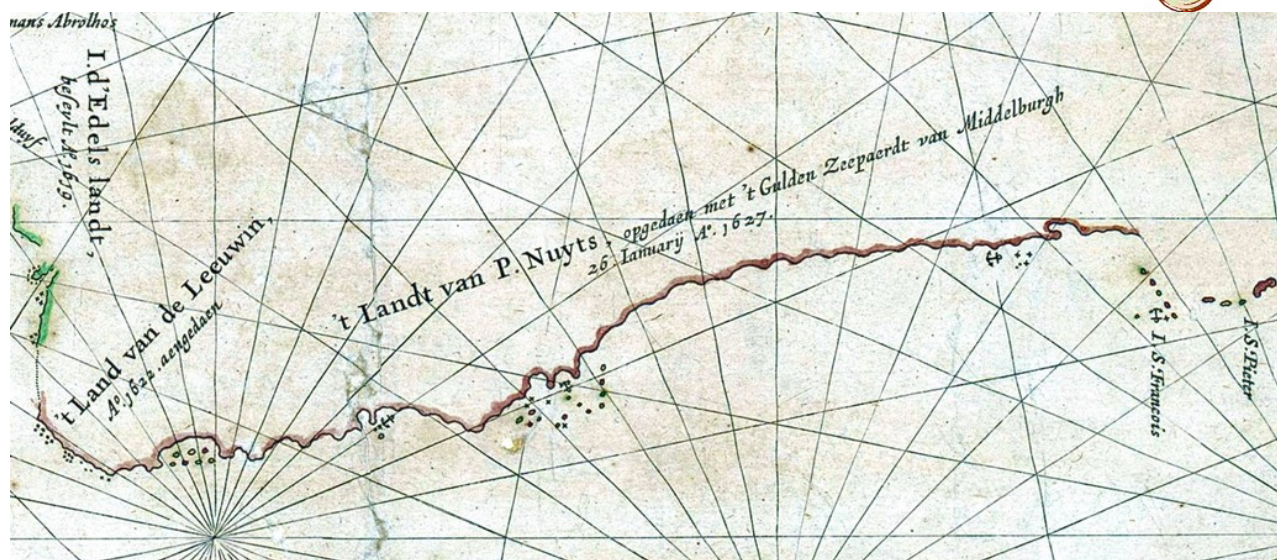
(low-lying land seemingly submerged) is actually Flinders Bay. *Leeuwin* continued to sail nor-nor-west correctly plotting Cape Hamelin and North Point until she arrived at Cape Freycinet, shown as a prominent feature on Gerritsz's chart in latitude 34° 05' south. Cape Freycinet's prominence is not for its landform but from the observation that it is the south-west corner from which the coast runs due north in one direction and falls away to the south-eastward in the other direction. The coast does not run due north from today's Cape Leeuwin, nor does Cape Leeuwin stand out as a prominent feature if viewed from four or five miles out to sea. The old adage stands true, "if you can see it, you're too close". Nevertheless, Gerritsz placed today's Cape Leeuwin as a minor headland dead-accurate in latitude 34° 22' south. There is no direct evidence on the chart to suggest *Leeuwin* anchored or that her crew went ashore. However, in keeping with the clandestine nature of *Leeuwin*'s visit, there is a cryptic reference to a landing site on the north face of Cape Freycinet. Gerritsz's chart can be read as a rebus (a puzzle in which hidden words are represented by a combination of letters, pictures and symbols). Like the rebus on the 17th century gable stone in Amsterdam that can be deciphered to mean 'Cape Leeuwin – named after the ship *Leeuwin*', so the *Leeuwin* chart can be deciphered with the identical meaning: 'Cape Leeuwin – named after the ship *Leeuwin*'. Gerritsz's chart forms a rebus by placing a rhumb line (used for plotting a ship's course) along a line of latitude that emanates from the letter L of *Leeuwin*, which then intersects the coast on a headland (Cape Freycinet) where a sandy beach (Conto Beach) forms a small landing place adjacent to a natural freshwater spring. Had the Dutch ever desired to name a headland 'Cape Leeuwin', this would be the place. This would also be a likely place to set up a Kaap (Cape), a beacon for an aid to navigation. After doubling Cape Freycinet *Leeuwin* sailed north and left the coast at Cowaramup Point and continued her course for Batavia where she arrived 15 May 1622. An assumption appears to have been made that the coast continued to run north from Cowaramup Point until it joined up with the land near Cape Bouvard discovered by Frederick de Houtman in 1619 (shown as a straight dotted line on the Gerritsz chart) when, in fact, the coast runs north to Cape Naturaliste then swings around into Geographe Bay before turning north again. There are no master or digni-

tary names scribed on the chart as we see with other Dutch discoveries, nor are there any place names. The name *Leeuwin* was added by Hessel Gerritsz (sometime before 1627 when the chart was published), and it was Matthew Flinders who gave the name Cape Leeuwin in December 1801 to 'the south-western and most projecting part of *Leeuwin's Land*'.

The *Trial* and Further Discoveries:

If the arrival of the *Leeuwin* in Batavia on 15 May 1622 didn't galvanize the Governor-General Jan Pieterszoon Coen into action to fit out a survey vessel, the arrival of a boat-load of shipwrecked sailors certainly did. On 24 May 1622, the East Indiaman *Trial* struck rocks off the Montebello Islands on the north-west coast and foundered. Two boats got away, the first arriving in Batavia on 25 June 1622 with the second boat arriving three days later. Coen was not pleased, the loss of the *Trial* (the first recorded shipwreck in Australian waters), proved there were unknown hazards on the Brouwer Route, but it also proved the Brouwer Route was no longer a secret, for the *Trial* was a 500-ton *English* ship employed by the English East India Company which clearly had followed the Brouwer Route. A few weeks later another Dutch ship, the *Wapen van Hoorn* ran aground at night in a hard wind in the 't *Landt van d'Eendracht*. Fortunately, they got off. According to the Governor-General's letter sent to the Board of Directors in Amsterdam, 29 September 1622, Coen did not need any more convincing and outfitted two yachts, the *Haringh* and *Hasewint*, both under the command of Jan Vos, to attend 'the urgent necessity of obtaining a full and accurate knowledge of the true bearing and conformation of the said land'. Regrettably, the *Haringh* and *Hasewint* never got past the Sunda Strait before they came across the *Waapen Van Rotterdam* and the *Mauritius* which were disabled by the scurvy. By the time these ships were escorted into Batavia it was too late in the season to go exploring along the coast of the Great South Land, and certainly not down to '45 or 50 degrees, or from the farthest point to which the land shall be found to extend southward within these latitudes . . . '.

It wasn't until 1626 before the *Gulden Zeepaerd* (Golden Seahorse) commanded by Captain François Thijszoon/Thijssen, with extraordinary member of the Council of India Pieter Nuyts on board, followed *Leeuwin*'s example to find the southern extent of the Southland by running a few more degrees further south. The *Gulden*



Detail from the Hessel Gerritsz Chart of the Malay Archipelago and the Dutch Discoveries in Australia, created between 1618–38, showing the southern coastline of Australia charted by François Thijssen in the Gulden Zeepaerdt. The orientation has North pointing to the top of the chart and shows 't Land van P. Nuyts joining up with 't Land van de Leeuwin in the south-west corner, with d'Edels landt (painted green) extending northwards up the west-coast from Cape Bouvard, past Rottneest Island towards Houtman's Abrolhos.

Collection – National Library of Australia: Hessel Gerritsz

Zeepaerdt approached the coast in latitude 37° and found the open sea. After running some 800 nautical miles (1,500 km) from the longitude of Cape Leeuwin she worked her way northwards and on 26 January 1627 sighted a group of islands in latitude 32° 30' south about 30km off the South Australian coast near Ceduna. The islands were later named Nuyts Archipelago by Matthew Flinders in 1802. Thijssen then turned and followed the coast westward, charting some 1,800km of coastline until he joined up with 't Landt van der Leeuwin 120km west of Albany near a point of land appropriately named Point Nuyts by cartographer Beautemp-Beaupré on Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's expedition in 1792. Thijssen named the land behind the coastline he charted: 't Landt van P. Nuyts, opgedaen met t Gulden Zeepaerdt van Middelburgh 26. January A°. 1627, (the land of P. Nuyts gained with the *Gulden Zeepaerdt* of Middelburgh 26 January in the year 1627) naming the land after Pieter Nuyts the senior official on board the ship. After doubling Cape Leeuwin Thijssen turned northwards and arrived at Batavia 10 April 1627.

With the Thijssen-Nuyts discoveries there seemed little doubt that the land mass previously referred to as the known Southland was not part of the true Southland. Though the eastern extent of the Southland was still unknown, Dutch navigators, cartographers and philosophers were already suggesting the land was simply too small and too close to the equator to qualify as the Great Unknown Southland. It only remained to make that final exploration to confirm the known Southland

was separated from the unknown Southland by a Great South Sea.

Though a few other ships touched the known coast, like the *Grooten Broeck* that sailed from Cape Leeuwin to Dirk Hartog Island in 1631 and the *Batavia* that investigated the Houtman Abrolhos the hard way in 1629, not much happened in southern waters until 1642 when Abel Janszoon Tasman was given command of two ships, the *Heemskerck* and the *Zeehaen* to discover and explore the unknown Southland and find a new South Sea route across the Pacific to South America. Tasman's instructions required him to search for the unknown Southland south of Mauritius in latitude 52° or 54° and if no land was found there to sail due east 'until you meet with the land'. Heavy seas prevented Tasman sailing beyond 49° south so he and his steersman/pilot François Jacobszoon Visscher thought it prudent to sail up to 45° before heading eastward. As they worked their way under the Great Australian Bight they ran along latitude 42° and on 24 November 1642 met with the land in 42° 20' south on the western coast of Tasmania. After a short consultation with the officers they elected to sail south-about rather than north-about, allowing the ships to pass into the South Pacific to discover New Zealand, Tonga and Fiji. Having traversed a Great South Sea, Tasman named the land he had just sailed under *Hollandia Nova* (New Holland) leaving the riddle of the Unknown Great Southland for others to find.

Ross Shardlow October 2022



SKIPPER OF THE *LEEWIN* NO LONGER A MYSTERY

By Nonja Peters

In March 1622, the Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie (VOC), or in English, the United East-Indies Company vessel *Leeuwinne* (Dutch for ‘lioness’ and pronounced ‘Laywin’, I spell it *Leeuwin* in this article), happened upon the coast now known as Western Australia in the region where the Cape Leeuwin lighthouse, named in its honour, now stands. Before moving on to Batavia (modern-day Jakarta) on the island of Java, it charted around 150 km of the coastline of Wadandi Land.

This article is based on the minutes of the meetings for the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC 1620–1621 and of Fort Batavia, 1620–1623 and the resolutions reached and incoming and outgoing letters as detailed in the digitised copy of Dr H.T. Colenbrander's publication, *Jan Pietersz. Coen, Beschieden omtrent zijn Bedrijf in Indië*, Vol I -V (1919–1923):

<https://www.cortsfoundation.org/pdf/COENV3.pdf>.

I also refer to information as per the VOC archives at the Nationaal Archief The Hague: NA 1.04.02 and the digitised diary of Arnoldus Buchelius:

<https://www.uu.nl/bijzondere-collecties/de-schatkamer/particuliere-collecties/collectie-bucheliu> held in the Special Collection at the University of Utrecht library.

There were two editions, and I chose the one that Kees Smit and Bart Jaski, archivists at the University of Utrecht library, edited in 2013 and 2020. It was a good decision as the Old Dutch text was easier to read in typescript. In this article, the translation of the quotes and paraphrasing from Dutch to English being the author's, she takes full responsibility for inconsistencies. The input from Meeno Leenstra is per personal communication.

Ross Shardlow has done a sterling job detailing the navigational coordinates of many VOC ships that chanced upon the WA coast. It enables me to confine my article to describing how our perspectives on the *Leeuwin* narrative differ. Shardlow correctly identifies the unexpected

presence of these ships on the WA shore with the explicit orders given to skippers leaving the Netherlands for Batavia by the VOC board of directors, the Heren XVII (Gentlemen XVII), that they sail Hendrik Brouwer's new route. Brouwer's new route was shorter and cooler and as a result, his crew had experienced less illness and fewer fatalities, and the food and water had stayed fresher longer. The disadvantage of the new route is related to the inability of current navigational devices to precisely measure longitude, which is necessary to decide when to turn north towards Batavia.

However, the foremost reason VOC ships were in the region in the 17th century was to trade in spices, luxury products and exotic items for which the demand was introduced in Europe by Silk Route merchants, from the time of the Han Dynasty (206BC–220AD). Daubed the ‘Golden Age’ by 1960s historians, its nomenclature is currently hotly debated by politically correct historians. However, to my way of thinking, it most aptly describes the ‘good life’ many Dutch were then living. At that time, the Netherlands had the highest levels of affluence, longevity, and education in all of Europe.



A Table of Desserts, c1640
by Jan Davidsz. de Heem, 1606–1684

Painting: Public Domain



The advances in the sciences, humanities, art and architecture the wealth had generated were visible in the many books in print and mansions along the most prominent waterways. The wealth for these changes had developed gradually from the Middle Ages via trading activities in staples in the Baltic, Atlantic, and Mediterranean regions.

Called the Moedernegotie (mother-of-all-trade) the increase in wealth was exponential from 1585 when thousands of highly-skilled Protestant refugees fleeing religious persecution in Flanders made Amsterdam their home. The wealthy merchants, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, traders, bankers, writers, artists, scholars, pastors, schoolmasters and printers possessed the skills and zeal to rebuild their lives. Their previous decades of business expertise and international perspective helped revive stagnant Amsterdam by regenerating its businesses with innovative new industries. Their drive and energy brought about a shift in the economic and cultural centre of gravity which saw Amsterdam in the north soon replace Antwerp in the south as the economic and Staple Centre of Europe. It included a financial market which provided cheap investment capital and insurance. This robust economic climate spawned the VOC in 1602, the Amsterdam Exchange Bank in 1609, the stock exchange (Beurs) in 1611 and the West Indies Company (WIC) in 1621. In 1595, Petrus Plancius, a Dutch cartographer and protestant minister, uncovered the Portuguese sea passage into SE Asia from the charts of cartographer Bartolomeu Lasso, that Cornelis de Houtman had acquired for him during his educational/intelligence gathering sojourn in Portugal. Now in possession of a sea route and owning the wealth to finance trade missions, the Dutch could finally free themselves from the stranglehold the Portuguese had held over their access to luxury and exotic goods since 1590. It was the socio-economic context in which *Leeuwin* operated.

AMSTERDAM

The *Leeuwin*'s Voyage 1620–1623

Researching the *Leeuwin* narrative has been challenging. Particularly notable, a fact also expressed by Shardlow, is that none of the leading maritime scholars, including Leupe in 1868, Heeres in 1898, and Schilder in 1974, have identified the skipper on the ship's 1621 outbound voyage from Amsterdam to Batavia. My research on the *Leeuwin* from 2012 provided no

more information than the specialists had already uncovered. However, my interest was reignited in 2021 by recently digitised documents, such as the Resolution of the Governor General and High Council of the Indies in Batavia and the Board of Directors of the VOC's Amsterdam Chamber, plus incoming and outgoing letters. These made my recent hunt far more absorbing.

Minutes of the meetings of the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC 1621

On January 4, A week later, on January 11, the minutes note that the minutes record Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest, the son of Simon Michielsens, had presented his services as skipper. Adam Verhuldt, a 12-year company stalwart, had requested that the directors consider him for the post of 'merchant' on the *Jacht van Advys* and that Jacob Reijersz Swardt had offered his services as skipper. The names appeared a positive find, particularly as Leupe 1868 was inclined to think that either Wygeest or Swardt would have acquired the job.

I reconnected with Menno Leenstra, an excellent researcher and interpreter of 17th-century Dutch script, who had assisted my research before, to alert him that I was again trying to track down the skipper of the *Leeuwin*. He informed me that only Reyer Simonsz. van Wtgeest had requested the directors consider him for the job of 'skipper' on the *jacht van advis*. A French idiom, *jacht van advis* means 'ship on notice' for the voyage under consideration. The Resolutions for March 4, 1621, also designated the ship *Leeuwin*, with a capacity of 400 tonnes and about to carry 80,000 reals in seven chests, to assist the then Governor General of Batavia, Jan Pietersz Coen (JPC), finance his lucrative intra-Asian trading schedule – the *jacht van advis*. At that time, dozens of closed and sealed chests made up of silver reals, riksdalers, ducats, and bars of silver or gold made their way to SE Asia on outbound journeys. Typically, these were stored in pine chests, wrapped in canvas, fastened with rope and then sealed with red wax with the skipper's seal.

At this point in the investigation, Leenstra introduced me to the diary of Arnoldus Buchelius (see sources). Also known as Aernout van Burchell, he had Latinised his name, a habit among savants. A Dutch antiquarian and humanist with a focus on genealogy and heraldry, his diary is particularly relevant to the *Leeuwin* story as he was one of the directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC from 1619 to 1621. Also, he was prone to jot down or elaborate on details of



the chamber meetings and include snapshots of daily life. I began by browsing the various configurations of the name *Leeuwinne* (*Leeuwin*, *Leuw*, *Leeuw*) in the diary entries for 1621, and record entries relevant to the *Leeuwin* narrative as per below.

On March 7, Buchelius writes,

Door strenge vorst en langzame dooi opgehouden, ben ik uit Utrecht in Amsterdam aangekomen (held up by severe frost and slow thaw, I finally arrived from Utrecht for the March meeting of the Amsterdam Chamber) (Fol.64v, p.100).

Between the end of November 1620 and March 7, 1621, Buchelius was unable to attend the January chamber meetings due to the severe weather. As a consequence his endorsement of the January 4, 1621 resolutions, which could have specified the choice of a skipper for the *jacht van advis*, is not noted. The weather had also kept ships that would typically have sailed for Asia contained in their winter mooring.



Winter scene on a frozen canal, c1620, by Hendrik Avercamp 1585–1634
Painting: Artsey open access

On March 8, Buchelius writes,

A large mob, including numerous women, blocked easy access to the building. It seems, it was rumoured, albeit wrongly so, that we were hiring women to send to the East Indies. Moreover, no sailors nor craftsmen were to be accepted unless travelling to Java with their spouses to help populate the new colony of Jakatra. This rumour originated from discussions—which have been addressed previously—about the benefits of sending young ladies to the Indies to spread Dutch culture there. J.P. Coen, the Governor General, has continually requested that the VOC send free Dutch people to reside in the company's operative region where they could establish a living in

commerce, industry, or agriculture. Moreover, in the event of an emergency, they would be available to contribute to the region's defence. Coen had observed this done by the Portuguese. However, the Amsterdam Chamber's directors and the Gentlemen XVII had expressed a variety of opposing viewpoints on this plan in previous meetings and letters. While most could see the advantages of having our country's children born there, as local births would immediately acclimate and immerse those children in local mannerism, numerous arguments were also made against the notion..... Again, so the rumour goes, at least one in ten of the women already sent to the Indies hadn't given birth. Moreover, recruiting indigenous women was not an option as they had already been so abused and were so depraved, that little support could be expected from them. The Heren XVII also feared that any young girls sent to the Indies would already be corrupted en route by rough ship's personnel and onshore by others. Consequently, they would be more of a disgrace to our nation than a benefit. The groups sent earlier of low origin from urban poor houses were the sort Jan Pietersz Coen was trying to avoid. The women chosen had to enter into a contract with the VOC to get married and stay in the Indies in return for which they would receive free crossing, clothing, and a dowry (Fol.62r, pp.96–97).

Buchelius' comment at the end of his March 8, 1621 diary entry took my breath away. He writes:

Alleen het schip de Leeuwin, van ongeveer 200 lasten, wordt hier toegerust. Het is onlangs gekocht door de VOC, en was enkele jaren eerder gebouwd. Maar het was niet goed toegerust of sterk genoeg voor zo'n verre reis, en is daarna met veel noodzakelijke aanpassing en vergroot en versterkt, en nu voor de reis geschikt gemaakt, onder SKIPPER JAN FRANSSEN VAN HOORN (fol. 62r, p.97).

English translation

The Leeuwin, a ship of about 400 tons, is the only one being refitted here. It was built a few years ago and recently purchased by the Amsterdam Chamber. However, it was found to lack the structural integrity necessary to go



Shipyard of the Dutch East India Company, Amsterdam, 1720 by Joseph Mulder, 1658–1743
Engraving: Public domain

a great distance. After many crucial adjustments, including enlarging and strengthening, it is now suitable for the lengthy voyage under **SKIPPER JAN FRANZS. FROM HOORN** (Hoorn being the city where he was born)!

Unica hic navis Leena instruitur ducentorum fere vasa (lasten vocant), quae nuper a Collegio Indico empta, ante paucos annos fuerat fabricata. Verum, non satis instructa aut valida ad tam longinquum iter, multis perinde necessariis aucta et firmata, nunc itineri adaptatur, sub nauta vel navis magistro Johanne Francisco Hornano.

Latin script as it appears in the diary of Buchelius noting the name of the Leeuwin's skipper for the outbound voyage of April 20, 1621
Attached is the text from folio 62 (recto) of the Diary by Van Buchel

Illustration: Nationaal Archief 1.11.01.01, inv. nr. 256

There was his name, the skipper of Leeuwin's outbound journey - Jan Fransz. an alternate spelling could be Fransen or Franssen. I was incredulous! Why hadn't Leenstra seen this? It appears that in 'book one' the original copy, which Leenstra had been reading, these three sentences are written in Latin as above. The women's quandary had piqued Leenstra's interest, and the Latin went unread. Finding his name was serendipitous - needing input from both Leenstra and me. From my side, it was the luck of having chosen to read the edited version of Buchelius's diary.

The Latin below was transcribed from the original by archivists Kees Smit (2013) and Bart Jaski (2020):

Unica hic navis Leena instruitur ducentorum fere vasa (lasten vocant), quae nuper a Collegio Indico empta, ante paucos annos fuerat fabricata. Verum, non satis instructa aut valida ad tam longinquum iter, multis perinde necessariis aucta et firmata, nunc itineri adaptatur, sub nauta vel navis magistro Johanne Francisco Hornano.

Why in Latin, I wondered? Archivists, Kees Smit (2013) and Bart Jaski (2020) note in footnote 52, p. 55 of

Buchelius' diary, Book One, *Het is opmerkelijk dat Buchell dit gevoelige onderwerp in het Latijn beschrijft*. Translated into English, it reads, 'It is noteworthy that Buchell (aka Buchelius) describes this sensitive subject in Latin.' The VOC's acquisition of a ship of inferior quality was possibly a sensitive topic. Perhaps Buchelius was partly to blame for the poor decision!

I would like to have waxed lyrical about the private life of Jan Franssen as a child in Hoorn and why or when he left there to pursue his maritime career. However, no such information has



as yet come to hand, despite a great deal of searching.

On March 8, Buchelius also noted that the Chamber hired Cornelis Abrahamsz. van Hoorn, as *onderstuurman* (deputy steersman) on the *Leeuwinne* at 34 guilders a month. They had fired the bottlier/steward (Jan Simonsz), *When we (directors) learned of his subpar supervision, drunkenness, and continued propensity to drink.* Botteliers were responsible for the victuals on board the ship.

On March 9, Buchelius records that a letter had arrived for the directors from Councillor Pieter de Carpentier brought over with the *Vrede*. In it, Carpentier notes ‘how happy the English are with the Defense treaty concluded in Europe between our nations. However, we are still blockading Bantam with yachts and small boats’ (fol.63v, p.98)... Additionally that Fort Batavia was taking shape [physically] but needed more capital for trade and more personnel including tailors, shoemakers, ABC books and pens, young girls, notaries, carpenters, masons and the materials and tools to build good houses.’

On March 11, Buchelius's diary entry mentions that just four ships, including the *Gouden Leeuw* and *Leeuwinne*, would travel to the Indies that spring. He adds that at the Chamber meeting that day, the Directors had overturned Jan Simonsz.'s dismissal (fol. 62r, page 99).

It seems the claim of intoxication was untrue. ‘The bottelier (Jan Simonsz) gave us a document today, signed by several people attesting to the fact that the skipper on his previous ship had fired him without cause, trial, or provocation. In Jan Simonsz.'s opinion, he was possibly fired out of enmity or hostility as he had provided good service. For when the English confiscated their ship, it was he who had leapt overboard to warn the other members of the crew. The crew then forced the English to release their skipper. Consequently, ‘we (the directors) agreed not to renegotiate his salary. Instead, we awarded him a special allowance in recognition of his remarkable loyalty and left what is currently recorded in our books as is’ (fol. 64v pp. 98–99).

On the same day, Buchelius expresses concern about the tardiness of mustering the crew. He also noted that the Resolution they'd reached concerning the transport of women to Batavia,

was to postpone it until autumn (see also Resolutions for the Amsterdam Chamber April 9, 2021, NA 1.04.02, scan 228 and 353).

On March 16, Buchelius writes, *today it was resolved to muster the crew for the Leeuwinne next Tuesday’* (fol.66v, p.102 and NA 1.04.02 (VOC) 228 (scan 353)). Mustering entailed registering the ship's name, its owner's name and destination, and the names of all crew members beginning with the captain. Each ship that left the Republic carried a separate pay-ledger known as the *scheepssoldijboek* or *principaal grootboek*. On arrival in Batavia, these pay-ledgers were reworked to reflect changes to a person's career. The Nationaal Archief in The Hague holds copies of ninety per cent of the pay-ledgers of ships that went from the Republic to Asia in the eighteenth century. Sadly, not many from the 17th century have survived.

The skippers of the *Leeuwin* and *Gouden Leeuw* would have received their sailing orders around this time. However, they failed to materialise and have perhaps been lost forever, given the timespan. To follow Brouwer's course would have been the directive. Leenstra notes that understanding the east and west monsoon seasons that impacted the Brouwer route only gradually emerged after the first flush of success of the ‘1000 miles east’ concept. The *Eendracht* was likely the first ship to experience the problem of the west monsoon, which in the north of WA, is at its worst in December, January, and February. To the south of the anticyclonic system, westerly winds and a procession of cold fronts associated with the ‘roaring forties’ (the windy zone between latitudes 40° and 50°S that underpin Brouwer's route) bring cool and cloudy weather, rain and westerly gales along the southern coast. These may have impacted *Leeuwin*.

On April 12, Buchelius observes that *Leeuwin* is to be manned by a crew of 175, comprised of 150 sailors, plus officers, assistants and boys. He expresses hope that *Leeuwin*, which is still in its Amsterdam Bay winter berth, will sail outside the pylons of the Amsterdam IJ and enter open water later that day (Fol.66v, p.102). The Oude and Nieuwe Waal in the IJ were safe berths for the ships, fenced off with a double row of pylons to break the waves (Buchelius Diary, Book 2, Footnote, 199, p.100). In open water, she was ready for the next stage of her journey to the Indies. It would begin on arrival in the harbour on Texel, one of the Wadden Islands. Texel was crucial to the Dutch East



Profiel van Amsterdam, gezien vanaf het IJ (Profile of Amsterdam as viewed from the IJ), dated 1611

By Claes Jansz Visscher II

Illustration: Open Access

India Company's commercial expeditions. It was where their ships anchored, off the Reede van Texel, to be loaded with provisions and stocked up on large quantities of iron-rich water from the Wezenputten. The water from these two enormous wells, located near the settlement of Oudeschild, is known to last much longer before losing usability. Once loaded and if the weather was fine the ship left right away.

The VOC had always sent their ships out as far as they could at set times and in fleets rather than alone. Three fleets were typically dispatched by the VOC to the Indies each year. One around Easter, another in September and the final one, known as the Christmas Fleet, departed naturally in December. Organizing the provisioning for departure in December and January had benefits. Compared to spring, summer and autumn, recruiting sailors was less compli-

cated in the winter months. In addition, the food supply was cheaper, particularly the cost of meat, which was always at its lowest point following the harvesting and slaughtering seasons.

BIGHT OF GUINEA AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Shardlow provides an extensive account of the mapping activity of the *Leeuwin* crew along the coast. It enables me to take up the narrative from inside Fort Batavia before, on *Leeuwin*'s arrival and during her sojourn there and when preparing for her homebound departure.

FORT BATAVIA, JAVA 1622–1623

The section that follows is based on the minutes of the meetings and relevant resolutions reached by the Governor General and High Council of



Dutch ships in the roadstead of Texel by Ludolf Bakhuizen, 1671

Painting: Rijksmuseum, in Public domain



the Indies (*Raad van Indië*) 1621–1623, at Fort Batavia, the headquarters of the VOC in SE Asia.

From late 1621 until May 18, 1622, the minutes of the Council meetings in Fort Batavia occasionally comment on *Leeuwin*'s anticipated arrival with 80,000 reals, express anxiety about her late arrival, or the fear that she had come to grief. In one entry, the JPC speculates that she may have encountered adverse winds and sailed straight to Ambon, as had the *Eendracht*.

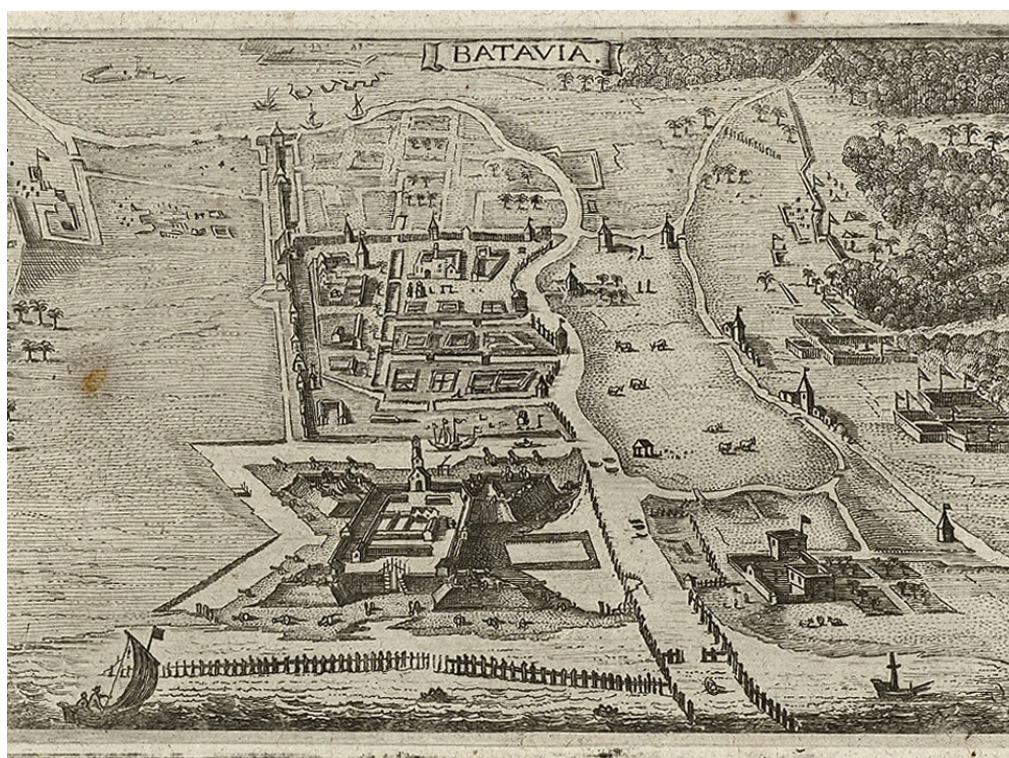
On October 8, 1621, the minutes record that the Council awaits two ships from Patria, the *Westvrieslant* and *Leeuwin*. However, they are taking longer than anticipated. The Council is desperate for the large amounts of capital they are carrying to avoid the embarrassment of not being able to meet the payment for their purchases from China and the Coromandel Coast and pepper from Bantam, Jamby, and Patany. JPC also deliberates that some capital will be left-over to pay the English for spices from the Mollucques, Amboyna, and Banda (Colenbrander, p.779).

The purpose behind the last payment was The Anglo-Dutch Fleet of Defense Treaty signed on June 17, 1619. The treaty called for the two powers to put aside their former grievances and work together. To enable this, they established

a Council of Defense, comprising eight members who were to operate a united fleet of ten ships, five each, out of Batavia. Its objective was to defend the two powers' God-given rights to free and liberal trade in Asia. Its main aim was to end the Portuguese and Spanish monopolies. Before long, the English in the region voiced concerns that the Dutch were so much better placed to dominate the alliance. However, the English being better-placed financially, JPC expressed concerns about Articles 6, 7, and 8 of the treaty, which compelled the Council of the Indies to hand over one-third of their profit on the spice trade and half of the pepper trade to the English. Given the effort and capital JPC and his predecessor had expended to establish the VOC trade in spices and pepper in Southeast Asia, which was beginning to come firmly into Dutch hands, it felt like a slap in the face for JPC. Consequently, rather than buckle under the terms of the Treaty, Coen interpreted to use it as a basis to obstruct the English.

On January 21, the minutes note that there are still no tidings of *Leeuwin*, *God grant that she arrives before too long as our need for capital is now desperate*.

On March 3, the minutes of Governor-General and High Council of the Indies record concern that the *Leeuwinne* has still not arrived.



Gezicht in vogelvluht op de stad Batavia, 1629, Batavia, Het Fort Batavia (Bird's-eye view of the city of Batavia, 1629, also showing Fort Batavia) By Adriaen Matha

Print: Rijksmuseum, Public domain



On May 18, the minutes note that on May 15, *Godtloff, van't Vaderlandt 't lange verwachte schip Leeuwinne wel aengecomen* (God bless, the long-awaited *Leeuwin* finally arrived). There is no mention made of her encounter and mapping of the southland. They do express the hope that the awaited missives from Patria are on the English ship *Trial* (Colenbrander, Vol. I, p. 719).

None of the Council Resolutions concerned with *Leeuwin's* late arrival contains evidence to suggest any anger is being expressed by Council members, as claimed by some researchers as per Shardlow. It is certainly not implied by the promotion and change in work status conferred on skipper Jan Franssen when he arrives in Batavia, which I note later.

On May 24, the minutes note, that the three chests of silver bullion the *Leeuwin* brought from Patria would now be used to pay for the China trade (Colenbrander, 1920, Vol. III, p.907).

In the month following *Leeuwin's* arrival in Batavia, the Council of Defense sent her to take fresh food, water, and weapons to ships maintaining the blockade of Bantam from June 15, for 16 days which cost f714,135, and again from July nine for 15 days, which cost them another f700. *Leeuwin* was to remain in the Sunda Strait to also offer assistance to any newly-arrived ships languishing there due to the many sick on board. A condition the *Leeuwin* knew all too well, as pointed out by the Council. She had many sick on board when she arrived in Batavia (NA 1.04.02 (VOC) 1076 Fol 306 [scan 655]; Colenbrander, Vol III, p. 889).

It is outside the scope of this essay to comprehensively discuss the history leading up to the Bantam blockade. Additionally, it would not advance this account of the *Leeuwin*. Suffice it to state that up until now, the competition around the spice trade had led to several arrangements of alliances between the English, Dutch, and Bantammers. These rotating alliances led to mistrust, contract fraud, ship confiscation, detention or murder of staff, besieging or destroying trading posts or forts, and overall undermining of each other in every manner possible. But in this instance, JPC was in charge, and the Defense Treaty had persuaded the English to support Coen's blockade of Bantam (Colenbrander, p. 779). Although the English quickly withdrew, JPC had the military might to continue to block the Bantam harbour. Hence

Leeuwin's brief participation. Leenstra notes that in the years after 1622, the Dutch and Bantam both came under attack by the ruler of mid-Java (Mattaram), which forced them to cooperate. As for the Defence Treaty, despite its projected 20-year alliance, it would dissolve in August 1622.

Homeward Bound 1622

On July 21, the Council deliberate the question of whether to designate the *Delffshaven* or *Leeuwin* next *jacht van advis* (Colenbrander, p. 900).

On August 13, the Council Resolutions conclude despite the issue of the Gentlemen XVII having chosen the *Delffshaven* that, the Council of the Indies saw fit to replace it with the *Leeuwin* as the next *jacht van advis* (Colenbrander 1921, p. 896). The Council replaced Adriaen Willem Goeree with Cornelis de Maeijer (or Meyer) as *Leeuwin's* merchant and named Dirck Gerritsz. Crol (Krul) homebound skipper. The minutes mention that she is to be manned by a crew of 70, and now fully laden, they wished to send her on her way as soon as possible (Colenbrander, 1921, p. 900). The Resolutions note, in addition, that the accord had again been reached with the English, which the Council of Defense had endorsed, contained a request from the English to have their ship *Cleene Jems* travel back to Europe in company with *Leeuwin* (Colenbrander, p. 901).

On September 6, the Resolutions records the assistance given the English collaboration by providing the *Cleene Jems* with 14 barrels of meat and bacon. This way, she could avoid waiting for a supply from England (Colenbrander, p. 752). The Council endorsed an earlier request from Willem van Antzen, Governor of Banda and Council member, that he be allowed to return to Patria on *Leeuwin* (Colenbrander, p. 902). Resolution Sailing Orders - Ordre: Voor d' Overhooffden van de Schepen de Leeuwinne ende Den Cleynen Jems, Gaende van hier in compagnie naer Europe, 6 September, 1622 Colenbrander, Vol III, Sailing Order 6-9-1622, pp. 235/6 the collective order. Crol secret order (pp. 236-38).

The Sailing Orders were explicit instructions concerning the cooperation between the two ships. The regulations advised each skipper to maintain companionable travel to Patria until they reached the passage between England and France. Also, the lead position, which included



flying their nation's flag, was to be swapped each month. They should stay close together to minimise attack from outside but, if it did occur, support each other. In addition, to avoid crashing into one another to light a fire on their ships at night. The secret order handed to skipper Crol by JPC warned him to be careful because the Council of the Indies still didn't trust the English. Consequently, he should part company with the *Cleyen Jems* before they reach the coast of France and England (Colenbrander Vol I, p. 752 [letter to Patria 6-9-1622]).

The *Leeuwin* arrived in Texel on May 19, 1623. In a letter from JPC to the Heren XVII, dated September 6, 1622, he notes:

The Leeuwin and the Golden Lion departed from the Netherlands at the same time but one arrived here after four months, the other after 13 months, which is, indeed, a significant difference. As we (the Council) understand it, the reason for the long journey the Leeuwin and some other ships had endured, is that on encountering adverse winds while sailing south from the islands of Cabo Verde, they'd held an easterly position for too long and this had taken them into the Bight of Guinea before they realised it. Conversely, skippers who'd been confronted with the same predicament and tried, instead, to regain south had quickly found favourable winds and crossed the equator.

The latter experience led JPC to add, *it is, therefore, imperative that Your Excellencies advise future skippers to retain a westerly course after passing Cabo Verde, as this, it seems, will more readily enable them to cross the equator* (Colenbrander, Vol. I, p. 718).

Leenstra 2022, notes that JPC's counsel is problematic because incidental evidence serves as its foundation. Furthermore, after 1623, VOC ships that spent days, weeks, or even months trying to cross the equator in vain, who feared running out of water, frequently topped up in the Bight. Leenstra adds that the knowledge to access favourable winds to cross the equator only slowly evolved partly due to the problem with longitude. Therefore the need for skippers

like Jan Franssen to seek fresh water in the Bight was *sometimes* unavoidable. Consequently, JPC's last sentence on the topic, *Na ons gevoelen comt daer niemant oft hy wilter wesen*, 'Nobody arrives there [in the Bight] unwillingly,' can hold for differing reasons.

On January 2, 1623, the Resolutions of the Governor General and High Council of the Indies, notes among a list of employees who had changes made to their contract post-arrival in Batavia:

skipper Jan Fransz. van Hoorn having come into the land with the ship Leeuwinne on a salary of f50 per month, carried a letter of instruction from the Chamber of Amsterdam that he be advanced to a position more in line with his capacity, as they found him to be a competent and appropriate person for such a promotion (Colenbrander, Vol. III, p. 934). *Given the Amsterdam Chamber's exceptional recommendation, the Council of the Indies has accordingly increased his salary by f20, thus from f50 to f70 per month. Moreover, that this was to continue until he reaches Patria.*

They also commissioned him to skipper the *Trouw*, a much larger ship than the *Leeuwin* (Colenbrander, Vol III, p. 934).

Unfortunately, little else has come to light about Jan Franssen's background, despite having scoured the notarial transport files at the Amsterdam City Archives, which often contain the skipper's name on the transport contract. I also checked the births, deaths, baptisms and marriage registers in the Regional Archives in Hoorn. My last hope is that Hoorn confirms that the Jan Fransz. (Fran's son) who married Marie Jansdr. (Jan's daughter) on Pentecost day, May 18, 1603, is the Jan Franssen who skippered the *Leeuwin* on its outbound voyage to Batavia in 1621. If so, it might reveal more about his private life.

I conclude this narrative by noting the immense impact, in Australia, of the *Leeuwin* name. To date, it is attached to flora, fauna, a suburb, a street, a vineyard, wines, an ocean current and a lighthouse.