



Jan van Riebeeck's Journal

Month-by-month version

Contents – October 1652

The four men who deserted their posts in the hopes of going back to the Fatherland, have returned. Upon investigation it was found that they kept a journal detailing their Journey. They have been condemned and sentenced for their wrongdoing. Harry brought Saldaniers to the fort to trade cattle for tobacco and copper. Read all of this and more in this monthly version of Jan van Riebeeck's Journal written exactly 370 years ago. Welcome to all our new subscribers. Remember to forward a copy to your friends. If you prefer the Old Dutch version with Afrikaans notes, request your copy [here](#).

All the best,

Rian Maartens (Executive Editor)

This monthly newsletter is extracted from:

"Journal kept by the senior merchant Jan Anthonissen van Riebeeck¹, who sailed as commander with the ships *Drommedaris*, *Reijger* and *Goede Hoop*² from Texel for Cabo De Boa Esperance, in the service of the General United Dutch Chartered East India Company under the Chamber of Amsterdam³"

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

1 – 31 October 1652

OCTOBER 1652

Primo Fine, sunny weather with variable winds in the bay, as is often the case. The wind may blow N.W. where the yacht lies and a pederero shot further blow strongly S.E., while here on land it may blow mildly and from all directions; so that one can hardly judge on shore how the wind is blowing outside. To-day again sowed some green peas; those sown a fortnight ago are coming up well, and those sown first are now ripening. The lettuces also are making exceedingly fine heads.

Shortly after our arrival here the assistants went behind the Table Mountain¹ to the other side of the land (to the south) and found there according to their report a beautifully closed-in bay with many fine forests². We now decided to explore it further, as it is thought that the private Portuguese Mozambique traders³ have harbours somewhere behind Table Bay where they refresh themselves on their outward and return voyages. So sent the mate of the yacht and the assistants Van den Helm and Verburgh, with some armed men and, as guide, the Hottentot Harry, who speaks a little English, to explore more fully the situation of this bay and the forests, etc. They returned on the

1. This refers to the visit which the assistants Pieter van den Helm and Frederik Verburgh, accompanied by the bookkeepers of the *Drommedaris* and the *Reijger*, undertook to the region behind Table Mountain on 5 and 6 May. See under those dates.

2. The present Hout Bay. To the beautiful forests (*schoone bosschagies*) Hout Bay incidentally owes its name. Cf. 11 July 1653. The description which appears under the following day's entry—especially the fact that this bay is well protected except against the S.S.W. winds—leaves no doubt that it is Hout Bay.

3. In the Journal: *particuliere portugese mosambijs vaerders*. This could mean private Portuguese ships—i.e. ships owned by private individuals in contrast to ships of the State or Crown—which sailed to Mozambique, or Portuguese ships specially destined for the Mozambique run. Cf. in this connection e.g. Keller, *Colonization*, pp. 110—130.

Summary:

- Inspection of Hout Bay
- Resolution regarding boilers at Salt River
- Return of four deserters
- Journal kept by them
- Abundance of salt
- Arrival of Saldanha Khoekhoe
- Deserters sentenced
- Fear of English competition
- Dinner prepared from Cape produce
- Soundings of the bays
- Cattle trade with Saldanha natives
- Cannon fired at walrus
- Worn-out state of wheelbarrows

2nd before noon, reporting that they had found the said bay to lie due south, mostly behind the Table Mountain, and to be most suitable and adequately sheltered against all winds. It is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in circumference, the entrance being S.S.W. to N.N.E., so that it would only be slightly exposed to the S.S.W. wind. They consider however that ships could, even so, shelter behind a certain promontory. According to the aforementioned Harry, Englishmen had once been there in a large ship in which he sailed with them from there to this bay. He says that he was presented with two bags of rice by the Englishmen.

Our men also found there, about $5\frac{1}{2}$ thousand paces from the beach, many beautiful forests with trees taller, thicker, straighter and even more suitable than we have ever found before, and a satisfactory path for conveying the wood to the sea-side in wagons or carts. *Item* a very fine, fresh river flowing to the sea, wide and deep enough for rowing boats. It narrows and becomes overgrown $\frac{1}{2}$ mile up, but they think it flows from the depth of the forest, so that if one wished to convey the wood by water it could be floated down the river. At a later date this should be further investigated.

As the aforesaid Pieter Brackenier refuses to confess that he had spoken the words: "The anchor is gone and the cable will soon follow", and as the attestors, in the collation of the attestations, declared that they had merely heard his voice and not actually seen him uttering those words, the Council¹ to-day agreed to discharge him from detention; but for having wished—according to his own confession—that he were with the deserters, condemned him to fall 3 times from the yard-arm, to receive a hundred lashes before the mast, and to serve on the yacht in future so as to prevent him from again inciting the men.

Also resolved to erect the oil boilers this side of the Salt River behind a high sand dune at the mouth of the river, so as not to be worried here at the fort by the smoke and the stench and any sickness that may be caused thereby. A small redoubt, 3 rods square, is to be built of sods on the sand dune for the protection of the boilers and accessories. It will be occupied and guarded by the men who catch the whales and extract the train-oil, and it will also serve for the greater security of Table Bay and the sloops to be kept in the river. Then, too, it will become a suitable look-out for whales and for ships entering the bay. Great difficulty would be experienced by any one seeking to land with boats against our will, as all the serviceable approaches could then be covered and defended by our guns.

3rd Lovely, sunny weather with variable winds. The aforesaid sentence passed on Brackenier was executed.

At noon the gunner and 2 other men of the yacht who had been to the Salt River to collect reeds, returned in flight, informing us that they had seen a great number

1. See resolution of the Council, C. 1: Res., C. of P., 1651—1663, pp. 22—24. C.A. Also C.J. 780: Sentences, 1652—1697, pp. 11—12. C.A.

of natives and had been chased across the river by 7 or 8 (there being only five of ours) and had left the other two behind with the sloop, as they could not swim. So 12 or 14 armed soldiers were sent to rescue and bring back the sloop and the two men. When they arrived at the Salt River, however, they found the 7 or 8 natives to be the wives of Hottentots living here. These women were digging roots from the earth for food, and on seeing our men had come dancing towards them as a sign of friendship and to ask for some tobacco or bread.

Meanwhile one of the men who had absconded on the 24th ultimo appeared from a thicket, requesting a safe entry into the fort, and shortly afterwards the other three also made their appearance¹. Before the evening all four of them came inside the fort of their own accord, having failed to see the soldiers who, on the strength of the rumour that they were in the vicinity, had been sent after them and who returned an hour later.

When the deserters had thus returned and arrived inside the fort, we immediately took them into custody and questioned each of them separately, but they all told more or less the same story. They said they had run away of their own free will in the hope of reaching the Fatherland by travelling overland, but owing to the many high and difficult mountains they could not get further than about 24 miles east from here, so they decided to return and beg for pardon, knowing full well that they had offended most gravely. They would not confess that the one had incited the other, nor would they say who had been the first mover. Jan Blanx, however, said that he had conspired with Jan van Leijen, that the other two had joined them of their own accord, and that some time ago on the yacht he had dreamt of a gold mine² for which they intended looking and which they thought they would find. He added other such frivolous and childish explanations, whereupon all four of them were for the time being placed in irons and detained in custody separately so that they could not speak to one another.

4th Bright, sunny weather with stiff S. breeze. Once more examined and heard the aforesaid fugitives³, who confessed voluntarily that they had intended to go overland to Mozambique and from there to the Fatherland, and that they had first been urged to undertake this journey by Jan van Leijen, as he himself also admitted. *Item* that Jan Blanx—and he himself admitted this—had encouraged them by showing them the way, as he had some knowledge of navigation. About 24 miles from here, however, they had arrived at some mountains and found this country most difficult and impossible to negotiate. Feeling quite weak from hunger, Jan

1. The four persons were Jan Blanx (of Mechelen), Willem Huijtjens (of Maastricht), Gerrit Dirckssen (of Elsen) and Jan Janssen (of Leyden), the latter also known as Jan Verdonck (of Flanders). See again 25 September 1652 and 1 March 1653.

2. The Journal has *een goudt bergh*, i.e. a mountain of gold—an old Dutch term for a gold mine.

3. Their confessions are to be found in C.J. 2952: Confess. and Interrog., 1652—1673, pp. 15—16. C.A.

van Leijen (who had been the first instigator) and Willem Huijtjens wanted to turn back. But Jan Blanx said: "You shall now go forward with us, or I will shoot you dead." They therefore continued with the others across the mountains until the next day, 30 September. In the meantime, as they could see no way of getting through the mountains, they also persuaded Gerrit Dirckssen to turn back, so that Jan Blanx, not daring to continue alone, also resolved to return. And so they arrived inside the fort last evening and prayed for pardon. All of this is more fully described in signed confessions¹.

Also found on them a journal written with red chalk and kept by Jan Blanx since the day they absconded or departed from here until 30 September, when they all turned back. It reads word for word as follows:

Copy of Journal kept by Jan Blanx who, together with Jan van Leijen, Willem Huijtjens and Gerrit Dirckssen, absconded from their service here on 24 September last—concerning their adventures:—

'In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

'24th September. Departed from the Cabo de boa Esperance in the evening and 'headed for Mozambique—four of us, Jan Verdonck of Flanders², Willem Huijtjens 'of Maastricht, Gerrit Dirckssen of Maastricht, and Jan Blanx of Mechelen. We 'had 4 biscuits, fish, 4 swords, 2 pistols and the dog. May God let this journey go 'well for us.

'25th do. In the evening marched 7 miles. Saw 2 rhinoceroses which charged us 'and threatened to destroy us, but God protected us; Jan Verdonck had to abandon 'his hat and sword. A little earlier our dog had chased a porcupine and received a 'wound in the neck, so that we thought it would die. Took our rest for the night 'alongside a brook, in God's name. Also saw 2 ostriches. Had to leave this place 'when 2 rhinoceroses advanced upon us. This time we chose the beach where we 'walked for two miles and encamped in the first of the dunes.

'26th do. In the morning proceeded on our journey, following the beach towards 'Cape Angulius³, and marched about 7 miles. Our first meal was four young birds 'which were sitting in the nest, and three eggs. In the evening encamped on the 'beach where we gathered some *clipconten*⁴.

'27th do. Continued along the beach about 7 miles. In the evening came to a

1. Their confessions are to be found in C.J. 2252: Confess. and Interrog., 1652—1673, pp. 15—16 C.A.

2. The same person as Jan Janssen (of Leyden). Cf. names a few lines above; also entry of 25 September.

3. Cape Agulhas.

4. i.e. *klipkousen* = ear-shells; probably the abalone or Venus-ear, which is still collected at the Cape as a delicacy.

'very high mountain by the sea¹. As we had to cross this we rested at its foot until the

'28th do. and provided ourselves with *clipconten* to take with us across the mountains. We roasted them, strung them together with bits of string and dried them. Also provided ourselves with calabashes in which to carry water.

'29th do. In the morning proceeded on our journey, intending to cross the mountains. When we did not meet with much success, Jan Verdonck and Willem Huijtjens began to repent. Nevertheless on the

'30th do. we continued until the afternoon, when Gerrit also grew tired. I could not manage by myself, so decided to return to the fort in the hope of receiving compassion and mercy. In God's name.

'At the foot was written: This copy was compared with the Journal kept by me, the undersigned, with red chalk from the day of my departure, and found to agree word for word. To prove it a true copy I have signed it with my own hand in the presence of Pieter van den Helm, bookkeeper, and Fredrick Verburgh, also bookkeeper, who were requested to be witnesses hereof, on this the 4th October anno 1652. Signed: Jan Blanx. P. V. Helm. F. V. Burgh.'

In the evening the wind began to blow very strongly and during the night grew to such violence from the S.E. that the tarred tents were torn into rags. *Item* on the 5th still much harder, so that we had quite an ado to keep our dwellings standing by propping them up with supports. The wheat was blown flat on the ground, and almost all the Roman beans and many of the green peas, already full of peas and blossoms, were also flattened. The strong wind continued until about 10 o'clock at night when it began to subside.

Sunday 6th Lovely calm, warm, sunny weather. Towards evening, close inshore, we caught with the seine about 2,000 harders and 200 spotted sand-sharks; some of these we can serve this week at the midday meal—the Lord be praised for the blessing.

7th *Idem* fine, warm weather and N.W. wind; in the evening it became quite misty.

Without pain of irons and bands², or threats to use them, the captive fugitives voluntarily made confession to-day, after having been examined for the third time. First of all Jan van Leijen admitted that Jan Blanx had said on their journey that as

1. They had probably arrived at the Hottentots Holland Mountains in the vicinity of the present Gordon's Bay. But then their statement of distances would be extremely erroneous, as according to their notes they had thus far covered 21 miles, i.e. Dutch (or German) miles, or approximately 84 English miles, while the actual overland distance from Table Bay to Gordon's Bay is only about 35 miles.

2. For their declarations on this day see C.J. 2952: Confess. and Interrog., 1652—1673, pp. 16—17. C.A.

he had never enjoyed any good from the Hon. Company but had endured all the trouble in the world, he would endeavour to do it as much harm as he could. He also said that Mr. Adriaen and Mr. Cornelis¹ had drunk with Jan Blanx to the success of the journey and also to his (Jan van Leijen's) health; on this Mr. Adriaen had spent 7 or 8 quarters of wine. He added that Mr. Cornelis had given Jan Blanx an old razor, as well as some ratsbane with which, in the event of his being caught by savages, he could poison them to regain his freedom. Further that Mr. Cornelis had wished to abscond with them, but was dissuaded by Jan Blanx in view of his good salary and the fact that he was not required to do any labour. All of this was also admitted by Willem Huijtjens, although he was not aware that Mr. Cornelis had wished to join them. Gerrit Dirckssen said, however, that Mr. Cornelis himself had told him at the last moment that he was inclined to accompany them but was remaining behind on the advice of Jan Blanx. Jan Blanx (when he was heard) admitted this and declared it to be the truth; also that Mr. Cornelis had given him an old razor and the ratsbane to take along for the purpose aforesaid. He emphatically denied, however, that he had drunk with Mr. Cornelis and Mr. Adriaen to their success, or that he had said that he would injure the Company.

Messrs. Adriaen and Cornelis were summoned before the court to be questioned about the aforementioned matters. The statements being laid before them, they denied everything most emphatically, declaring that they knew of nothing, least of all of the fugitives' departure or their intentions².

8th Misty, cold weather and N.W. wind. Went to the salt-pan to collect some salt as our supply of this commodity was nearly exhausted. Found nothing there; maybe it is still too cold and the sun too weak for the formation of salt, but in the warm season there will obviously be an adequate supply. Indeed, if one took the trouble, there would be enough for a number of ships to be loaded every year; and it could easily be fetched by boats, as there was so little surf close to the pan to-day that the boats could easily be loaded there. As the sea is not always so calm, however, wagons would be required to bring the salt from the pan to the Salt River. This would take about 1½ hours and would be quite practicable along the beach, where the sand is hard.

9th *Idem* misty, cold weather with N.W. breeze. During the last 3 or 4 days another 10 to 12 men have gone to bed with dysentery.

To-day once again examined the captured fugitives and interrogated each one separately³. All adhered to their previous confessions and the *meesters* persisted in

1. Adriaen de Jager, chief surgeon, and Cornelis Hansen Maijerp (or Majarp), junior surgeon. See C.J. 2952: Confess. and Interrog., 1652—1673, pp. 17—18; and C. 1: Res., C. of P., 1651—1663, p. 25. Both in C.A. The title *Mr.* (*Meester*), was prefixed to the name of a surgeon or barber.

2. See their declarations, C.J. 2952: Confess. and Interrog., 1652—1673, pp. 17—18. C.A.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 18—22.

their explicit denial of what the prisoners had said about them¹. They declared that they had not the least foreknowledge of the plans or of the desertion of the prisoners, who, in turn, also stated that they had told the truth in every respect and had disclosed everything they knew. The Council therefore resolved² to dispose of their cases to-morrow by pronouncing sentence in God's name and giving each the punishment he deserves for his offence. This is stated more fully in the sentence under that date³.

In the evening some Saldania Hottentots arrived at the fort⁴, upon which the sentinels gave the alarm. The Hottentot Harry (who speaks a little English and who lives under our protection in his hut on the other side of the river below the northern point, the Reijger) came to the gate with two Saldaniers and requested to be admitted, which we allowed. When they came before us, we treated them with wine and tobacco, so that they were in good spirits when they left again after about 2 hours. They affirmed that if only we had enough copper—which they call *bras*⁵ — many of their comrades would appear very soon with an abundance of cattle. We showed them some copper and this seemed to please them very much.

These two Saldaniers were much more robust and much stouter than the Strandlopers who live here with us every day, but they wear the same clothing and speak the same language. On their arms they wear rings of ivory and as ornament in their hair they plait small horns similar in appearance to *cauris de Maldiba*⁶; copper bracelets and copper plates are worn round the neck. They have nothing else with them but some ostrich eggs and leek or young onion and garlic, which we have also found here in fair abundance, growing wild, and of which we intend collecting seed in order to grow it at the fort, as we have already been doing with the asparagus, sorrel and mustard.

10th Wind and weather as yesterday. In the morning Harry came into the fort with another 12 to 14 Saldanhars. We presented them with a draught or two of wine and a little tobacco, and they presented us with some young onions or leek, promising to arrive very soon with many head of cattle. They would go now to tell

1. See their declarations, C.J. 2952: Confess. and Interrog., 1652—1673, pp. 23—25. C.A.

2. Cf. C. 1: Res., C. of P., 1651—1663, pp. 24—25. C.A.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 26; and C.J. 780: Sentences, 1652—1697, pp. 14—17. C.A. In both these documents the sentences are described in detail.

4. As stated before, the Saldaniers (or Goringhaiquas) were a cattle-owning Hottentot tribe, who usually trekked with their cattle in search of good pasture. See p. 25, note 2. They generally arrived—as is illustrated by this entry—in the vicinity of Table Bay in the springtime, after the winter rains had fallen.

5. The word *bras* (brass) for copper was evidently learned by the Hottentots from the English sailors. Compare e.g. three days later, where abundant evidence is given of their contact with the English. As we have seen before, Harry had even sailed to the East in an English ship.

6. A type of shell which is found especially on the Maldiv Islands, to the south-west of India, and much sought after as ornaments by the inhabitants. See e.g. Paulus, *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*, I, pp. 741—744 (under *Gastropoden*); and Winckler Prins, X, p. 380.

their comrades that we had copper and tobacco with which to barter; they would bring back some ivory, also musk or civet (which we put before them to see and smell) to exchange for tobacco and copper. To this end we exhorted them with every kindness and good entertainment.

In the meantime we are still doing our best to bring the fortifications into a better state of defence, but sickness is again proving a great hindrance. Hope that when some cattle are obtained the position will improve by the grace of God. Amen.

To-day the aforesaid imprisoned fugitives were condemned by the Council and sentenced. Jan van Leijen who was the first to suggest absconding and who, together with Jan Blanx, through the intercession of many, had been absolved from the death penalty, is to be tied to a pole and have a bullet fired over his head. Jan Blanx, the guide, is to be keelhauled. *Item* to receive one hundred and fifty lashes, and in addition, together with Jan van Leijen, to work as a slave in fetters for 2 years doing the common and all other dirty work. Willem Huijtjens and Gerrit Dirckssen van Eltsen, who had allowed themselves to be persuaded by Jan van Leijen to abscond, are sentenced only to two years in fetters as above¹. Mr. Adriaen and Mr. Cornelis are to be absolved and Mr. Cornelis to be released from his detention and set free, owing to insufficient proof of the statements made by the prisoners regarding them.

11th Weather and wind as before. Above-mentioned sentence executed.

12th Weather and wind *ut supra*. About 20 Saldaniers arrived, intimating that they were on the point of leaving to go and tell their comrades about us and would return here with cattle and ivory. They requested a gratuity of a small piece of tobacco each, which we gave them as well as a draught of wine each, with a friendly exhortation to return soon with their cattle and all other commodities as we had enough copper and tobacco for them, if only they would have no fear and come along. They showed themselves willing to do this and we are therefore hoping soon to have success.

They were very eager to get bread, with which we would have wished to treat them and could have obliged them greatly, but as the supply of bread is beginning to run rather low and the ration will soon have to be reduced (because no relief can be expected for another 4 months, the ships which left in the spring apparently having passed already) we gave them a little more tobacco instead. There should really be a larger annual supply of bread, rice and arrack with which to treat the natives, because we have observed that with these they can be very much tempted and made favourably disposed towards us. Notice it particularly from the fact that they are continually saying that the English had given them whole bags full of bread and much tobacco and cans full of arrack and wine. All the more reason,

1. Cf. C.J. 780: Sentences, 1652—1697, p. 14. C.A. On 1 January 1653 three of the prisoners, Jan Blanx, Gerrit Dirckssen and Willem Huijtjens, were, however, again set free. See under that date.

therefore, why we should be better provided in order to outdo the English and become the more popular with these natives, if we wish to draw them from the interior towards us. Otherwise there would not be a single animal to be had. The animals would most probably be obtained so cheaply that one could afford to give some bread, tobacco and wine or arrack into the bargain.

13th Dirty, rainy and windy weather from the W. Enjoyed a farewell dinner to-day with the officers of the yacht, which is ready for departure. Everything on the table was produced at the Cape: the fowls were reared here, new green peas, spinach, chervil, pot-herbs, asparagus (a finger's thickness) and lettuce as hard as cabbage and weighing at least 1¼ lbs. each. The cabbages and carrots are coming on well; but turnips sown in the new garden with the rich soil, which had come up well, have now been destroyed for the second time. We ascribe this to the *haer wortel*¹, which abounds in the ground here. Close behind the fort, however, in the garden with the sandy soil the turnips continue to grow reasonably well, and some are already as big as a small tennis-ball. All crops will apparently do well here, once the soil has been allowed to settle longer after it has been dug up 5 or 6 times and prepared with manure from the cattle. So also the barley (of which we sowed a handful upon our arrival here) is shooting out into lovely fat ears and the wheat is also doing well so far. We hope to have more experience of and success in this before the arrival of the return fleet.

14th Weather and wind mostly as before; quite cold, however. *Item* on the

15th with much rain and N.W. wind, which hardly aided the progress of our fortifications.

The weather is not favourable at present for taking soundings of the entrance to this bay. This we have often ordered and repeatedly warned the skipper of the yacht to do, for the guidance of ships both from the Fatherland and from India entering this bay. Often before now there has been suitable weather for this and more than enough opportunity, but, owing to the carelessness of the said skipper, it has been postponed, and through his negligence, and notwithstanding our daily exhortations, it has remained undone so far. Although we had not intended the yacht to leave the bay until this had been done, it was resolved, in order to gain time, to despatch her to-morrow to the bay lying to the south behind the Table Mountain and explored over land on our instructions on the 2nd instant under the directions of the bookkeepers Van den Helm and Verburgh. For our hopes of the May ships² putting in an appearance are in any case vanishing, although we should

1. Lit.: hair root. The meaning is not clear. The standard Dutch dictionary, *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, refers to the Van Riebeeck Journal and suggests: *een (kruipend?) plantgewas*, but finds it impossible to give a satisfactory explanation. The possibility of its being a type of eel-worm (*nematoidea*), and not a weed, however, has been suggested by entomologists.

2. i.e. ships which should have departed from the Fatherland in May.

have liked to send the particulars of the bay's entrance to Batavia. The said bay was thought by the mate of the aforesaid yacht to be a better bay than this one, abounding in fine forests with much suitable timber fairly easily obtainable, as set out more fully in the resolution taken with the skipper on that date. So the prepared.....¹ to test trade in the bays of St. Helena and Saldanha were handed over, together with instructions on one or two other things, the contents of which can be found in our copy-book under date of the 14th instant².

In the evening it began to rain and blow very strongly, increasing steadily during the night. Likewise on the

16th from the W., so that not only was the yacht forced to remain at anchor but had enough to do to ride out the storm.

The wind shifted completely to the N.W., making it an unsafe anchoring-place. This spells constant danger for the yacht, so that we are all the more resolved to have the situation of the aforementioned bay behind the Table Mountain more closely examined, to find out whether it would be better during the bad weather for the yacht to shelter there than here. This is to be desired, as there could be contact overland within 6 or 7 hours every day and, as there are very fine forests, much suitable timber would be obtainable, on which the men from the yacht could set to work. Here in Table Bay they simply have to remain idle in the ship in order to look after her lest she be driven from this anchoring-place by the strong S.E. winds—a danger to which she is often subjected.

17th Wind W. with slightly better weather than yesterday. The yacht set sail from the roadstead in the afternoon with the aforesaid purpose, dropping anchor off the Robben Island in the evening. The wind remained as before until the

18th Still W., with rain. The yacht remained to the leeward of the island until the

19th In the morning, fine weather and the breeze in this bay being S.E., we saw the yacht setting sail from the Robben Island, but she had to return to her former anchoring-place.

In the afternoon went about 1½ miles from here beside the Table Mountain to see how the mustard was growing. Found it doing excellently and blossoming abundantly and running to seed, and from all appearances we shall be able to reap a good ½ dozen small barrels full. We then intend sowing this nearby in the vicinity of the fort, it being most suitable for refreshment of the crews of the Company's ships calling here; *item* the Cape sorrel which grows wild here in great profusion, and we are collecting its seed for the same purpose; likewise the leek or small

1. Missing words—probably orders or instructions relating to the expedition.

2. Cf. C. 1: Res., C. of P., 1651—1663, pp. 26—27. C.A. According to the minutes, however, this meeting took place on 15 October—and not on the 14th. For the instruction issued to the officers, see C. 493: Lett. Desp., 1652—1661, pp. 29—34. C.A.

onion, more of which is daily discovered growing wild and is of as good flavour and quality as those in Holland.

In the evening, after we had arrived home and said prayers, and the gate of our hardly half completed fort had been shut, a few natives from Saldanha arrived at the gate requesting speech with the captain (meaning the Commander). So we went outside and gathered from them that the 12 of them had come ahead with 3 head of cattle and 4 sheep. They showed us some young ostriches and 3 elephants' tusks, which they wished to trade with us in the morning for copper and tobacco; and asked in the meantime for a little tobacco in return for bringing news and intelligence that within 4 or 5 days all the Sandaniers with wives and children and thousands of cattle, elephants' tusks and musk, would arrive. For further encouragement we also gave them a drink of wine, so that they were very happy when they left us to take their rest for the night.

Sunday 20th Early in the morning, the weather being fine and calm, they returned to the fort with 3 head of cattle and 4 sheep, 2 old and 2 young, which we bartered from them, namely the cattle for 9 plates of copper of 1 pound each and about 1 lb. of tobacco to boot, amounting to 31 stivers 12 penningen for each beast, the 2 old sheep for 2 do. copper plates and $\frac{1}{8}$ lb. of tobacco to boot, so that the price of each sheep amounted to 10 st. and $5\frac{1}{2}$ p.; and 2 fine, young, delicate, fat lambs for $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of copper wire and $\frac{1}{8}$ lb. of tobacco to boot, together costing 11 st. and 4 p.; so that each lamb cost 5 st. and 10 p.—altogether less than 1 pound in Dutch money¹. Believe that in the course of time we shall be able to make better and better bargains. Of the elephants' tusks we got 3 moderately cheap for about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of tobacco (amounting to 2 st. and 13 p.); *item* 2 young ostriches for $\frac{1}{8}$ lb. of tobacco, to see whether they can be reared. To-day the yacht returned to the roadstead, the skipper reporting that he had not been able to get round the point of the Cape and had nearly lost the yacht on the rocks off the Robben Island. Ordered him therefore to proceed on his voyage to the bays of St. Helena and Saldanha according to the instruction handed to him². So on the

21st weather and wind being as before, he accordingly again departed from this roadstead. The aforementioned Saldaniers also left, after they had begged a little tobacco and we had presented them with about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in all. They promised to return within 2 or 3 days with more cattle and tusks, which we urged them to do by treating them most kindly. These Saldaniers had just left when another one arrived

1. In connection with money values and the monetary system in the possessions of the D.E.I.C., see p. 83, note 1.

2. This is an exceptionally comprehensive document dated 14 October. According to it the men of the *Goede Hoop* among other things had to investigate the islands, bays, rivers and articles of trade of the territories to which they were going; and with articles given to them such as tobacco, copper, bread-knives and razors, they had to begin trading with the natives. See C. 493: Lett. Desp., 1652—1661, pp. 29—34. C.A.

in advance to inform us that he had been sent ahead to announce the approach of many Saldaniers who, with wives and children and all their cattle, were approaching and were coming to trade with us. He asked for some tobacco in return for the news; this we gladly gave him.

Meanwhile Harry the Hottentot (who speaks a little broken English and who claims, although contrary to our opinion, to have induced the Saldaniers to start negotiating with us and that it would not have happened but for him) had gone with some of his Strandlopers to meet the Saldaniers. Although he has been treated well, we regard this with some suspicion, the more so as he has proposed that for every beast we obtain by barter he should receive a 1 lb. copper plate to which he pretended to have a claim as brokerage. In relation to the trade here this would amount to excessive commission. Will seek, however, as far as is possible without serious prejudice, to placate him so as to be better able to find out what he is up to. Hope that, as he is now with the Saldaniers, he will do his best on our behalf, or, as we are inclined to believe, that they will not pay much attention to him. We can hardly imagine (in view of our friendly attitude and decided goodwill in our dealings with them) that they would listen to any evil proposals made by the said Harry, for we have noticed on the few occasions so far that they seem to prefer to deal without Harry being present.

At the moment, however, it cannot be determined with certainty how we stand with the one or the other, or what power the one has over the other. Therefore we are on our guard, and have doubled the sentries from to-day. All the carpenters, masons and those who can use their hands were set to wheeling the barrows so as to raise the walls a little higher with the greatest speed (they being only 7 feet as yet). To this end have given each the task of wheeling up 20 barrow-loads of earth every day for fourteen days in addition to the 130 loads daily required of them. A reward of one fathom of roll-tobacco per person (the men having nothing at all and thus being very anxious to have it) will be given to them—half now, about $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. each, and the other half at the end of the fourteen days. In order to raise their courage and eagerness still further, we had the bartered cattle summarily slaughtered and served, giving each a quartern of wine as well, after which every one set to work with much courage, not one remaining idle, whilst 2 carpenters took care of repairs to wheelbarrows and other materials damaged through incessant use. Also began to-day with the digging of a circular trench for the kraal in which the cattle will be kept at night. *Item* had the men bring some well-decayed manure which was found yesterday $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from here. It will be used for dressing the soil in our gardens, where the vegetables are growing well. Some, however, particularly turnips and peas, are ruined, very largely by the noxious hair root which is plentiful here. Hope thereby to improve the position, which may God grant. Amen.

22nd Heavy rain with N.W. wind, otherwise nothing in particular.

23rd In the morning S.E. wind with reasonably fine weather. The sky was a little overcast, however, with a few light showers. During the day it cleared up completely, the sun shining.

To-day Harry and 3 or 4 other Hottentots who live here with us returned to the fort, after having been inland for two nights with some natives from Saldanha. They brought with them two eland heads adorned with fine large horns, which they presented to us, and—according to what they told us in broken English—the animals had been killed by the Saldanhamen, who had eaten the meat in their huts.

At midday it began to blow quite strongly from the S.E. and towards evening the wind increased in force.

24th Weather quite calm; lovely warm sunshine with no wind. Again sowed some Turkish beans in ground dressed with manure, in the hope that they will grow well, as those sown before did not come up.

25th In the morning wind N.W., quite hazy, but during the day warm sunshine.

In the afternoon received report that many fish were disporting themselves near the shore in the bay. So instructed the gunner to draw the seine, which was done immediately and about 500 delicious harders were caught; most of these were served this evening to the men, who have to labour hard every day.

26th Wind variable, fine weather. To-day fired with cannon from the point Reijger at a monstrous, large walrus which was disporting itself close to the shore in the bay, and hit it; but the sloops could not be got ready in time to row towards it, so that the animal saved itself by escaping towards the sea.

Sunday 27th Fine, warm weather, the wind N.W. from one side and S.E. from the opposite side of the bay. To-day had some of our new turnips with lamb for the first time; some of them were half a pound in weight and at least as delicate as those in the Fatherland, and had not the slightest trace of being worm-eaten. As our two beds of turnips in the new garden had come up but through the severity of the hair root (which destroys much of the crops) had died again, the supply of turnips and other earth fruits and vegetables is still rather meagre. We hope, however, to improve the soil with manure and will in the meantime do our best to collect seed from all the crops.

Towards evening it began blowing hard from the S.E. and heavy gusts came over the Table Mountain. This evening also for the first time picked and ate beetroot, of fair size. This also seems to thrive here.

28th Wind N.W. with fine warm weather. Sowed some pumpkin seed in soil prepared with manure, and hope in due course to enjoy a good crop.

In the evening another 8 or 9 natives of Saldania arrived at the fort with the news that they had some sheep grazing near the Salt River, which they wished to barter with us (that is, after we had slept) and that their comrades with wives and

children and many cattle would follow shortly. They asked for some tobacco in return for the news they had brought and we gave them some.

29th Wind and weather *ut supra*, but the sky slightly overcast. Made a good haul of fish with the seine on the beach to-day, about 1,600.

Meanwhile we are busy making a kraal for the cattle to be obtained by barter, digging a circular ditch 8 feet wide and 4 feet deep. We are also strengthening our fortifications somewhat, finding the earth in the moat almost as hard as rock, so that we have enough to do to loosen it with picks and mattocks and have already broken many shovels and spades. Our wheelbarrows are also getting very worn, and we are prevented from repairing them not only through lack of small nails but also on account of other work, so that in this regard and in other matters we are highly in need of relief. Also bartered from the people of Saldania one sheep and 2 small elephants' tusks for a little tobacco and thin copper wire, altogether amounting to about stivers¹.

In the evening threatening weather with some rain. During the night it began to blow strongly from the S.E. over the Table Mountain, continuing on the

30th throughout the day. No work could be done on the fortifications as the men could not have stayed with the wheelbarrows on the walls but would have been blown right off. Meanwhile the gardener is very busy sowing cucumbers and pumpkins in soil mixed with manure: we hope these and all our other crops will bear good fruits in due course.

Ultimo Stormy weather continuing and wind as before, blowing so terribly that all our beans, peas and barley, standing beautifully in pod and ear, were blown to pieces. It is feared that hardly anything that grows fairly high will attain full growth, as the S.E. wind is so strong that the plants cannot stand up to it; and we shall thus get our best results from turnips and carrots. In time we shall gain more knowledge about this.

To-day some Saldaniers left again with a little tobacco as a gratuity, for which they begged as usual. They raised hopes in us that many of them would soon return with cattle, which is to be desired, as our Dutch victuals are almost exhausted.

Next Edition...

November 1652

Highlights to look forward to:

- Reduction of bread ration
- Sickness
- Food becomes scarce
- Harry discourses on native tribes
- Goede Hoop reports on French in Saldanha Bay
- Sijmon Turver's diary
- Frederick Verburgh's diary
- Saldanha natives arrive with large number of cattle
- Successful cattle trade
- Preparations for seal-hunting
- Suspicions against Harry
- Natives desire copper plate

Final Words...

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Edited and with an introduction and footnotes by H.B. Thom (Professor of History University of Stellenbosch)

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