

AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT

FREDERICK DANVERS

Transcripts of Dutch East India Company records, 1600-1700

Reels M550 – M576

**India Office Library
197 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NG**

**National Library of Australia
State Library of New South Wales**

Filmed: 1963

HISTORICAL NOTES

The Dutch East India Company

The Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie) was established in March 1602 following negotiations between the States-General and the directors of six companies that had been trading with the East Indies since 1596. It comprised six regional chambers based in Amsterdam, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Rotterdam, Delft and Middleburg. In 1609 it decided to appoint a governor-general and council to regulate the activities of its captains and factors in Asia.

The Company's first fleet sailed to the East Indies in 1603 and its first trading post was at Banten in Java. Its initial interest was the Moluccas and the trade in cloves and nutmegs and it captured Amboina in 1605 and Ternate in 1606. Within a few years it had established factories over a vast area, including Siam, Japan, the Coromandel coast and Surat in India, and Sumatra. In 1619, after the Dutch had stormed the English fort at Jayakarta in the sultanate of Banten, the Company transferred its headquarters from the Moluccas. Jayakarta was renamed Batavia in 1621. The Dutch had major victories over the Portuguese, English and French and for most of the seventeenth century they were the dominant European power in Asia. They took control of Malacca in 1641, Ceylon in 1656, Ternate in 1662 and Makassar in 1667. By this time, the VOC had over 140 ships and 25,000 employees, making it by far the largest trading company in the world.

In the eighteenth century the Company consolidated its position in Java, but its military, shipping and financial power declined. By the later decades of the century it had lost all its settlements in India, Japan, Siam and the Persian Gulf. The Company was dissolved in 1800. Its surviving records were transferred to the General State Archives in The Hague in 1856.

Frederick Danvers

Frederick Charles Danvers (1833-1906) was educated at the Merchant Taylors' School and King's College in London. He studied civil and mechanical engineering before joining the East India Company as a writer in 1853. Following the nationalisation of the Company in 1858, he transferred to the India Office. He worked in several departments, in particular the public works department, where he became assistant secretary in 1875. In 1884 he was appointed the Registrar and Superintendent of Records, a position he held until his retirement in 1898. In 1891-92 Danvers was sent to Lisbon to examine and transcribe Portuguese records relating to India. He then made three trips to The Hague in 1893-95 and studied many of the seventeenth century records of the Dutch East India Company. He selected 2646 documents for transcribing, 1517 of which were subsequently translated into English.

Danvers was the author of a number of publications on technical and engineering matters and later wrote reports and papers on Indian subjects. His most substantial work was *The Portuguese in India* (2 volumes, 1894)

FREDERICK DANVERS

IOR/1/3/1-106 Transcripts and translations of Dutch records, 1600-1700 (106 volumes)

Transcripts of letters from India

The title of this series of records is somewhat misleading: they are not confined to letters and they were written from Dutch settlements and factories throughout Asia, not just in India. In addition to letters, there are legal documents, treaties, contracts, reports of diplomatic missions and trade negotiations, historical summaries and accounts, daily registers of expeditions, journals of ships' captains, descriptions of towns, resolutions, lists of merchandise and prices, and instructions to naval officers and factors. A large number of the letters were written to the directors of the VOC in the Netherlands, many of them from the Governor-General and Council in Batavia. There is also a great deal of correspondence between the Governor-General and governors, directors, factors, admirals, captains and Dutch residents in the East Indies, India, Japan, Siam and elsewhere and also between the Governor-General and kings, sultans, rajahs and other rulers. There is some correspondence with agents of the English East India Company and Portuguese governors.

The original records were arranged in roughly chronological order, although some documents were misfiled. The transcribed documents were numbered by Danvers and bound in volumes. The English translations were given the same numbers and the volumes of translations were interfiled with the volumes of transcripts. For instance, the first volume containing the 1600-8 transcripts was followed by the volume containing the 1600-8 translations. However, the microfilming was done in two sequences, with all the volumes of transcripts filmed first (reels M550-67), followed by all the volumes of translations (reels M568-76).

Reel M550

Transcripts of letters from India, 1600-20 (In Dutch)

I/3/1 1600-8: documents 1-31

I/3/3 1607-16: documents 32-78

I/3/5 1615-20: documents 79-126

Reel M551

Transcripts of letters from India, 1621-25 (In Dutch)

I/3/7 1621-23: documents 127-71

I/3/9 1622-24: documents 172-90

I/3/11 1621-25: documents 191-221

Reel M552

Transcripts of letters from India, 1625-29 (In Dutch)

I/3/13 1625-26: documents 222-34

I/3/15 1626-29: documents 235-88

Reel M553

Transcripts of letters from India, 1629-39 (In Dutch)

I/3/17 1629-34: documents 289-318

I/3/19 1634-37: documents 319-49

I/3/21 1638-39: documents 350-67

Reel M554

Transcripts of letters from India, 1639-44 (In Dutch)

I/3/23 1639-42: documents 368-405

I/3/23 1639-42: documents 368-405

I/3/25 1643-44: documents 406-25

Reel M555

Transcripts of letters from India, 1644-51 (In Dutch)

I/3/27 1644-45: documents 426-51

I/3/29 1645-47: documents 452-96

I/3/31 1646-51: documents 497-514

Reel M556

Transcripts of letters from India, 1650-55 (In Dutch)

1/3/33 1650-51: documents 513-37

1/3/35 1652-54: documents 538-50

1/3/37 1654-55: documents 551-78

Reel M557

Transcripts of letters from India, 1655-58 (In Dutch)

1/3/39 1655-56: documents 579-601

1/3/41 1656-57: documents 602-23

1/3/43 1657-58: documents 624-38

Reel M558

Transcripts of letters from India, 1659-62 (In Dutch)

1/3/45 1659-60: documents 639-53

1/3/47 1660-61: documents 654-69

1/3/49 1661-62: documents 670-85

Reel M559

Transcripts of letters from India, 1662-70 (In Dutch)

1/3/51 1662-63: documents 686-705

1/3/53 1662-65: documents 706-28

1/3/55 1665-67: documents 729-38

1/3/57 1667-70: documents 739-66

Reel M560

Transcripts of letters from India, 1670-74 (In Dutch)

1/3/59 1670-72: documents 768-90

1/3/60 1672-73: documents 791-811

1/3/61 1673-74: documents 812-25

Reel M561

Transcripts of letters from India, 1674-83 (In Dutch)

1/3/62 1674-75: documents 826-39

1/3/63 1674-79: documents 840-72

1/3/64 1679-81: documents 873-99

1/3/65 1681-83: documents 900-29

Reel M562

Transcripts of letters from India, 1683-86 (In Dutch)

1/3/66 1683-84: documents 930-46

1/3/67 1684-86: documents 947-63

1/3/68 1685-86: documents 965-76

Reel M563

Transcripts of letters from India, 1686-89 (In Dutch)

1/3/69 1686: documents 977-90

1/3/70 1687-89: documents 991-1020

1/3/71 1688-89: documents 1021-54

Reel M564

Transcripts of letters from India, 1689-93 (In Dutch)

1/3/72 1689: documents 1055-76

1/3/73 1689-90: documents 1077-1132

I/3/74 1688-89: documents 1134-1141

I/3/75 1689-91: documents 1142-71

I/3/76 1691-93: documents 1172-1203

Reel M565

Transcripts of letters from India, 1691-94 (In Dutch)

I/3/77 1691-93: documents 1203-22

I/3/78 1690-93: documents, 1103-4, 1223-75

I/3/79 1693-94: documents 1276-1301

I/3/80 1694-95: documents 1302-69

Reel M566

Transcripts of letters from India, 1694-99 (In Dutch)

I/3/80 1694-95: documents 1369-77

I/3/81 1696-97: documents 1378-1435

I/3/82 1696-97: documents 1436-61

I/3/83 1697-99: documents 1462-1504

Reel M567

Transcripts of letters from India, 1698-99 (In Dutch)

I/3/84 1698-99: documents 1505-49

I/3/85 1698-99: documents 1550-88

I/3/86 List of volumes of letters from India 1595-1699 (564 vols.) compiled by Danvers when selecting documents for transcribing.
Copy (in French) of accord concluded between the English and Dutch commissioners, 25 Jan. 1622/23.
List of Portuguese documents (and English translation) found among Dutch records, principally from Goa and Malacca, 1639-40.
Undated Dutch letter on the state of Portuguese settlements, c. 1638-39.

Transcripts of letters from the Seventeen

The Gentlemen Seventeen were the group of directors who were responsible for the central management of the Dutch East India Company. They consisted of eight members of the Amsterdam chamber, four members of the Zeeland chamber, one member each from the Delft, Rotterdam, Hoorn and Enkhuizen chambers, and one director appointed in turn from one of the chambers outside Amsterdam. They usually met two or three times a year for periods of four to five weeks and used the Amsterdam or Zeeland chambers for administrative purposes.

The great majority of the transcribed letters were sent from the Seventeen to the Governor-General and Council of India. Others were sent to governors (such as Amboyna, Banda, Ceylon, Cape of good Hope), directors of factories, factors, admirals, the English East India Company, kings (such as Siam, Persia) and other rulers, and individuals living in Dutch settlements in Asia.

The English translations of selected letters can be found on reel M576.

Reel M567

Transcripts of letters from the Seventeen to India, 1614-1700 (In Dutch)

I/3/87 1614-20: documents 1-41

Reel M568

Transcripts of letters from the Seventeen to India, 1614-1700 (In Dutch)

I/3/87 1614-20: documents 42-51

I/3/89 1624-33: documents 52-99

I/3/91 1633-66: documents 100-69

I/3/93 1666-1700: documents 170-228

Transcripts of letters from the Governor-General

The letters from the Governor-General in Batavia were written to Dutch generals, admirals, captains, governors, factors, the English East India Company, Portuguese governors, kings and other rulers. They often contain instructions. One important example is the instructions from Anthony Van Diemen to Captain Abel Tasman and the chief mate Franz Visscher on their voyage of discovery on the *Heemskirk*, 13 August 1642.

The English translations of selected documents can be found on reel M676.

Reel M568

Transcripts of letters from the Governor-General to various factories, 1617-22 (In Dutch)

I/3/95 1617-22: documents A-X2

Reel M569

Transcripts of letters from the Governor-General to various factories, 1617-62 (In Dutch)

I/3/95 1617-22: documents A-X2 (contd.)

I/3/97 1622-32: documents Y2-Y5

I/3/99 1633-43: documents Z5-N7

I/3/101 1644-55: documents O7-W8

I/3/102 1656-62: documents X8-C10

Reel M570

Transcripts of letters from the Governor-General to various factories, 1663-99 (In Dutch)

I/3/103 1663-66: documents D10-I11

I/3/104 1668-80: documents J11-I13

I/3/105 1681-86: documents J13-Z14

I/3/106 1686-99: documents A15-K17

Reel M571

Translations of letters from India, 1600-23

I/3/2` 1600-8: documents 1-31

I/3/4 1607-16: documents 32-78

I/3/6 1615-20: documents 79-126

I/3/8 1621-23: documents 127-71

Reel M572

Translations of letters from India, 1622-29

I/3/10 1622-24: documents 172-90

I/3/12 1621-25: documents 191-221

I/3/14 1625-26: documents 222-34

I/3/16 1626-29: documents 235-88

Reel M573

Translations of letters from India, 1629-45

I/3/18 1629-34: documents 289-318

I/3/20 1634-37: documents 319-49

I/3/22 1638-39: documents 350-67

I/3/24 1639-42: documents 368-405

I/3/26 1643-44: documents 406-25

I/3/28 1644-45: documents 426-51

Reel M574

Translations of letters from India, 1645-56

I/3/30 1645-47: documents 452-96

I/3/32 1646-51: documents 497-514

I/3/34 1650-51: documents 515-37

I/3/36 1652-54: documents 538-50

I/3/38 1654-55: documents 551-78

I/3/40 1655-56: documents 579-92

Reel M575

Translations of letters from India, 1655-67

I/3/40 1655-56: documents 593-601

I/3/42 1656-57: documents 602-23
I/3/44 1657-58: documents 624-38
I/3/46 1659-60: documents 639-53
I/3/48 1660-61: documents 654-69
I/3/50 1661-62: documents 670-85
I/3/52 1662-63: documents 686-705
I/3/54 1662-65: documents 706-28
I/3/56 1665-67: documents 729-38

Reel M576

Translations of letters from India, 1667-70

I/3/58 1667-70: documents 739-66

Translations of letters from the XVII to India, 1614-1700

I/3/88 1614-20: documents 1-51

I/3/90 1624-33: documents 52-99

I/3/92 1633-66: documents 100-69

I/3/94 1666-1700: documents 170-228

Translations of letters from the Governor General to various factories, 1617-43

I/3/96 1617-22: documents A-X2

I/3/98 1622-32: documents Y2-Y5

I/3/100 1633-43 : documents Z5-N7