PETER FLORIS
HIS VOYAGE TO THE EAST INDIES
IN THE GLOBE
1611–1615

The Contemporary Translation of his Journal
Edited by
W. H. MORELAND, C.S.I., C.I.E.

LONDON
PRINTED FOR THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY
1934
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. The Place of the Voyage in Commercial History ............... xi

§ 2. The Inception of the Voyage .................................... xiii
§ 3. The Trade Conditions Encountered .............................. xix
§ 4. The Position in Siam ............................................. xxvi
§ 5. The Results of the Voyage ....................................... xxx
§ 6. The Dutch Chief Merchants ..................................... xxxvi
§ 7. Peter Floris, the Man ............................................ liii
§ 8. The Manuscript .................................................... lxiii

Note on Currency, Weights and Measures ......................... lxix

THE JOURNAL

Chapter I. The Outward Voyage ....................................... 1
   II. The Coromandel Coast ......................................... 8
   III. Bantam ....................................................... 22
   IV. Patani ....................................................... 30
   V. Siam ........................................................ 45
   VI. Patani (continued) .......................................... 59
   VII. Patani (continued) ......................................... 78
   VIII. Patani (continued) ........................................ 91
   IX. The Voyage to Masulipatam .................................. 99
    X. Masulipatam ................................................ 111
    XI. Masulipatam (continued) ................................ 124
    XII. Bantam .................................................... 140

List of Authorities .................................................. 149

Index ............................................................................. 153

MAPS

The Course of the Voyage ........................................... frontispiece
The Southern Malay Peninsula ...................................... to face page 30
The Passage of the Straits .......................................... to face page 100
INTRODUCTION

§ 1. The Place of the Voyage in Commercial History

The *Globe*, which made the seventh Voyage for the East India Company, was the first English vessel to engage in the trade of the Bay of Bengal and the Gulf of Siam; and consequently, the Journal of the voyage possesses the interest which attaches to all records of the experiences of pioneers. It has also a peculiar interest of its own, in that it enables us to realise, better perhaps than any record which has yet been published, the true inwardness of a prolonged trading voyage in the earliest days of the Company. It will be recalled that at first the Company had no capital of its own, nor did it engage in trade on behalf of the members as a body. When it decided that a Voyage should be undertaken, that is to say, that one or more ships should be sent out to the East, a subscription list was opened to provide the requisite capital, and the members who subscribed became the 'adventurers' for that particular Voyage, bearing the entire risk, and dividing the entire proceeds in proportion to the amounts they had subscribed.

Such a Voyage had necessarily to be self-contained, for when a ship had once left the English Channel, she could expect no help, except by accident, until she returned. There were, of course, no diplomatic or consular agents representing England in eastern seaports: the captain and merchants had to conduct their own diplomacy, and, on occasion, fight their own battles. The Company, again, had no permanent establishments in Asia, other than a not too efficient 'factory', that is, agency, at Bantam. The ship might perhaps get help from officers of other Voyages whom she might run across in eastern waters: it was equally possible that such a meeting might result in competition or intrigue, to the injury of both ventures. Casualties among staff and crew had to be provided for in the ship itself; commercial intelligence had to be picked up as occasion served; and carefully
INTRODUCTION

laid plans might have to be hurriedly revised in the light of political or economic changes, which occurred sometimes with disconcerting rapidity. All these features, and others, are illustrated in the Voyage of the *Globe*. By training and experience, if not actually by birth, the writer of the Journal was a Dutchman, and he possessed in some measure the national gift for elaborating details so as to present an artistic whole; from the written record we can follow not merely the course of the enterprise, but the workings of the writer's mind, from the day he left Gravesend, in January, 1611, until, more than four years later, he was ready to sail from Bantam to return to England.

The seventh Voyage belongs to what may be described as the second phase in the direct commercial intercourse between England and the East. Just at the outset, the East India Company followed the practice of the various Dutch ventures of the preceding years, and despatched its ships on an out-and-home voyage to the spice ports. Experience, however, proved very quickly that the spice trade, important as it was, could easily be overdone. Competition in the producing markets led to a heavy increase in cost; competition in the consuming regions led to heavy falls in price; and the large profits of the earliest ventures could not be maintained for long. Elimination of this injurious competition was one of the chief objects of the amalgamation of the various Dutch interests into the powerful Dutch East India Company, established in 1602; but there still remained the competition between Dutch and English, buying in the same eastern markets, and selling in the same regions of Europe. For both Companies alike, a policy of expansion was found to be essential: a larger variety of eastern goods had to be purchased, and new markets had to be explored, both for the provision of these goods and for the sale of European produce.

The rapid development in these directions can be traced in the commissions issued by the English Company for successive Voyages. The commission issued in 1601 to Lancaster for the first Voyage contains no hint of expansion. The objective of the second Voyage, sent out in 1604, was still limited to the spice ports, but now endeavours were to be made to procure other

---

THE INCEPTION OF THE VOYAGE

commodities, such as silk, "wherewith theis parts of Christendome have not been gluted as with spices". The third and fourth Voyages, sent out in 1607 and 1608, were directed to explore new waters, and were concerned with the Red Sea and Western India as well as with the spice ports; the fifth, which was in fact an offshoot of the third, consisted of a single ship, which sailed in 1609 only for the spice ports; while the sixth was again concerned largely with Western India and the Red Sea.

So far, no vessel had been sent to the Bay of Bengal, but by the year 1607 the Directors of the Company had become alive to the possibilities of that region, and clause 44 of Keeling's commission for the third Voyage ordered that the factors to be left at Bantam should investigate the possibilities of such places "as Mesapatania [i.e., Masulipatam] in the partes of Bengalla Cheremandall St. Thome or any other places fitt for trade...the omission of seekinge out whereof all this while hath returned to our greate losse, and to the benefit of the Hollanders, who have beene laborious and industrious therein". These instructions were repeated in the following year, but there is no record of anything having been done to comply with them; and in 1609 the position was that the Directors were alive to the possibilities of the Bay of Bengal, but had no precise information regarding it.

To conclude these preliminary observations, it may be noted that the system of separate Voyages wore out very quickly. The records of the change of policy are no longer extant, but it is known\(^1\) that, some time in the year 1613, the Company decided on the formation of a Joint Stock, by which a succession of Voyages should be conducted as parts of an orderly whole; and the news of the inception of this third phase had reached Bantam when the Globe arrived there at the beginning of the year 1615.

§ 2. The Inception of the Voyage

The movement which led to the despatch of the Globe was initiated by two Dutchmen, who for the present will be described as Peter Floris and Lucas Antheunis, the names under which

\(^1\) See the Introduction to Letters Received, ii, where the subject is discussed at length.
they presented themselves in London; their identity and antecedents will be discussed in a later section. It is uncertain, however, whether Floris and Antheunis were the first, or the only, Dutchmen to offer their services to the English Company at this time.

In November, 1609, the Company was approached\(^1\) by a Dutchman giving the name of Florence (i.e., Florens, or Floris) Devyne, who stated that he had been employed on the Coromandel Coast, and proposed that, if the Company would send a small ship to those parts with a capital of £6000, under his direction, he would guarantee them a return of three for one, and would be satisfied with the balance of profit as his remuneration. A committee was appointed to discuss this proposal with the projector, and a week later a letter, drafted by the Governor, was ordered to be sent to him in Holland. Here the story breaks off abruptly: the Governor's letter is not extant, and the Court Minutes, containing the records of the Company's proceedings, are missing for the period from January, 1610, to December, 1613. It is impossible therefore to say whether 'Florence Devyne' was identical with one of the two Dutchmen who inspired the despatch of the Globe, or was acting independently of them: no person of that name can be traced in the records of the Dutch factories on the Coromandel Coast, and the name was most probably a pseudonym. All that can be said is that in the autumn of 1609 the Company was considering a project for entering the Coromandel trade with the aid of Dutch experience.

For the action taken in the following year we are dependent, in the absence of the Court Minutes, on a series of documents preserved in a record which was printed in 1893, and is known variously as the 'Miscellaneous Court Book', 'The Register of Letters etc. of the Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies', and 'The First Letter Book of the East India Company'. What is probably the earliest of these documents in point of time, though it is the last of them in the book, is the note\(^2\) of 'A discourse delyvered to Mr

\(^1\) Court Minutes, 18th and 25th November, 1609.
\(^2\) First Letter Book, 427.
Governor, by Peter Floris and Lucas Antheumes [sic] of their pretended [i.e., proposed] Voyage". The proposal was for a Voyage lasting nearly four years, to start in November, 1610, and visit successively the Coromandel Coast, Bantam, Patani and Siam, the Coromandel Coast again, Patani and Siam again, and finally to leave Bantam for England in December, 1613, or January, 1614.

This document is not dated. It is reasonable to infer that the discourse was delivered after 26th January, 1610, when the Court Minutes break off, for, if it had been earlier, there would probably have been some reference to it in that record. It may further be assumed that the discourse was an early incident in the negotiations, before the Voyage had been decided on, and consequently it must be several months earlier than January, 1611, by which time the required capital had been raised, the ship had been procured, and all necessary business transacted. The next document to be cited shows that a preliminary agreement regarding the Voyage had already been made on 27th March, 1610; and, if, as is probable, the discourse was earlier than this, its date would be February or early March.

The preliminary agreement was subsequently cancelled, and its terms are not on record. The next document is the agreement¹ which definitely laid down the conditions of the Voyage. It purports to have been made on 13th December, 1610, but its contents indicate that part of it must be much earlier, and we must infer that the date was left blank in the settled draft, and filled in only when all preparations had been made, and the time had come to sign and seal the fair copies. The principal indications of this fact are two. In the first place, the body of the agreement contemplated an investment of 12,000l. in all, but later clauses explain that owing to increased charges the capital had been raised to about 14,000l.: obviously the wording of the earlier part of the agreement belongs to the stage of estimation, while the addenda relate to ascertained facts. In the second place, the two projectors, Floris and Antheunis, misspelt in the document as Ploris and Athewmes, were allowed to invest 1500l. of the original capital—600l. in cash, and the balance "in

¹ First Letter Book, 363.
June or Julie next followinge the date of theis presentes". As the text stands, this second payment would have fallen due in the summer of 1611, when the Globe had been six months on her voyage; but the money was wanted for her equipment, and must have been paid in 1610, not 1611. The project must thus have been definitely settled before June, 1610, but after 27th March, the date of the preliminary agreement, in other words, some time in April or May.

The agreement provided that the two Dutch projectors and one Englishman, Robert Browne, who had been employed for some time as factor at Bantam, should act together as chief merchants in the business of the Voyage. Floris and Antheunis, but not Browne, were to have a commission on profits if they amounted to "centum per centum" or more, the rate rising from 4 to 10 per cent., according to the amount of the profit; they were to give their whole time, and their best powers, to the conduct of the business; and they were to furnish security, as was usually done, for the due performance of their duties, and also "for the deliveringe up in writeinge of a true and just accompl of all their proceedings in the said voyadge", a provision which doubtless accounts for the existence of this Journal.

Certain clauses dealing with the possibility of one or both of the projectors dying during the Voyage indicate that they were not to receive any salary, for the Company bound itself to pay to their executors or administrators the amount due as commission and the net proceeds of their investment, but no provision was made for their wages. According to the practice of the time their current expenses, on land as well as on the ship, would be defrayed out of the funds of the Voyage, but they would not receive the lump sum of accumulated wages which ordinary factors drew on the conclusion of their engagement; instead, they would receive whatever commission they had earned.

The next documents to be noticed are the commissions for

1 First Letter Book, 359 ff. for the Royal, and 360 ff. for the Company's, commission. These documents mark a departure from the usual practice of naming the same officers in both commissions, for the first was issued to Hippon alone, and the second to Hippon and the three chief merchants jointly; presumably it was considered undesirable to entrust aliens with the execution of martial law.
the Voyage. The Royal Commission, issued to Anthony Hippon, an experienced navigator who had been master of the Dragon on the third Voyage, and had now been chosen to be captain of the Globe, was in the usual form, enjoining the strict observance of international obligations, and empowering the captain to maintain discipline, and, in case of need, to apply "our Lawe called Lawe Martiall". Two commissions issued by the Company are on record, and a comparison of their contents bears out the suggestion made by the Editors of the First Letter Book that Floris and Antheunis may have been dissatisfied with the terms of the earlier document. These commissions bear no dates, but there is no doubt that the one which is placed second in the Letter Book was the operative document, for, unlike the first, it provided for the strengthening of the factory at Bantam, which the Journal shows was in fact done, while a memorandum, written at Patani in the year 1613, quoted as the 9th article a clause which bore that number in the second commission, but did not appear in the first.

The main difference between the two commissions lies in the more precise definition of responsibility effected by the later one. Under it the chief merchants were to be entirely independent of the captain in all matters of trade, and were to have full control over the four factors appointed to the ship; under no circumstances could they be displaced during the voyage. The captain was to sail where the chief merchants directed, while anyone who even suggested a premature return was to be severely punished. On the other hand, the captain was to have full government over the ship and crew, and possibly it was in deference to Hippon's experience that several clauses dealing with details disappeared from the second commission. Provisions in regard to sanitation (clause 4 of the earlier document), records of the course (5), precautions during watering and the like (12, 13), care of empty casks (18), alterations in cabins (21), salutes (22), or avoidance of the Channel ports (28), may have been considered unnecessary in the circumstances; but it is a little surprising that among the omissions are two articles which were at this period common form—the prescription of morning

\[1\] Letters Received, i. 296.