

**Selected Transcriptions, Translations, and Collation of
Information for a Textual Analysis
Relating to Material Evidence from the
Vergulde Draeck and the
68 Missing Crew and Passengers from that Vessel,
Reportedly Found on the Coast of Western Australia
in the Period 1656 – 1658**

Rupert Gerritsen



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CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Part 1: Relevant Original Sources That Are Known	2
Part 2: Availability of Original and Other Relevant Sources in Australia	4
Part 3: Relevant Extracts From All Identified Sources	6
Part 4: Collation of Key Texts and Information	26
Part 5: Textual Analysis – Analysis of Sources, Summary of Finds, Identification of Find Locations and Other Conclusions	35
- Introduction	
- Sources and Analytical Methodology	
- Initial Events	
- Subsequent Searches	
- Searches and Finds by the <i>Waeckende Boey</i> and Abraham Leeman	
- Location of Finds of Physical Material	
- The Origin, Veracity and Significance of Schouten’s Account	
- Implications and Inferences Arising From Schouten’s Account	
- Anthropogenic Sites – Tentative Conclusions	
- Further Archival Research	
- Acknowledgements	
Part 6: Bibliography	58

Cover: *‘t Lant van Eendracht oft Afbeelding van’t Zuytlandt*
Johan Nessel (1658) Algemeen Rijksarchief

INTRODUCTION

In the early hours of 28 April 1656 a Dutch vessel belonging to the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), the *Vergulde Draeck*, struck a reef off Ledge Point on the central west coast of Western Australia, about 5 kilometres from shore, and approximately 90 kilometres north of where Perth now stands. At least 75 individuals made it to shore, where they camped for at least nine days. Then seven of their number departed in a boat, making for Batavia, now known as Jakarta, at the western end of Java. They arrived there on 7 June 1656 and raised the alarm. A number of ships were then despatched over the following two years in an endeavour to locate the survivors who had remained, and to salvage what they could from the wreck. This work documents and collates all known excerpts deriving from relevant original documents that refer to the presence of the wreck, wreckage from it, the search for the survivors, and any signs of their presence. Considerable attention is paid here, in view of new information that has recently come to light, to accounts by, and relating to, the Upper Steersman of the *Waeckende Boey*, who led a boat crew which found most of the material and sites that were ultimately reported, before being marooned themselves. Other sources providing summaries of original sources are also considered.

The intent of this re-examination of the evidence is to:

1. Assist in the identification of the location where the known survivors had camped.
2. Identify and distinguish structures that may have been erected by those that had survived.
3. Identify locations where survivors may have been present and any structures erected at such places.
4. Identify what type of material could be expected to be found there, and thus provide an indication of the likely archaeological signature of the original campsite and any other location where they may have camped.
5. Identify other potential original sources of information, assess their nature and, if possible, provide some indication whether such sources still exist and where they may be located.

Part 1: RELEVANT ORIGINAL SOURCES THAT ARE KNOWN: Originals in VOC Archives, or transcribed and/or translated copies in other identified locations

Resolutions and Instructions:

- *Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 7 June 1656*
- *Instructions for the heads of the little fluit DE VINCO in order to find the wreck and the people of the lost ship the VERGULDEN DRAECK on the Southland.
Jan van Riebeeck - 26 April 1657*
- *Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 21 December 1657*

Letters and Reports:

- *Governor General and Council to Managers of VOC, 4 December 1656*
- *Governor General and Council to Managers of VOC, 14 December 1658*

Logs and Journals:

- *Journaal of te dag register van mijne voyagie gedaan met de fluyt de "Waeckende Boey" in compe van de fluyt "Emeloort" van Bata naer 't Suylant, om nae 't schip "den Vergulden Draeck", 1656 aldaar verongeluckt, te vernemen.*
- *Journal or daily register of my voyage in the ship "de Waeckende Boey" accompanied by the ship "Emeloort" from Batavia to the Southland, to search for the ship "den Vergulden Draeck" wrecked there 1656.
[Journal of Abraham Leeman van Santwits]*
- *Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boey, sailing in the same from Batt^a to the Southland. AD 1658 including A Brief account of the west-coast of the South-land*
- *Daily Journal kept by skipper Aucke Pieters Jonck, skipper of the galiot Emeloordt, on her voyage from Battavia to the South-land, AD 1658*

Charts and Coastal Profiles:

- *Chart of Eendrachtsland, or a depiction of the Southland as discovered by Samuel Volckerts in the months of February and March 1658 with the Waeckende Boey* [Chart: Volkersen]
- *Chart of Eendrachtsland, 1658* [Chart: Jonck]
- *'t Lant van Eendracht, 1658* [Coastal profile: Jonck/Nessel]

Part 2: AVAILABILITY OF ORIGINAL AND OTHER RELEVANT SOURCES IN AUSTRALIA: Copies, Transcriptions and/or Translations

Copies, in full or part, of almost all relevant original sources, are available in Australia. These include:

Handwritten papers, charts and printed material concerning the journey of the ship the "Gilt Dragon" in 1656 and thought to have been shipwrecked on the coast of Western Australia. Includes a photostat of extracts from "Dagh - Register gehouden in Casteel Batavia vout passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts - India" Anno 1656. Also includes extracts from the logs of the Emeloort and the Waeckende Boey, 1658, sent to find survivors of the wrecked Vergulde Draeck.

- National Library of Australia: MS 1002

Journaal of te dag register van mijne voyagie gedaan met de fluyt de "Waeckende Boey" in compe van de fluyt "Emeloort" van Bata naer 't Suylant, om nae 't schip "den Vergulden Draeck", 1656 aldaar verongeluckt, te vernemen.

- Western Australian State Library: Battye Library - formerly PR 3756/1, now PR 8818/GIL/4 – 0/77

Journal or daily register of my voyage in the ship "de Waeckende Boey" accompanied by the ship "Emeloort" from Batavia to the Southland, to search for the ship "den Vergulden Draeck" wrecked there 1656.

- Western Australian State Library Battye Library - formerly PR 3756/2, now PR 8818/GIL/3 – 0/77

- de Heer, C. 1963

My shield and my faith.

Westerly No.1 April 1963:33-46.

J. E. Heeres 1899

Het aandeel der Nederlanders in de ontdekking van Australie 1606-1765/ The Part Borne by the Dutch in the Discovery of Australia 1606 – 1765.

(London: Luzac & Co)

- 25 libraries in Australia

Leupe, P. A. 1868

De Reizen der Nederlanders naar het Zuidland of Nieuw-Holland, en de 17th and 18th Eeuw. Amsterdam: G. Hulst van Keulen

- 4 libraries in Australia

A number of key sources are now also available online.

Heeres work, *The Part Borne by the Dutch in the Discovery of Australia 1606 – 1765*, which contains extracts from many of the official documents, including Letters, Charts, Reports and Resolutions, originating from the Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie's Council for the Indies, is now accessible through Project Gutenberg at:

<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks05/0501231h.html>]

The Western Australian Museum's website carries scans, compiled by the Department of Maritime Archaeology, of:

- The log of the Skipper of the *Emeloort*, Aucke Pieters Jonck
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-272-Jonk-Emeloord-Journal.pdf>
- Abraham Leeman's '*Journaal of te dag register van mijne voyagie ...*'
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-273-Leemans-Journal.pdf>
- The log of Skipper of the *Waeckende Boey*, Samuel Volkerson.
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-274-Volkersen-Wackende-Boey-Journal.pdf>

A comprehensive report on the historical background and excavation of the *Vergulde Draeck*:

Jeremy N. Green (ed.) 1977 *The Loss of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie Jacht VERGULDE DRAECK, Western Australia 1656*. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports. *BAR Supplementary Series 36*.

is also accessible through the Western Australian Museum at:

- Part (i):
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-275a-Vergulde-Draeck-BAR36a.pdf>
- Part (ii):
<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/No-275b-Vergulde-Draeck-BAR36b.pdf>

In addition to these major sources there are various works, published between 1676 and 1995, which contain brief extracts, translations, summaries, charts and coastal profiles which are cited in the body of this work. Where necessary these texts have been transcribed and/or translated.

Part 3: RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM ALL IDENTIFIED SOURCES - arranged chronologically

Schouten, Wouter 1676

Aanmercklijke Voyagie Gedaan door Wouter Schouten Naar Oost-Indien

Amsterdam: Jacob Meurs and Johannes van Someren

TRANSLATION (Peter Reynders and Rupert Gerritsen)

page 27 – last paragraph

From good old Batavia news has just been received that the ship *Den Draeck*, on its way from the home country to the East Indies had chanced upon the unknown Southland and was wrecked there. And that the flute *De Waekende Boey* had been sent there with the intention of retrieving the folk that remained behind, and any goods that could be salvaged, and then returning to Batavia.

p.28

The *Waekende Boey* duly arrived at the location where *Den Draeck* was wrecked and the place from where its boat with some of the survivors of the ordeal had brought the news to Batavia, who were now helping to find that location. Once they found the location of the wrecked ship, they anchored at a suitable anchorage, and sent the boat as soon as they could for their countrymen who had made it to land from the ship *Den Draeck*.

They eagerly lowered the boat from the ship, which examined the wreck which had been battered by the waves and flooded, and following that to the spot where the folk left on land had been living in a commodious tent when their boat had left, with the intention of waiting there until a vessel from Batavia could come to collect them. When they landed they found the tent-poles broken but did not find any of their countrymen in the vicinity. They were quite surprised by this and looked for canvas, nails, knives and so forth, but couldn't find any sign of carpentry or part of any watercraft, let alone any letters or messages – not a sign – so nobody could figure out where all these people had gone. When they sailed back to the ship and reported this unexpected news, everyone else also found it strange. However, after some deliberation it was decided to continue searching the surrounding area, with men making quite a few landings and carefully searching this uninhabited land. But again this was fruitless. They made loud sounds with their muskets, shouting and by other means, even using a small cannon. All this proved to be useless and it seemed impossible to find anyone in the area, and so I never was able to learn what became of these Netherlanders.

They then searched the wreck of the *Draeck*. But this produced no result either, as the ship's holds and cabins were all inundated by powerful waves, so that the constant pounding of the ocean thwarted their efforts. They did not have any other option than to prepare to return in the *Waekende Boey* to Batavia. As they were basically at risk of being hit by a storm and strong winds, and if a gale struck them they would surely be wrecked, they prepared to leave. The boat, having been sent ashore again to get

fresh water, the crew, after landing near a small stream and beaching the boat, wandered off inland, instead of hurrying along. Then a heavy storm came which continued unabated, blowing so strongly (or so the Skipper later claimed) that they were forced to sail away, in the belief that the boat, in attempting to return, had been wrecked – they had been

p.29

away so long, against orders, so that there was no longer any doubt, especially as the raging storm forced her to make, with great difficulty, away from the lee shore to reach for open sea. The ship headed straight for Batavia where this plausible speculation would ultimately be challenged by the real truth.

When the winds and sea abated and they were able to cross a narrow channel and make seaward, the boat and its crew sought to find their missing ship. They fell silent, and with heavy sighs, tears came to their eyes. Softly at first, their expressions of sorrow and pity grew louder. After some discussion they decided to return to the shore, forced to do so if only to escape from the wild waves lashing their little boat. On coming ashore they regarded each other with great sadness. They didn't have anything to eat or drink and there was nothing of the sort in the area.

This lonely, inhospitable and sad place provided nothing but rocky hills, wild valleys and sandy plains. The bare beaches were strewn with cliffs and rocks and the sea continuously moaned. They could find no sustenance for themselves of any sort. And so these Netherlanders, standing there, thirteen in all, weak, hungry, cold and wet, in despair and without any hope, it seemed they would all starve to death. How could they survive? Nothing could be obtained from the wreck as it was under water so that all they could feel were dark pangs of hunger, ready to end their miserable life. Cries, sighs, screams and curses were the only thing they could resort to. But others showed courage and began to look for food. They found between the rocks along the shore some edible sort of fish. Because they had to rely on this meagre source of food, raw at the time (they were unable to make fire), they began to lose their strength as they starved and their health declined. They finally decided, rather than stay there and die, to trust God's mercy and take to the sea, to find out what the Almighty had in store for them there.

Major, R. H. 1859

Early Voyage to Terra Australis, Now Called Australia

London: Hakluyt Society

pp.77-88 Account of the Wreck of the Ship "De Vergulde Draeck" on the Southland, and the Expedition Undertaken

Drawn up and translated from authentic MS copies of the logbooks in the Royal Archives at the Hague.

p.79 According to the reports which were made, some men or some signs of the wreck had been noticed [by *Witte Valck* in June/July 1656]

p.80 the only thing they [*Emeloort* and *Waeckende Boey*] saw were a few planks and blocks, with the piece of the mast, a taffrail, fragments of a barrel, and other p.81>

objects scattered here and there along the coast, and supposed to be remnants of the wreck.

p.84 On the 26th [February 1658], on return of the boat from the shore, the steersman reported many signs of the lost ship *Draeck*, but neither footpaths nor any places where traces of human beings had been left were discovered, notwithstanding they had been in all directions both inland and along the coast. They further reported that wood and other objects, portions of boxes, etc., a barrel, and other things had been found; also a number of pieces of plank, standing upright in a circle.

p.85 On the 20th [March], a boat was sent ashore well manned; the following day ... in the evening the boat returned to the ship, bringing with it a piece of the mast of the *Draeck*, and again returning to land ... brought back a part of a round-top, a block and other trifling objects.

p.87 From the journal of the above-mentioned Abraham Leeman, steersman of the *Waeckende Boey*, ... on one occasion on the 20th March ... in searching along the beach found there pieces of plank, lids of boxes, staves of water-barrels and butter-casks, and other objects of trifling importance. The heat of the day was excessive and one of the men fainted. They also found similar planks, staves, etc. in an enclosure.

Leupe, P. A. 1868

De Reizen der Nederlanders naar het Zuidland of Nieuw-Holland, en de 17th and 18th Eeuw. Amsterdam: G. Hulst van Keulen

pp. 96-98 text in Dutch of:

Letter of the Governor-General and Council to the Managers of the VOC, December 4, 1656

pp.100-103 text in Dutch, paraphrasing:

Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 21 December 1657 ["Instructions for *Waeckende Boey* and *Emeloordt*"]

pp. 105-116 text in 17th century Dutch from 21 February 1658 to 14 March 1658 of:

Daily Journal kept by skipper Aucke Pieters Jonck, skipper of the galiot Emeloordt, on her voyage from Battavia to the South-land, AD 1658

pp.116-125. text in 17th century Dutch from 23 February 1658 to 31 March 1658 of:

Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boeij, sailing in the same from Batt^a to the Southland. AD 1658

p.118 26 ditto [26 February 1658] 'Smorgens goet weer, de wint met slappe coelte Z., ende alsoo geen boot vernamen, ware nom deselve heel beducht, soo dat de schuyt na

lant sonden om te sien hoe 't met de boot gelegen waer, doch ten halven synde sagen de boot van lant steecken, en (die) tegenden middagh aen boort quam. Waervan den stierman rapporteerden aen lant geweest waren, veel teeckenen van 't verongeluckte ship den Draeck vernomen hadden, doch geen voetpaden noch eenich plaets daer volck haer onthouden hadt, alhoewel wydt en zydt soo in 't land als lands de strant hadden.

De teecken van 't schip aen de zeecant die vernomen hadden syn dese, namenlyck: een dicke dwarsbalck, stuck van de eecke huyt, stuck van de verdubbelingh, vaetie, putsen, doften van de boot, stucken van kisten, duygen en andere rommelingh, en notabels was, dat party stucken van plancken, die met de eyden omhooch en in 't ronde opgeset waeren.

Alsoo hier tot geen rechte kennis conden comen, resolveerde 't anchor te lichten en langs den wal N. af te seylen; in 't anchor winden is 't touw gebroocken, ...

TRANSLATION (Peter Reynders and Rupert Gerritsen)

26 February 1658

In the morning good weather, with a cool weak breeze from the south, and not knowing what had happened to the ship, about which we were most apprehensive, we directed the schuyt to head for the shore to see what the circumstances were, but being halfway there, we saw the boat leave the shore which came alongside toward the afternoon.

In this regards the steersman reported that he has been ashore, having noted many signs of the wrecked ship Den Dreack, but no tracks nor any place where folk would have been staying, although everywhere there on the land it was open beaches.

The signs of the ship they had noted along the seashore included a crossbeam, a piece of an oak hull plank, part of the doubling, a keg, canvas buckets, thwarts from the ship, pieces of boxes, staves, flotsam, and notably some of pieces of planking which had been placed ends upward in a circle.

So because we could not get any certain information, it was decided to raise the anchor and to sail along the shore northwards; but as we raised the anchor, the rope broke.

p.120 Geg. Br.
Maart 18 31⁰ 49'

p.121
20 ditto [Maart] 'Smorgens schoon weer, de wint labber coelte N. O., sonden de boot welgemant aen lant. Op den dach stilte, na den middach mooye Z. lycke coelte. 'Snachts hadden ons volck een groot vier aen lant.

21 ditto 'Smorgens de wint met slappe coelte O., na-middagh Z., lichten met deselve 't ancker, zelende om de N. langs de wal, doende veel schooten met canon; weynich voor sonnenondergangh quam de boot aen, medebrengende een joffer van 't schip de Draeck, en nadat van alle noodwendicheden versien was is wederom p.122> na lant gesteecken, ende hebben wy 't ancker op 14 à 15 vaem een myl buyten de wal laeten toegaen, daer tuschen 't schip en 't lant een recif hadden, dat langs de wal streckte, daer se stortingh op saegen.

22 ditto 'Smorgens 't labber coeltjen O. N. O., lichten 't anchor, ende lieten 't met clein seyl langs de wal steevenen, schietende als voren; bequamen aen N. son 31 gr. 9 min. Z. pools hoochte, synde op 19 à 20 vadem 2 à 3 myl buyten de wal, van waer met zeewint weder na de wal stevende, daer de boot aanquam, medebrengeende een voormarseknecht, een blocq met iets anders van cleyne wardye, ende alsoo 't heel schoon liefelyck weder was, en oock anders niet liet aensien, hebbe deselve, andermael versien synde, naer lant gesonden, daer met de son noch quamen. Ende alsoo wy met t' schip dicht tusschen twee reven, op 12 à 13 vaem waren, dat te dicht was om ten ancker te comen, syn wat t'zee geseylt, alwaer t' ancker op 16 vaem, 1½ myl buyten de wal lieten toegaen. Met den doncker begont wat uyt den Z. Z. W. op te coelen, dat in de eerste wacht hert aennam, soodat schielyck hol water en harden wint hadden, wensten wel de boot aen boort hadden ende 'tzee te wesen. Schooten een canonschoot, staecten een vier op, om of de boot na boort mochte comen, ons bequamer te vinden, blyvende alsoo met groote becommerringh van boot, en groot peryckel, om met 't schip tegen de reven aen te dryven, leggen ryden tot 'smiddernachts, als wanneer 't tuy quam te breecken, dat een ander ancker lieten toegaen en aleer 't selve te houden quam, op 13 vaem geraeckten, daer alsoo bleven leggen.

TRANSLATION (Peter Reynders and Rupert Gerritsen)

p.120 Deg. Mins
March 18 31⁰ 49'

p.121
20 ditto [March] In the morning beautiful weather, a cool, sharp NE wind, decided to send the boat to the land. During the day nothing was heard, after midday fine cool southerly. At night our people had a big fire burning on shore.

21 ditto [March] In the morning the wind a cool weak breeze from the E, around midday from the S, raised the anchor and sailed north along the coast, frequently shooting off a cannon; a little before sunset the boat arrived with a beam from the ship the Draeck, and after being provided with the necessities p.122> were sent ashore again, and we anchored in 14 to 15 fathoms, a mile offshore, to be close, between the ship and the land there was a reef which followed the shore, as could be seen from the surf, where they had made their finds.

22 ditto [March] In the morning a sharp, cool ENE breeze, raised the anchor and headed with small sail along the coast, shooting as before; took a sighting of the sun, 31 deg. 9 mins. latitude, 19 to 20 fathoms at 2 to 3 miles from shore, and on the sea breeze headed for the shore, as the boat came, bringing a forward knighthead [alt. = marchman], a block and something else of little value, and as it was in all respects fine and clear, gave them orders, once they had prepared, to return to shore while there was still daylight. In the meantime with the ship close to two reefs in 12 to 13 fathoms, where it was too dangerous to anchor, sailed out to sea and anchored in 16 fathoms, 1½ miles offshore from where our people were. With darkness beginning, that from the SSW made it colder, during the first watch period it [the sea] quickly turned hollow and with strong winds I wished the boat to come back on board. Fired a

cannon as a signal to help the boat find its way back, and while we continued to have great concern for the boat, the ship was in great danger of being driven onto a reef, and we continued ride it out until midnight, but as the tide began turning the rope broke so we had to use another anchor before it properly held ground, saving us, found 13 fathoms, put down there and stayed.

pp.126-7 text in 17th century Dutch of:

A Brief account of the west-coast of the South-land
[“De Waeckende Boeygeeft de volgende beschryvingh van de Westcust van ‘t Zuytland”]

pp.128-143 text in 17th century Dutch from 21 March 1658 to 10 April 1658 of:

Extract from the *Journal of Abraham Leeman*

p.128-9 Hiervoren op de bladzijde 286, hebben we gezien hoe de boot van de Wakende Boey, op den 21st Maart aan bord van land terug gekomen, door den Schipper VOLCKERTSZ. Nogmaals derwaarts werd gezonden, en sedert niet terugkeerde. Tegen de verwachting van den Schipper VOLCKERTSZ., kwam echter Opper Stuurman ABRAHAM LEEMAN, met een gedeelte van zijn sloepsvolk later nog teregt, en daar het door dezen gehouden journaal is bewaard gebleven, zoo zal men het niet ongepast noemen, wanneer wij daaruit overnemen, wat hem en zijne metgezellen sedert hun laatst vertrek van boord op deze kust is wedervaren, en mede te deelen met welke rampen en wederwaardigheden zij te kampen hebben gehad.

“Den 22nd Maert. ‘sMorgen mooi weder, de wint Zuydelyck en moje coelte, lichten onse dreggh en ben weder met eenigh volck aan lant gegaan. ‘tSchip en de boel zeylden soo N. Waarts aan met ons heenen; bevonden weder als voren, verckens, buttervaten, daar noch een bodem in was, strucken van ’t roosterwercq van ’t hackebort, 4 à 5 roopaarden, juffrouwen en andere rommelingh. Over de middagh, zynde de wint Z. Z. W. met een labbere coelte, begonnen de zee seer aan te rollen, soodat tegen het volck seyde, laat ons nae boort gaan, want ick vreesse voor onweer, opdat wy niet vaeren als voor omtrent 3 weecken, wanneer aan lant zynde, met hart weder aen boort mosten comen (1)¹ ende omtrent het schip zynde, is de mast van de boot gebroocken, soodat onse dreggh mosten laten vallen, zynde onmogelyck om aan boord te comen door harde wint en schrickelycke hoog zee, soodat elck oogenblick meenden van de zee overstelpt te worden, deden seyn en lieten schoot op schoot schieten p.129> om hulp, dan en kwam niet, daar tocher echter by aldien den Schipper het touw hadt laeten cappen op ons conde afcomen, dan het geschiede niet, ende wy meenden alle oogenblick te vergaen, tot dat eyndelyck God gaff dat het touw van ’t schip van selffs brack, en op ons affquam dryven en soodanich met groot peryckel weder aen boort quamen.

¹ Zie den 28ⁿ Februarij, op bl. 281.

TRANSLATION (Peter Reynders and Rupert Gerritsen)

p.128 On page 286 above, we saw how the boat of the Wakende Boey had returned from the shore, and had been sent back there yet again by Skipper VOLCKERTSZ., but had not returned. Against all the expectations of Skipper VOLCKERTSZ., Upper Steersman ABRAHAM LEEMAN did turn up later with part of his boat crew, and so as a result his journal has been preserved, so it would not be inappropriate to recount what happened to him and his crew following their final departure from the ship on this coast, and to tell of the trials and tribulations that they faced.

22 March. Nice weather in the morning, a pleasantly cool Southerly wind, raised our grapnel and went ashore again with some of our people. They sailed northwards past us; we found, as before, planks, butter casks, still with their bottom in them, pieces of taffrail railing, 4 or 5 gun carriages, beams and other flotsam.

In the afternoon, with a SSW wind but cooler, the swell started to rise again, so I said to the others, let's return back on board, because I feared there would be a thunderstorm, we have been ashore three weeks, we desperately need to get back in touch with the ship for assistance, our mast is broken, so that when we release our grapnel, rowing can't arrest our momentum, making it impossible to get back on board because of the strong wind and the terribly high seas, so that we expected any moment to be overwhelmed by them, so we signalled and fired shot after shot for help, which did not come. Had the Skipper ordered the rope to be cut then they they would have come towards us, but this did not happen, and we saw that we would perish any moment, until finally God intervened and the rope broke by itself, and it floated towards us, and in great peril we made it back on board again.

Heeres, J. E. 1899

The Part Borne by the Dutch in the Discovery of Australia 1606 – 1765

London: Luzac & Co.

p.75 *Letter of the Governor-General and Council to the Managers of the VOC, December 4, 1656*

...On the 7th June there arrived here...from the South-land the cock-boat of the yacht den Vergulden Draeck with 7 men, to our great regret reporting that the said yacht had run aground on the said South-land in 30 2/3 degrees, on April the 28th, that besides the loss of her cargo, of which nothing was saved, 118 men of her crew had perished, and that 69 [sic – 68 in Dutch version] men who had succeeded in getting ashore, were still left there. For the purpose of rescuing these men, and of attempting to get back by divers or other means any part of the money or the merchandises that might still be recoverable, we dispatched thither on the said errand on the 8th of the said month of June, the flute *de Witte Valcq*, together with the yacht *de Goede Hoop*, which after staying away for some time were by violent storms forced to return without having effected anything, and without having seen any men or any signs of the wreck, although the said *Goede Hoop* has been on the very spot where the ship was said to have miscarried...

p.76 *Letter of the Governor-General and Council to the Managers of the VOC, December 14, 1658*

... the galiots *De Waeckende Boeij* and *Emeloort* ... returned to this place on the 19th April following, after exploring the coast about the place of the ... without, however, discovering any Netherlands or any traces of the wreck, except a few planks [etc.] ... which must undoubtedly be looked upon as remnants of the said ship ...

p.77 *Chart of Eendrachtsland, 1658, on a smaller scale [Volkersen]*

p.78 *Chart of Eendrachtsland, 1658, on a larger scale [Volkersen]*

p.80 *Chart of Eendrachtsland, 1658 [Jonck]*

Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boeij, sailing in the same from Batt^a to the Southland. AD 1658

p.79 The South-land has sandy dunes forming many points on the sea-side; the dunes all consist of loose sand overgrown with grass into which a man will sink up to his ankles, and leave deep footprints on withdrawing his feet.

NOTE: There is another translation of this last document English in:

* Major, R. H. 1859

Early Voyage to Terra Australis, Now Called Australia

London: Hakluyt Society

pp. 89-90 "Description of the west coast of the South Land, by Captain Samuel Volkersen of the Pink, 'Waeckende Boey'"

* Henderson, J. 1982/1985

Marooned

Perth: St. George Books

p.102

and another transcription in Dutch in:

* Leupe, P. A. 1868

De Reizen der Nederlanders naar het Zuidland of Nieuw-Holland, en de 17th and 18th Eeuw

Amsterdam: G. Hulst van Keulen

pp.104-126

Stapel, F. W. 1943

De Oostindische Compagnie en Australie

Amsterdam: P. N. Kampen & Zoon

pp.97-102

p.97 Deze eerste reddingspoging is volslagen mislukt. Den 18den Juli zijn beide scheppen door en harden storm van p.98> elkander geraakt en ze hebben verder de reis afzonderlijk voortgezet. Het was de ongunstige tijd voor West Australie; hevige stormvlagen en een onstuimige zee maakten het naderen der kust uiterst gevaarlijk. De Witte Valck keerde, na tal van vergeefsche pogingen om aan land te komen, den 14den September onverrichter zake op Batavia terug. Het jacht de Goede Hoop had een ietsje succes, doch dit werd zeer duur gekocht. Dit scheepje slaagde er in, de plaats der stranding te bereiken, maar het zoeken naar de overlevenden leidde tot geen resultaat; integendeel kostte dit een aantal nieuwe slachtoffers. Drie de opvarden, voor en onderzoekingstocht aan land gegaan zijnde, verdwaalden in het bosch en keerden niet terug. Na twee dagen wachten zond de schipper nu de boot met 8 man naar den wal, om de drie kameraden te zoeken, maar ook dit achttal zag men niet weer. Toen daarop de schipper met het schuitje zelf naar den wal voer, vond hij daar de boot, aan stukken geslagen, op het strand liggen en van de inzittenden geen spoor. Mogelijk waren zij in de branding verdronken, mogelijk verdwaald of door woeste inboorlingen gedood. Na lang zoeken en wachten keerde ook Goede Hoop naar Batavia terug, waar zij een maand na de Witte Valck aankwam, met het droevige resultaat, dat het aantal slachtoffers met 11 vermeerderd.

Intusschen had de regeering te Batavia verslag van de ramp naar Kaap de Goede Hoop gezonden, en den commandant aldaar, den bekenden Jan van Riebeeck, opgedragen, an alle naar Indie varende schepen last te geven, zoo zij het Zuidland mochten bezeilen, uit te zien naar ongelukkige schipbreukelingen. Van Roebeeck evenwel deed meer; hij droeg aan het eind April 1657 van de Kaap vertrekkende fluitscheepje, de Vinck, op , een stelselmatige reddingspoging te doen. Doch ook dit leverde niets op. Wel bereikte de Vinck den 8sten Juni de plaats van de stranding, maar en stond zoo'n wind, gepaard met donder en bliksem, en de branding op de riffen p.99> was zoo hevig, dat het scheepje in ernstig gevaar geraakte. Met veelmoeite slaagden men er in van den lager wal af te komen en weer zee te kiezen. Den 27sten Juni kwam ook de Vinck onverrichter zake op Batavia aan. Daar bepaalde men er zich voorloopig toe, uit te zien naar de verder in dit jaar van de Kaap komende schepen, in de hoop, dat die meer succes zouden hebben, doch geen hunner bleek de Australische kust te hebben bezeild. Toen besloot de Indische regeering nog een laatste groot-opgezette poging te doen. Wel was zij van meening dat nu, bijna twee jaren na de ramp, de kans op redding der schipbreukelingen welhaast uitgesloten moest worden geacht, *alsoo het seer apparent was, dat se door honger en ellende souden zijn vergaan, of door de wilde inwoonderen dootgeslagen en vermoort*, doch hoe gering de hoop dan ook was, zij meende niet te mogen nalaten een laatste poging te beproeven. Den 1sten Januari 1658 vertrokken daartoe twee galjoots, de Waeckende Boey en Emeloort, respectievelijk onder schippers Samuel Volkersen en Aucke Pieter Jonck, de eerste met 40, de tweede met 25 man, voorzien van alle mogelijke hulpmiddelen en geapproviandeerd voor 6 maanden. Hun werd bij instructie opgedragen: 1. Steeds bij elkaar te blijven, *om malkanderen by voorval van ongeluck te kunnen assisteren ende in 't aandoen ende besoecken van de kusten te vrymoediger te wesen*; 2. Alles te doen om de ongelukkige landgenooten op te sporen; 3. Zooveel mogelijk van de lading, in 't bijzonder de kisten met geld, te redden. Aan het eerste punt is al dadelijk niet voldaan; voor de Australische kust zijn beide galjoots al spoedig van elkander geraakt. Volgens de regeering blijkt uit de journalen, dat dit niet noodig was geweest, maar een gevolg was van de zorgeloosheid

der schippers, die na afloop der expeditie daarvoor dan voor den Raad van Justitie te Batavia zijn gedaagd.

Wij zullen nu eerst de Emeloort volgen. Dit scheepje kwam den 24sten Februari aan de Australische kust op p.100> circa 33 ½ graad Zuiderbreedte. Van daar volgden zij de kust in Noordelijke richting, tot zij den 8sten Maart voor anker gingen op circa 30 ½ graad, dus ongeveer ter plaatse, waar de Vergulde Draeck vergaan was. Dien avond zagen de opvarenden aan den wal een groot vuur branden en, de mogelijkheid aannemende, dat dit van de schipbreukelingen was, liet de schipper drie kanonschoten lossen en zond den volgenden morgen vroeg zijn stuurman met 9 matrozen naar den wal. Toen de boot de kust naderde, werd het vuur evenwel gedoofd, wat de bemanning wantrouwig maakte en waarop zij naar boord terugkeerden. Den volgenden nacht zagen zij op een andere plaats een vuur branden en gaven toe lichtseinen, die echter niet beantwoord werden, waaruit men afleidde, dat het een vuur van inboorlingen was. Niettemin zond schipper Jonck den 10den de boot weer naar den wal. Aan land komende zagen de matrozen drie huisjes staan, waarbij een vijftal groote zwarte inboorlingen. Deze wenkten de matrozen om naderbij te komen, doch die deden dit niet, *uyt mistrouwen*. Ze keerden integendeel naar de boot terug, op eenigen afstand door zwarten gevolgd, die op hun beurt echter niet aan het strand durfden komen, ook niet toen blanken hen door gebaren daartoe uitnoodigen. Gedurende 4 etmalen bleef men nu daar in de buurt voor de kust kruisen en zag daarbij nog eenige malen inwoners, *kloeck van persoon en naeck gaande, voort seer swart, met een kroon op haer hoofd*. Van landgenooten evenwel bespeurde men niets. Daar een groot deel van de 25 opvarenden ziek lag, en bijna allen gekweld werden door oogontstekingen, besloot schipper Jonck huiswaarts te keeren. Merkwaardigerwijze ontmoette hij bij de Westpunt van Java op den 14den April de Waeckende Boey, zoodat beide schepen ten slotte toch nog gezamenlijk op Batavia terugkeerden.

Thans volgen wij schipper Volckersen en zijn mannen wier reis heel wat meer emotie had gegeven. Zij waren den 23sten Februari voor de kust gekomen op ruim p.101> 31½ graad Zuiderbreedte. Van daar stuurden zij langzaam Noordwaarts op, elken dag de boot ter verkenning naar den wal zendende onder leiding van den opperstuurman Abraham Leeman, die een kranig zeeman bleek te zijn. Den 26sten rapporteerde hij bij terugkomst, dat hij eerste verblijfplaats der schipbreukelingen had gevonden. Aan het strand had hij een aantal planken en balken gezien, die in een kring in het zand waren opgezet; daarbij en omheen lagen tal van wrakstukken, kisten, putsen, een vaatje *en andere rommelingh*. Van menschen evenwel geen spoor, terwijl noch aan het strand noch in het kreupelbosch voetsporen of paden te zien waren. Klaarblijkelijk hadden de schipbreukelingen deze plaats al heel lang geleden verlaten, wat zeer begrijpelijk was, daar er geen drinkwater was te vinden. Op dezen zelfden dag had men nog een ernstigen tegenslag; de schuit, die men achter het schip aan sleepte, sloeg door een zware stortzee om en verdween in de diepte.

Ook op de volgende dagen ging Leeman geregeld aan land, zag eenige malen inboorlingen, vuren en rook, maar verder niets. Van den 1sten to den 18den Maart was schipper Volckersen genoodzaakt wegens stormachtig weer een eind uit de kust heen en weer te kruisen. Eerst op den avond van den 18den, toen het wat kalmer geworden was, kwam hij voor de kust ten anker, en den volgenden morgen ging de boot weer naar land. Dien dag zag men niets bijzonders dans eenige robben een boschkat, benevens uitwerpselen van andere dieren. Doch den 21sten vond men

sporen van de Draeck. Als bewijs bracht Leeman een joffer mee (een houten paal of spriet) waarin het merk van de Draeck gekrast was. Ook had hij een katrol, een voormarseknecht (houten pin, waarom men de schoot van het zeil vastknoopt), botertonnen en nog andere kleinigheden gezien. Dit alles wees er op, dat men althans op de goede plaats was. Maar nu had een nieuw onheil plaats, waarvan de schipper de schuld droeg. Op den morgen van den 22sten Maart was Leeman weer p.102> met de boot naar den wal gegaan, doch toen tegen het middaguur de wind draaide en de zee hevig begon te rollen, besloot hij naar boord terug te keeren. Hij had, zooals zij aan zijn mannen zeide, geen zin, hier door den schipper te worden achtergelaten. Daarmede zinspeelde hij op hetgeen eenige weken vroeger gebeurd was, toen ook onverwacht het weer omsloeg en de schipper van plan was geweest zee te kiezen zonder de boot in te wachten. Slechts door een toeval was dit toen belet. Nu keerde hij dan naar boord terug, maar toen hij daar aankwam, vroeg schipper Volckersen hem honend, of hij soms bang voor een beetje wind. De stuurman wees op het gevaar der voor de kust liggende riffen bij stormweer, doch de schipper wilde niet luisteren en gelastte Leeman, oogenblikkelijk naar de kust terug keeren. Deze voldeed aan dit bevel, maar tegen den avond woei er een complete storm, en nu begon de schipper spijt te krijgen van zijn optreden: *wenste wel de boot aen boort hadde*. Weldra stormde het zoo, dat de Waeckende Boey van zijn ankers sloeg. De onrust aanboord steeg, toenmen ook den volgenden dag de boot niet zag terugkeeren; men begon te vreezen, *dat onderwegen sijn omgeslagen of tegens 't rif aengeraeckt sijn*. Volckersen riep nu den scheepsraad bijeen, die het noodig oordeelde, wegens het kwade weer zee te kiezen. Dit geschiedde en eerst zes dagen later, den 28sten Maart ...

TRANSLATION (W. C. Gerritsen and Rupert Gerritsen)

This, the first rescue attempt, failed completely. On the 18th July both ships were hit by a fierce storm p.98> and they continued their voyages separately. It was bad time off Western Australia, strong winds and rough seas made approaching the coast extremely dangerous. The White Valck returned, after several futile attempts to land, to Batavia on the 14th of September, empty-handed. The yacht of Goede Hoop had a little more success, but this was at a price. This boat succeeded in reaching the wreck site, but the search for survivors produced no result, rather it claimed a number of new victims. Three people who were part of the expedition went ashore and got lost in the bush and did not return. After waiting two days the skipper sent a boat with eight men to the shore, searching for their three comrades, but these eight were not seen again. Later, when, the Skipper himself landed, he found the boat, broken to pieces, lying on the beach but no trace of the occupants. Perhaps they were drowned in the surf, or perhaps they were slain by the natives. After a long search and waiting, the Goede Hoop also returned to Batavia, arriving one month after the White Valck, with the sad news that the number of victims had increased by 11. Meanwhile, the government at Batavia reported the disaster to the Cape of Good Hope and sent to the commander there, the renowned Jan van Riebeeck, giving orders that all Indies ships loading there were to sail by the Southland if they could, to look for unfortunate castaways. Riebeeck however did more: he decided to send, at the end of April 1657 from the Cape the flute, the Vinck, to systematically undertake a rescue mission. But even this did not achieve any result. The Vinck reached the location of the stranding on 8th June, but such strong winds arose, accompanied by thunder and lightning, and the surf on the reefs p.99> was so violent, that the ship was in grave danger of being lost.

With great difficulty they succeeded in coming away from the low coast and back out to sea. On the 27th June the Vinck arrived at Batavia empty-handed. So it was decided to ask other ships arriving at the Cape for the rest of the year, to also search, in the hope that they might be more successful, but none appear to have sailed along the coast of Australia. Then the Indies government decided to make one final full-scale attempt. However, they were of the opinion that now, almost two years after the disaster, the chances of rescuing any survivors should virtually be excluded from consideration, *thus the view was formed that they, by necessity of hunger and misery, would have perished, or been beaten and murdered by the wild inhabitants*, so there was little hope but they believed they should not fail to make a final attempt. On the 1st of January 1658 two galliots sailed, the Waeckende Boey and Emeloort, respectively, with skippers Samuel Volckersen and Aucke Pieter Jonck, the first with 40, second with 25 men, with all possible equipment and six months provisions. They were given specific instructions: 1. Always stay together, *close to one another so that they can be of assistance should there be bad luck here and be bolder to end the necessity of visiting these coasts* 2. To do everything to locate their unfortunate countrymen 3. Recover as much as possible of the cargo, especially the chests of money. If the first point is not strictly fulfilled, the Australian coast could easily be struck by either of the galliots. According to the governors, the journals show that this should not have been necessary, but the results were due to the carelessness of the skippers, who were summoned to appear before the Council of Justice at Batavia after the expedition.

We will now first follow the Emeloort. This ship reached the Australian coast on 24th February p.100> approximately 33 ½ degrees south latitude. From there they followed the coast northward, until the 8th of March she anchored at about 30 ½ degrees, about the spot where the Vergulde Draeck was wrecked. That evening the crew saw a large fire burning on shore, and assumed that it was possibly that this was from the shipwreck, so the captain shot three cannons and resolve early the next morning to send his steersman with nine sailors to the shore. As the boat approached the shore, the fire was extinguished, however, making the crew suspicious and so they returned to the ship. The next night they saw a fire in another place and they gave light signals, but these were not answered, from which they deduced the natives had lit the fire. Nevertheless Skipper Jonck on the 10th sent the boat toward the shore. The sailors upon coming ashore saw three habitations there and five large black natives. They signalled the sailors to come closer, but they did not, *out of distrust*. They turned instead for the boat, and were followed for some distance by blacks, who in turn do not dare come on to the beach, even when the white men invited them using gestures. Over the next 4 days, for forty-eight hours they were right on the coast and saw a few of the inhabitants, *bold people going naked and very black with a crown of hair on the head* [chignon]. Of our countrymen, however, nothing is seen. Since a large part of the 25 crew members were ill, and nearly all were troubled with eye infections, Skipper Jonck decided to return home. Curiously, he met on the west point of Java on the 14th April the Waeckende Boey, so that both ships, came back together at last, finally returning to Batavia.

Now we follow Skipper Volckersen and his men, whose journey was so very moving. On the 23rd February they came upon the coast at p.101> 31 ½ degrees south latitude. From there they steered slowly northward, every day the boat was sent to shore to explore, led by the Upper Steersman Abraham Leeman, who turned out to be such a brave sailor. On his return on the 26th he reported that he had found the first campsite

of the castaways. On the beach he had seen a number of boards and beams which had been set up in a circle in the sand, and a lot of wreckage around, boxes, buckets, a barrel *and assorted things*. However, there was no trace of the men, while neither footprints nor tracks were visible on the beach nor in the bushes. Apparently the castaways had abandoned this place quite some time ago, which was understandable, since no water was to be found here. On this same day there was a serious setback, the schuyt, which they were towing behind the ship, was hit by a heavy swell and it disappeared into the depths.

Also on the next day, when Leeman searched the countryside he saw natives several times, and fire and smoke, but nothing else. From the 1st to the 18th March, due to stormy weather Skipper Volckersen was forced to sail back and forth from the coast. Then on the evening of the 18th, when it had grown calmer, he anchored off the coast, and the next morning the boat went back to shore. That day saw nothing special other than a bush cat, seals, as well as the dung of other animals. But on the 21st they found traces of the Draeck. To prove this Leeman brought back a beam (a wooden pole or whip) on which the Draeck's mark was scratched. He also had found a pulley, a march man (wooden peg, which was used to tie down the lap of the sail), butter casks, and other trifles were noted. All this pointed to this being the right place. But then a new calamity befell them, and it was the Skipper who was to blame. On the morning of the 22nd of March, Leeman again p.102> went ashore in the boat, but around noon the wind changed and a large swell developed, so he decided to return to the ship. He had to tell his men, alas, they may be left behind again by the Skipper. He was alluding to what had happened a few weeks earlier, when the weather had turned unexpectedly and the Skipper chose to head out to sea and not wait for the boat. It was only by chance that this did not happen. When he returned to this and was back on board, he was scornfully asked by Skipper Volckersen if he was afraid of a little wind. The Steersman pointed to the danger posed by the offshore reefs in stormy weather, but the Skipper would not listen and ordered Leeman to return to the coast immediately. They complied with this order, but by evening it was blowing a full gale, and now the Skipper came to regret his actions: *he wanted the boat crew back on board*. When the storm came it hit the anchors of the Waeckende Boey. They were also very worried on board when the boat did not return the next day, they began to fear, *that while under way they had capsized or hit a reef*. Volckersen now called a meeting of the ship's council, which considered this necessary because of the bad weather and sea. This was done, and only six days later, on the 28th March ...

de Heer, C. 1963

My shield and my faith.

Westerly No.1 April 1963:33-46.

and

Typescript: PR 8818/GIL/3 – 0/77

Journal or daily register of my voyage in the ship "de Waeckende Boey" accompanied by the ship "Emeloort" from Batavia to the Southland, to search for the ship "den Vergulden Draeck" wrecked there 1656.

p.35

20 March After I had been ashore in the ship's boat four or five times and had spent 24 hours on the coast of the Southland in order to find any people, if it were possible; so I went ashore once more on the 20th of this month, the weather being fine, the wind southerly and the boat well-manned and stocked with provisions; landed at about 9 to 10 o'clock, leaving the understeersman and 3 to 4 men in the boat to sail along the shore, I went ashore with the rest, finding nothing but bits of planking, lids of cases, staves of kegs, broken butter casks and so forth; toward the evening we reassembled on the beach, found one of our crew unconscious through the terrible heat and was not much better myself; we went together in the boat and ate and drank something of what we had and laid ourselves to rest to await the day, but put a man on guard.

21 March In the morning the weather fine, the wind SE blowing a fine breeze; we weighed our grapnel and sailed along the shore; went ashore again with some of the crew, found planks, staves and a beam which had lain athwart the vessel, i.e. a deal plank 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and round about 12 or 13 similar planks also stuck in the sand; we pulled out the timbers and dug 4 to 5 feet deep in the ground, thrusting our cutlasses as deep as we could in the sand but found nothing; then we sailed back to the ship to return the man who was very sick; same being done, set sail again from board at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, carrying water and some victuals; after landing, searched as before, but found nothing but planks and staves as before; brought part of the same into the boat; also set fire to some deadwood, which was seen from the ship; we gathered in the boat and awaited dawn.

22 March In the morning the fine weather, the wind southerly and a fine breeze; weighed the grapnel and again went ashore with some men; the ship and the boat sailed northward with us; again as previously found some planks, lids of buttercasks, pieces of grating from the taffrail, 4-5 gun carriages and other flotsam; in the afternoon, with a slight breeze from the SSW, the sea began to rise, so that I said to the crew: 'Let's go aboard for I fear bad weather.'

--- 11 lines + 2 maps [Volkersen's Eendrachts Land; same with translations] ---

p.38

we came to the ship which was still under sail; the captain seeing me, said: 'What are you doing on board again, leave the stores in the boat, you shall go back ashore.' To which I replied: 'The sea is rising so fast near the shore that I am afraid of bad weather'; then he replied to me: 'Never mind, the boat must go back'. I answered: 'If I do get bad weather ashore, where will I find shelter, for there are neither islands nor coves; if I am washed ashore I shall be killed, and I shall not be able to beat out to sea; also the water is dangerous, being full of rocks. Moreover being close on evening, we would have little visibility.' Then he said again to me: 'Never mind, the weather is fine', to which I said again that I was in grave fear for ourselves; he said that I was a coward and that the boat must go back ashore; I asked the secretary what

he thought of it, who answered that the weather is fine, so in God's name went ashore again.

de Heer 1963

p.40

27 March

In the morning, good weather with a fair breeze from the SE. Set sail with the boat along the coast, but saw nothing and came, as we thought, on the spot where we had got away from the ship; on shore we saw again wreckage of the ship, the Draeck, casks, pieces of planking as before

--- 9 lines ---

In the sea saw an island to our north ...

Zuiderbaan, Lous 1977

Part One: Historical background. In Jeremy N. Green (ed.) 1977 *The Loss of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie Jacht VERGULDE DRAECK, Western Australia 1656*. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports. *BAR Supplementary Series 36(i)*.

pp.48-50 *Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 7 June 1656*]

p.48

Wednesday 7 June 1656. Today, shortly after midday, the schuyt of the yacht Draeck arrived after one month wandering around with the under-steersman and six sailors. They brought the sorrowful news that the abovementioned fine yacht had run aground on the coast of the Southland on 28 April during the night, in the middle of the morning watch, on a reef stretching out to sea for about 1 ½ mijlen at the latitude of 30 2/3 degrees.

Of the 193 heads, only 75 landed safely, amongst whom the skipper Pieter Albertsz. and the mentioned under-steersman. From the ship, which immediately burst open when touching the ground, nothing was saved and only very few provisions were thrown on the beach by the waves.

The remaining 68 persons were further trying to recover the [ship's other] boat which was buried in the sand, in order to send it hither with some people and meanwhile, in their sorrowful state, they are anxiously awaiting all needed comfort and help from here.

Thus the honourable Governor General summons the Council on the spot and tells the Gentlemen Councillors the here-told

pp.51-3 *Instructions for the heads of the little fluit DE VINCQ in order to find the wreck and the people of the lost ship the VERGULDEN DRAECK on the Southland.*

Jan van Riebeeck - 26 April 1657

p.52 Also, the letters sent by the lost people to the aforementioned Honourable with the little schuyt and forwarded to us with that missive (you can read that on your way to realise better Honourables' orders and seriousness) ...

[p.53 later indicated to have been written on 5 and 7 May 1656]

pp.55,57 *Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boeij* – text erroneously indicates 24 February 1658 but was 26 February 1658

p.55 That they had been on the land and had observed many signs of the wrecked ship DRAECK, but no footprints nor any place where people had lived, although they had gone far and wide, both inland and along the beach. The remains of the ships on the coast which they observed are as follows: A heavy beam, a piece of oak planking, a piece of outer planking, a small keg, buckets, thwarts of a boat, pieces of chests, staves, and similar rubbish. It is noteworthy that a number of pieces of planking had been put up in a p.57> circle with their ends upwards. Since here we could come to no correct knowledge, we resolved to weigh anchor and to sail north along the coast.

p.57 [PARAPHRASE On March 21, Leeman found a dead-eye of the VERGULDE DRAECK; the next day a forward knighthead and a block]

Henderson, J. 1982/1985

Marooned

Perth: St. George Books

[Excerpts from original documents, translated by Lous Zuiderbaan]

pp.52-3 [*Resolution of the Governor General and Council* [of the Indies] 7 June 1656]

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The remaining 68 persons were further trying to recover the [other ship's] boat which was buried in the sand, in order to send it hither with some people and meanwhile, in their sorrowful state, they are anxiously awaiting all needed comfort and help from here.

p.54 [*Letter of 4 December 1656*]

... they had got out of the wreck very few victuals and [little] fresh water but they were about to go inland after the departure of the mentioned schuyt, where we hope they will have found provisions and drinking water.

pp.54-5 [Paraphrase from *Letter of 4 December 1656*]

It is also explained (perhaps from information from the seven survivors who reached Batavia in the *Vergulde Draeck*'s schuyt) that the stern of the *Vergulde Draeck* stern was still above water when it p.55> had been abandoned, ...

p.56 [Paraphrase from *Orders to Vincq by Commander van Riebeck*]

at the Cape refer to private letters carried back to Batavia by the boat crew which were dated 5 and 7 May – indicating boat crew did not leave until 7 May at earliest.

pp.62-65 [*Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 21 December 1657*] [*“Instructions for Waeckende Boey and Emeloordt”*]

- full translation of the document, recounting circumstance of loss of *Vergulde Draeck* and efforts to date to locate the missing members of the ship's complement and to salvage what they could from the wreck.

p.63 “Since it would be for the sake of victuals or drinking water they would have made their way inland some distance ...”

p.64 “However, if any sign or indication of remnants of the wreck should be found, you should spare no labour to investigate whether anything might be salvaged by diving.”

p.64 “Our opinion however is that in view of the great peril and danger this will not happen, since we deem human life more precious than goods.”

p.85 [*Chart of Eendrachtsland, 1658*] [Jonck]

With astonishing accuracy he [Jonck of *Emeloort*] wrote on his chart ‘The *Draeck*'s Reef’ [close to Ledge Point, 30⁰ 13.36’ and the actual wreck site]

Later he marked another feature about twenty-eight miles further north on his chart as ‘The *Draeck* Headland

p.96 [*Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boey - 26 February 1658*]

The steersman of the boat reported that they had been on land and observed many sign of the wrecked ship *den Draeck*, but no footprints nor any place where the people have lived, although they had gone far and wide, both inland and along the beach.

The signs of the ship on the coast which they have observed are as follows: A heavy beam, a piece of oak planking, a small keg, buckets, thwarts of the boat,² pieces of chest, staves and other similar rubbish.

It was noteworthy that a number of pieces of planking had been put up in a circle with their ends upwards.

p.97 [*Chart of Eendrachtstland, or a depiction of the Southland as discovered by Samuel Volckerts in the months of February and March 1658 with the Waeckende Boey*] [Volkersen]

THE LAND OF *EENDRACHT* or a depiction of the Southland as discovered by Samuel Volckerts in the months of February and March 1658 with the *Wakende Boey*

This island [Rottnest] full of trees and low hills

Here in this way one sees the trees and some hills

Here many signs of the *Draeck* were found [p.96 reputedly just north of Two Rocks – ca 31° 29']

Here behind these cliffs is most convenient to come and go ashore with the boat and schuyt

Here the boat went ashore for the last time

On this reef the *Draeck* was wrecked

Here the fire was seen³

A distinct hill or table-topped mountain

These islands *Batavia*'s graveyard

Here low hilly land

Thus far sailed

p.103 [*Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boeij - 21 March 1658*]

² Possibly the one swamped close to shore after the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck*, which they had been trying to recover at the time their boat sailed for help. However, it is more likely Volkersen was referring to one from the *Vergulde Draeck* as Leeman's journal indicates they later found "a beam which had lain athwart the vessel" (de Heer 1963:35).

³ Heers 1963:37 translated this as "Saw river here" but that appears to a mistranslation, as text on the map appears to be "hier 't vier gezien" (here the fire seen), the mistake arising because it was written in Secretarial Script where the 'v' looks like an 'R'.

A little before sunset the boat arrived and brought a dead-eye from the ship *den Draeck*.

p.104 [*Daily Journal kept by skipper Samuel Volkersen on board the flute de Waeckende Boeij* - 22 March 1658]

Boat brings back 'a forward knight head [a big pulley block normally anchored to deck], a block and something else of little value'

Gerritsen, R. 1994

And Their Ghosts May Be Heard

Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press

pp.31-2 [Source: Halls, Schouten]

- refers to Schouten information that the tent at original campsite had been destroyed

p.42 *Journal ... of Abraham Leeman*

21 March

(Trans. W. C. Gerritsen)

"a deal plank 8 to 9 feet long and a foot wide put upright in the earth and round 12 to 13 struts of similar planks, also stuck in the sand"

Eisler, W. and Smith, B. 1988

Terra Australis: The Furthest Shore

Sydney: Art Gallery and International Cultural Corporation of Australia

p.110 Plate 74 't *Land of Eendracht, 1658*

[black and white: Coastal profile by Jonck, prepared by Johan Nessel]⁴

- shows 'Draecken riff' [Draeck's reef] and 'Die drie inwooders huizen' [three houses of the inhabitants]

Eisler, W. 1995

The Furthest Shore: Images of Terra Australis From the Middle Ages to Captain Cook

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

p.140 Plate 64 't *Land of Eendracht, 1658*

[colour: Coastal profile by Jonck, prepared by Johan Nessel]

Reynders and Gerritsen 2011

Transcript of *Journaal of te dag register van [Abraham Leeman]*

⁴ Eisler and Smith (1988:110) state that this is 'one of the oldest extant views of Australia's west coast.' In fact it is probably the oldest view of any Australian coast.

21 March “namentlyck een greynen plancke, langh 8 à 9 voet en een voet breed, overent in de aarde geseth, ende rontom 12 a 13 stutten van deselve plancke, mede in t zand gesteecken, trocken de plancke ende de stutten daar uyt, hebben aldaar 4 a 5 voet in de aarde gegraven, en met houwens gesteecken, soo diep als wij conden, dan vonden niet,”

Gerritsen 2011

21 March namely a deal plank, 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and round it 12 or 13 struts of the same planks, also thrust in the sand, we pulled out these props, dug down 4 or 5 feet into the ground, and thrust in our cutlasses as deep as we could, but did not find anything ”

Reynders 2011

March 21 namely a pine plank, about 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and around about 12 or 13 supports of the same planking, also thrust into the sand, we pulled the plank and supports out of the sand

Part 4: COLLATION OF KEY TEXTS and INFORMATION

Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 7 June 1656

Translation(s): Zuiderbaan 1977:48; Henderson 1985:52

Wednesday 7 June 1656. Today, shortly after midday, the schuyt of the yacht Draeck arrived after one month wandering around with the under-steersman and six sailors. They brought the sorrowful news that the abovementioned fine yacht had run aground on the coast of the Southland on 28 April during the night, in the middle of the morning watch, on a reef stretching out to sea for about 1 ½ mijlen at the latitude of 30 2/3 degrees.

Of the 193 heads, only 75 landed safely, amongst whom the skipper Pieter Albertsz. and the mentioned under-steersman. From the ship, which immediately burst open when touching the ground, nothing was saved and only very few provisions were thrown on the beach by the waves.

The remaining 68 persons were further trying to recover the [other ship's] boat which was buried in the sand, in order to send it hither with some people and meanwhile, in their sorrowful state, they are anxiously awaiting all needed comfort and help from here.

Thus the honourable Governor General summons the Council on the spot and tells the Gentlemen Councillors the here-told

Letter of the Governor-General and Council to the Managers of the VOC, December 4, 1656

Translation(s): Heeres 1899:75; Henderson 1985:54

... On the 7th June there arrived here...from the South-land the cock-boat of the yacht den Vergulden Draeck with 7 men, to our great regret reporting that the said yacht had run aground on the said South-land in 30 2/3 degrees, on April the 28th, that besides the loss of her cargo, of which nothing was saved, 118 men of her crew had perished, and that 69 [sic – 68 in Dutch version] men who had succeeded in getting ashore, were still left there. For the purpose of rescuing these men, and of attempting to get back by divers or other means any part of the money or the merchandises that might still be recoverable, we dispatched thither on the said errand on the 8th of the said month of June, the flute *de Witte Valcq*, together with the yacht *de Goede Hoop*, which after staying away for some time were by violent storms forced to return without having effected anything, and without having seen any men or any signs of the wreck, although the said *Goede Hoop* has been on the very spot where the ship was said to have miscarried...

... they had got out of the wreck very few victuals and fresh water but they were about to go inland after the departure of the mentioned schuyt, where we hope they will have found provisions and drinking water.

Paraphrase: Major 1859:79

According to the reports which were made, some men or some signs of the wreck had been noticed [by *Witte Valck* in June/July 1656]

Paraphrase: Henderson 1985:54-5

It is also explained (perhaps from information from the seven survivors who reached Batavia in the *Vergulde Draeck's* schuyt) that the stern of the *Vergulde Draeck* was still above water when it had been abandoned, ...

*Instructions for the heads of the little fluit DE VINCQ in order to find the wreck and the people of the lost ship the VERGULDEN DRAECK on the Southland.
Jan van Riebeeck - 26 April 1657*

Translation(s): Zuiderbaan 1977:52

Also, the letters sent by the lost people to the aforementioned Honourable with the little schuyt and forwarded to us with that missive (you can read that on your way to realise better Honourables' orders and seriousness) ...

Paraphrase: Zuiderbaan 1977:53

... later indicated to have been written on 5 and 7 May 1656

Paraphrase: Henderson 1985:56

... at the Cape refer to private letters carried back to Batavia by the boat crew which were dated 5 and 7 May – indicating boat crew did not leave until 7 May at earliest.

pp.62-65 [*Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 21 December 1657*] [*“Instructions for Waeckende Boey and Emeloordt”*]

Translation(s): Henderson 1985:63-64

p.63 “Since it would be for the sake of victuals or drinking water they would have made their way inland some distance ...”

p.64 “However, if any sign or indication of remnants of the wreck should be found, you should spare no labour to investigate whether anything might be salvaged by diving.”

p.64 “Our opinion however is that in view of the great peril and danger this will not happen, since we deem human life more precious than goods.”

Chart of Eendrachtsland, or a depiction of the Southland as discovered by Samuel Volckerts in the months of February and March 1658 with the Waeckende Boey [Volkersen]

Reproduced Heeres 1899:77-8; Henderson 1985:97

Translation(s): Henderson 1985:97 (title; south > north)

THE LAND OF *EENDRACHT* or a depiction of the Southland as discovered by Samuel Volckerts in the months of February and March 1658 with the *Wakende Boey*

This island [Rottnest] full of trees and low hills

Here in this way one sees the trees and some hills

Here many signs of the *Draeck* were found [p.96 reputedly just north of Two Rocks – ca 31° 29']

Here behind these cliffs is most convenient to come and go ashore with the boat and schuyt

Here the boat went ashore for the last time

On this reef the *Draeck* was wrecked

Here the fire was seen

A distinct hill or table-topped mountain

These islands *Batavia's* graveyard

Here low hilly land

Thus far sailed

Chart of Eendrachtsland, 1658 [Jonck]

Reproduced Heeres 1899:80

Translation(s): Henderson 1985:85 (south > north)

The *Draeck's* Reef [close to Ledge Point, 30° 13.36' and the actual wreck site]

The *Draeck* Headland

*Daily Journal kept by ... Volkersen ... of Waeckende Boey including A Brief account of the west-coast of the South-land
't Land of Eendracht, 1658*

Reproduced Eisler and Smith 1988:110; Eisler 1995:141

Translations(s): Eisler and Smith 1988:110

[black and white: Coastal profile by Jonck, prepared by Johan Nessel]

- Draeck's reef
- three houses of the inhabitants]

26 February 1658

Transcription: Leupe 1868:118 **Translation(s):** Reynders and Gerritsen

In the morning good weather, with a cool weak breeze from the south, and not knowing what had happened to the ship, about which we were most apprehensive, we directed the schuyt to head for the shore to see what the circumstances were, but being halfway there, we saw the boat leave the shore which came alongside toward the afternoon.

In this regards the steersman reported that he has been ashore, having noted many signs of the wrecked ship Den Dreack, but no tracks nor any place where folk would have been staying, although everywhere there on the land it was open beaches.

The signs of the ship they had noted along the seashore included a crossbeam, a piece of an oak hull plank, part of the doubling, a keg, canvas buckets, thwarts from the ship, pieces of boxes, staves, flotsam, and notably some of pieces of planking which had been placed ends upward in a circle.

So because we could not get any certain information, it was decided to raise the anchor and to sail along the shore northwards; but as we raised the anchor, the rope broke.

Translation(s): Zuiderbaan 1977:55,57

That they had been on the land and had observed many signs of the wrecked ship DRAECK, but no footprints nor any place where people had lived, although they had gone far and wide, both inland and along the beach. The remains of the ships on the coast which they observed are as follows: A heavy beam, a piece of oak planking, a piece of outer planking, a small keg, buckets, thwarts of a boat, pieces of chests, staves, and similar rubbish. It is noteworthy that a number of pieces of planking had been put up in a circle with their ends upwards. Since here we could come to no correct knowledge, we resolved to weigh anchor and to sail north along the coast.

Translation(s): Henderson 85:96

The steersman of the boat reported that they had been on land and observed many sign of the wrecked ship *den Draeck*, but no footprints nor any place where the people have lived, although they had gone far and wide, both inland and along the beach.

The signs of the ship on the coast which they have observed are as follows: A heavy beam, a piece of oak planking, a small keg, buckets, thwarts of the boat, pieces of chest, staves and other similar rubbish.

It was noteworthy that a number of pieces of planking had been put up in a circle with their ends upwards.

[According to Henderson the ship was off Two Rocks/ Wreck Point - ca 31⁰ 29' – and Leeman's boat about 5 km north (ca 31⁰ 25')]

Paraphrase: Major 1859:84

On the 26th [February 1658], on return of the boat from the shore, the steersman reported many signs of the lost ship *Draeck*, but neither footpaths nor any places where traces of human beings had been left were discovered, notwithstanding they had been in all directions both inland and along the coast. They further reported that wood and other objects, portions of boxes, etc., a barrel, and other things had been found; also a number of pieces of plank, standing upright in a circle.

Paraphrase: Schouten 1676:27 **Translation(s):** Reynders and Gerritsen

p.27 They eagerly lowered the boat from the ship [*Waeckende Boey*], which examined the wreck which had been battered by the waves and flooded, and following that to the spot where the folk left on land had been living in a commodious tent when their boat had left, with the intention of waiting there until a vessel from Batavia could come to collect them. When they [shore party from *Waeckende Boey*] landed they found the tent-poles broken but did not find any of their countrymen in the vicinity. They were quite surprised by this and looked for canvas, nails, knives and so forth, but couldn't find any sign of carpentry or part of any watercraft, let alone any letters or messages – not a sign

Paraphrase: Stapel 1943:100-101 **Translation(s):** Gerritsen and Gerritsen

On the 23rd February they came upon the coast at 31 ½ degrees south latitude. From there they steered slowly northward, every day the boat was sent to shore to explore, led by the Upper Steersman Abraham Leeman, who turned out to be such a brave sailor. On his return on the 26th he reported that he had found the first campsite of the castaways. On the beach he had seen a number of boards and beams which had been set up in a circle in the sand, and a lot of wreckage around, boxes, buckets, a barrel *and assorted things*. However, there was no trace of the men, while neither footprints nor tracks were visible on the beach nor in the bushes. Apparently the castaways had abandoned this place quite some time ago, which was understandable, since no water was to be found here.

20-22, 27 March 1658

Translation(s): Leupe 1868:120-22 (Reynders and Gerritsen)

p.120	Deg. Mins
March 18	31 ⁰ 49'

p.121
20 ditto [March] In the morning beautiful weather, a cool, sharp NE wind, decided to send the boat to the land. During the day nothing was heard, after midday fine cool southerly. At night our people had a big fire burning on shore.

21 ditto [March] In the morning the wind a cool weak breeze from the E, around midday from the S, raised the anchor and sailed north along the coast, frequently

shooting off a cannon; a little before sunset the boat arrived with a beam from the ship the *Draeck*, and after being provided with the necessities p.122> were sent ashore again, and we anchored in 14 to 15 fathoms, a mile offshore, to be close, between the ship and the land there was a reef which followed the shore, as could be seen from the surf, where they had made their finds.

22 ditto [March] In the morning a sharp, cool ENE breeze, raised the anchor and headed with small sail along the coast, shooting as before; took a sighting of the sun, 31 deg. 9 mins. latitude, 19 to 20 fathoms at 2 to 3 miles from shore, and on the sea breeze headed for the shore, as the boat came, bringing a forward knighthood [alt. = marchman], a block and something else of little value, and as it was in all respects fine and clear, gave them orders, once they had prepared, to return to shore while there was still daylight. In the meantime with the ship too close to two reefs in 12 to 13 fathoms, where it was too dangerous to anchor, sailed out to sea and anchored in 16 fathoms, 1½ miles offshore from where our people were. With darkness beginning, that from the SSW made it colder, during the first watch period it [the sea] quickly turned hollow and with strong winds I wished the boat to come back on board. Fired a cannon as a signal to help the boat find its way back, and while we continued to have great concern for the boat, the ship was in great danger of being driven onto a reef, and we continued ride it out until midnight, but as the tide began turning the rope broke so we had to use another anchor before it properly held ground, saving us, found 13 fathoms, put down there and stayed.

Translation(s): Henderson 1985:103

21 March A little before sunset the boat arrived and brought a dead-eye from the ship *den Draeck*.

Translation(s): Henderson 1985:104

22 March [Boat brings back] 'a forward knight head [a big pulley block normally anchored to deck], a block and something else of little value'

Paraphrase: Major 1859:85

On the 20th [March], a boat was sent ashore well manned; the following day ... in the evening the boat returned to the ship, bringing with it a piece of the mast of the *Draeck*, and again returning to land ... brought back a part of a round-top, a block and other trifling objects.

Paraphrase: Major 1859:80-1

the only thing they [*Emeloort* and *Waeckende Boey*] saw were a few planks and blocks, with the piece of the mast, a taffrail, fragments of a barrel, and other scattered here and there along the coast, and supposed to be remnants of the wreck.

Paraphrase: Stapel 1943:101-2 **Translation(s):** Gerritsen and Gerritsen

But on the 21st [March] they found traces of the *Draeck*. To prove this Leeman brought back a beam (a wooden pole or whip) on which the *Draeck*'s mark was

scratched. He also had found a pulley, a march man (wooden peg, which was used to tie down the lap of the sail), butter casks, and other trifles were noted. All this pointed to this being the right place. But then a new calamity befell them, and it was the Skipper who was to blame. On the morning of the 22nd of March, Leeman again p.102> went ashore in the boat, but around noon the wind changed and a large swell developed, so he decided to return to the ship.

Paraphrase: Zuiderbaan 1977:57

On March 21, Leeman found a dead-eye of the VERGULDE DRAECK; the next day a forward knighthead and a block

Journal of Abraham Leeman

Translation(s): Leupe 1868:128-9 (Reynders and Gerritsen); de Heer 1963:35 (de Heer); Gerritsen 1994:42 (WC Gerritsen, de Heer)

de Heer 1963

20 March After I had been ashore in the ship's boat four or five times and had spent 24 hours on the coast of the Southland in order to find any people, if it were possible; so I went ashore once more on the 20th of this month, the weather being fine, the wind southerly and the boat well-manned and stocked with provisions; landed at about 9 to 10 o'clock, leaving the understeersman and 3 to 4 men in the boat to sail along the shore, I went ashore with the rest, finding nothing but bits of planking, lids of cases, staves of kegs, broken butter casks and so forth; toward the evening we reassembled on the beach, found one of our crew unconscious through the terrible heat and was not much better myself; we went together in the boat and ate and drank something of what we had and laid ourselves to rest to await the day, but put a man on guard.

21 March In the morning the weather fine, the wind SE blowing a fine breeze; we weighed our grapnel and sailed along the shore; went ashore again with some of the crew, found planks, staves and a beam which had lain athwart the vessel, i.e. a deal plank 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and round about 12 or 13 similar planks also stuck in the sand; we pulled out the timbers and dug 4 to 5 feet deep in the ground, thrusting our cutlasses as deep as we could in the sand but found nothing; then we sailed back to the ship to return the man who was very sick; same being done, set sail again from board at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, carrying water and some victuals; after landing, searched as before, but found nothing but planks and staves as before; brought part of the same into the boat; also set fire to some deadwood, which was seen from the ship; we gathered in the boat and awaited dawn.

Gerritsen 1994:42 (Trans. W. C. Gerritsen)

21 March "a deal plank 8 to 9 feet long and a foot wide put upright in the earth and round 12 to 13 struts of similar planks, also stuck in the sand"

21 March “namentlyck een greynen plancke, langh 8 à 9 voet en een voet breed, overent in de aarde geseth, ende rontom 12 a 13 stutten van deselve plancke, mede in t zand gesteecken, trocken de plancke ende de stutten daar uyt, hebben aldaar 4 a 5 voet in de aarde gegraven, en met houwens gesteecken, soo diep als wij conden, dan vonden niet,”

Gerritsen 2011

21 March namely a deal plank, 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and round it 12 or 13 struts, also thrust in the sand, we pulled out these props, dug down 4 or 5 feet into the ground, and thrust in our cutlasses as deep as we could, but did not find anything ”

Reynders 2011

21 March namely a pine plank, about 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and around about 12 or 13 supports of the same planking, also thrust into the sand, we pulled the plank and supports out of the sand

de Heer 1963

22 March In the morning the fine weather, the wind southerly and a fine breeze; weighed the grapnel and again went ashore with some men; the ship and the boat sailed northward with us; again as previously found some planks, lids of buttercasks, pieces of grating from the taffrail, 4-5 gun carriages and other flotsam; in the afternoon, with a slight breeze from the SSW, the sea began to rise, so that I said to the crew: ‘Let’s go aboard for I fear bad weather.’

--- 11 lines + 2 maps ---

p.38

we came to the ship which was still under sail; the captain seeing me, said: ‘What are you doing on board again, leave the stores in the boat, you shall go back ashore.’ To which I replied: ‘The sea is rising so fast near the shore that I am afraid of bad weather’; then he replied to me: ‘Never mind, the boat must go back’. I answered: ‘If I do get bad weather ashore, where will I find shelter, for there are neither islands nor coves;’

--- 4 lines ---

I asked the secretary what he thought of it, who answered that the weather is fine, so in God’s name went ashore again.

Luepe 1868

22 March. Nice weather in the morning, a pleasantly cool southerly wind, raised our grapnel and went ashore again with some of our people. They sailed northwards past us; we found, as before, planks, butter casks, still with their bottom in them, pieces of taffrail railing, 4 or 5 gun carriages, beams and other flotsam.

In the afternoon, with a SSW wind but cooler, the swell started to rise again, so I said to the others, let's return back on board, because I feared there would be a thunderstorm, we have been ashore three weeks, we desperately need to get back in touch with the ship for assistance, our mast is broken, so that when we release our grapnel, rowing can't arrest our momentum, making it impossible to get back on board because of the strong wind and the terribly high seas, so that we expected any moment to be overwhelmed by them, so we signalled and fired shot after shot for help, which did not come. Had the Skipper ordered the rope to be cut then they they would have come towards us, but this did not happen, and we saw that we would perish any moment, until finally God intervened and the rope broke by itself, and it floated towards us, and in great peril we made it back on board again.

Paraphrase: Major 1859:87

From the journal of the above-mentioned Abraham Leeman, steersman of the *Waeckende Boey*, on one occasion on the 20th March in searching along the beach found there pieces of plank, lids of boxes, staves of water-barrels and butter-casks, and other objects of trifling importance. The heat of the day was excessive and one of the men fainted. They also found similar planks, staves, etc. in an enclosure.

de Heer 1963

p.40

27 March

In the morning, good weather with a fair breeze from the SE. Set sail with the boat along the coast, but saw nothing and came, as we thought, on the spot where we had got away from the ship; on shore we saw again wreckage of the ship, the Draeck, casks, pieces of planking as before

--- 9 lines ---

In the sea saw an island to our north ...

Letter of the Governor-General and Council to the Managers of the VOC, December 14, 1658

Translation(s): Heeres 1899:76

.... the galiots *De Waeckende Boey* and *Emeloort* returned to this place on the 19th April following, after exploring the coast about the place of the without, however, discovering any Netherlanders or any traces of the wreck, except a few planks [etc.] ... which must undoubtedly be looked upon as remnants of the said ship ...

Part 5: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS – Analysis of Sources, Summary of Finds, Identification of Find Locations and Other Conclusions

Introduction

As stated, the basic facts regarding the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck* are well known and not in dispute. She struck a reef about 5 kilometres out to sea off Ledge Point during the early hours of 28 April 1656. The ship had a complement of 193. According to contemporary accounts at least 75 individuals survived and reached the coast, including Skipper Pieter Albertszoon. There they camped until around the 7 May, when a boat with seven sailors, under the command of an unnamed Under Steersman, set off to Batavia to raise the alarm. They arrived there shortly after midday on Wednesday 7 June. Their arrival triggered great consternation and a series of searches were undertaken over the next two years to locate the survivors and recover anything of value from the wreck. The wreck's location was given in contemporary sources as 30° 40'S.⁵

The actual wreck was discovered by Graeme Henderson, in company with others, on 14 April 1963. It was located at 31° 13' 36'S x 115° 21' 48''E and much material was recovered from the wrecksite in subsequent years.⁶

A number of finds possibly connected with the survivors from the *Vergulde Draeck*, have come to light in the area since the British colonisation of Western Australia. An ornate metal object, known as the 'Incense Urn', and presumed to be from the *Vergulde Draeck*, was handed over to missionaries at the New Norcia Mission, 90 kilometres east north east of the wrecksite, by an Aboriginal shepherd in 1846.⁷ A small campsite, associated with part of a mast, was found just north of Wedge Island around 1890. Artefacts recovered here included a rusty pot, two horn spoons, a copper shovel and two half-moon hatchet heads.⁸ Two boys, Fred and Alister Edwards, found 40 coins dating from 1618 to 1655, including Spanish *reales*, in sandhills north of Seabird,⁹ about 7.4 kilometres east south east of the wrecksite, early in 1931.¹⁰ Another coin, a half ducaton dated 1637, was found on the banks of the Moore River, approximately 65 kilometres from the coast, in 1957.¹¹ However, the actual campsite of the survivors has not been found, and although some other possible indications have come to light in recent times, these are yet to be verified (Sheppard 2011).

This section will firstly consider material evidence as detailed in charts and documents prepared in the years 1656 to 1658, as well as any other contemporary sources, relying on transcriptions of those documents, accounts drawn from them and subsequent translations. The intention in this is to:

⁵ Zuiderbaan 1977:48:

⁶ Henderson 2007:32-40.

⁷ Gerritsen 1994:49-51

⁸ Gerritsen 1994:52

⁹ At 31° 14.39-56'S x 115° 25.51-86'E (Flowers 2001:20).

¹⁰ Flowers 2001:Annexures: Interview with Fred Edwards pp.2-4; Interview with Alister Edwards pp.1-2; Henderson 2007:38.

¹¹ Gerritsen 1994:55.

1. Ascertain what material evidence was observed and/or recovered in this period.
2. Attempt to reconcile evidentiary conflicts to ascertain, if possible, as precisely as possible the number and nature of significant finds of anthropogenic origin.
3. Identify, if possible, the location of the significant finds of an anthropogenic nature.
4. Re-assess and re-examine known sources to identify information not previously considered.
5. Identify any sources that existed in the past and which have either been lost or misplaced since that time, but which may still exist.
6. Identify new lines of enquiry, further research and any other actions that may assist in locating the campsite of the survivors of the *Vergulde Draeck*.

Sources and Analytical Methodology

The original documents relating to this study are part of the VOC archives held by the Algemeen Rijksarchief in the Netherlands, and are not directly accessible from Australia at the time of writing. However, full or partial transcriptions are widely available, and much has been translated from Dutch into English. Furthermore, there are Dutch and English accounts based on the original documents or accounts by Schouten (1676), Major (1859), Leupe (1868) and Stapel (1943), all of which can be found in Australia. Although a copy of the manuscript of the Volkersen's log, as Skipper of the *Waeckende Boey* at the time of his voyage to the west coast of Western Australia, was available for this analysis, there is no full transcription available in Australia. However, almost all relevant material is contained in a short transcription by Leupe. A copy of the original manuscript of Leeman's journal is held by the National Library of Australia, as well as by the State Library of Western Australia, at the Battye Library. The State Library of Western Australia provided a transcript of Leeman's journal as well as a typescript translation by de Heer. An identical version of the full translation of Leeman's journal by de Heer was also published in *Westerly* in 1963.

From these sources all relevant entries in logs and journals were obtained, sources not previously transcribed and/or and translated were done so, and then all such material was collated. Multiple translations were included to allow comparisons to be made. Where there was doubt or uncertainty in regards to a translation, the text was re-translated from the original source.

The analysis of these sources summarises what material evidence was reported, found and/or observed by contemporaries with the intention, as stated above, of resolving conflicts and ascertaining, if possible, as precisely as possible the nature and number of find sites and identifying their locations. Initially the analysis draws from all the sources documented here, with the exception of the extract from Schouten's book, which is considered separately. This is because there appears to be information that is contained in that source which is not reflected in other sources. Finally, the analysis of sources is divided into two periods, the first relating to the time of the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck* and its immediate aftermath, and the second, relating to the subsequent period in which searches were carried out. Lastly, it should be noted that the translation of some obscure 17th century Dutch and colloquial nautical terms

relating to objects that were found is not completely certain, and where relevant alternative descriptors are identified.

Initial Events

As stated earlier, the *Vergulde Draeck* sank as the result of striking a reef approximately 5 kilometres off Ledge Point in the early hours of 28 April 1656. Reports indicate it had a full complement of 193 persons, of whom 75 are known to have safely made it to land. It should not be assumed, however, that all of the remaining 118 individuals perished. It would appear two boats were employed in carrying known survivors to safety, as two boats are mentioned in the earliest report.¹² However, others may have survived unaided by clinging to flotsam and being carried to shore by the current and paddling. The coins found by the Edwards brothers in 1931 may have come from such an individual, as the location is some distance to the south of the wrecksite.

It would seem the main body of survivors, the 75 who made it to shore, were at the location they landed for a period of at least nine days. This is indicated in the Instructions Jan van Riebeeck gave to the commanders of the *Vincq* in which it is reported that the letters written on 5 and 7 May 1656 were carried back to Batavia by the boat crew. From existing sources it appears that the survivors were “awaiting all needed comfort and help,”¹³ indicating an intention to remain at the location where they had been stranded. However, a subsequent document reported that “they were about to go inland,”¹⁴ to search for much needed food and water, at the time the boat departed.

The largest physical remains from this period was the wreck itself. It would appear that the stern was still above water when it was abandoned.¹⁵ Apart from Schouten, there is no evidence, however, that the wreck was subsequently found and/or investigated. The *Witte Valq* and the *Goede Hoop* sailed from Java on 8-9 June 1656 and reached the west coast of Western Australia in July. The *Valq* had returned by 14 September and the *Goede Hoop* a month later. The *Goede Hoop*, whilst searching, had lost 11 men on the coast, some of whom may have survived. It reputedly had been “on the very spot where the ship was said to have miscarried,” but found nothing. The *Witte Valq* was also said to have arrived at the wrecksite “without having seen any men or any signs of the wreck,”¹⁶ although, according to Major, they had noticed “some men or some signs of the wreck.”¹⁷

Given the difference in the latitude between that provided by the boat crew that had returned to Batavia to raise the alarm, 30° 40'S, and the actual latitude revealed when the wreck was found in 1963, 31° 13' 36'S, the initial searches may have focussed on the wrong area. The inherent inaccuracies in measuring latitude at that time would

¹² Resolution ... 7 June 1656.

¹³ Resolution ... 7 June 1656.

¹⁴ Letter ... December 4, 1656.

¹⁵ Letter ... December 4, 1656; Henderson 1985:54-5.

¹⁶ Letter ... December 4, 1656.

¹⁷ Major 1859:79.

have introduced an even greater element of uncertainty in the search.¹⁸ It is possible part of the wreck was still visible above the water at this time. Part of the *Batavia* was still above water three and half months after it had struck Morning Reef.¹⁹ Henderson points out that the chart produced by Jonck of the *Emeloort*, *Chart of Eendrachtsland*, 1658, signifies ‘The *Draeck*’s Reef’, which he claims is close to the actual wreck site.²⁰ Nessel’s coastal profile of 1658 also shows ‘Draecken riff’,²¹ but apart from the examples there is no evidence in any other original documentation that the *Emeloort* encountered the wreck.

Regarding the original campsite, very little is known. It could be safely assumed that a proportion of the “few provisions were thrown onto the beach by the waves”²² were collected, so potentially remnants of these, such as parts of boxes, metal handles, hinges, clasps, nails, staves and barrel rings could signify the location of the original campsite.

The earliest report on what had transpired, the Resolution of ... 7 June 1656, mentions a boat which had been “buried in the sand,” following the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck*, and which those remaining behind were trying to recover. In the same report the vessel that reached Batavia to raise the alarm was referred to as a schuyt, but in the Letter of ... December 4, 1656 it was described as a cock-boat. While schuyts were generally smaller vessels, no indication was given of the size of the one in question. Cock-boats, however, are usually described as a small rowboat. If 75 people made it to shore, this would suggest the sunken boat may have been a larger vessel, perhaps the size of a longboat. Presumably it had capsized or been swamped close to shore while ferrying people from the wreck. It may have been recovered and the remaining survivors set sail, only to come to grief elsewhere.²³ But, if it was not recovered, then it is possible it remains lie close to the survivor’s campsite. If it were located, then this would provide a strong indication that the survivors campsite was in close proximity.²⁴

Subsequent Searches

In all five vessels were subsequently engaged in dedicated searches for the wreck of the *Vergulde Draeck* and its survivors – the *Witte Valq*, *Goede Hoop*, *Vincq*, *Emeloort* and *Waeckende Boey*. With the exception of the *Waeckende Boey*, none of these ships appear to have observed the remains of the wreck, wreckage or survivors. It may well be that the *Witte Valq*, *Goede Hoop* and *Vincq* searched too far north. The *Goede*

¹⁸ For example, sightings for the location of the *Batavia* wrecksite taken during 1629 were 28° 8’S, 28° 20’S and 28° 36-40’S, a variation of up to 32 minutes (Gerritsen 2009:37).

¹⁹ Pelsaert 1629:145.

²⁰ Henderson 1985:85.

²¹ Eisler and Smith 1988:110; Eisler 1995:140, Plate 64.

²² Resolution ... 7 June 1656.

²³ Recovery may have been very difficult, if not impossible, if the experience of the Baudin expedition in Geographe Bay in 1801 is any guide. Their longboat, (*chaloupe*) had capsized close to shore and been swamped, before filling up with sand while submerged. They were unable to recover it, despite endeavouring to do so for a period of days, even though salvage equipment (tackle, grappling irons, pulleys, masts, hawsers, pliers and jacks) had specially been brought ashore for that purpose.

²⁴ Conversely, discovery of the campsite would point to the location of the remains of the boat.

Hoop, for example, had landed “at very spot where the ship [*Vergulde Draeck*] was said to have miscarried,”²⁵ but of course, if correct, this was at least half a degree too far north. Major’s claim, that the *Valq* had seen “some men or signs of the wreck,” is not supported by any of the original documents available for this study, or by other writers. The vagueness of his claim also lessens its credibility and makes it of little assistance.

The *Emeloort*, as noted above, did not appear to find anything, although Jonck had marked ‘*Draeck*’s Reef’ and ‘*Draeck*’s Headland’ on his chart and coastal profile. This chart is not very accurate, with Rottnest Island shown as a point or headland, and it is difficult to precisely reconcile the coast as depicted with that shown on modern maps.²⁶ An anchor is shown off the coast close to the top of the chart, and Stapel, indicate the *Emeloort* anchored at 30° 30’ on 8 March 1658.²⁷ If this is accurate, it would have placed the *Emeloort* off Cervantes, although the coastal morphology represented bears some resemblance to the Jurien Bay – Green Head area, a little to the north. Using relative position as a guide, the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite is about half way between Cervantes and Rottnest Island. On Jonck’s chart *Draeck*’s Reef is also half way between his anchorage and Rottnest Island. So indeed, Henderson may have been correct in asserting that Jonck had marked the actual wrecksite, though there is obviously a significant degree of uncertainty in this. Again using relative position, this approach would also suggest that *Draeck*’s Headland may be Wedge Island point.

In contrast to the other voyages, significant sites and a considerable amount of material was identified as a result of investigations and searches carried out by crew from the *Waeckende Boey*, particularly by the shore parties led by the Upper Steersman Abraham Leeman. These are discussed in greater detail below.

Searches and Finds by the *Waeckende Boey* and Abraham Leeman

A number of finds, of wreckage, what appears to be at least one campsite, and a possible structure, or structures, were reported by Skipper Volkersen and Upper Steersman Leeman, from the *Waeckende Boey*, as a result of their searches along the coast in the vicinity of the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite during February and March 1658. The principal primary sources relating to these finds are the log of the *Waeckende Boey*’s, kept by Volkersen, and Leeman’s journal. No other contemporary documents add any further details. There is significant additional information, however, in Schouten’s work, but that, as indicated earlier, will be considered separately.

Most of the material that was located was found in two brief periods, 26 February and 20 – 22 March, 1658. On 26 February,²⁸ Volkersen recorded in his log that a shore party led by Leeman, having observed “many signs of the wrecked ship Den Draeck,” had found “a crossbeam, a piece of an oak hull plank, part of the doubling, a keg,

²⁵ Letter ... December 4, 1656.

²⁶ The coastal profile also appears to differ in a number of respects.

²⁷ Stapel 1943:100.

²⁸ Zuiderbaan (1977:55) appears to give the date as 24 February, but this is probably the result of poor expression, particularly as the *Waeckende Boey* had only just arrived on the coast on that day.

canvas buckets, thwarts from the ship, pieces of boxes, staves, flotsam, and notably some pieces of planking which had been placed ends upward in a circle.”²⁹ All translations of this passage agree closely, although the exact terminology differs slightly.³⁰ Some of the material, such as the crossbeam and doubling, would appear to be wreckage that had simply washed ashore. Other material, such as the keg and the canvas buckets (“putsen”) may be flotsam or could have been carried to the location by survivors. However, the circle of upright planks is almost certainly the product of human intervention.³¹ The precise location and the significance of this will be discussed further under the heading of Anthropogenic Sites.

The second period in which significant amounts of wreckage and other material from the *Vergulde Draeck* were encountered, relates to consecutive days, from 20 to 22 March inclusively. In this case there are two primary sources, Volkersen’s log and Leeman’s journal. There is some confusion as to what was found on what day, because Leeman and his party disembarked, found material on 20 March, which Leeman recorded in his journal, they stayed onshore overnight, Leeman then recorded finding more material the following morning, before they made their way back to the *Waeckende Boey*, probably around noon on 21 March. Volkersen, however, reputedly stated the boat returned “just before sunset”³² on that day. Volkersen recorded the finds from both the 20th and 21st in the entry in his log for 21 March, but there is also some filtering by Volkersen, in terms of which of Leeman’s finds he chose to mention. Some writers have not distinguished between the two sources, and compounding the confusion is variation in what terms have been used to describe objects, as well as apparent mistakes by some, such as Major, in their chronology.³³

The most significant find Leeman and his crew made in this period was on the morning of 21 March where they encountered a structure on the shore consisting of a deal plank 8 or 9 feet long [2.4 – 2.7 m] and a foot [30 cm] wide, put upright in the ground, with 12 or 13 similar planks placed round it, probably as struts.³⁴ The shore party, after removing the struts, dug down 4 to 5 feet [1.2 – 1.5 m] but found nothing further. There is some slight variance in the translation of Leeman’s account, which will be discussed further under Location of Finds and Anthropogenic Sites.

So it would seem that on 20 March, Leeman, after going ashore with his boat crew, by his account found:

- ▲ bits of planking
- ▲ lids of cases or boxes
- ▲ staves of kegs
- ▲ broken butter casks
- ▲ other unspecified material

²⁹ Leupe 1868:118 (Trans: Reynders and Gerritsen)

³⁰ Volkersen’s log appears to be the only eye-witness account of events and observations that day, as Leeman didn’t start this part of his journal until 20 March.

³¹ Designated as the Plank Circle by Gerritsen (1994:42).

³² Henderson 1985:103.

³³ Major (1859:85) appears to have moved the chronology back by a day.

³⁴ Designated as the Wooden Structure by Gerritsen (1994:43).

The shore party appear to have stayed overnight on the boat (or perhaps slept on the beach) and the next morning, 21 March, Leeman records finding:

- ▲ a beam which had lain athwart the vessel, i.e. a deal plank 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground, with 12 or 13 similar planks placed round it as struts
- ▲ planks
- ▲ staves

before his shore party made their way back to the ship. However, the only find by Leeman and the boat crew that Volkersen records in his log, on 21 March, was:

- ▲ a piece of the mast (also described as a beam, pole and whip) of the *Draeck*, supposedly inscribed with “the *Draeck*’s mark”³⁵

According to Zuiderbaan and Henderson the shore party returned with:

- ▲ a dead-eye³⁶

on that day, while Major claims that Leeman and party reportedly found:

- ▲ a round-top³⁷
- ▲ a block³⁸

on that day as well. But this is incorrect and presumably refers to finds recorded by Volkersen the next day, 22 March.

On 21 March, by Leeman’s account, he and the shore party departed again about 2 pm and continued to search, only finding more “planks and staves” that day. They then spent the night in their boat, close to shore, and on the morning of the following day, 22 March, found:

- ▲ some planks,
- ▲ lids of butter casks,
- ▲ pieces of grating from the taffrail,
- ▲ 4-5 gun carriages
- ▲ other flotsam

In the afternoon the shore party briefly returned to the ship, but not before Volkersen recorded that they had found:

³⁵ Major 1859:85; Stapel 1943:101. Perhaps this was the ‘deal plank 8 or 9 feet long’ that Leeman had found, although that is described elsewhere as being a thwart beam. But the translation of Volkersen’s log does not indicate it was ‘inscribed with the *Draeck*’s mark’, it simply says it ‘was from the ship the *Draeck*’ (Luepe 18768: Trans: Reynders and Gerritsen translation)

³⁶ Zuiderbaan 1977:57; Henderson 1985:103. A ‘dead-eye’ is a “wooden block with holes but no pulleys”, or “a block of wood through which the shrouds are reeved” (See ‘Glossaries’ for all nautical terms not otherwise specifically cited).

³⁷ A ‘round-top’ is a platform around a masthead.

³⁸ A block is “a piece of wood with running sheaves or wheels in it,” or “a set of pulleys”.

- ▲ a ‘forward knight-head’, or a ‘march man’, depending on the meaning and translation of “voormarseknecht”³⁹
- ▲ a block
- ▲ ‘something else of little value’

As Stapel mentions a ‘pulley’ being found, it may be that the ‘dead-eye’, ‘pulley’ and ‘block’ are references to the same object.

Following their brief return Leeman and his crew were sent back to shore, finally losing contact completely with the *Waeckende Boey* when it sailed away. However, they appear to have returned to this spot on 27 March where Leeman noted:

- ▲ casks
- ▲ pieces of planking

In summary it would seem what was found was:

26 February

- a crossbeam
- a piece of the oak hull plank
- part of the doubling
- a keg
- canvas buckets
- thwarts from the ship
- pieces of boxes
- staves
- flotsam
- some pieces of planking which had been placed ends upward in a circle

20 March

- bits of planking
- lids of cases or boxes
- staves of kegs
- broken butter casks
- other unspecified material

21 March

- a beam which had lain athwart the vessel, though possibly a pole or part of the mast (a deal plank 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide), which had been put upright in the ground with 12 or 13 similar planks around supporting it.
- planks
- staves

³⁹ Leupe 1868:121(Trans: Reynders and Gerritsen). Zuiderbaan (1977:57) and Henderson (1985:104) opt for ‘forward knight-head’, which according to Henderson (1985:104), was “a big pulley ... anchored to the deck”, but other authorities indicate it was applied to a timber giving support to the stern and/or bowsprit, or a bollard. Stapel (1943:101) mentions this item having been found on 21 March, but it was 22 March. He calls the ‘voormarseknecht’ a ‘march man’.

22 March and 27 March

- some planks
- casks
- lids of butter casks
- pieces of grating from the taffrail,
- 4-5 gun carriages
- a 'forward knight-head' or a 'march man'
- a block
- other flotsam

Location of Finds of Physical Material

As previously mentioned, based on available documentation, there were two episodes in which considerable material originating from the wreck of the *Vergulde Draeck*, and possibly from missing survivors, was located.

Henderson contended that the finds of 26 February 1658 were in an area just to the north of the Two Rocks/Wreck Point area, located at 31° 29' 42"S x 115° 35' 17"E, approximately 60 kilometres north of the centre of Perth.⁴⁰ This position has been accepted by others,⁴¹ although 26-27 kilometres south of the wrecksite. Henderson's methodology, as described in Chapter 21 of his book *Marooned*, was based on using Rottnest Island as a reference point,⁴² to determine average latitudinal error in Volkersen's charts, making adjustments for an erroneous standard measurement for the length of a degree used by the Dutch at the time,⁴³ and by endeavouring to relate Volkersen's chart to identifiable landmarks. There may be a flaw in this reconstruction, however, as Henderson states Volkersen's chart shows the line marking 32°S latitude, to be "between six and ten minutes ... south of its true position on Rottnest",⁴⁴ whereas the chart may actually show this line of latitude about 15 minutes **north** of Rottnest Island. Furthermore, basing his determination of the location of the *Waeckende Boey* and the boat crew on 26 February on a single latitudinal fix is highly questionable given the degree of variation in this period in individual readings to determine latitude. As pointed out earlier, the readings for the *Batavia* wrecksite, made on land, varied by 32 minutes. Similarly, the latitude for the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite was out by over 33 minutes. By Henderson's own admission, Volkersen appeared to be in error by 8-12 minutes where ever his latitudes could be verified.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Henderson 1985:95-6. Volkersen gave his position as 31° 20', while the boat crew seem to have been about 5 kilometres to the north (31° 17').

⁴¹ e.g. Gerritsen 1994:42.

⁴² Henderson 1985:176.

⁴³ Henderson (1985:179), drawing on the research of Warren Robinson, contended that because the Dutch relied on the erroneous calculation of a mile by Snellius, they underestimated the length of each degree by 3.264 kilometres.

⁴⁴ Henderson 1985:176. The chart shows no line of latitude south of Rottnest.

⁴⁵ See Henderson 1985:176,182. Moreover, as recognised by Henderson (1985:177), the errors are magnified the more northerly the chart goes. This may be a consequence of the projection that was used in making the chart.

An alternative analysis of the evidence, based on relative position rather than absolute latitude suggests that the site found by the shore party led by Leeman on 26 February was at, or very close to, where the *Vergulde Draeck* had sunk.

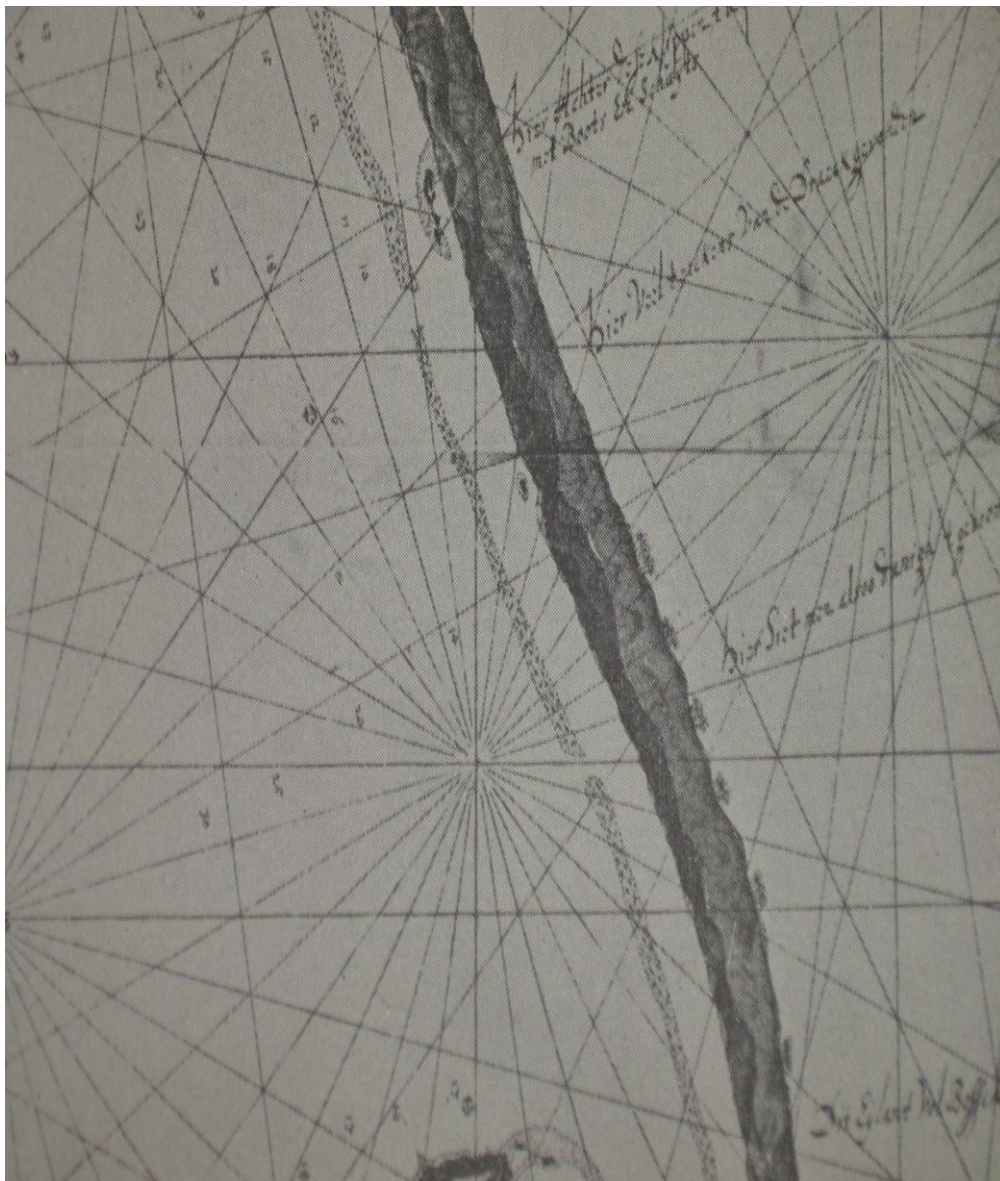


Figure 1: Section of *Chart of Eendrachtsland*
(Heeres 1899:78)

It is noteworthy that on that day, 26 February, Volkersen wrote in his log, “many signs of the wrecked ship DRAECK”. On his map, *Chart of Eendrachtsland*, the inscription appears “Here many signs of the Draeck were found.” Just to the north of this is a sizeable island, with two smaller ones to the south, with another inscription, “Here behind these cliffs is most convenient to go ashore with boat and schuyt.” This feature, based on the scale used on Volkersen’s chart, lies very close to 1° north of Rottneest Island. The only coastal feature close to that latitude and resembling the description given is Lancelin, with Lancelin Island, Edwards Island and other rocky islets jutting up from the sea, and a point providing a

protected bay behind these islands. Using Lancelin Island as the reference point (31° 00' 25"S),⁴⁶ this is almost exactly one degree north of Rottneest Island. Again using the scale on Volkersen's chart, the place indicated as showing "signs of the ... DRAECK" is estimated to be 15.5 minutes south of Lancelin, at 31° 15' 55"S, in close proximity to the shore directly adjacent to the actual *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite. However, a little to the south, about 5.8 minutes [9.3 km], of the "signs of the ... DRAECK inscription" is what appears to be an island, shown close to the shore. There is no island as such on that part of the coast but may well be the prominent reefs upon which the *Vergulde Draeck* foundered or those in the Two Rocks/Yanchep area. This 'island' is positioned, by this method of reckoning at 31° 21' 40"S, or 8 minutes south of the reefs on which the *Vergulde Draeck* actually foundered. In summary it can be concluded:

- ▲ that the place where there were the "signs" noted, and where Leeman found "pieces of planking which had been placed ends upward in a circle" may well have been the original campsite of the survivors of the *Vergulde Draeck*.
- ▲ The position of this campsite, is most likely quite close to the wrecksite.
- ▲ Although there are significant errors in Volkersen's chart and uncertainties in terms of how currents may have affected the distribution of wreckage and debris, if the relative position shown on Volkersen's chart is a true indicator, the site found on 26 February may actually lie a little to the north of the wrecksite.

The second structure reported by Leeman and his crew, on 21 March, is the "deal plank 8 or 9 feet long and a foot wide, put upright in the ground and round about 12 or 13 similar planks."⁴⁷ Other translations, however, consistently indicate that the 12-13 planks "round about" were "struts" or "props" for the upright.⁴⁸ A significant question is whether this was the same structure at that seen on 26 February. Several lines of evidence strongly suggest that the two structures are distinct and in different locations. The basis for the distinction is:

1. The second site mentions an arrangement of planks but with an upright in the centre, apparently with struts around it, whereas the first structure was described "planking which had been placed ends upward in a circle".
2. Leeman was the person who saw and reported both structures, but his journal entry for 21 March provides no indication that they had simply encountered the first structure again and was re-examining it. The tone suggests the second structure was a new find.
3. Their actions, whereby they "pulled out the timbers and dug 4 to 5 feet deep in the ground but found nothing" is indicative of a new find, because they most likely would have looked for such signs on 26 February, when they had searched far and wide for any indications of the stranded survivors.
4. Leeman appears to have taken a piece of the mast, a pole or a thwart "from the the ship the *Draeck*" back to the *Waeckende Boey*, possibly indicating that he may have been trying to show that this site was also linked to the survivors and distinct from that found on 26 February.

⁴⁶ This and the following latitudinal positions and calculations have been made using Google Earth.

⁴⁷ De Heer 1963:35

⁴⁸ W. C. Gerritsen in Gerritsen 1994:42; Gerritsen 2011; Reynders 2011.

5. The two finds appear to have been in different locations, as will be argued below.

It is difficult to reconstruct the *Waeckende Boey*'s and the shore party's movements with enough precision in the period 20 – 22 March so as to identify the exact location of the supported upright found on 21 March. Leeman did not record his latitude, so his journal is only able to provide indicative or corroborative evidence. Volkersen only recorded latitudes on 18 March and 22 March. On 18 March the *Waeckende Boey* was well south, at 31° 49'S,⁴⁹ but heading north. Volkersen's next fix was at 31° 09'S, around midday on 22 March.⁵⁰ The supported upright had been seen the previous morning, 21 March. On that day the shore party had been moving slowly northward following this find, while the *Waeckende Boey*, which had been anchored in the morning, moved north around the middle of the day. At this point there is a conflict in the accounts. Leeman claims to have returned to the ship around the middle of the day, to bring back a sick sailor, before heading back to shore at 2 pm.⁵¹ Volkersen, however, only mentions that they brought back the "beam from the ship the Draeck", before returning to the shore, and that this took place "a little before sunset."⁵² According to Leeman the boat continued to slowly move northward during the remainder of the afternoon, searching. That night the ship anchored in close proximity to the boat crew, who slept in the boat close to shore, and "where they had made their finds."⁵³ The next morning the search continued, with both the ship and the boat moving slowly northward. It was then that Volkersen recorded his latitude as 31° 09'. About that time Leeman and the boat crew, becoming concerned about the weather, returned to the ship, but were ordered back to shore by Volkersen. At that point contact with the ship was lost, and Volkersen records on his chart, "Here the boat went ashore for the last time."⁵⁴ Around the time the boat returned to the shore for the last time the *Waeckende Boey* also anchored.

Based on the fix by Volkersen, the supported upright must have lain a little to the south of 31° 09'S. This latitude is about 5 kilometres south of Ledge Point, so that the supported upright, a little further south, by this reckoning would either be at, or a little to the north, of the coast directly adjacent the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite. This is about 10 kilometres further south and in the same locality as that identified as the location of the plank circle. However, one cannot rely on this latitudinal reading given the apparent range of error, at least up to 12 minutes, in Volkersen other fixes. Within this range of error the upright could have been situated anywhere between Guilderton and half way between Lancelin and Wedge Island. Another approach is to refer again to Volkersen's chart.

⁴⁹ Leupe 1868:120.

⁵⁰ Leupe 1868:122.

⁵¹ De Heer 1963:35.

⁵² Leupe 1868:121.

⁵³ Leupe 1868:122.

⁵⁴ *Chart of Eendrachtsland* (Henderson 1985:97)

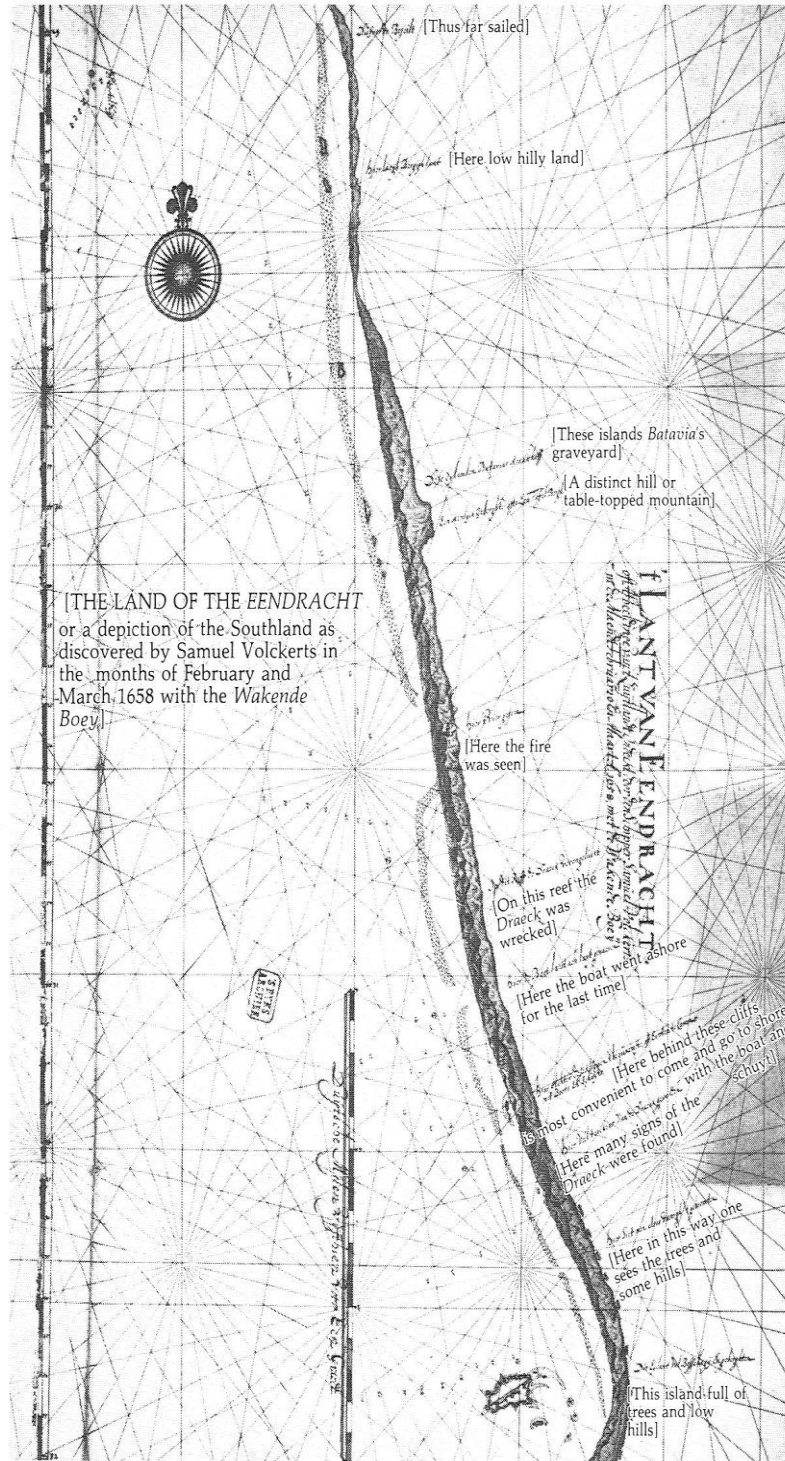


Figure 2: Section of *Chart of Eendrachtsland* with translations
(Henderson 1985:97)

It was suggested earlier that the find on 26 February, of the planks with “ends upward in a circle”, was in the vicinity of the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite. On Volckersen’s chart there are two highly relevant inscriptions, one referring to the parting of the

Waeckende Boey and the shore party on 22 March, “Here the boat went ashore for the last time”, and another, “Here the fire was seen,” referring to their last contact with the boat crew on 28 March.⁵⁵ The boat “went ashore for the last time” shortly after Volkersen had taken his latitude. On the chart that location is shown as being well to the north of the locations previously identified as Lancelin, the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite and the site discovered on 26 February. Relying on the relative position as indicated on the chart rather than absolute latitudinal fixes, where the “boat went ashore” lies between a flat topped hill identified as Mt. Lesueur (30° 10’S) and the island identified earlier as Lancelin Island (31° 00’S). Its relative position, about one-fifth of the way between Lancelin Island and Mt. Lesueur, is 30° 50’S, 10 minutes north of Lancelin Island. This location is 4 kilometres south east of Wedge Island. As previously estimated, the location of the supported upright was perhaps as much as 10 kilometres further south of the location the boat went ashore for the last time, placing the supported upright in the vicinity of the small point at Narrow Neck (30° 54’S), about half way between Lancelin and Wedge Island. This lies just to the north of the section of the coast identified earlier as the possible location of the supported upright, based on Volkersen’s latitude on 22 March (31° 09’S) and his assumed error of up to 12 minutes. Some slight corroboration is provided by Leeman who, in objecting to being sent ashore again on 22 March in the vicinity of the supported upright, claims he said to Volkersen, “there are neither islands nor coves,” where they could shelter. There are no islands or coves of any significance along the section of coast between Lancelin and Wedge Island. Leeman also observed, when they returned to the area on 27 March that there was an island to the north, which could possibly have been Wedge Island.

Based on the foregoing analysis, it is now suggested that there were two different sites at which man-made structures were found, a circle of planks on the coast close to the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite (31° 13’S), and a supported upright possibly in the vicinity of Narrow Neck (30° 54’S). These conclusions clearly differ from the identification of their location made in previous research addressing this question.⁵⁶ But they also provide hypotheses that can be tested and provide guidance for future site searches.

The Origin, Veracity and Significance of Schouten’s Account

The analysis of information and data up to this point has been drawn from official documents of the VOC. However, one account, written by Wouter Schouten, was not an official account,⁵⁷ and is considered separately here. This account, *Aanmercklijke Voyagie Gedaan door Wouter Schouten Naar Oost-Indien* (“Remarkable Voyage by Wouter Schouten to the East Indies”) was published in 1676 and so can be considered a contemporary source. However, researchers have previously been uncertain as to the veracity and reliability of the information contained in this work.⁵⁸ It includes significant and potentially important information not in other sources, such as the intentions of the 68 survivors, the state of the wreck at the time the *Waeckende Boey*

⁵⁵ Henderson 1985:106-7.

⁵⁶ Such as Henderson 1985:95-96; Gerritsen 1994:42-43.

⁵⁷ Even Leeman’s account was transcribed and certified by the Secretary of the Council of the Indies in Batavia (Henderson 1985:152), giving it status as official document.

⁵⁸ e.g. Gerritsen 1994:31.

searched, and the circumstances of the abandonment of Leeman and his companions. As the source or sources used in the compilation of this work have not been identified, and the fact that it was written in a populist style, has made it difficult to assess its value. However, new information has come to light that may provide further insight.

Schouten's text, in 17th century Dutch, shows characteristic forms of expression for Dutch of that period, so that the "news that has just been received" probably refers to the search by the *Waeckende Boey*,⁵⁹ not the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck*, which occurred two years before his arrival. He provides basic information that a boat had made it to Batavia to raise the alarm and that the *Waeckende Boey* had been sent to search. Following that is information which does not appear in any other source. This includes the assertions that:

1. Some of the boat crew who had returned to raise the alarm in 1656 had helped to find the location in 1658 where the *Vergulde Draeck* had been wrecked and the campsite of the 68 who remained.
2. The *Waeckende Boey* had found the wreck of the *Vergulde Draeck*, it had been examined and was reportedly "battered by waves and flooded".
3. The boat crew from *Waeckende Boey* had relocated the original campsite.
4. The 68 people who had remained behind had erected a "commodious tent".
5. The 68 who had remained behind intended to await a rescue party.
6. The "tent-poles" at the original campsite had been 'broken'.
7. An attempt had been made to search the wreck of the *Vergulde Draeck*, but its holds and cabins were flooded, and it was subject to "constant pounding" by the sea.
8. Leeman and his crew had gone ashore to get water and had landed "near a small stream" at the time they lost contact with the *Waeckende Boey*.

Viewed as a whole, Schouten's reportage could be considered as either a work of historical fiction, a sensationalist account based on official documents, a somewhat flawed version of events reconstructed from official documents and/or personal communications, or a work that attempted to accurately report and paraphrase a complex series of events, with some errors, while possibly incorporating sources of information no longer available to us at this point in time. To assess the options an examination of the historical circumstances which allowed Schouten to acquire and publish the relevant information is warranted.

Wouter Schouten,⁶⁰ was born in 1638, and apprenticed to a surgeon at the age of 14. In 1658 he entered the service of the VOC, as an Assistant-Surgeon, sailing on the

⁵⁹ As "just been received" is a literal translation, "recently been received" may be the real meaning.

⁶⁰ All biographical information on Schouten come from Bruijn (2009:169);

Nieuwpoort from Texel, bound for Batavia, on 16 April that year. The ship appears to have left the Cape around 1 August and probably arrived in Batavia around mid- to late September.⁶¹ Schouten's initial contract was for a period of three years, but he extended this for another three, and was promoted to Chief Surgeon. He returned to the Netherlands in December 1664, and subsequently wrote *Aanmercklijke Voyagie*, based on his experiences in the Indies. As an office holder in the establishment at Batavia, which only had a small European population at that time, possibly around 8,000,⁶² he probably had personal contact with many of those involved in the events he describes. His direct sources are therefore likely to have been VOC documents, VOC officials, officers and sailors. He may well have gleaned additional anecdotal information, gossip.

There are elements in Schouten's account that it seems could only have originated from a person, or persons, who had been directly involved in what transpired. For example, the description of the Western Australian coast in the areas being searched fits well with the nature of those coastal areas, "bare beaches ... strewn with rocks and cliffs", "rocky hills, wild valleys and sandy plains."⁶³ Such detail is not included in any known official document, and unless there are unknown documentary sources that he accessed, could only have come from personal contact. It is also worth noting that the boat crew feature in much of the material, the supposed examination of the wreck, the discovery of the campsite, the search of the area and the coast, and the separation of the boat from the *Waeckende Boey*. This points to the officers and crew of the *Waeckende Boey* and the *Emeloordt*, and particularly Abraham Leeman and his three surviving compatriots, as the informants. It should not be assumed that Schouten's report comes from a single source, however, the various elements could well have come from a number of different sources. Volkersen, nevertheless, can definitely be ruled out as an informant as he had died a short time before Schouten reached Batavia.⁶⁴ It is highly significant in this context that Abraham Leeman, and the three others who survived their abandonment and their epic journey, arrived in Batavia on 23 September,⁶⁵ around the same time Schouten landed there. Leeman remained in Batavia at least until 1 November as he provided his formal account for transcription to Secretary Andries Frisius on that date.⁶⁶ It is highly likely, therefore, that Schouten had direct personal contact with Leeman and/or the other survivors. Given the nature of the information contained in Schouten's account and the focus on the exploits of the boat crew, it would appear that at least a proportion of his information does derive from Leeman and/or others from the boat crew. Furthermore, as we know Leeman was an officer, highly capable, articulate, literate, and with proven leadership qualities, it is quite possible he provided much of the personal experiences that

http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wouter_Schouten (Accessed 8 August 2011) and http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wouter_Schouten (Access 8 August 2011).

⁶¹ The voyage from the Cape of Good Hope to Batavia seems to have usually taken 6-9 weeks.

⁶² de Haan 1935:1:99. This was in 1638, and is only an estimate, but the European population was then stabilising after a period of rapid growth, and was only just under 9,000 at the end of the 19th century.

⁶³ Personal Observation. Having trekked these areas on numerous occasions, I have noted that it is predominantly sandplain country, characterised by limestone outcrops occurring at the top of many of the dunal ridges, with dense bush and scrub in the swales.

⁶⁴ Henderson 1985:210. In the context of how events unfolded, Volkersen's mysterious death (Henderson 1985:210) perhaps warrants further investigation.

⁶⁵ de Heer 1963:46.

⁶⁶ Henderson 1985:152. The transcription was signed on 20 November 1658.

Schouten appears to relate. Consequently, because Schouten was in Batavia at the period when some of the actors were present, particularly actors intimately involved in some of the events reported by him and others, his data must therefore be given some credence.

Following the reportage on the discovery of the abandoned campsite and the investigation of the wreck is an account of the incident on 22 March when Leeman and his comrades returned to shore and the *Waeckende Boey* sailed away, and an abbreviated version of their struggle to survive. There are a number of apparent inaccuracies, inconsistencies and evidentiary conflicts between what is in this section and other sources. For example, Schouten states “the boat had been sent ashore to get fresh water”.⁶⁷ There is no indication of this in Volkersen’s log or Leeman’s journal, the intent in going ashore clearly seems to have been to continue the search for the survivors. It is stated they landed “near a small stream,”⁶⁸ but there are no watercourses running out to sea between the Moore River (31° 21’ 10”S), well to the south, and Hill River (30° 23’ 09”S), about 45-50 kilometres to the north.⁶⁹ In addition it is claimed the boat crew, “wandered off inland, instead of hurrying along,”⁷⁰ again not recorded in Volkersen’s log or Leeman’s journal. The next line may, however, provide an explanation. It states that a “heavy storm came,” forcing Volkersen to sail away, “or so the Skipper later claimed.”⁷¹ The whole passage appears to relate to Volkersen attempting to justify his actions. A comment a few lines later, that “this plausible speculation would ultimately be challenged by the real truth,”⁷² appears to support that contention. But what were Schouten’s sources for this seemingly erroneous information? None of these details are articulated in the known sources. But the Council of the Indies had considered the conduct of the voyage and passed a resolution following the return of *Waeckende Boey* and *Emeloordt* on 19 April 1658.⁷³ In this the Council “recorded their displeasure,” ostensibly because of the respective Skippers’ negligence in not following their strict orders to stay together during the voyage. It also resolved that both men be interrogated by the Judge Advocate.⁷⁴ Neither the text of the resolution nor any documents relating any interrogation are in the public domain at this point in time, but they may well have been one of Schouten’s sources. Officers and crew from the *Waeckende Boey* may have been another source. The Secretary of the *Waeckende Boey* is one such officer, as he was present during Leeman’s confrontation with Volkersen on 22 March, and supported Volkersen’s position.⁷⁵

⁶⁷ Schouten 1676:28.

⁶⁸ Schouten 1676:28.

⁶⁹ Although Leeman and the boat crew must have passed Hill River, Leeman makes no mention of it. This is not surprising as it is not readily observable from the sea, being a fairly small watercourse that is blocked by a bar much of the time, only flowing out to sea intermittently.

⁷⁰ Schouten 1676:28.

⁷¹ Schouten 1676:28.

⁷² Schouten 1676:29.

⁷³ Henderson 1985:210.

⁷⁴ It may be possible that word had reached the Councillors of what had actually taken place when Leeman and his crew had been abandoned, and that the investigation into the Skippers’ negligence was a pretext for investigating that incident.

⁷⁵ de Heer 1963:38.

There are other apparently more minor inaccuracies and inconsistencies in Schouten's passages relating to what transpired after Leeman and his crew were abandoned. Schouten reports that "they were unable to make fire,"⁷⁶ but in fact they made numerous fires, although their flint was last lost in April when they were much further north.⁷⁷ He also claims they "didn't have anything to eat or drink."⁷⁸ But according to Leeman they did start out on 23 March with "7 or 8 pounds of bread, very wet with salt water, and 4 pieces of bacon."⁷⁹

Apart from these issues, where Schouten's work can be cross-referenced, it closely echoes other sources, particularly Leeman's journal. For example, it provides a reasonable summary of the circumstances of the abandonment of the boat crew. It also mentions that the searchers shouted, and fired muskets and cannons, to attract attention, in accordance with their instructions.⁸⁰ It also closely reflects the sense of hopelessness experienced by Leeman and his crew, and their lamentations following their abandonment, though expressed in different terms to those in Leeman's journal.

Implications and Inferences Arising From Schouten's Account

At this point in time some of the factual information contained in the account written by Schouten cannot be verified. Nevertheless, other sources and information may come to light in the future that may make verification possible. But if the substantive information contained in the account written by Schouten is credible and accurate, then a number of implications arise and inferences can be made.

The first set of inferences relates to the search and the apparent discovery of the original campsite. Of all the vessels sent to search for the survivors only the *Waeckende Boey* found any definite indication of their former presence. The lack of success of other searchers seems to have been largely because of the unfavourable weather, the dangerous character of the coast and the error in the latitude of the wrecksite. The fact that some of the original boat crew accompanied the *Emeloort* and *Waeckende Boey* may be the reason that the wrecksite and the original campsite were found so readily.⁸¹

Although not explicitly recorded in any document, Schouten claims the wreck of the *Vergulde Draeck* was located but not searched. However, it appears to have been submerged, or nearly so, and given the difficult conditions at the wrecksite, any attempt to salvage cargo or other valuables, such as the specie being carried, would have been fraught with danger. The instructions for the *Emeloort* and *Waeckende Boey* exhorted them to put the safety of crew above all else, "we deem human life more precious than goods." So it may have been deemed too risky to attempt any

⁷⁶ Schouten 1676:29.

⁷⁷ de Heer 1963:42. Probably in the Zuytdorp Cliffs/Shark Bay area.

⁷⁸ Schouten 1676:29.

⁷⁹ de Heer 1963:38..

⁸⁰ See *Resolution of the Governor General and Council, 21 December 1657* (Henderson 1985:63).

⁸¹ It has been claimed (Personal Communication: Tom Vanderveldt) that Leeman was one of the original boat crew that returned to raise the alarm, but there is nothing in his or Schouten's account to suggest he had been there previously.

salvage, and thus the wreck was written off, and so of little consequence for those who were primarily engaged in a search for the missing mariners. The possibility that the wreck had been found is given some support by Jonck's signification on his chart of 'The *Draeck's* Reef', seemingly quite close to the actual wrecksite.

Two important additional pieces of information about the situation following the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck* are also revealed in Schouten. Both are unremarkable, and not unexpected. It would seem the survivors had erected a "commodious tent", presumably using sail canvas from the ship, or perhaps the boat that had been swamped. This would have been a logical action in the circumstances. The other was their stated intention to await a rescue party. Again, this would have been a logical response in the immediate circumstances, but does help to clarify a statement in the *Letter of 4 December 1656*, that they were "about to go inland after the departure of the mentioned schuyt." It has been assumed that this was referring to foraging parties, and the statement that they intended to wait gives greater weight to that assumption.

The final piece of information, that the shore party had found the "tent-poles broken" and no trace of the survivors, indicates they had found the original campsite. The question in this regard is whether this refers to the 'circle of planks' and is additional information, or is providing a completely different description and is conflicting information. However, because both passages seem to directly refer to the original campsite and indicate that there was no trace of the survivors, it is more likely that it is additional information.⁸² As there was no trace of the survivors, or even any other material evidence of their presence, it therefore suggests that the 'commodious tent' had possibly been dismantled or destroyed, just leaving the supports in place, the 'circle of planks'. This may have occurred when the survivors abandoned the site and moved away. It is possible there had been a conflict or mutiny which led to the destruction. Lack of any indication of disorder would, however, seem to make that a highly unlikely possibility. Indirect corroboration that this was the original campsite is provided by the comment in the relevant passage that there was "no sign of carpentry or part of any watercraft" present. Presumably this was referring back to the situation at the campsite at the time their boat had set off to get help, with those remaining "trying to recover the boat," the one that had been swamped.

Anthropogenic Sites – Tentative Conclusions

There are three sites that have been identified from contemporary sources and recent finds directly linked to the survivors of the *Vergulde Draeck* that are deemed to be Anthropogenic Sites, those that have clearly been created by, or are the result of human activity. These are the Edwards Coin Find, the circle of planks (also known as the Plank Circle) and the supported upright (also known as the Wooden Structure). Each of these will be considered in turn.

⁸² The very limited description of the tent-poles as being broken may be what was actually observed, but it is a literal translation, and one that is rather puzzling. Perhaps it was intended to convey a slightly different meaning such as 'broken down', 'pushed over' or 'dismantled'.

Edwards Coin Find

This site lies, as stated earlier, about 7.4 kilometres east south east of the *Vergulde Draeck* wrecksite. It is situated in sand dunes approximately 80 metres from the shore. The most likely explanation for the presence of the coins is that they were a personal cache that had been in a small chest and brought ashore by a survivor from the wreck. Potentially this could be an indicator of the location of the campsite of the main body of survivors from the *Vergulde Draeck*. However, the survivors reached the shore in boats and logically would have made as directly as they could for the coast. Directly opposite the wrecksite there is a long stretch of open beach, with no obstructing headland or reefs. Unless there was a strong wind from a northerly direction the boats would not bear to the south. The situation of the wreck, on the eastern side of a large area of reef suggests the *Vergulde Draeck* was sailing north to northwest at the time it came to grief. It could have been on that bearing if there was a strong north east breeze and it was sailing close to the wind, but as the prevailing winds in this part of Western Australia are predominantly southerly, it would seem more likely there was a southerly breeze. Therefore the ship's company making for the shore in boats would more likely have been carried slightly to the north.

In view of this reconstruction it is proposed that the human presence in the locality of the Edwards Coin Find was the result of an individual, perhaps a number, being carried there clinging to, or floating on, flotsam or makeshift rafts, carried by the current. The main current here is the Leeuwin Current which flows southward at about 1-2 knots [3 kmph] from March to November, the flow being strongest from May to June.⁸³ For an individual floating in the sea, they would be therefore carried toward the south, in spite of any southerly wind. In this case, essentially the individuals who made their way there would be stragglers who would not necessarily create a patterned archaeological signature but only leave isolated finds.

Circle of Planks

The circle of planks, based on our limited knowledge and understanding, appears to have been the location of the campsite of the main body of survivors from the *Vergulde Draeck*. It is likely to have been directly opposite the wrecksite, or perhaps a little to the north. While debris from the wreck seems to have been scattered along the coast over a considerable distance, as would be expected, a significant proportion may have been washed ashore a little to the south of the wrecksite, carried by the current alluded to above. Consequently, it is likely the main debris field lay a little to the south of the wrecksite, and the campsite of the survivors.

Given the passage of time it is likely most perishable items from the ship and the survivors have decayed and disappeared. Some larger structural elements such as parts of larger beams, planks and masts may still survive. However it would be difficult to distinguish such items reaching the shore by natural means from those, such as the planks making up the circle, reaching there by human agency, unless such items were found in a location they can only have reached by human agency, a short distance inland for example. It was suggested earlier that if the second boat from the

⁸³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leeuwin_Current (Accessed 4 August 2011)

Vergulde Draeck, the one that had been swamped, could be located, assuming any part of it has survived, it would indicate the proximity of the campsite.

Artefacts found on land, however, offer great potential in locating the campsite. The archaeological signature for this site is likely to be mostly non-perishable items, although some more perishable items, such as leather, horn, canvas, skeletal material, even books and paper, could be preserved in highly favourable conditions. The archaeological signature is also likely to reflect the personal nature of most items remaining *in situ*, given that the survivors were fortunate to make it to shore and perhaps were only able to bring with them highly portable and/or important personal items. Consequently the most likely material to be found would be:

- coins
- jewellery, jewels and precious stones
- button, particularly metal buttons
- hinges and locks
- buckles
- tools (for carpentry, axes)
- nails
- utensils, cooking pots and containers (metal, glass, ceramic and pottery)
- weapons (swords, knives, guns, scabbards)
- flints
- barrel hoops

It is noteworthy that items of this nature were found at both the Edwards Coin Find and the campsite found just north of Wedge Island around 1890.

Supported Upright

The supported upright, as suggested earlier, appears to have been located somewhere between Lancelin and Wedge Island, perhaps about half way between those places. Some wreckage was reported in this area, the most substantial being gun carriages and the beams or planks used to construct the supported upright. The most likely scenario is that the supported upright was constructed by the survivors on their way north. They presumably waited at the coast adjacent to the wrecksite for some time, hoping to be rescued. Because of the erroneous latitude of the wrecksite it would seem the initial search was focussed on the wrong area. The survivors may have seen the ships engaged in the search passing by, or didn't observe any rescuers and concluded that the boat party sent to raise the alarm had failed to reach its destination. In either case they may well have decided at that point to make for Batavia as best they could and began moving up the coast. If this reconstruction is correct then presumably the supported upright was erected to alert any would-be rescue party to their presence and progress.

In terms of relocating this site, it is uncertain how far above the tide line it was, so it is possible any archaeological evidence may have been washed away or covered over. However, it is likely that similar items to those listed above would be present. If, as has been suggested, the individuals who constructed the supported upright were

travelling north, then they would have only carried essential items and only stayed briefly at the location. This would result in a very limited archaeological signature. But, if the site north of Wedge Island is a guide, the type of artefacts left behind (a pot, horn spoons, copper shovel, hatchet heads) may nevertheless be sufficient to identify the site.

Further Archival Research

In the course of this research the former existence of one potentially very significant contemporary document was immediately noted. This was Leeman's journal for the period prior to his and the boat crew's abandonment. It is referred to in the opening paragraph of the journal he subsequently kept. He stated in this, "What has happened up to now is specified in my journal on board the ship ..."⁸⁴ No other reference to this document is known, but it may possibly still exist, perhaps in the VOC archives currently held in Indonesia.

As mentioned earlier, Henderson refers to a Resolution by Governor General and Council following the return of *Waeckende Boey* and *Emeloordt* on 19 April 1658,⁸⁵ in which the Council "recorded their displeasure," ostensibly because of the respective Skippers' negligence in not following their strict orders to stay together during the voyage. It also resolved that both men be interrogated by the Judge Advocate. There may be details in this document that could shed further light on the search those ships conducted and what was found. This document is presumably in the VOC archives in the Netherlands, but neither the text nor any translation is currently in the public domain. Furthermore, as the Resolution directed that Jonck and Volkersen be interrogated by the Advocate-General, potentially a document exists detailing that interrogation, which could also provide further information.

It seems several letters, dated 5 and 7 May 1656, were sent back to Batavia with the boat crew that returned to raise the alarm. Apparently these were sent on to the Cape Colony where Riebeeck passed them, or copies of them, on to the Skipper of the *Vincq* to assist and guide that ship's search for the survivors.⁸⁶ It is a remote possibility these survived and could be in VOC archives, either in Indonesia, the Netherlands or South Africa. These letters, if they could be relocated, would undoubtedly be an invaluable source of additional information.

Finally, it should be noted that Schouten was a prolific author. His writings in this instance have provided important new information. There may exist somewhere an archive holding his papers. This possibility warrants further investigation as such papers could also yield further insights into the fate of the hapless 68 survivors from the *Vergulde Draeck*.

⁸⁴ de Heer 1963:35.

⁸⁵ Henderson 1985:210.

⁸⁶ *Instructions for the heads of the little fluit DE VINCQ ... APRIL 26, 1657.*

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