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THE "AMBOYNA MASSACRE" OF 1623.

D. K. Bassett

On 27 February, 1623, Gabriel Towerson, the chief factor or merchant of the English East India Company in Amboyna, was beheaded by command of the local Dutch governor, Herman van Speult. Nine other Englishmen, ten Japanese and one Portuguese shared Towerson's fate. The charges brought against these unfortunate men were that they planned to kill Speult and overwhelm the Dutch garrison of Fort Victoria as soon as an English ship appeared in the roadstead to support them. It is not the purpose of the present article to re-open the more controversial aspects of the Amboyna tragedy. Suffice it to say that the plausibility of the Dutch accusation has never commanded much respect in the estimate of British historians and it is unlikely that this attitude will change. On the other hand, there is every evidence to suggest that Speult, despite English suspicions to the contrary,[1] was genuinely convinced that an English plot was afoot to overthrow his government. Normally the governor was a humane and reasonable man, who had received Towerson at his table on many occasions, and his bitterness at the strange turn of events in February, 1623, is very understandable. Dr. Stapel has recorded the reputed reply of Towerson to Speult when the latter upbraided him for thus abusing his hospitality and friendship: "Alas! If it were to beginne againe, it should never be done". Is this the response of a man who knew he was innocent? asks Dr. Stapel.[2] On the face of it, Towerson would appear to be condemned by his own words, but it must be remembered that his physical condition at that time was pitiful. He had firmly protested his innocence under prolonged and severe torture until his powers of endurance were broken, after which he sought relief, presumably, by telling the Dutch what they wanted to hear. In these circumstances, it is difficult to attach to Towerson's rather cryptic expression of repentance the importance it would otherwise deserve.

It is somewhat strange that historians assessing the likelihood of Towerson's guilt should attach such importance to his words when he was a man broken and without hope, while paying so little attention to his character and outlook in his happier days. Towerson's letters from Amboyna in the last months of 1622 are preserved for us in the Java Factory Records in the India Office Library. They throw such startling doubt on his willingness or ability to plan the cold-blooded murder of Speult and the Dutch garrison that they merit extensive quotation. It is worth remembering when reading these extracts that Anglo-Dutch relations in other parts of the East Indies were very strained indeed by 1622.

It is ironical but significant that Towerson had nothing but praise for Herman van Speult. On 19 September, 1622, Towerson wrote to

1. D. G. E. Hall: *A History of South East Asia*, London, 1955, p. 250.
2. F. W. Stapel: "De Ambonsche 'Moord' "; *Tijdschrift van het Bataviaasch Genootschap* (TBG), LXII, Batavia & The Hague, 1923, p. 224.

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president Fursland at Batavia informing him of the Dutchman's friendly assistance in providing the English Company with housing in Amboyna, and he added: "and truly I beleeve that he doth itt with an upright harte, and [I] thinke that I doe him butt ordinary right to place him in the first ranke of all the Dutch that I have bin accquainted with for an honest and upright man".[3] This was no mean compliment from Towerson, who had served the Company in various parts of Asia since its inception almost twenty-two years before,[4] but he was not content with words. In recompense for Speult's "dyvers curtisies and promises touchinge all just dealinge, wch. uppon my faith carrieth so likely a shewe of truth that I would intreate yow to take notise of itt", Towerson asked Fursland to write a letter of thanks to the governor, accompanied by a butt of beer for the Dutchman and a "chaine of gold" for his wife. Towerson was convinced that this gesture would be greatly appreciated by Speult and would also "bread [breed] good bloud and more benefitts to our maisters".[5]

Towerson's opinion of Speult and his anxiety to continue amicable Anglo-Dutch relations are so obvious in this letter that they need no further comment. It is not irrelevant to add, however, that one of the reasons why Towerson esteemed Speult so highly was his avoidance of bloodshed in his dealings with the Asian population. In the same letter, Towerson wrote: "he [Speult] is to be recommended for his greatt paynes takinge and hath an excellent guift, for that with his good words and carridge hee winneth this people much more then would have bin done with expence of much more mony and effusion of bloud".[6] Is this the outlook of a man who would contemplate the murder of Speult and the unsuspecting Dutch soldiers three months later?

One other point needs to be made in favour of Towerson. During the last months of 1622 he was regarded by president Fursland and the English Council at Batavia as being so pro-Dutch in his attitude as to need a sharp warning. When Fursland replied to Towerson's paean of praise to Speult on 17 December, 1622, he rebuffed Towerson's suggestion that a letter of thanks or a present be sent to Speult from the president; instead, he suggested that verbal expressions of gratitude by Towerson would be quite sufficient. Furthermore, Fursland felt that Towerson was becoming far too friendly with the Dutchman: "wee knowe he is free enough," commented the president, "but in your mayne afaires you will find him a subtle man.... therefore be carefull you be not circumvented in matters of ymportance through his desembling friendshipp".[7] Five days after this letter was written, on 22 December, 1622, or "Nieuwjaarsdag, 1623" according to the Dutch calendar, Towerson is supposed to have first hatched the plot to capture Fort Victoria at his house. If he did so, he must have been far more of a "dissembler" than Speult could ever be, not only to his potential enemies but also to his friends.

3. Towerson to Fursland, 19 Sept., 1622. I.O., Java Records, III, i, f.351.
4. For a brief note on Towerson's career see Sir W. Foster: *The Voyage of Sir Henry Middleton to the Moluccas*, Hakluyt Society, London, 1943, p. 98.
5. Towerson to Fursland, 19 Sept., 1622. Java Records, III, ff. 352, 357.
6. Loc. cit., f. 355.
7. Fursland to Towerson, 17 Dec., 1622. Java Rec., III, i, f. 455.

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In the light of this correspondence, it is probable that a terrible mistake was made at Amboyna in that the executed Englishmen were innocent of the plans ascribed to them. To make such a statement does not detract from the integrity of Speult, of whose honesty Towerson has given ample testimony, nor does it question the genuineness of the Dutch belief in the conspiracy. Whether the Dutchmen should have tortured and put to death the representatives of another company and nation which was nominally in alliance with them is quite another matter. Undue haste and a lack of discretion certainly characterised Dutch actions in February, 1623, and it is difficult to understand the argument of Dutch historians that it was impossible to transfer the prisoners to Batavia without unnecessary loss of time or a dangerous weakening of the Dutch garrison.[8] Two of the Englishmen, Collins and Beaumont, were reprieved and sent to Batavia; would it have required many more guards, e.g. from the crew of the ship which conveyed the two survivors, to transport the ten additional Englishmen rather than execute them? There appears to have been no real need to weaken the garrison of Fort Victoria at all; most of the Dutch vessels which sailed between Batavia and Amboyna carried a complement of some one hundred men and could easily have provided a guard for twelve Englishmen in irons.

Furthermore, why was rapidity of execution such an important consideration? Almost all the confessions were obtained by torture, the severity of which is a matter of some dispute, but which even the Dutch records admit to have been "sware [severe] torture" in the more recalcitrant cases. If Towerson and his fellow-sufferers had reached Batavia alive, would they not have repudiated the confessions extorted from them by such means, particularly when the presence of president Fursland and the other free Englishmen there would have provided a reasonable guarantee that pressure of this kind would not be repeated? One of the Amboyna victims, Samuel Coulson, recorded a pathetic and posthumous avowal of his innocence in his Book of Psalms, which subsequently reached the hands of his fellow-countrymen. Confronted by this awkward piece of evidence, Dr. Stapel admits that Coulson probably was innocent but argues that he was an exception;[9] it may occur to some readers that Coulson was an exception in another and more sinister sense: he was the only Amboyna victim whose written declaration of innocence reached his friends. Coulson stated that he falsely confessed his guilt in the first instance because he could not face the torture inflicted on his compatriots; how many of the other prisoners might have left similar repudiations of their guilt had they found the opportunity?

One of the more obvious weaknesses in the Dutch contention that Towerson and his subordinates were planning to seize Fort Victoria is the small number of Englishmen available to perform this remarkable feat. It is generally agreed that there were only some twenty Englishmen in

8. E. S. de Klerck: *History of the Netherlands East Indies*, I, Rotterdam, 1938, p. 232; J. K. J. de Jonge: *Opkomst van het Nederlandsch Gezag in Oost-Indie*, V, The Hague & Amsterdam, 1870, p. xix; F. W. Stapel: "De Ambonsche 'Moord' ", *TBG*, LXII, p. 212. De Jonge also points out that one of the reasons why the executions were carried out in Amboyna was to terrorise some rebellious Ternatens.

9. Stapel: "De Ambonsche 'Moord' ", p. 224.

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Amboyna and Ceram together with their servants,[10] but it is argued that reinforcements would have been available when the next English ship arrived. The first person to indicate that the conspiracy hinged on the arrival of the next English ship from Java was the Japanese soldier who was arrested by the Dutch on 13 February (O.S.) after making enquiries about the strength of the watch in the fort; he made this revelation only after considerable torture. All the subsequent events therefore stem from his statement and it is crucial to the case to ascertain when Towerson expected this ship and how long he anticipated that he would have to hold his supposed plans in abeyance before the necessary help arrived.

In order to answer this question it is necessary to digress a little. By the time the conspiracy was first hatched at Towerson's house on 22 December, 1622, — as the confessions indicate — the position of the English Company in the Spice Islands as a whole was very precarious. After an unsuccessful attempt to break the Dutch monopoly in the Spice Islands by force in the early years of the seventeenth century, the English directors had reluctantly agreed to an alliance with the "Hollanders" in 1619, by which they were allowed to establish factories alongside the Dutch ones in the Moluccas, the Bandas and Amboyna, in return for bearing one third of the maintenance costs of the Dutch garrisons. In theory, the English Company should have covered its expenses easily by its legal claim to one third of the spices produced, but in practice this was not the case. Dutch administrative expenses were very high, as numerous complaints from governor-general Coen to the various Dutch governors confirm, and the output of spices was exceptionally low. The English Company naturally felt the repercussions of this situation even more keenly than its Dutch ally, because of its much smaller capital resources. It is significant, however, that English complaints to this effect came from the factors in the Banda group and in the Moluccas,[11] but not from Towerson in Amboyna, who dismissed the bickering between his subordinates and the Dutch as "fopperies" unworthy of detailed report. Any evidence of exceptional Anglo-Dutch friction in Amboyna is therefore lacking, to say the least, and it must be a cause for surprise that an anti-Dutch plot should have been hatched there rather than in the more troubled waters of Banda or Ternate.

President Fursland regarded the overall situation in the Spice Islands as too detrimental to the finances of the English Company to be perpetuated. On 24 September, 1622, he instructed John Gonning, the chief factor in Ternate, to close down the Moluccan factories in Bachian, Tacomi, Motir and Tabelolo, retaining only those at Maleyo, Taffasoho and Gnofficia. The possibility that the spice trade might be abandoned completely by the English was considered even at that early stage[12] and by

10. The corresponding Dutch garrison in the Amboyna district in August, 1622, was 345 European and 83 Asian troops; there were 463 Dutch soldiers holding ten forts in the Moluccas and 420 Dutch soldiers in the Bandas. The total Dutch force in the Spice Islands was thus almost four times as large as the contemporary Dutch garrison at Batavia itself. See H. T. Colenbrander: *Jan Pietersz. Coen: Beschieden*, I, The Hague, 1919, pp. 800-801. Towerson would not only have to capture Fort Victoria, but presumably hold it against counterattacks.

11. See, for example, letters from Welden and Moore at Banda Neira, 20 Aug., 10 Sept., 1622. Java Rec., III, i, ff. 340, 345.

12. Fursland to Gonning, 24 Sept., 1622. Java Rec., III, i, ff. 429-430.

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17 December presidential opinion in favour of this course was hardening. On that day, Fursland, disappointed in his hopes of a ship from England, wrote to Gonning in Ternate and to Towerson in Amboyna warning them of the imminence of a withdrawal. "Except orders come from our masters for reformation of abuses in those parts, or that wee may have more reassonable conditions from ye Dutch", declared Fursland, "wee shall rather send order for all to come from thence then to proceede in such manner". Both Gonning and Towerson were advised to settle their affairs so that if definite instructions to leave the Spice Islands were sent later, they would be ready "to come away".[13] These letters were sent by Dutch conveyance, probably on the *Eenhoorn*, by which Coen wrote to Speult on the following day. When Fursland next wrote to Towerson, Welden and Gonning on 21 January, 1623, he had finally made a decision: still no ship had arrived from London and hence, he declared, "wee intend to remove all our people" from the Bandas, Moluccas and Amboyna "until such tyme as wee heere from our maisters how they intend to follow those afaires".[14]

The importance of this trend in English policy at the turn of 1622-1623 is difficult to exaggerate. If Towerson really planned to attack Fort Victoria in the middle of February, 1623, from what English ship did he expect to receive assistance? The whole tone of Fursland's correspondence since 17 December, 1622, had been one of bleak pessimism, and a dispirited English withdrawal from Amboyna was envisaged rather than a daring *coup d'etat*. Towerson — and indeed most of the Europeans on Amboyna[15] — must have been aware that the Englishmen would probably be completely isolated throughout the first half of 1623, until the availability of an English ship and the monsoon coincided; even when that ship arrived, its captain would almost certainly be authorised to withdraw Towerson and his subordinates. Was it upon the generosity of this unknown seaman that Towerson intended to base the desperate venture of capturing Fort Victoria? This idea is so fantastic as to be untenable, but let us assume for the sake of argument that this was the case and that the ship's captain might have been won over by an impassioned appeal to his patriotism. Would Towerson have received any subsequent support from Fursland in his mad-cap scheme? It need scarcely be emphasized that Fursland can have had no inkling of Towerson's plot, even if it existed, and when it was put into operation it would have been in direct contradiction of Fursland's latest instructions to withdraw completely from the Spice Islands. If no assistance could be expected from the president, from where else could it materialise?

13. Fursland to Towerson & Gonning, 17 Dec., 1622. Java Rec., III, i, ff. 459, 462-463.

14. Fursland to Towerson, 21 Jan., 1622/23. Loc. cit., f. 465. For similar letters to Welden and Gonning see ff. 467, 469.

15. Coen's letters to Speult in October and December, 1622, also commented upon the complete absence of English ships from London and this fact must have been common knowledge in European circles at Amboyna. See Colenbrander: *Beschei-den*, III, The Hague, 1921, pp. 254, 274. In July 1624, Edward Collins, one of the Amboyna survivors, affirmed before Sir Henry Marten in the High Court of Admiralty: "the English had then noe shippe or other vessell there, neither did they expect any to come at that tyme"; the Dutch, on the other hand, had four ships, three pinnaces and one junk at Amboyna. See Depositions, Java Records, II, iii, f. 31.

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Furthermore, in his letter to Towerson of 21 January, 1623, Fursland revealed that the ship which would bring the Englishmen away from Amboyna would be a *Dutch* ship, gladly supplied by Jan Pietersz. Coen, the retiring Dutch governor-general and an outstanding Anglophobe. It is unlikely that this letter reached Towerson before his arrest on 15 February, but even if it had, its contents would have been no great surprise to him. The only ptrsons in Amboyna who were not aware that no English ship would arrive that season may well have been the Japanese soldiers, who resorted to that story as a desperate expedient to escape further torture.

One point should also be made as far as the Dutch participants in the story are concerned. Coen knew that the English Company was abandoning the Spice Islands almost seven weeks before Towerson was executed,[16] but he sailed for the Netherlands on 23 January/2 February, 1623, leaving Pieter de Carpentier as governor-general. Speult cannot have known of the impending English withdrawal at that time, but it would be interesting to know when news of Fursland's decision first reached him. If a letter from Coen or Carpentier indicating the preparations being made for the English withdrawal[17] reached Speult before 27 February/9 March, when the Englishmen were beheaded, should if not have given him cause to wonder about the authenticity of the plot the tortured Japanese and Englishmen had revealed? Furthermore, when did Fursland's letter of 21 January, 1623, reach Amboyna? This document, too, should have raised grave doubts as to the truth of the Japanese story.[18] If, on the other hand, Speult had no knowledge of the English decision to withdraw until after Towerson and his colleagues were beheaded, it is understandable that he should have governed his actions by his own sense of indignation, the evidence before him, and Coen's earlier injunction to maintain his jurisdiction as governor unimpaired against all nationalities.[19] The real tragedy of the affair is that Speult's suspicions of Towerson were almost certainly mistaken.For a conspiracy to be feasible, it must not only be capable of initial success but of subsequent exploitation and development. This was not the case in 1623.

THE EFFECTS ON THE SPICE TRADE.

So much for the authenticity of the conspiracy. Opinions on this aspect of the problem will continue to vary, nor is the present article

16. The English made known their intention of leaving the Spice Is. in the Council of Defence at Batavia on 10/20 January, 1623. See H. T. Colenbrander: *Coen: Bescheiden*, I, pp. 786-787.

17. Coen wrote to all the governors of the Spice Islands on 18/28 January, informing them that Carpentier was assuming the governor-generalship, but made no reference to English plans in his letter. See Colenbrander, *op. cit.*, III, p. 286.

18. Several of the Amboyna survivors later testified that Speult told them he had intercepted correspondence from president Fursland, but the only conclusion he drew from it was that neither Fursland nor the English directors were implicated in the plot. See Depositions, Java Records, II, iii.

19. Coen to Speult, 28 Oct., 1622(N.S.). Colenbrander: *Coen: Bescheiden*, III, p. 253. The question of jurisdiction had been raised because of a duel between an English factor and a Dutch corporal at Kambelu, in which the Englishman was killed; the other Englishmen insisted on the execution of the corporal, although Speult would have preferred a more lenient punishment. Coen was anxious that the law of the land should be applied with equal rigidity to offending Englishmen when the opportunity arose.

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intended to offer a final solution. What is less tolerable is the number of loose and often misleading generalisations which have been made in standard history books concerning the repercussions of the Amboyna affair. These statements tend to fall into two categories: firstly, those which claim to describe the immediate consequences and secondly, those which consider the long-term implications in the sphere of inter-European rivalry in South East Asia.

Dutch historians are more prone to error on the first count than English writers, possibly because of an inadequate knowledge of the contemporary English documents. Vlekke, for example, argues that the English East India Company used the "Massacre" as 'a good pretext to withdraw with dignity from a position that had become hopeless".[20] This argument would be tenable if Fursland had kept the Dutch governor-general in ignorance of English intentions and could thus subsequently save his face and that of his employers; but Fursland had already sunk his pride completely in revealing to the Dutch authorities not only that his Company was so destitute that a withdrawal from the Spice Islands was imperative but that a Dutch ship would have to be utilised for this purpose. What dignity remained to be saved? E. S. de Klerck also appears to be under the impression that the English decision to evacuate their factories "in the Dutch settlements" was an immediate consequence of the Amboyna affair.[21] This statement is applicable only to the English presidency at Batavia, which was transferred initially to Pulo Lagundi in Sunda Strait and ultimately to Bantam in 1628; it could not be true of the Spice Island factories because definite instructions for their closure had been given before the "Massacre". Stapel,[22] Hall,[23] and Harrison[24] are more accurate when they write that the Amboyna tragedy simply hastened, or rather, confirmed, a decision which had already been taken, but Hall includes Batavia as one of the settlements the English intended to leave *before* the "Massacre" and there is no evidence to support this belief. The search for an alternative headquarters to Batavia was not initiated until October, 1623,[25] by which time the news of the Amboyna executions was four months old in Batavia.

The long-term consequences of the Amboyna "Massacre" are usually represented in even more sweeping and ill-informed terms. Vlekke propounds the view that the Amboyna affair was simply a "dramatic epilogue" in the Anglo-Dutch struggle for the trade of the East Indies, because English activities in Indonesia were already at an end.[26] Furnivall, while conceding the fact that the English Company was able to establish itself at Bantam between 1628 and 1682, nevertheless contends that it never

20. B. H. M. Vlekke: *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia*, The Hague and Bandung, 1959, p. 141.
21. E. S. de Klerck: *History of the Netherlands East Indies*, I, Rotterdam, 1938, p. 233.
22. F. W. Stapel: *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indie*, III, Amsterdam, 1939, p. 162.
23. D. G. E. Hall: *A History of South East Asia*, p. 249.
24. B. Harrison: *South East Asia: A Short History*. London, 1957, p. 102.
25. John Gonning's Diary, Oct. 1623, Java Records, III, ii, f. 7.
26. Vlekke: *Nusantara*, p. 140.

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recovered the ground which it lost in 1623.[27] Harrison, who is clearly aware of the fact that English trade in South East Asia after 1623 was more extensive geographically than is generally imagined, feels compelled to describe this trade as limited and subject to Dutch supervision and permission.[28] The consensus of opinion, therefore, is that the Amboyna affair was disastrous for English commerce in Indonesia.

One of the reasons why so much significance has been attached to the Amboyna "Massacre" as the termination of English commercial ambitions in South East Asia has been a general ignorance of subsequent events; little has been known of the details of English activity in the East Indies after 1623, possibly because the superior attraction of the Indian mainland has proved as irresistible to the historian as it did to the Company itself. To assume, however, that because nothing of importance is known to have occurred in the East Indies in the later seventeenth century, nothing of importance can have taken place, is surely dangerous and fallacious reasoning. The neglect of the post-1623 period can also be explained on the basis of a premise which deserves more sympathy but has equally little foundation. This is the belief that profitable trade in the East Indies was synonymous with the trade in spices, i.e. cloves, mace and nutmeg; once the islands producing those commodities passed under Dutch political control, little else of commercial importance remained. Such an attitude would, of course, imply that pepper, which grew extensively in Java, Borneo and Sumatra, was a trivial investment, but it has been pointed out that as late as 1650 pepper constituted over 50% of the value of Dutch cargoes from Batavia to Europe.[29] Hence, even assuming that the Dutch monopoly of spices after 1623 was sufficiently effective to compel the English Company to place the bulk of its investment in pepper, this would still not mean that the English East Indies' trade was financially unimportant. If one could go further and prove that the closing of the English factories in the Spice Islands did not in fact involve the exclusion of the English Company from the spice trade for another twenty years, the traditional interpretation of the Amboyna "Massacre" would be largely untenable.

It has always been taken for granted that the volume of English trade with Indonesia after 1623 must have been negligible compared to the volume of the trade before the Amboyna tragedy. Nothing could be more erroneous. The number of English ships which left Java with cargoes for London in the fifteen trading seasons from 1602 to 1616 was 28, of which one ship was lost without trace and another was wrecked upon the coast of Brittany; these ships represented a combined tonnage of a little over 10,000 tons, of which about 660 tons was lost at sea. The comparative number of ships dispatched from Bantam to London during the nineteen possible trading seasons from 1659 to 1681 (1665-1667 and 1673 were war years when shipping was not sent out from England) was 87, of which four were lost. This second group of ships represented an aggre-

27. Furnivall: *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy*, Cambridge and New York, 1944, pp. 30-31.

28. Harrison: *South East Asia*, pp. 102-103, 106.

29. K. Glamann: *Dutch-Asiatic Trade, 1620-1740*, Copenhagen and The Hague, 1958, p. 13.

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gate of about 34,000 tons, of which some 1,500 tons was lost at sea.[30] Even when allowance is made for the slight difference in the number of trading seasons, it will be seen that the number of English ships engaged in the trade between Indonesia and England was two and half times greater in the later period than in 1602-1616, while the tonnage had increased almost three fold. Even during the less vigorous decades of the 1630's and 1640's an average of two or three ships left Bantam for London every year, while in times of unusual activity, as in 1648-1650, 14 ships were sent home in three seasons. It is true that the Company's trade in Indonesia was virtually at a standstill between 1652-1658, but this was the result of abnormal conditions caused by the first Anglo-Dutch war (1652-1654), the Dutch blockade of Bantam (1656-1659), and the disturbed political atmosphere of England under Cromwell. After the East India Company's charter was renewed by Cromwell in 1657 and again by the restored Charles II in 1661, the directors were quick to expand the volume of their trade with Indonesia to the highest level it ever reached in the seventeenth century.

It might be argued, however, that tonnage is not necessarily a measure of the value of cargoes. If the ships which returned to England from the East Indies before 1623 carried a considerable quantity of spices, while those which made the voyage thereafter were laden only with pepper and other less profitable commodities, surely the Amboyna Massacre would still have some commercial significance? Unfortunately, there is every evidence to suggest that the peak period of the English trade in cloves was in the 1630's and 1640's rather than in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. It must be remembered that English trade with the Spice Islands before 1620 could only be maintained by flouting the monopoly treaties which the Dutch Company claimed it had signed with the people of those regions. The number of English ships which performed this feat with any measure of success was five: the *Dragon* and *Ascension* in 1605; the *Consent* in 1607-1608; the *Hector* in 1609; and the *Expedition* in 1610. Of these vessels, we know only the quantity of cloves carried by the *Consent* and this will therefore have to be taken as typical: the amount was 112,000 lbs.[31] Other ships visited the Spice Islands later but they were apparently less fortunate. The *Darling*, for example, made a determined effort to trade at Amboyna and Ceram in 1613, but captain Best, who insisted on transferring the *Darling's* cloves to his ship *Dragon* for the homeward voyage, recorded that he had only 23,400 lbs. aboard.[32] The *Solomon* carried about 9,000 lbs. in her return cargo in the same year, while the *James* was reported to have about 19,000 lbs. in 1615.[33] The *Peppercorn* had to be content

30. These figures are based on a study of the Court Minutes, Letter Books and Factory Record (Java) in the India Office Library, London, for the period 1600-1682. Readers should consult Bal Krishna: *Commercial Relations between India and England, 1601-1757*, London, 1924, pp. 331-351, for additional information on this subject. The ships listed there as sailing to Bantam from London must be supplemented by others which came to Java from India with piecegoods and then returned direct to England.

31. I.O. Library, London. Court Minutes, 17 Feb, 1608/09, vol. 2, f. 111.

32. Sir. W. Foster: *The Voyage of Thomas Best to the East Indies, 1612-1614*, Hakluyt Society, London, 1934, p. 73.

33. F. C. Danvers: *Letters Received by the East India Company*, I, London, 1896, p. 289; W. Foster: *op. cit.*, II, 1897, p. 271.

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with a mere 23 cwt. in 1617.[34] By that year, the Dutch had begun to lose patience with English intrusions into the Spice Islands and the ships *Swan* and *Defence* were seized while trying to maintain an English foothold in the Bandas. Open war was commenced between the two nations in the East Indies in December, 1618, in the course of which the English lost seven ships, and would have lost even more had not the Treaty of Defence saved them.

One might have expected this depressing picture to improve when the English and Dutch companies joined in alliance in 1619, but this was clearly not the case. It is true that the English Company was henceforth entitled to one third of the spices produced in the Spices Islands, but this item had to be balanced against one third of the maintenance costs of the Dutch garrisons in that region. Coen estimated the sum owing from the English Company as its proportion of the charges in the Moluccas, the Bandas and Amboyna in 1621-1622 as f.283,294.[35] During the same period, the English had obtained:

"From the Moluccas about 20 bhaar cloves ..	lbs.	12,500
and from Amboyna		222,801.
	lbs.	235,301." [36]

President Fursland confirmed these weights in September and October, 1622,[37] with much grumbling. Presumably, it was these cloves which the *Palsgrave* brought to London in August, 1623, where they were estimated as worth £10,000 — £12,000; this cheerful note is deceptive when we remember that Coen's estimate of English costs exceeds £28,000 when converted from florins. The 242,000 lbs. of mace and nutmegs which the English obtained from the Bandas in 1621-1622 would presumably not pay for itself either. By the end of 1623 the situation was even worse. The *Exchange* and *Elizabeth* sailed from Batavia bound for London in December of that year: they carried between them about 1,658,000 lbs. of pepper, invoiced at over 132,000 reals of eight, or £33,000; the *Elizabeth* alone carried spices, which were reckoned at R11s. 1,739. 7d. or £435, obtained "from the Dutch as they cost in Moluccas, Banda, [and] Amboyna".[38] Such was the sorry state of the Company's trade in spices when the English factories in the Spice Islands were closed.

Can it be maintained seriously, therefore, that the English Company should have courted bankruptcy by continuing to operate under this ruinous system? It did not need the news of the Amboyna Massacre to convince Fursland that there was no place for the English in the Spice Islands; a glance at his accounts had already brought him to that conclusion. Once the East India Company severed its connection with the Dutch Company and recovered its independence of action, it became possible to consider alternative and more successful means of tapping the spice trade. In July, 1624, Thomas Brockedon, the new English president at Batavia, sent instructions to his chief factor at Macassar in Celebes that

34. I. O. Library. Court Minutes, 23 Sept., 1617, vol. 4, f. 8.
35. Colenbrander: *Coen: Bescheiden*, I, p. 786.
36. *Loc. cit.*
37. Furslands to Towerson, 19 Sept. and 18 Oct., 1622. I.O., Java Records, III, i, ff. 350, 445.
38. Batavia to London, 22 Dec., 1623. Java Records, III, ii, f. 204.

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he was to begin the purchase of the cloves which were smuggled into Macassar by Malay and Javanese vessels from Amboyna, Ceram and the Moluccas.[39] The English had been aware of the smuggling for some years, but they had hitherto regarded the Macassar factory, which was opened in 1613, simply as a source of rice and timber for eastward-bound ships; by 1624 there were no English ships sailing to the east of Celebes and the overheads of the factory were the same whichever function it served. The new policy of encouraging the smuggling trade proved a resounding success as early as 1629-1630, by which time the English had the additional advantage of having moved the seat of the presidency back from Batavia to Bantam. Indeed, 1630 was described by the council at Bantam as "their great year of cloves",[40] but even greater ones were to come.

It is as difficult to give complete statistics in the 1630's and 1640's as in the earlier years of the seventeenth century, but the prevailing impression is one of a remarkably flourishing English spice trade. We know, for example, that the total quantity of cloves imported into England from Bantam in 1633 was 157,114 lbs.[41] and that the two ships which brought home the result of the 1635 investment in Indonesia carried little short of 300,000 lbs. of cloves worth 125,000 reals.[42] This latter quantity represented one half of all the cloves smuggled into Macassar from Amboyna in 1635, against which only 161,000 lbs. had been brought from Amboyna to Dutch hands at Batavia that year.[43] The stock of cloves imported to London at the end of the 1636 trading season was almost as great as in 1635 (274,000 lbs. worth 114,000 reals), nor one must forget that cloves were a very profitable article of export from Bantam to the Coromandel Coast of India, Surat and the Persian Gulf. In December, 1638, for example, the *Thomas* landed almost 140,000 lbs. of cloves for sale at the English factory of Gombroon in Persia. Simultaneously, the Dutch directors in the Netherlands justified the policy of paying dividends to their stockholders in cloves, which they had adopted since 1635, by pointing to the large imports of that commodity which had reached England and Denmark.[44]

There can be no doubt that the import of cloves to European ports by non-Dutch ships was exceptionally large, because sales prices in London and Amsterdam tumbled sharply. This was partly the result of Dutch manipulation of the market, which brought the selling price of cloves in Amsterdam down from f.5.40 in 1630-1634 to f.2.41 in 1642, but it was also caused by a genuine glut in North West Europe. In the early years of English participation in the clove trade at Macassar, (1626-1634), garbled cloves usually sold in London at prices ranging between 10s. and 11s. per lb, while ungarbled cloves sold between 8s.6d. and 10s., dependent on the damage they had received during the voyage. By September, 1636, English ungarbled cloves were fetching only 6s. per lb. and they continued to fall until 1643, when at least 220 hogsheads of cloves were shipped

39. Batavia to Macassar, 22 July, 1624. *Loc. cit.*, f. 292.
40. Bantam to London, 6 Dec., 1630. O.C. 1326, f. 4.
41. I.O., Court Minutes, 20 Sept. & 18 Nov., 1633, vol. 14, ff, 88, 166.
42. Bantam to London, 31 Jan., 1635/36. O.C. 1552, f. 1.
43. Brouwer to Hon. XVII (the Dutch directors), 4 Jan., 1636 (N.S.), quoted in P.A. Tiele: *Bouwstoffen*, II, pp. 282-283.
44. K. Glamann: *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, p. 96.

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to Italy by the directors because the highest bid by the London grocers was only 3s.9d. per lb.

By 1643, however, the fat years were drawing to a close as far the English spice trade was concerned and only the lean years remained. The success or failure of the smuggling traffic between Amboyna or Ceram and Macassar depended in the last resort upon the spirit of independence, or rebelliousness as the Dutch would describe it, of the Ambonese. These people proved very troublesome to the Dutch throughout the 1630's and early 1640's, with only a brief period of quiescence in 1637-1638, when governor-general van Diemen visited Amboyna personally to negotiate a settlement. The kimelaha, or Asian governor, of Luhu in the neighbouring island of Ceram formented a fresh outbreak in 1639 but the tide of events gradually moved in favour of the Dutch. The sultanate of Macassar, with which the Dutch Company had been in a state of undeclared or open war from 1616 to 1637, had signed a peace treaty with Van Diemen in the latter year and did not give its traditional measure of support to the rebels in Ceram; Portuguese Malacca fell into Dutch hands in January, 1641, thus releasing a number of Dutch ships and soldiers for duty elsewhere; and an unofficial relief fleet of thirty-six ships which sailed from Macassar to Ceram in 1642 was completely destroyed by the vigorous Dutch commissioner, Anthony Caen. In June, 1643, twenty years after Towerson met his death, kimelaha Luhu, together with his mother, sister and half brother, was beheaded outside the gate of Fort Victoria and the rebellion was at end.[45] The flood of cloves to Macassar died away to a trickle[46] and the Dutch monopoly of the spice was never seriously challenged again. It is worth emphasizing that Dutch success in this respect was the consequence of the final assertion of effective political control by the Company over its Asian subjects, rather than the result of any Dutch action against its European rivals in Indonesia.

THE EFFECT ON THE PEPPER TRADE.

The effect of the Amboyna Massacre on the other branches of English trade in the East Indies remains to be considered. This aspect of the problem is quite as important as the fortunes of the spice trade, because it has already been indicated that pepper constituted over half the value of Dutch imports to Europe as late as 1650; in the case of the English Company this proportion presumably would be even higher. In order to obtain pepper the English Company cast its commercial net quite widely before 1623. Factories were established for this purpose at Bantam in western Java and at Acheh, Tiku, Jambi and Indragiri in Sumatra; other trading posts were opened at Macassar, as we have already seen, at Sukadana in eastern Borneo and at Japara in eastern Java, from which the principal exports were rice, diamonds and timber respectively. This extensive pattern of trade was modified to some extent before 1623 because of local developments and the financial

45. The best accounts of Dutch relations with Macassar and of the troubles in Amboyna at this period will be found in F. W. Stapel: *Het Bongaais Verdrag*, Groningen, 1922, and P. A. Tiele: *Bouwstoffen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlanders in den Maleischen Archipel*, The Hague, 1886-1895, 3 vols., vol. II and III.

46. Cartwright (Bantam) to London, 9 Dec., 1643, I.O., O.C. 1847, f. 4.

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stringency of the Company. Tiku, on the west coast of Sumatra, was closed in 1619 because the monopolistic control of sultan Iskander Muda (1607-1636) of Acheh over the pepper exports of that region made further trade unprofitable; the factory at Sukadana was scheduled for dissolution when it was destroyed in an attack on the town by the Javanese Sunan Agung of Mataram in April, 1622; the factory at Indragiri was burned down in the same year and was not re-opened. Bantam, the traditional English headquarters, was abandoned in 1619 because of the strained relations between the Company and the local sultan and for a few years Batavia became the seat of the English presidency in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Defence. These changes preceded the Amboyna Massacre and had no connection with it, nor was any further retrenchment considered necessary in the English factories outside the Spice Islands after news of the massacre reached Batavia in June, 1623. The factory at Jambi was retained until it was destroyed in a Malay attack on the town in 1679; Acheh was closed in 1631 or 1632, but was reopened in 1643-1649 and 1659; the Japara account books were closed for the last time in June, 1652; and Macassar fell to the Dutch in November, 1667. The pattern of English trade was therefore unchanged in its essentials for some years after 1623, with Bantam, to which the English returned in January, 1628, serving as a depot for the pepper of Jambi, the cloves of Macassar and the rice and timber of Japara.

There were occasional variations on this theme, which extended the geographical limits of English trade still further. A number of voyages were made to the west coast of Sumatra by English ships from Bantam or India in 1628 and 1631-1636. Abortive and not very successful English factories were opened in Palembang in 1633-1634 and 1636-1638(?), while a pepper factory which was established at Banjermasin in southern Borneo in 1635 continued its somewhat checkered existence until October, 1651. These were lesser ventures, more in the nature of experiments, whose continuation or abandonment was not crucial to the Company's prosperity. The only aspect of this peripheral trade about which the president at Bantam evinced any real enthusiasm was the voyages to the west coast of Sumatra, but the heavy loss of life incurred in 1646-1650, particularly at the new English factory of Silebar, led to their abandonment. This decision was easier to take because of the large imports of pepper from Silebar and the Lampongs to Bantam on Indonesian vessels throughout the 1640's, which was supplemented by the English shipments from Jambi and Banjermasin. The success of the Dutch Company in bringing the pepper trade of Palembang and the Achinese dominions in west Sumatra into its monopoly system in 1642 and 1649 evoked no serious alarm in English circles because ample alternative sources of supply existed.

The English Company's Indonesian trade came to a standstill in 1652-1658 and it might therefore be useful to draw a few general conclusions as to its value in the quarter of a century before the outbreak of the first Anglo-Dutch war (1652-1654). Between 1628, when Bantam became a presidency again, and 1653, 58 English ships left Bantam bound for London, representing slightly over 27,000 tons, of which 26,000 tons reached its destination. Until 1643 the cargoes of these ships included considerable quantities of cloves, as we have already seen; indeed, cloves formed 56% and 63% of the total value of the cargoes sent home in January and December, 1636, as against 27% and 29.7% for pepper.

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During the 1630's the cost price of cloves as shown in bills of lading was 2s.1d. per lb.; since we know the sales price in London, it is possible to calculate the profit on several shipments of cloves. The selling price in 1633, for example, was between 10s. and 11s. per lb. and hence the Company's profit on the 157,000 lbs. imported that year must have been at least £63,000; the profit on the large shipments of 1636 and 1637, when the selling price was 6s. and 5s.4d. respectively, would be about £58,000 and £44,500. The 50,223 lbs. of cloves on the Caesar in 1640 were invoiced at only 1s. 2½d. per lb., so that although the sales price of cloves in London was dropping because of the surplus on the market, the profit would still have been about 3s per lb. or £7,500 in all.

The value of the pepper imported to England from Indonesia is rather easier to estimate because much more information is available. Prior to 1640, the quantity of pepper imported annually must have been between 900,000 lbs. to 1,000,000 lbs. per annum, which would meet about one eighth of the European demand. The invoiced cost price of pepper during the 1630's and 1640's was slightly less than 3¾d. per lb. so that the cost of bringing one lb. of pepper to London would be about 7d. Between 1628-1643, the sales price of Sumatran pepper in London was steady between 1s. 4d. and 1s. 6d. per lb., so that an average of 1s. 5d., or a profit of 10d. per lb. can be assumed. On this basis, the East India Company would make a profit of some £40,000 per year on its pepper imported from Bantam, provided that no ships were lost at sea. Taking this as a static figure, the Company's profit on its cloves and pepper combined would have been £103,000 in 1633, £98,000 in 1636 and £84,500 in 1637. These figures, naturally, do not include wages for factors and seamen, maintenance of ships and factories and other charges, but it must be remembered that these would not be much more than £10,000 per annum and the the cargoes to England also included sugar, benzoin, ginger, saltpetre and Indian calicoes which would help to offset these expenses.

As the flow of cloves into English hands dwindled after 1642-1643, the Company's dependence on pepper to make up its homeward-bound cargoes increased. During the early 1640's the import of pepper to London probably crept up to 1,200,000 lbs. p.a. and in 1644 it was about 1,500,000 lbs., but the former figure is likely to be more typical. The selling price of pepper in London fell to little more than 1s.3d. during the 1640's, or a profit of 8d. per lb. The Company's gross profit on its annual import of pepper in the years 1641-1648 would therefore be £40,000 — £50,000, usually in the lower half of this range. It must be remembered, however, that there would not now be any large profit from cloves to supplement this figure, which would represent henceforth almost the total return of the Indonesian factories. In this respect, the tremendous effort made by the Bantam presidency in sending goods to England in 1648-1650 is not so impressive when translated into terms of hard cash. During those three seasons fourteen ships were dispatched to London carrying altogether about 7,000,000 lbs. of pepper; the only fleet known to have carried cloves was that of 1648, but it is significant to note, in comparison with the cargoes of 1636-1637, that those cloves represented only 8.4% of the total value of the cargoes that year, while pepper made up 70% of the value. Furthermore, the selling price for the 7,000,000 lbs. of pepper in 1649-1652 was only 1s. per lb., or a profit of 5d. per lb. The Company's profit on its pepper would therefore be about £146,000 spread

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over three years, or a little under £48,000 per year; to this latter figure must be added £7,500 — £8,000 profit on the cloves which reached London from Bantam in 1649. The profit made on this exceptionally large shipment of pepper in 1649-1652 was no worse than in the early 1640's, but the English directors, fearful of a further fall, tried to boost the selling price artificially by restricting the quantity of pepper to be sent home in 1652 and 1653 to 500 tons; the surplus at Bantam was to be redistributed to Persia, Surat and Madras.[47] Thus the *East India Merchant*, which was the last ship to leave Bantam before news of the Anglo-Dutch war reached there in 1653, carried only 480,000 lbs. of pepper to London, which, at the current selling price, would have made a profit of £12,000.

For the next six years, with the Company's monopoly being freely flouted by large numbers of English private or interloping ships, the Company's trade to Indonesia was virtually at a standstill; only three of the Company's ships visited Bantam or Jambi during that time. The New Joint Stock, which was formed in 1657 after Oliver Cromwell had at last confirmed the Company's monopoly, had therefore to build up the trade again almost from its foundations. During the first four trading seasons, 1659-1662, not more than 1,000 tons of shipping returned to London from Bantam each year, so that it is doubtful if more than 800,000 lbs.—1,000,000 lbs. of pepper was imported into London per annum during that time. The cost price of pepper in Bantam and Jambi was slightly below 2d. per lb. when the trade was resumed after the long lapse of the 1650's, but it rose to 2½d. per lb. in 1661 and showed little variation thereafter. The cost of bringing the pepper to London was estimated variously during the period 1658-1680 as 3d.-4d. per lb., so that 6d. per lb. would be a reasonable approximation of the cost of delivering pepper to the Company's London warehouses. The selling price of pepper in London was just over one shilling in April, 1660, but was down to 10¾d. in October, 1661, and stood at 11¼d. in August, 1662. The Company's profit on the pepper trade during those years would therefore total not much more than £20,000 — £25,000 per annum. Small quantities of ginger, sugar, benzoin, cloves and mace were being imported simultaneously, but they would have made a negligible difference to the total value of the cargoes. The last three commodities came from Macassar, where the English factory continued an existence which was becoming steadily more difficult and less remunerative. Dutch political control in that quarter of Indonesia was now much stronger, particularly since the defeat of Macassar at their hands in 1660, and the arms of Macassar's overseas trade were lopped off one by one until the kingdom itself was conquered in 1667.

English dependence upon pepper was therefore greater after 1660 than it had ever been, but the directors were prepared to make the best of this situation. In December, 1660, they resolved to supply their agent at Bantam with large quantities of Spanish silver reals so that he might attract as much pepper from Silebar and the Lampongs as possible, to supplement the traditional supply from Jambi.[48] From 1661 until May, 1676, the quota of pepper required by the Company annually from the East Indies was set at 2,000 tons, which, at the current rating of 16 cwt. to the ton, was equivalent to 3,584,000 lbs. This demand may not be very impres-

47. London to Bantam, March, 1651. Quoted by president Baker in a letter from Ft. St. George, Madras, to London, 11 Nov., 1653. I.O., O.C. 2348, ff. 1-2,
48. London to Bantam, 19 Dec. 1660. I.O., Letter Books, II, f. 360.

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sive to the modern reader, but it must be borne in mind that the total European consumption of pepper as late as 1688 was only 8,600,000 lbs.[49] and in the 1660's it probably barely reached 8,000,000 lbs. It is unlikely that more than one third of the directors' demand for pepper was satisfied before the outbreak of the second Anglo-Dutch war in 1665, because the tonnage of shipping sent from Bantam to London in 1663 and 1664 was only 1,300-1,400 tons. Nevertheless, the expectation, if not the fulfilment, was indicative of future policy.

With the resumption of peaceful conditions in 1668, the East India Company made its most vigorous effort to date in the pepper trade. The quota demanded from Indonesia remained at 3,580,000 lbs. but the tonnage of shipping returning to England was drastically increased. By way of example, let us look at the years 1669 and 1670. In the former year four ships returned to England with an aggregate tonnage of 1,465 tons. Their cargoes were invoiced at only £28,200, but we know that about 1,750,000 lbs. of pepper was put aboard at Bantam[50] and one of the ships, *Coast Frigate*, received most of her lading at Jambi.[51] The total shipment that year was probably slightly over 2 million lbs. In 1670 seven ships left Bantam bound for London, with an aggregate tonnage of 2,360 tons. From the statistics provided by the agent we know that 2,458,000 lbs. was dispatched or was ready for dispatch at the end of 1670, with two ships still awaiting their cargoes,[52] so that an estimate of 2,600,000 lbs. of pepper from Bantam alone that year would not be too generous. Furthermore, three of the seven ships received only a fraction of their pepper at Bantam, having taken in the bulk of their cargo at Jambi, which would probably contribute an additional seven thousand piculs or another 900,000 lbs. There is little doubt therefore that the pepper received by the Company from the East Indies by the fleet of 1670 approximately very closely to their demand of 3,584,000 lbs.

How did this large supply of pepper sell? The profit on the shipment of 1669, which sold at 9¾d.-10d. per lb., would be about £32,000-£33,000, while that on the pepper of 1670 would be close to £48,000, taking the sales price in 1671 as 9¼d-9½d. per lb. Since the number of ships sent from Bantam to London in 1671 was eight (3,000 tons), there is little reason to doubt that the feat of 1670 was repeated in the following year, particularly since the outbreak of the third Anglo-Dutch war in 1672 halted any fall in the selling price of pepper in London. Of the four ships to leave Bantam before the war spread to the East Indies in 1673, two carried over one million lbs., so that assuming a total export

49. K. Glamann: *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, p. 74. The comparable European demand in 1622 was 7 million lbs.

50. Dacres(Bantam) to London, 29 Dec., 1670. I.O., OC. 3531, f. 4.

51. As an indication of the capabilities of the Jambi factory, it might be noted that 1,102,000 lbs. of pepper were received into the English godown there between 31 Nov., 1664 and 1 Jan., 1668, when trade was slight because of the Anglo-Dutch war. The comparable quantity purchased in Bantam between 8 Oct., 1672, and 29 Nov., 1674 — again during a period of war — was 3,910,368 lbs. I.O., O.C. 3237 and Java Records, vol. 6A, Section 105, f. 7.

52. See f. n. 50.

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of two million lbs., the total profit on its sale would be approximately £34,000 that year.*

These figures were most encouraging, but they could only be maintained in face of the falling sales price of pepper after the third Anglo-Dutch war by increasing the quantity imported to London still further. The Danes, the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese were also supplying Europe with large quantities of pepper and by May, 1676, pepper would barely fetch 8¼d. per lb. in London. The English directors countered this trend by pushing the quota required from Bantam up to 3,000 tons or 5,376,000 lbs. per annum in 1676-1678, in the hope that the nett profit, even at reduced prices, would be greater. Simultaneously, the English Company sought to induce the sultan of Bantam, Ab'ul Fatah, to lower the customs charge of five reals per picul on pepper exported from Bantam, which made up almost one third of the cost price of that commodity. This request was crucial, because Palembang, Banjermasin and Indragiri were closed to the English by this time,[53] while Jambi, because of its interminable war with Johore (1666-1679), could provide no more than 400,000 lbs. per annum by 1676. Hence the English Company depended almost exclusively on Bantam until 1678 and completely so after 1679, when the English factory at Jambi was destroyed in a Malay attack. Unfortunately, sultan Ab'ul Fatah refused even to consider the lowering of the customs charge at Bantam and Arnold White, the agent who put the directors' request, was murdered by the Javanese in most suspicious circumstances in April, 1677.[54]

Confronted with this *impasse*, the English directors had no alternative but to reverse their policy of bringing home very large shipments of pepper. In 1679-1681, with European prices still tumbling, the directors cut their shipping to Bantam to 1,600 tons, as compared with the 3,380 tons of 1678. The quota of pepper required was reduced to one thousand tons or about 1,800,000 lbs., but the difficulty now was to sell the pepper once it was brought home. Only 4,850 bags of Indonesian pepper were sold in the London sales of 1678 at a profit of 2¼d. or less per lb., while 19,000 bags lay on the directors' hands.[55] By August 1680, the Company had 15,000 bags containing 4,590,000 lbs. of pepper unsold in its warehouses and the profit was only 1½d. per lb. on the small quantity

* Since writing the above two paragraphs, my attention has been drawn to Table 18 in Glamann, *op. cit.*, p. 84, which I inadvertently overlooked. The table presents the details of the English Company's imports of black pepper between 1669 and 1686 as recorded in the General Ledgers. Dr. Glamann's figures naturally will supercede the rough estimates I was able to make on the basis of the cargoes known to have been disaptched from Bantam. In making a comparison, it should be remembered that my estimate of the pepper carried by "the fleet of 1670", for example, must be equated with Dr. Glamann's imports *in* London for 1671.

53. The English Company made belated and not very energetic efforts to resume trade with Palembang, Indragiri and Banjermasin in 1661-1664, but governor-general Maetsuycker was too quick for it; Palembang signed a new monopoly agreement with the Dutch Company in June, 1662; Indragiri did so in October, 1664; and Banjermasin confirmed its former agreements in September, 1664. J. E. Heeres: *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum*, II, BTLV, 87, pp. 209-212, 285-287, 291-297.

54. I.O., OC. 4282 contains an account of the murder.

55. I.O., Letter Books, V, f. 540, VI, f. 1.

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which was sold.[56] In March, 1682, the price of pepper fell to its lowest point in the seventeenth century (6½d.-6¾d. per lb.), thus rendering the Bantam pepper trade a profitless one, if not actually a losing one. In the same month, the Dutch, taking advantage of a dynastic dispute in Bantam, invaded the sultanate and expelled the English and other rival traders.

Thus, sixty years after the Amboyna "Massacre", the English Company at last found itself on the wrong side of Sunda Strait, while the Dutch Company apparently was triumphant throughout the East Indies.

We have covered a considerable span of time since Towerson met his death, but it must now be apparent that, far from surrendering the commerce of Indonesia to the Dutch in 1623, the English Company maintained its trade there, firstly in cloves and later in pepper, until the one was lost and the second became profitless. Even after 1682, the English directors were not prepared to concede to the Dutch Company a monopoly of pepper comparable to that which it already enjoyed in spices. Instructions were sent out from London immediately after the loss of Bantam became known, emphasizing that a new headquarters must be found on the fringe of the East Indies from which pepper could be purchased.[57] By March, 1685, when the English finally settled at Bencoolen in south west Sumatra, pepper prices in London had risen again to 9½d. per lb., and they stayed at 11¼d. from March, 1687, to September, 1690. During the 1690's the selling price rose to 1s.5d., although 3d of this represented a new import duty. Nevertheless, prospects were much brighter, particularly since the cost price of pepper in Sumatra no longer included the five reals per picul customs charge which had been levied at Bantam and was therefore only 2d. per lb.

Fort York, Bencoolen, or Fort Marlborough as it later became, thus replaced Bantam as the English source of pepper in Indonesia. The English directors looked forward to resuming the commercial battle with the Dutch in the years ahead, even if the rivalry ultimately resulted in open hostilities between the two companies. In August, 1687, the directors commented that the "vulgar" [i.e. the "man in the street" of Stuart England] might see little purpose in a contest with the Dutch for pepper, because each family used but little of that commodity; 'but at the bottom" warned the directors, "it will prove a warr for the Dominion of the British [i.e. European] as well as the Indian Seas",[58] because if the Dutch achieved a complete monopoly of pepper, comparable to that of spices, this would enable them to maintain a great and threatening navy in Europe. With this solemn thought, the English Company went forward into the eighteenth century, whence we cannot follow them because of our present ignorance of the records relating to the East Indies.

56. Company to Bantam, 25 Aug., 1680. I.O., Letter Books, VI, f. 225.
57. The references to a possible site for a new headquarters are very numerous. Acheh, Kedah, Johore, Indragiri, Silebar, Lampong, and Jambi were seriously considered for this role in October-November, 1683. See: London to Madras, 19 Oct., 1683, and London to Surat, 16 Nov., 1683. I.O., Letter Books, VII, ff. 223E-223F.6, F.9-10; also f.223-L9. The directors assumed at first that Ord and Cawley, who had been dispatched from Madras, would build a fort at Priaman and sent two companies of soldiers there in November, 1685, on the *Herbert* and *Royal James*, but later heard that Bencoolen had been selected. Court Minutes, vol. 34, ff. 127-129, 154.
58. London to Bombay, 3 Aug., 1687. Letter Books, VIII, f. 321.

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One may, however, catch one or two glimpses of the future in Dr. Glamman's history of the Dutch pepper trade prior to 1740. In 1728 the Honourable XVII, or directors, of the Dutch Company complained that the English were obtaining larger quantities of pepper from Palembang than had previously been the case, while in 1735 the Dutch pepper trade at Jambi was said to be suffering from similar competition.[59] The reason for this situation was that pepper was cultivated in the hill districts of central Sumatra, the Minangkabau, and could be brought down with equal facility to the east or west coasts of the island. In the 1730's a great deal of this pepper was being carried to Bencoolen and it is significant that the Honourable XVII stated in 1736 that the English alone were importing as much pepper to Europe as was brought into Batavia annually from all the Dutch-controlled pepper districts of Indonesia.[60] Whether these instances were typical of the relative positions of the Dutch and English companies in the pepper trade throughout the eighteenth century is a matter for future researchers to determine.

59. K. Glamann: *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, pp. 89-90.
60. Glamann, p. 90.

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