

# Galle Two Centuries Ago

Memoir by Jacob de Jong, Commandeur of Galle, for his successor  
18th May, 1748.

## Introduction.

ONE of the characteristic features of the Dutch administration of Ceylon was the orderly and methodical manner in which they maintained and recorded their transactions of business, both commercial as well as political. The precision and care with which the proceedings of the respective Political Councils both at the central administration in Colombo and at the subordinate Commandements of Jaffna and Galle were recorded, and the regularity with which inventories of goods and belongings of the Dutch East India Company were prepared and checked prior to their handing over by the various Governors and Commandeurs to their successors in office, with carefully compiled memoirs on the state of their respective administrative charges, are apparent in the series of records left over by them.

These records are a mine of information for a detailed study of the history of the Dutch period in Ceylon. One important section of these records is the series of memoirs referred to above. Most of the memoirs left over by Governors have already been translated and published from time to time, but those of the Commandeurs and Chief Officers of the subordinate districts, which naturally take second place in this series, have not hitherto received similar attention, with the exception of three on the Jaffna Commandement.<sup>1</sup>

This memoir is one dealing with the state of the Commandement of Galle at the time when it was handed over by the retiring Commandeur Jacob de Jong to his successor in 1748, exactly two centuries ago.

Jacob de Jong was born at Mannar, and was the son of Jacob de Jong of ter Veer and Johanna Pasque de Chavonnes of Hulst. He was married four times: (1) to Elizabeth Mooyaart,<sup>2</sup> a sister of the Hon. Anthony Mooyaart, Commandeur of Jaffna, (2) to Maria Sophia Ravens of Jaffna,<sup>3</sup> (3) to Antonia

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1. Memoirs by the Commandeurs of Jaffna, Anthonie Pavilioen (1665), Hendrick Zwaarddecroon (1697) and Anthony Mooyaart (1766); translated and published by Miss Sophia Pieters. Text in Government Archives, Dutch records Nos. 2671, 2469 and 2706 respectively.

2. She died suddenly at Galle in October, 1747 just prior to her husband's promotion to the post of Commandeur of Jaffna. Her gravestone may be seen in the Dutch Reformed Church at Galle, with the arms of the two families impaled. See *Tombstones and Monuments* by J. P. Lewis, p. 162.

3. *Op. cit.*, p. 220.

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van Pelt<sup>3</sup> and (4) to Cornelia Schokman. He began his career in the lower grades of the Company's service, and after many years of wide experience gained in a variety of appointments was promoted to the office of Commandeur of Galle in 1742, which he administered for a period of over five years until his further promotion as Commandeur of Jaffna, when he handed over to his successor Gerrard Joan Vreeland<sup>4</sup> on the 18th of May, 1748. He served also as Special Commissioner at the Pearl Fishery in 1722 and as Dutch Ambassador to the Court of Kandy in 1736, and had the honour of acting as Governor of Ceylon during an interregnum in that office.

The Dutch Commandement of Galle extended from the Benteṭa river on the west southwards as far as the Valavē on the east, and consisted of a large part of the Galle, Valallāviṭṭi, Vāligam, Morovak and Dolosdas Kōralēs, including the fertile fields of the "Baygams and the Girreways." It was well fortified with a series of good forts and natural barriers, and possessed an excellent natural harbour in the bay of Galle where the Company's vessels were well protected both from the strong monsoon winds and from enemy action in time of war. It was naturally the rendezvous for the "return fleets" from Ceylon to Holland, the Cape and Batavia, and therefore the most important port of call of the Dutch in Ceylon.<sup>5</sup>

The town and fort of Galle was under the direct supervision of the Commandeur and Council. The two subordinate interior districts of the Galle Kōralē and the Matara Disāvany<sup>6</sup> were directly administered by the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē and the Disāva of Matara respectively, posts which were filled by Dutch officials of high rank in the Company's service, subject to the general control of the Commandeur and Council at Galle.

The memoir compiled by Commandeur de Jong deals with the various branches of the Company's interests in the Commandement of Galle, including the Matara Disāvany, chiefly in the matter of its revenue and commerce, paragraph by paragraph under the several subjects referred to. They may be classified under four general heads, *viz.* commerce and trade, land revenues, naval and military matters and matters of internal administration.

Firstly, under matters of commerce and trade, he deals, as may naturally be expected, with the two principal items of export trade, *viz.* cinnamon and arecanut.

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4. Geraard Johan Vreeland, Commandeur of Galle 1748-1751, died as Governor of Ceylon at Colombo on 26 February, 1752. See *op. cit.*, p. 111.

5. An interesting account of "Old Galle" in a lecture delivered by the late F. H. de Vos has been published in the Dutch Burgher Union Journal of June, 1908: Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 120.

6. Dutch term for a district administered by a Disava.

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The Galle Commandement provided a rich harvest in these two commodities, and as the fleets carrying the return cargoes from Ceylon to Holland and the Cape and the other Dutch possessions in the East assembled here for loading prior to departure, the preliminary arrangements necessary for the collection and storage of these and other commodities of export take up a good deal of the memoir. Besides the details of procedure for getting ready the various articles of merchandise, much stress is laid on the need for guarding against smuggling, which was obviously one of the chief menaces to the trade of the Dutch. The difficulty of checking this menace seems to have been enhanced by the subtle and dishonest practices of some of the high-ranking Dutch officials themselves, who, to use the words of Governor Becker in reference to the arecanut trade at Galle "filled their own pockets by buying up and privately selling a large quantity of these nuts, which quite supplied the demand of the vessels arriving there" resulting in a poor sale of the same by the Company who were "obliged to consign yearly a large quantity of spoil and stale nuts to the fire."<sup>7</sup> The importance of the trade in these two commodities is further reflected in the special instructions which necessitated their being packed and loaded in the presence of two special commissioners, officers of high rank in the Company's service, besides the warehousekeepers and ships' officers, who were bound by special oaths of allegiance to honour and duty. These stringent measures for the prevention of smuggling and other evils were introduced by Governor Becker as the result of his personal experience of the many commercial "malpractices" which existed at the time, which, as he records in his memoir to his successor, impelled him to use every endeavour "to discover the real state of affairs and . . . expose all the fraud and to lift the veil from the subtle mysteries presented before the eyes of rulers by dishonest servants."<sup>8</sup>

In addition to cinnamon and arecanut, the other commodities dealt with under the head of trade are pepper, cardamoms, coffee, sapanwood,<sup>9</sup> blood-coral, Maldivian cowries,<sup>10</sup> straw-mats, lime, tiles, paving stones and coconut oil, the four last-mentioned being chiefly for local requirements in Colombo and the other districts of Ceylon, and the straw-mats being specially made for export to Batavia. Coffee, sapanwood and blood-coral apparently did not find such a ready market in Holland on account of their inferiority to the

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7. Memoir of Governor Hendrick Becker for his successor (1716); translation by Mrs. Sophia Anthonisz, p. 19. Text in Government Archives, Dutch records No. 2682.

8. *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

9. A red dye wood of the East: the *bukham* of the Arabs and the Brazil wood of mediaeval commerce (Ceylon sandalwood). See *Hobson Jobson* by Yule and Burnell.

10. Small white shells current as money in parts of South Asia and of Africa. See *Hobson Jobson* by Yule and Burnell.

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samples received from other sources, and their export was either totally discouraged or curtailed.

Secondly, the subject of land revenues is dealt with under two sub-divisions, *viz.* tithes in kind and money tithes. The former were derived chiefly from the tithes of paddy and arecanut received in respect of the many fields and gardens in the Galle Kōralē and the Matara Disāvany, including the fertile fields of the "Girreways and Baygams." One of the chief items recommended for the attention of his successor is the enforcement of a strict and regular collection of these tithes, for which the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē and the Disāva of Matara were responsible in their respective districts, as well as the speeding up of payment of arrears of the same, which amounted at the time to 3,397 parras<sup>11</sup> and 6 mediets<sup>12</sup> in the case of paddy.

The money tithes were also a form of land revenue derived from the farming out of the rights of collecting certain fixed taxes to the highest individual bidder.

The right of cutting and transporting timber was a monopoly of the Company, who issued special licences to private individuals according to circumstances. Here again a diligent watch against smuggling is recommended.

Thirdly, the memoir contains many recommendations in regard to naval and military matters. Strict measures are recommended against the indiscriminate admission of foreign ships and vessels into the harbour of Galle, particularly those belonging to the English and the French who were the rivals of the Dutch in trade. One of the reasons for this precaution may well be the risk of danger to the Company's vessels during anchorage inside the harbour in times of stormy weather caused by the inferiority of the cables of foreign ships referred to by Governor Becker in his memoir.<sup>13</sup> Precautions are also recommended against the admission of foreigners ashore. Among other matters recommended for attention under this head are the proper care and due repair of fortification works, the storing of a sufficient supply of provisions for the victualling of ships and of gunpowder to be supplied to the ships of the "return fleets," which were generally due to leave Galle harbour in the month of January, not forgetting also the difficulties of obtaining the necessary labour for the unloading and loading of their cargoes.

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11. *Parra*: a grain measure equal to about 24 seers or three-quarters of a bushel, being one-eighth of an *amunam*. See also note 28.

12. Portuguese *medida* = a measure. A grain measure equal to about 1½ seers, being one-twentieth of a *parra*. See also note 28.

13. Memoir of Governor Hendrick Becker for his successor (1716); translation by Mrs. Sophia Anthonisz, p. 18.



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Special reference is made to the completion of the molework and battery on the hill of Unawaṭuna,<sup>14</sup> which, according to Governor Becker, was provided with a tank or reservoir of fresh water from the neighbouring hills, which "could be obtained for the use of vessels without much loss of time or trouble."<sup>15</sup>

One other matter of importance under this head is the reference to the shipbuilding and carpenters' yards and the smithy and armoury, from which it would appear that at that time Galle, besides being an important port, was also a naval and military arsenal, and had quite an up-to-date shipyard and dock for the building and repair of shallops and barges and other vessels.

Fourthly, the other items referred to in the memoir which may be classified under the last head of internal administration, are such matters as the maintenance of the tombo and garden registration, the administration of the Landraad<sup>16</sup> and the Court of Justice, the ecclesiastical and educational establishments, and native affairs. The importance of ensuring the co-operation of the native chiefs for the good progress of the Company's affairs in general, though perhaps somewhat veiled by the pretence in the preceding clause that they are "lazy and indolent folk," is apparent from the remark made under this head that "they must be constantly stimulated and held to their respective obligations in order that the services which they have to render to the Lord of the Land may be duly performed by them."

It was perhaps the over-enthusiasm of the Dutch officials in the carrying out of these recommendations that led to the later disturbances in the Matara and Galle districts, which culminated in the war with Kandy and the treaty of 1766.

The memoir ends with a statement of the balances of cash in the Treasury chest and stocks of grain in the warehouses, and an inventory of the manpower and vessels belonging to the Commandement, with an amplification or addition in the nature of a post-script, and an appendix showing the list of arrears due on account of paddy tithes, all of which are typical of the thoroughness and uniformity of procedure of the Dutch administration in Ceylon.

S. A. W. MOTTAU

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14. The present "Watering-point" at Galle.

15. Memoir of Governor Hendrick Becker for his successor (1716); translation by Mrs. Sophia Anthonisz, p. 18.

16. The Land Court established by the Dutch: See *Catalogue of the Archives of the Dutch Central Government of Coastal Ceylon* by Miss M. W. Jurriaanse, pp. 308 sq.

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**Memoir<sup>17</sup> of matters which have to be attended to, executed and observed in this Commandement in terms of the orders prescribed, left by the undersigned Commandeur for his successor Gerrard Joan Vreeland, to serve as a guide to His Honour in his administration of the Company's affairs as Director of this Commandement.**

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Whereas it has pleased Their Honours the Supreme Government of India at Batavia, according to their esteemed letter to Ceylon of the 29th September last, graciously to relieve me of this Commandement which I have now for quite six years governed and administered, if I may venture to say so, to the satisfaction of my superiors—it having always been my endeavour to observe and comply strictly with the relevant orders—and to appoint me as Commandeur of Jaffna ;

And whereas they have elected Your Honour as my successor to administer the affairs of this place as Director ;

I thought it might be as well, in handing over to you today the government of this place with all its dependencies with a proper inventory, in terms of the order of the Noble and Right Honourable Councillor-ordinary of Netherlands-India and Governor of Ceylon Julius Valentein Stein van Gollenesse and the Council at Colombo, to deliver to Your Honour at the same time this document, in which I shall briefly describe, according to my humble opinion, the principal matters which require attention and encouragement in the service of our Lords Superior.<sup>18</sup>

And to begin with in this my intention I shall firstly state here for Your Honour's information that :

The CINNAMON peeled and delivered in the Galle and Matara districts must be collected in time by sending out the necessary vessels, so that they may be conveyed here at the due time and delivered into the warehouse, and after prior careful inspection by special commissioners, usually consisting of an officer of the Military and the Chief Surgeon of this Commandement, be packed in bales and made ready for despatch to the Fatherland, the Cape and Batavia. As regards the Galle Kōralē, it is the special duty of the Superintendent to have the necessary sheds erected for the collection and storage of this scented bark everywhere along the river banks, and also to despatch through-

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17. Text in Government Archives, Dutch records Nos. 2697 and 2698. There is a draft of a free translation of this memoir by Miss Sophia Pieters (in mss.) in the Government Archives. The paragraphing and punctuation in the text have been followed in the translation as far as possible.

18. The Directors of the Dutch East India Company in Holland or the "Lords Seventeen."

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out the country without fail the catteponels<sup>19</sup> and other small vessels in proper time for the transport of the same, to which I duly recommend Your Honour's attention; and, to no less a degree, concerning

The ARECANUT, which the cultivators in this and the Matara districts are bound to bring annually and deliver into the Company's warehouses here, at Belligam,<sup>20</sup> Gandura<sup>21</sup> and several other places. And, in order to ensure a speedy and full delivery, the necessary mandate olas must be issued throughout the country at the proper time, *viz.* in the month of May, strictly enjoining the inhabitants, one and all of them, to bring and deliver individually and severally their due tithes with the outstanding arrears. And Your Honour must use every possible and practicable means to see especially that the arrears due from the cultivators, which you will find specified in the compendium<sup>22</sup> for the last financial year, are not increased but rather liquidated as far as possible. I can assure Your Honour that during my administration I have endeavoured to use every conceivable means in my power to effect this, but I have not, I regret to say, been able to achieve or realise any result in spite of my steady efforts and constant zeal in this respect, because the native, as Your Honour is no doubt aware, apart from his natural laziness and indolence, always makes some sort of excuse or other. I hope, however, that Your Honour will be more successful in this respect, and that during your administration there will be a full delivery of the aforesaid nuts, and that the arrears due from cultivators will be duly liquidated, and more so that the trade in these nuts may be carried on with greater profit to the Honourable Company than it has been during the past few years, which was due both to the want of customers and also particularly of money, for the lack of which the coast-traders were obliged to apply to the esteemed Ceylon Government<sup>23</sup> to trade in arecanut on credit on the furnishing of sufficient security, which request was allowed by Their Honours' letter dated 26th August, 1747, on the condition that the said traders furnish therefor such mortgages and bonds as might be considered to be most secure for the Honourable Company.

And while commenting on this trade, it behoves me also to remind Your Honour, as I myself have always diligently done, to use every possible endeavour in your power to check all smuggling in this respect, and to publish and

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19. Padda boats.

20. Weligama.

21. Gandara.

22. The annual report on the administration of the Galle commandement sent to the Governor and Council in Colombo for compiling their annual report to the Directors in Holland on the Company's affairs in Ceylon. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 289.

23. The Governor and Council at Colombo.

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proclaim in due time the relevant placcaats<sup>24</sup> in this connection, which are republished annually as a rule in the months of May or June at the latest in Dutch, Sinhalese and Malabar,<sup>25</sup> prescribing such matters as the penalties imposed as well as the dates fixed for the departure of the coasting vessels scheduled to leave at the end of August or by the 8th of September at the latest. These vessels are then laden once a year in the presence of Honourable members of the Judiciary and the Fiscal,<sup>26</sup> and sent out with one of the Company's vessels acting as a cruising convoy for the same from here to Batticaloa, so that none but the Honourable Company may enjoy the profits of the arecanut trade.

Your Honour must also further stimulate the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē, whose special duty it is to promote

The cultivation of PEPPER, CARDAMOMS and COFFEE, and also the growing of the indigenous SAPANWOOD tree, as these articles are all required for the return cargo to the Fatherland, so that thus a good collection of the two former may be made available early for despatch to the Netherlands, the more so as the two latter, especially coffee, are not so promising at present since our Lords Superior in the Netherlands in Their Right Honourables' general requisition for return cargo for the year 1748, according to the extract dated 7th August, 1747 sent from Batavia to our Head Office in Ceylon and preserved in the Trade Office here for purposes of information as regards this Commandement, inform us that the samples of Ceylon sapanwood sent were found to be inferior in quality to that of Siam and Bima<sup>27</sup> and should be much heavier and more solid like the Siamese wood, and as regards coffee, that its cultivation should be reduced as much as possible, except that which has to be brought in and delivered from the Matara district.

Since Your Honour is as fully aware of these circumstances as myself, I shall now proceed further to say that

The PADDY TITHES in the Galle Kōralē and part of the Walallawiti Kōralē, apart from the "Girreways and Baygams," are annually farmed out here, as in Matara. Those of the Galle Kōralē were farmed out last year to

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24. Placards containing orders, notices, etc., proclaimed by means of posting up in public places.

25. Tamil.

26. The Fiscal in Dutch times was a Superintendent of Police, Justice of the Peace and Public Prosecutor in criminal cases, corresponding to the modern Attorney General.

27. A seaport town of the Dutch East Indies, capital of the state of the same name, in the island Sumbawa, east of Java.

Simon Alwis Wickremesinge Appu for 1,000 amunams<sup>28</sup> of paddy, and those of the Walallawiti Kōralē quite recently by sending our special commissioners to Bentota as there were no local bidders, and it was taken over by the Mudaliyar residing there named Salomon Alwis for 180 amunams. As compared with the previous year, the former yields 98 amunams more, and the Honourable Company has also gained on the latter a small increase of 2½ amunams. Your Honour should therefore see that the tithes thus farmed out, as well as the 33¼ amunams of paddy from the village Haupe Mawella which was cancelled and regranted and recently farmed out to the writer Manuel De Silve, and the arrears still outstanding from the farmers for the last financial year<sup>29</sup> amounting in all to 3,397 parras and 6 mediets, are duly delivered and liquidated by them in full. This is the duty of the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē, who, as Land Regent, is specially responsible for the collection of the same, and has, according to his report in his letter of 19th February this year, undertaken to see that the old arrears of paddy dues from the village chiefs amounting to 1,661½ parras are collected more or less in full by the end of August next, as far as possible in grain, and the remainder in cash at the rate of 12 Dutch stivers<sup>30</sup> the parra, as approved in the esteemed letter from Colombo dated the 27th March.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, in order to see that he keeps to his promise, he should be repeatedly urged and reminded of it, so that a reasonable liquidation of the same may be assured and further arrears or accumulation of arrears avoided. Likewise, it is the duty of the aforesaid Superintendent to see that

The LAND REVENUES or MONEY TITHES, which are also farmed out annually and were leased out by Waytenaden Chitty for 658 rix-dollars at the end of August last, are rendered in full and paid into the Company's Treasury without letting it fall into any arrears. In doing so, care must be taken to see that the money tithes of the village Haupe Mawella are not allowed to be included in the foros<sup>32</sup> as was done on the last occasion, but farmed out like the other personal taxes of pattebendi<sup>33</sup>, deccum<sup>34</sup>, etc. Then, as regards

28. *Amunam*: a grain measure equal to about 6 bushels. According to a resolution of the Dutch Political Council dated 3rd October, 1758: 1 *amunam* = 8 *parras* or 4 *pelas* = 40 *kurunies* = 160 *mediets*. See Government Archives, Dutch records, No. 126. See also note 56.

29. The financial year of the Dutch East India Company in Ceylon was from September to August.

30. 1 rix-dollar = 48 heavy or 60 light stivers (Dutch): its value varied from time to time, being approximately equivalent to 1s. 6d. or 1 rupee.

31. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 303.

32. From Portuguese *foro* = a quit-rent.

33. *Patabenda*: in a service village, a superior class of tenants doing nominal service. See Codrington's *Glossary of native, foreign and anglicised words*. See also "Pattangatyn" in note 68.

34. "Appearance": a present given to a Chief or Lord by his subordinate on his annual appearance.

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The TIMBER required and ordered annually for use both in this Commandement as well as, in particular, for our capital of Colombo, I must state here, for Your Honour's information, that as far as the Galle Kōralē is concerned this too is the duty of the said Superintendent, who should do his best to see that good and sufficient supplies of it are collected in time, for which the Overseer of that work, Muhandiram Jacobus van Cleeff, should be sent out into the country in good time to have this timber cut, hauled up, transported and delivered here by his men, without fail or neglect on his part. It is also the special duty of the said Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē to keep a constant watch against the clandestine transport of any timber, be it ever so trifling and little, as no one is licensed or permitted to enter the forests for cutting or transporting timber without the prior knowledge of the authorities. And since Your Honour will be well acquainted with these matters through your experience in the Matara Disavany, I will now proceed briefly to say further in regard to

The MALDIVIAN COWRIES, that these too should be obtained in fairly large quantities by kind and friendly treatment of the Maldivians, as these shells are also needed for the return cargo, or rather as under-cargo for the ships returning to the Netherlands, according to orders recently received from Their Right Honourables at Batavia in their esteemed letter of the 29th September<sup>35</sup> last year, to which, in order to be brief, I shall refer Your Honour, and proceed further to state that

The GUNPOWDER MILL in this city must, as far as possible, be always kept reasonably at work without a break, as this is the express desire and order of the esteemed Ceylon Government, to whom a monthly report must also be submitted of the newly-made gunpowder and of the stocks in hand, which Your Honour must therefore bear in mind, and not fail to see too that the magazines for the said gunpowder, i.e. the gunpowder cellars in this city, are maintained in good condition, in compliance with the orders of Their Right Honourables contained in an extract from the Batavian resolutions of the 20th December, 1746.<sup>36</sup> The quantity of gunpowder at present in stock amounts to 61,192 lbs.

As regards the CHURCHES and SCHOOLS in the Galle and Matara districts, I would refer to last year's compendium<sup>37</sup> and the recent survey, a report of which, in regard to the Galle Kōralē, may be seen at the Secretariat. The former of these also separately indicates the number of Christians. I shall

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35. Extract in Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 1627, p. 319.

36. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 1627, p. 312.

37. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 289.

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only mention here, for Your Honour's information, that they must be visited annually by the clergyman and the Scholarch<sup>38</sup> after having applied for and obtained the prior sanction of the esteemed Ceylon Government to do so. Similarly, in regard to

FOREIGN SHIPS arriving at this fortress, which must not be allowed to enter within its bay except with the prior sanction of the said Government, in terms of the order contained in the esteemed letter from Batavia to Ceylon dated the 24th October, 1746,<sup>39</sup> but they should be allowed to anchor outside the harbour here, particularly in the case of the English who are our allies, and thereafter come ashore in their barges after obtaining proper passports in order that they may make known their wishes, a report of which must then be made to Colombo for their instructions. In terms of the strict injunctions of our Lords and Masters, however, particular care should be taken with the arrival of such foreigners to keep a watchful eye on them to prevent malpractices, and the relevant placcaats duly published and posted up on board at the first opportunity on their arrival. As regards the French, and the procedure which, in the present circumstances, should be observed concerning them, I would refer to the successive series of secret letters from Colombo and the local resolutions on them, which may be referred to in the Secretariat for further details : also the orders regarding the procedure to be followed in the paying of compliments on the arrival of ships belonging to the English who are our allies, which are contained in a copy of a letter dated the 6th May, 1745 sent from Batavia to Trincomalee and transmitted here from Colombo for our information on the 6th of July<sup>40</sup> following. I would also observe that

The SHIPBUILDING and CARPENTERS' YARDS as well as the SMITHY and the ARMOURY must be kept regularly at work, so that the duties which they have to perform daily for the Company may be regularly and fully executed. And since, in regard to the former, *viz.* the Shipbuilding yard, I regret to say, the new shallop "Wilhelmina Johanna" is still uncompleted for the want of the necessary iron, the last quantity supplied from Colombo in various assortments in the ship "Het Hoff van Delft"<sup>41</sup> being insufficient, Your Honour will have to do your best to see this work completed. The Superintendent of Shipbuilding and Carpentry, Abraham Anthonisz, in his last report stated at the time that all that he required was only six or seven thousand pounds more for the said shallop, as may be seen in our letter to

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38. A member of the *Scholarchale vergadering* or School Board of the Dutch.

39. Should be "24th October, 1744": see extract in Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 1627, p. 303.

40. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 263.

41. The garden (or court) of Delft.

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Colombo of the 4th March<sup>42</sup> last. For the lack of this material, the 44 newly-built gun-carriages too still remain unfitted here, and we have made several representations and requests to Colombo regarding our need of it in order to secure an early supply for completing the said shallop and launching it out as early as possible, and for fitting up at the first opportunity the gun-carriages referred to above, especially in view of the order that a few sets of these should be regularly made. I can assure Your Honour that I have done all in my power to promote this work, and to no less a degree to see that

The FORTIFICATION WORKS of this fort are provided with the necessary requirements and maintained in a good state of defence. As regards their condition, I would refer, for further details, to the recent report by the special commissioners the Hon. Messrs. Marten Rein and Pierre De Salva, embodied in the resolutions passed by the Political Council here on the 9th February<sup>43</sup> last. I would further recommend Your Honour to attend to the completion of the other improvements yet to be effected, which were authorised by letter of the 27th March,<sup>44</sup> and which could not yet be completed owing to the lack of various materials ; and also to see that

The Honourable Company's BUILDINGS, both within and outside this city, are similarly maintained as far as possible in good condition, so that they may not fall into decay. For this the masons should be kept daily at their tasks, taking care however, in terms of the special order contained in the esteemed letter from Colombo dated 13th December last year, that no important or additional repairs in this or in the Matara district be undertaken except with the express knowledge and approval of the esteemed Government of Ceylon. Then, as regards

The PIER<sup>45</sup> being constructed here on the hill of Unawatuna under the supervision of the Captain and Master Attendant the Hon. Steven Bade, I would inform Your Honour that I have done everything possible in my power to comply with the orders to promote the good progress of this work, particularly in obtaining the necessary labourers, as Your Honour must also be aware ; but though these labourers have hitherto been obtained for this work not without a great deal of trouble, Your Honour should not be discouraged in the same, but likewise do your best to expedite and complete the said mole-work, the necessary tools for which have already been made and supplied as far as possible, except of course those which could not be manufactured and supplied for the want of iron.

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42. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 302.

43. Missing in the series.

44. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 303.

45. Literally "a little mole-work."



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The same applies to the BATTERY which the esteemed Ceylon Government has ordered to be erected on the aforesaid hill of Unawatuna for preventing foreign vessels from entering the bay without permission, for it has been possible to undertake or accomplish but little or nothing yet in this respect, also for the want of the necessary workmen, who could not be obtained notwithstanding all my efforts, which are apparent in the letters of requisition sent from time to time to Matara and to the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē. We have therefore decided recently to report the same to the said Government in a secret letter on the 22nd of March,<sup>46</sup> which I would recommend for Your Honour's further perusal, both in regard to this matter as well as on the constitution of this place and its garrison, and at the same time state for Your Honour's information in this respect, not only that the completion of the said battery here has been entrusted to the Hon. Messrs. Rein and Bade to be expedited as far as possible under their supervision, but also that

The THRESHING-MILL in this city has recently been sold by public auction in compliance with an order from Colombo, and was bought by the burgher Jan Pietersz for 241 rix-dollars. Since it was a condition of this sale that the said machine with its accessories shall be removed within a period of 3 months along with its stone foundation, it must be seen to that this has been properly carried out and completed. Similarly

The LANDRAAD and the TOMBO as well as the GARDEN REGISTRATION here should be properly carried out without the slightest neglect. The successive orders received from Colombo concerning these institutions have already been issued for their information and observance in the form of certified copies, and Your Honour is no doubt aware of them too, as well as of the recommendations of the Hon. the Ceylon Government that the said tombo and garden registrations should be diligently carried out. So I shall now pass on to the subject of

NATIVE AFFAIRS, and, as regards the situation and condition of the Galle Kōralē as well as the services performed in it, I would refer in short to what has been written and described at length and in detail in the Memoir<sup>47</sup> left by the former Superintendent Robert Cornelis Bagilet for his successor the present Superintendent Johem Christiaen Salder. Likewise, with regard to

The NATIVE CHIEFS here, I shall state, solely for Your Honour's information, that being very lazy and indolent folk, they must be constantly stimulated and held to their respective obligations in order that the services which they have to render to the Lord of the Land may be duly performed by

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46. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. 1902D.

47. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Nos. 2692 and 2693.

## GALLE TWO CENTURIES AGO

them. Those of them who are negligent should not be excused but handed over for due and condign punishment as an example to all other fellows of their ilk, whom Your Honour should be able by experience to discern and pick out. Passing on from this, then, I would also mention that the registration of lascoreens in the Galle Kōralē has already been completed, but only the draft of the roll compiled is in the custody of the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē here, who assisted me in the registration and made the various preliminary arrangements that were necessary. This must be put into effect and duly revised in respect of those soldiers who have since died of the wretched small-pox and other diseases, so that they may be replaced by others and that the respective ranchuwas<sup>48</sup> may eventually have their full complement of lascoreens and not lapse into a state of confusion again. Your Honour should therefore remember to see that this is done as far as possible. And, to no less a degree, in regard to

The STRAW-MATS, LIME, TILES and PAVING STONES, and also the COCONUT OIL, the first-mentioned being required and ordered for Batavia and the others for our capital of Colombo. Your Honour must do all in your power to see to the collection and timely delivery of these supplies, apart from the local requirements of the same, so that the various articles may as far as possible be delivered in full and stored away, and so avoid the displeasure of the esteemed Ceylon Government, to whom also must be submitted annually lists of the chenias in this and the Matara districts which have been cut and cleared by various people both with and without permission, in terms of the relevant orders received thereon, which are already known to Your Honour. Similarly, I would further remind Your Honour that

The lease of the BAYGAMS and GIRREWAYS is due to expire at the end of August this year. It will be necessary therefore to inform the said Ceylon Government early of this fact, both as a reminder and in order that Their Honours might issue their orders regarding the same, and also to forward to them a detailed account specifying the income and payments from these leases and the arrears still outstanding.

Then, with regard to the RETURN SHIPS, which, according to the latest orders, are annually due to leave from here for the Fatherland about the middle of January, I would state for Your Honour's information that the necessary orders must be issued as soon as they arrive here, both for having them carefully examined by special naval and nautical experts in respect of their masts, riggings and sails, and also for making ready and issuing as soon as possible, with the approval of the Ceylon Government, such of their individual

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48. A Sinhalese word meaning "a gang or company of lascoreens or native militia who performed various other duties as messengers, etc. in Dutch times."

requirements as may be necessary for provisioning the vessels, whose commanders are accordingly bound to submit in good time an account of the requirements of each vessel as well as of its gunpowder supply, to be sent early to Colombo for their instructions and authority, without which no supplies of equipment or other provisions could be issued to vessels, as this has been strictly prohibited by the letter from Colombo of the 27th February<sup>49</sup> this year.

Similarly, care should also be taken to see that the unloading and re-loading of these "return" ships are carried out without let or hindrance in the most expeditious manner. For this work the oeliammers,<sup>50</sup> both Moors and Chetties, who are annually registered here by special commissioners after publication of notices, should be got ready in time about the middle of November, *viz.* those of Matara only, as those in Galle are employed throughout the year in three alternate divisions (of work) and serve daily in their respective bands, in terms of the latest orders from Colombo in their esteemed letter of the 21st October, 1747. They should therefore be summoned and assembled in time to work for two months on the "return" ships, *viz.* from the middle of October to the middle of December or from the middle of November to the middle of January, in terms of the concession allowed by His Excellency the Right Honourable High and Mighty Governor-General Willem Baron van Imhoff when he was Governor of this Island, contained in the resolution passed regarding the native affairs of Matara during his visit to the Galle Commandement in April, 1737, which is filed in the volume of inward letters after the letter of 17th July<sup>51</sup> of the same year. In order that this work may be carried out effectively, the chiefs who are appointed to supervise the labourers must be kept strictly to the performance of their respective shares of work, and delinquents severely reprimanded and made to perform their obligations, so that thus, in this respect too, no slackness may find place but the work on the "return" ships be expeditiously carried out.

The COURT OF JUSTICE, over which Your Honour will preside, must also be properly conducted without the slightest procrastination or delay. The ordinary meetings during the week are held on Tuesdays and Fridays for the hearing and disposal of both criminal and civil cases on the roll and those subsequently brought up. It is relevant also in referring here to the BLOOD CORAL to say that the sample of 2½ lbs. sent to the Netherlands was found to be of no value there and could not fetch a price at the auction, as may be

49. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 303.

50. Those who are registered for *uliyam* or menial service. In the territories of the Dutch: *oeliam* was manual labour imposed on Moors and Chetties as being foreigners.

51. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 165.

## GALLE TWO CENTURIES AGO

seen in the extract received of the requisition for the return vessels from the Indies for the year 1748 in the Trade Office here.

I would also mention *inter alia* that the new shallop "Wilhelmina Johanna" referred to above, having now been finished and completed, was removed from its dock or building-yard and floated through the slip on the 3rd instant, so that now it has only to be fitted up with riggings, on which work the sailors are busy.

The Superintendent of Shipbuilding and Carpentry Abraham Anthonisz has, according to the report submitted by him, also made and completed the new Commandeur's barge built on the authority received from Colombo by letter of 26th August, 1747, to replace the one which was written off on being stranded and wrecked on the rocks at Sand Bay, and there is only some iron-work still to be done on it.

With regard to the GODOWNS and GARDENS here just outside the city which are within cannon reach, and the proposal to have them removed so as to have an open space in case of any hostilities (from which, however, may the Lord Almighty graciously protect us), I would respectfully refer to the esteemed orders issued by letter from Colombo dated the 8th September<sup>52</sup> last year.

Likewise, as regards the arrears of paddy due as at the 14th of this month, I would refer to the statement of the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē bound at the end of this memoir.<sup>53</sup>

In regard to the warehouse above the fish bazaar, I must here state that it is a Portuguese building, and is at present quite unfit for use, the repair of which, in case it is proposed to undertake it, would cost a good deal of money. As, however, this is never in use, and is therefore of no advantage to the Company, it would be as well if authority could be obtained, when forwarding to the esteemed Ceylon Government the report of the commissioners who have recently inspected the buildings here, for demolishing it and using the material therefrom for other purposes.

We have at present here in the large and small cash chests of the Company the following cash in gold, copper and lead specie :—In the former 2,177 rix-dollars and 42 $\frac{7}{8}$  stivers, and in the latter, according to the report of the Cashier, a balance of 1,830·37 rix-dollars, making a total of 4,008·31 $\frac{7}{8}$ <sup>54</sup> rix-dollars, which would not last very long for the payment of monthly salaries

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52. Missing in the series.

53. See Appendix.

54. Since amended to "10,008 rix-dollars and 31  $\frac{7}{16}$  stivers" in the amplification. See note 66 on page 99.

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and ration allowances. Early information should therefore be sent to Colombo of the depleted state of the Treasury and an application made for financial assistance.

With regard to the trade in linen goods and the balance stocks of the same available in the warehouse, I would refer to the trade accounts, with the remark that it is desirable to have a supply of 80 or 90 bundles of Tutucorin guinea-cloths<sup>55</sup> for the daily trade here, for owing to the scarcity of linen the shop-keepers and hawkers are very anxious to buy it for retail to the Sinhalese or other inhabitants of this place.

The stock of GRAIN in the stores at the end of April was not more than 66½ lasts<sup>56</sup> of rice and 37 lasts of paddy, which will suffice for about 5 months for the ordinary monthly consumption, apart from special supplies to ships, etc. ; but when, according to the usual custom, the cinnamon peelers receive and draw their rations for the great harvest this month, amounting to 43 or 44 lasts according to the prescribed rates, the balance of grain in the stores would not be sufficient for more than one full month. We have quite recently applied to Colombo for assistance with a supply of grain by our letter of the 4th of March<sup>57</sup> last, and it would be as well to send a reminder again, as the aforesaid 66½ lasts also includes the supply of 60 lasts of rice brought by the ship " Het Hoff van Delft " for this Commandement.

As regards SALT, we have a fair supply of it ; but there are no supplies whatever in the warehouse of bacon, meat, wine, olive-oil, nautical goods and other essentials. It is therefore a matter to be desired and hoped for that the ships from the Fatherland may safely arrive soon with a good supply, and with this wish I shall close this memoir, appending below the following short statement of the manpower in this city and district, and wishing Your Honour and the other gentlemen of this administration God-speed in the Company's trade and business :—

662 men in all, of whom 67 are qualified officers, to wit :

1 Merchant, administrator of this Commandement

6 Under-merchants, to wit :

1 fiscal and cashier

1 chief warehousekeeper

1 secretary

55. See *Hobson Jobson* by Yule and Burnell.

56. *Last* : a measure of capacity for grain, equal to 9¼ *amunams* or 52 bushels of 3,000 lbs. (Dutch). See also note 28.

57. In Government Archives, Dutch records, Old No. Galle 302.

## GALLE TWO CENTURIES AGO

- 1 pay book-keeper<sup>58</sup>
  - 1 superintendent of the Galle Kōralē
  - 1 trade accountant.
- 14 Book-keepers in actual service, as follows :
- 1 storekeeper
  - 1 dispenser<sup>59</sup>
  - 1 superintendent of the arecanut (department)
  - 1 chief clerk
  - 1 pay accountant
  - 1 second warehousekeeper
  - 1 permanent member of the Landraad and the Tombo registration
  - 1 permanent member of the Tombo registration
  - 3 commissioners of the arecanut (department)
  - 1 scribe for the Scholarchal meetings and the Landraad
  - 1 attached to the superintendent of the Galle Kōralē as scribe
  - 1 officer who serves on commissions.
- 34 men employed at the three Secretarial bureaus, as follows :
- 10 at the Secretariat, *viz* :
    - 1 sworn clerk
    - 7 assistants
    - 1 bookbinder
    - 1 apprentice.
  - 15 at the Trade Office, of whom—
    - 2 book-keepers
    - 11 assistants
    - 2 apprentices.
  - 9 at the Pay Office, of whom—
    - 1 book-keeper
    - 5 assistants
    - 3 apprentices.
- 2 assistants as permanent members of the Landraad and Tombo registration
- 1 assistant to the superintendent of the arecanut (department)
  - 1 assistant in the Master Attendant's stores
  - 1 assistant to the cashier
  - 2 assistants who serve on commissions
  - 1 assistant to the Honourable the Commandeur

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58. Dutch *Boekhouder* : a term used to denote those holding the general rank of "Accountant."

59. Commissariat Officer.

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- 1 assistant at the registration of ratmahera gardens, etc.
- 2 assistants employed in connection with the Tombo
- 1 assistant to the scribe of the Landraad
- 4 men employed in connection with the churches and schools, *viz* :
  - 1 clergyman
  - 1 visitor of the sick
  - 1 town schoolmaster
  - 1 sexton.
- 16 men in the Artillery, as follows :
  - 1 constable<sup>60</sup>
  - 4 constables' mates
  - 11 gunners.
- 9 men in the Hospital, *viz* :
  - 1 chief surgeon
  - 2 surgeons
  - 1 under-surgeon
  - 1 provisional under-surgeon
  - 1 junior surgeon
  - 1 steward
  - 1 apprentice
  - 1 hall-porter (doorkeeper).
- 7 men in various offices, *viz* :
  - 1 messenger<sup>61</sup> of the Court of Justice
  - 1 surveyor
  - 1 junior surveyor
  - 1 bookbinder
  - 1 miller, also employed on commissions
  - 1 sadler
  - 1 provost marshal and jailor.
- 4 men at the Gunpowder mill, *viz* :
  - 1 superintendent
  - 2 assistants, gunpowder-makers
  - 1 sieve-maker.
- 3 men in the Public works, *viz* :
  - 1 superintendent
  - 2 overseers or *mocquedons*<sup>62</sup>.

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60. Chief Gunner or Head of the Artillery : also called *Constable Major*.

61. Corresponds to the modern Fiscal's Officer or Process Server.

62. Overseers of coolies : See *Mocuddum* in Yule and Burnell's *Hobson Jobson*, also resolution of the Dutch Political Council of 16 May, 1786, in Government Archives' Dutch records No. 193.

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- 2 men at the Masonry works, as follows :
- 1 superintendent
  - 1 ordinary mason.
- 15 men at the Smithy, as follows :
- 1 superintendent
  - 1 farrier
  - 4 blacksmiths
  - 2 locksmiths
  - 4 coppersmiths
  - 1 gun-maker
  - 1 furbisher (blade-smith)
  - 1 apprentice.
- 16 men at the Shipbuilding yard, *viz* :
- 1 superintendent of both shipbuilders and carpenters
  - 1 foreman
  - 12 carpenters
  - 2 apprentices.
- 13 men at the Carpentry yard, *viz* :
- 1 foreman
  - 2 upper-coopers
  - 4 under-coopers
  - 1 block-maker
  - 2 turners, one of whom is a junior turner
  - 1 carpenter
  - 2 apprentices.
- 216 men in the Military, as follows :
- 2 captains
  - 1 lieutenant
  - 3 ensigns
  - 12 sergeants, two of whom are stationed at the outposts at Bentota and Gintota and one excused from duty on account of old age
  - 15 corporals, two of whom are posted for duty at Ambalangoda and with the Superintendent of the Galle Kōralē
  - 1 garrison clerk
  - 1 drum major
  - 7 drummers
  - 174 soldiers, composed of 86 Europeans and 88 natives, the latter being mostly tupases<sup>63</sup> and Sinhalese, on whom, in case of hostilities (which God prevent), we cannot so safely and surely depend as

63. Half-castes. See Yule and Burnell's *Hobson Jobson*.



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on our own soldiers : of these 174 men, two (both natives) are stationed at Bentota and two are employed as watchmen here.

77 men in the Eastern militia, as follows :

- 1 lieutenant
- 4 sergeants
- 8 corporals
- 64 soldiers.

210 men in the Navy, of whom—

- 1 captain and master attendant
- 3 pilots
- 2 junior pilots
- 4 boatswains
- 2 ships' mates
- 1 master of the riggings
- 1 steward in the Company's store
- 2 sail-makers
- 9 quartermasters
- 1 provost
- 1 cook's mate
- 135 sailors
- 48 ropeyard (rigging) boys.

3 pensioners, *viz* :

- 2 sergeants
- 1 soldier.

662 in all.

This Commandement also possesses some sailing and rowing vessels, apart from the new shallop now afloat, and the still incomplete Commandeur's barge, as follows :

	<i>Tonnage</i> <i>In lasts.</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Breadth</i> <i>In feet.</i>	<i>Depth</i>
"Cornelia Anthonia," in bad condition, should be brought ashore and repaired .. .. .	20	58	17	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
1 pontoon employed at the molework, good and serviceable .. .. .	—	—	—	—
1 rowing-boat named "Den Leyder," <sup>64</sup> old and worn out .. .. .	20	52	15	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
1 rowing-boat named "Den Overwinnaar," <sup>65</sup> also old and worn out .. . . .	20	52	15	6 $\frac{1}{2}$

64. Dutch: "The Leader."

65. Dutch: "The conqueror."

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	<i>Tonnage In lasts.</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Breadth In feet.</i>	<i>Depth</i>
1 barge, marked "No. 2," in bad condition, requires repair .. .. .	—	28	7	3
1 rowing-barge marked "A," good and serviceable	—	28	7	3
1 rowing-barge marked "B," same as above ..	—	28	7	3
1 rowing pontoon, still quite serviceable ..	—	41	12½	5
1 set apart : must be provided with a new bottom	—	—	—	—
1 set apart : also requires a new bottom ..	—	—	—	—
1 sailing-boat " Bellingwolde " : should be brought ashore, have its bottom cleaned, and some obviously necessary repairs effected ..	20	56	17	6

With kind regards,

I shall always remain,

Your Honour's most humble and obedient servant,

Jb. DE JONG.

Galle, the 18th May, 1748.

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**Amplification of matters that have not been referred to above, but which, in my opinion, should be mentioned and brought to Your Honour's notice.**

As regards the lesser Colleges, besides the Political Council and the Court of Justice and the Landraad and Tombo registration which are permanently established, apart from the usual alternate changes, a double list of names is submitted annually by nomination at the due time on expiry of the present terms of office, for the orders and approval of the esteemed Ceylon Government. This usually takes place at the end of February or the beginning of March, so that they may be installed and established in office on the 13th of March, being the anniversary of the capture of Galle, after receipt of the Governor's orders as aforesaid.

As regards the gardens which are, and according to my experience, become cultivated with or without consent, I would refer in this respect to the relevant orders thereon, which Your Honour is no doubt also acquainted with.

The same applies to the uncultivated or ratmahera lands.

Since the compilation of this memoir, we have received from Colombo 6,000 rix-dollars in 3,000 pieces of gold pagodas. The amount of our general capital on folio 44<sup>66</sup> should therefore be increased to 10,008 rix-dollars and 31 7/16 stivers.

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66. Mss. p. 44. See note 54 on page 93.

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Appendix.<sup>67</sup>

Statement of all the arrears of paddy in respect of the Galle Kōralē and part of the Walallawiti Kōralē showing separately the amount of grain that has been imposed on the farmers in the several villages for the years 1745-46 and 1746-47 according to the certificates furnished, as well as what is still due to the Honourable Company in respect of the same, also the old arrears still due from the village chiefs, *viz* :—

	<i>Parras.</i>	<i>Parras.</i>
The farmer of the Galle Kōralē Waytenaden Chitty, <i>viz.</i> from the Talpe, Gangebaddē and Wellebadde pattuwas for the financial year 1746-47 .. .. .	2,447 6	—
The farmer of part of the Walallawiti Kōralē, Don Siman, Pattangatyn, <sup>68</sup> for the year 1746-47 .. .. .	950 —	3,397 6
In respect of old arrears due from the village chiefs in the villages of the Galle Kōralē, <i>viz.</i> the Talpe, Gangebaddē and Wellebadde pattuwas, which will be collected by the undersigned at the end of August next ..	— —	1,661 8
Also from the villages of the Galle Kōralē in respect of the farm-year <sup>69</sup> 1745-46 and 1746-47, being the amounts of tax imposed on the farmers according to the certificates of the atukoralas and vidanes given in terms of the orders issued to the said village vidanes ..	3,828 15	— —
From the Mudaliyar of Bentota Salomon Alvis, who has to furnish the daily ordinary and extraordinary rations there, in respect of the farm-year 1745-46 .. .. .	375 6	4,203 21
Total ..	9,262 11	— —

(Signed) Jm. Cn. SALDER.

Galle, the 14th of May, 1748.

67. See note 53 on page 93.

68. *Pattangatyn* is said to be a corruption of the Tamil *pattankutti*, and to be allied to the Sinhalese word *patābandi* in the term *pattābandi-arachchi*, a rank generally held by fishers. One of the duties of a *pattangatyn* would seem to have been the collection of fish market rents. It appears to have been a title coveted by the fishers quite as much as native ranks were by members of other communities. The word is also applied in this sense to certain natives in authority at the pearl fisheries.

69. Same as the financial year, i.e. 1 September to 31 August.

GALLE TWO CENTURIES AGO

True extract from the original.

Dated as above.

Bs. De KRANKEL,  
*Secretary.*