

Anglo-Dutch Trade in the Chesapeake and the British Caribbean, 1621–1733

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Introduction

In recent years scholars have produced a flurry of work describing the Dutch influence on Britain and its empire during the early modern period. The celebration of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Henry Hudson in what would become New York City and the publication of several new works has reinvigorated the study of Anglo-Dutch relations and cultural borrowing. This scholarship has charted Dutch influence on a number of English developments during the seventeenth century, including those in the fields of cartography, finance, national accounting, and even landscape design. Other works have concentrated on the strong cultural, political, diplomatic, and religious links that the Dutch and English shared and the ways that migration and commerce buttressed these bonds. In the aggregate these works have offered a thoroughly international history of the origins of the British state.¹

As scholars of early modern Britain have revised our understanding of state-building there, historians of the early modern Atlantic world have also been at work reconsidering the nature of Atlantic empires. Moving away from an earlier view that focused on the institutional character of early modern empires, Atlantic historians are increasingly finding that imperial economies grew out

1 For examples of scholarship considering Anglo-Dutch relations in the seventeenth century see Lisa Jardine, *Going Dutch: How England Plundered Holland's Glory* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008); Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009); Jonathan Scott, "'Good Night Amsterdam': Sir George Downing and Anglo-Dutch Statebuilding," *English Historical Review* 113, no. 47 (2003): 334–356; Thomas Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jacob Soll, "Accounting for Government: Holland and the Rise of Political Economy in Seventeenth-Century Europe," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 40, no. 2 (2009): 215–238. This scholarship, of course, has a long history and is best investigated through the volumes produced by the Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference intermittently since 1959. There were also a number of studies published surrounding the 300th anniversary of the Glorious Revolution. See, for example Jonathan I. Israel, ed., *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its world impact* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

of local decision-making and self-organized, often interimperial, networks as much as they did from centralized planning and metropolitan coordination.² Scholars have uncovered particularly close ties between the commercially powerful Dutch Republic and England's fledgling colonies. Encouraged by the vulnerabilities of colonial life and less affected by the cross-sea rivalry that sometimes tempered Anglo-Dutch relations in Europe, English and Dutch colonists forged close cross-national relationships in the Americas that endured for more than a century.³

2 For examples of the most recent statements of this argument see Games, *The Web of Empire*; David Hancock, *Oceans of wine: Madeira and the emergence of American trade and taste* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2009); Michael J. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the maritime Atlantic world, 1680–1783* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

3 Most work on Anglo-Dutch trade in the Americas has focused on Anglo-Dutch interaction in the Chesapeake and New Netherland/New York. April Lee Hatfield, "Dutch New Netherland Merchants in the Seventeenth-Century English Chesapeake," in *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice, and Personnel*, ed. Peter Coclanis (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 205–228; Hatfield, "Mariners, Merchants, and Colonists in Seventeenth-Century English America," in *The Creation of the British Atlantic World*, ed. Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 139–159; Claudia Schnurman, *Atlantische Welten. Engländer und Niederländer in amerikanisch-atlantischen Raum, 1648–1713*, *Wirtschafts- und Sozialhistorische Studien*, no. 9 (Cologne, 1998); Schnurmann, "Atlantic Trade and American Identities: The Correlations of Supranational Commerce, Political Opposition, and Colonial Regionalism," in *The Atlantic Economy*, ed. Coclanis, 186–204; Schnurmann, "Representative Atlantic Entrepreneur: Jacob Leisler, 1640–1691," in *Riches From Atlantic Commerce Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817*, ed. Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 259–283; Jan Kupp, "Dutch Notarial Acts Relating to the Tobacco Trade of Virginia, 1608–1653," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 30 (1973): 653–655; Victor Enthoven and Wim Klooster, "The Rise and Fall of the Virginia-Dutch Connection in the Seventeenth Century," in *Early Modern Virginia: Reconsidering the Old Dominion*, ed. Douglas Bradburn and John C. Coombs (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 90–127. For works that also consider New England see Cynthia J. van Zandt, "The Dutch Connection: Isaac Allerton and the Dynamics of English Cultural Anxiety in the *Gouden Eeuw*," in *Connecting Cultures: The Netherlands in Five Centuries of Transatlantic Exchange*, ed. Rosemarijn Hoefte and Johnanna C. Kardux (Amsterdam: Vrije University Press, 1994), 51–76; Kim Todt, "Trading between New Netherland and New England, 1624–1664," in "The Worlds of Lion Gardiner, ca. 1599–1663: Crossing and Boundaries," ed. Ned Landsman and Andrew Newman, special issue, *Early American Studies* 9, no. 2 (2011): 348–378. Anglo-Dutch trade in the English Caribbean has received surprisingly little in-depth attention. See the works cited below and the several examples noted by Wim Klooster, "Inter-Imperial Smuggling in the