All readers of this journal will be familiar with the name of Willem Jansz Blaeu (1571-1638), the founder of a business which became internationally famous, and which was continued after his death by two generations of the Blaeu family. He is best known as the maker and publisher of maps, atlases and globes, and as a printer and publisher of books; but he is also honoured as a mathematician and astronomer, and as the maker of nautical instruments. The name of Willem Janszoon Blaeu - and to some extent those of his son Joan and of the latter's own sons - are linked for us with the days when the Netherlands were supreme in politics, economics and science, in painting and in literature. Thanks to the excellence of publications on the Blaeus, and to exhibitions devoted to the works published by them, readers have become familiar with the astonishing range of material brought out by these 'portrayers of land, sky and sea'.

In what follows we shall pay particular attention to valuable contributions by Willem Janszoon in aid of navigation and seamen. Although this immediately conjures up the thought of certain magnificent outline maps of different seas and oceans, printed on hard-wearing parchment and destined for use on board ship, we shall concentrate here, at least initially, on a couple of large seamen's guides published by Blaeu. These were the Licht der zee-vaert (The Light of Navigation) (see illus. 1), first published in 1608, and its more elaborate replacement, the Zeespiegel (The Sea-Mirror), issued in 1623. The number of editions which appeared of these two works, as well as their publication in French and English translations, witness to the high value set on them by seamen, both in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

Although the first edition of the Licht der zee-vaert, contained 19 and 22 maps respectively in its two volumes, the most important part of the work was the text. It was here the main emphasis lay, offering as it did a guide to sailors navigating the coasts of the 'Western, Northern, Eastern (Baltic) and Mediterranean Seas'. In compiling his work - or so the title-page informs us - Blaeu had made use of the information collected by the 'best writers on the sea', such as Lucas Janszoon Waghenae and others, together with written and oral accounts by 'many experienced seamen'. It was the skilled sailors who, drawing on their own experience, were in a position to furnish Blaeu with information about coastal features such as shoals and harbours. Their knowledge was registered

* Revised version of an article which originally appeared in Geografisch Tijdschrift. Nieuwe Reeks II (1968), No. 4.
HET LICHT DER ZEE-VAERT
darimme claarveck beschreven ende afgebeeld
werd alle de Eilanden ende Havenen dande Westereheu. Noordhese, Middelhansche ende
Middellandscche Zeen. Oock van vele Landen, Eronden ende plaatsen van Guinea, Fransien, West ende West-Indien.
Wt de alderbeste Zeebeschryvers gheschreve(n als Lucas Iansz, waghe naer ende meer andere) eene decels vergaderd: naer uyt vele eervare Zeevaarders schrijven ende mondtlycke verclaringhen van alle verloopen ghebetert, ende met veel nieuwe bevrieyninghen ende Carren peer vermeerderd. Altes gheheelt in vier boecken, vaert van ycker: inhoudt voorg. eelt ongeheuekkel flaut.
Hier zijn bijhevenzichte eerst en oermuis met van de Regten en Zeevaarders tusschen van der
Zonen: decimatie, schrebent uyt de informatie van Sybe Broeck, ende gheburen op de Merkam of
van Amsterdam. Meevhere nieuwe taftelen over ende meet met vaste gebruk van der
Nederland en eere middernag stroven. Alle Zeevaarde venstelen met gedogen.
DOOR WILLEM IANZ ZOON.

TOT AMSTELDAM
Boedschap by Willem Ianszoon, wonende op't water by de oude
brughe, inde vergulde Zoonuytsten. Anno 1608
Met Privilegio van zeven leeren.

Amsterdam