

Guide & Concordance

to

DUTCH TRADE IN ASIA
PART 2:
PAPERS OF JAN COCK BLOMHOFF
ON JAPAN
c. 1817-1829

on microfiche



Nationaal Archief, The Hague
&
Moran Micropublications, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

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Moran Micropublications

Singel 357

1012 WK Amsterdam

The Netherlands

Tel + 31 20 528 6139

Fax + 31 20 623 9358

E-mail: info@moranmicropublications.nl

Website: www.moranmicropublications.nl

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CONTENTS/INHOUD

Publisher's Preface	5
Note on the microfiches.....	6
Copyright and citation/citeerinformatie.....	6
Inventory/Inventaris, by/door D.J. Kortlang	7

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Short biography

Jan Cock Blomhoff was born in Amsterdam on 5 August 1779. As a youth he served as a cadet in the campaign of 1794 against the French in the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium). After the French invasion of the northern Netherlands in 1795 he fled with his family to Germany where he took service in the regiment organized by the exiled Prince of Orange. He accompanied this unit to England, but returned to the Netherlands after the peace of Amiens with the French (1802) to devote himself to commerce. In 1805 he traveled from Bremen to Java in the Netherlands East Indies. Under the Dutch governor there, Marshall Daendels, he again entered military service in 1808 and was appointed first lieutenant and staff adjutant. In 1809 he assumed the post of *pakhuismeester* (lit. warehouse master) at the Dutch trading post in Deshima, the artificial island in the bay of Nagasaki where the Dutch had been permitted to stay since 1641. Hendrik Doeff was *opperhoofd* (head) at Deshima during this period. When the British took control of Java in 1811, their Lieutenant-governor, Thomas Raffles (founder of Singapore), tried the next year to wrest Deshima from the Dutch as well, but Doeff and Blomhoff adamantly refused to cede the post. On a mission to offer a trade agreement to Raffles in Java in 1813 he was instead made a prisoner of war and transferred to England. Liberated in 1815 he was promoted to *opperhoofd* of Deshima to succeed Doeff, but the return of Napoleon from exile compelled him to postpone his journey. He then served as chief administrator of a military supply depot in Dordrecht. In 1816 he was able to depart for the Indies, but only succeeded in gaining his post in Japan and relieving Doeff in 1817. Against the prevailing rules in Japan, he was accompanied by his young wife Titia and their infant son Johannes, she thus becoming “the first Western woman in Japan”, though not for long (see Bersma below, Literature) . Refused permission to stay at Deshima she returned to the Netherlands in December that same year and died without ever seeing Blomhoff again in 1821.

As head of Deshima, Cock Blomhoff vigorously promoted Dutch commercial interests, twice undertaking the strenuous *hofreis* (journey to the court of the shogun in Edo, now Tokyo). His account of this voyage in 1818 has recently been republished in an annotated edition (see Literature below). Besides his activities as a merchant, he was an avid collector of Japonica, assembling a significant collection of art and artifacts on behalf of the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities, which he took with him upon leaving Japan in 1823 for Batavia. The collection was later purchased by King William I (1826) and is now divided between the National Museum of Ethnology (Museum Volkenkunde) in Leiden and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. In 1824 he returned to the Netherlands, for good as it turned out. He remarried in 1827 and lived in various places in the Netherlands before building the manor Birkhoven near Amersfoort where he died in 1853.

The archive

This small, but interesting collection of papers includes Dutch translations of dispositions and other official documents issued to him by the Japanese authorities in Nagasaki, more than 100 letters to him in Dutch from Japanese people (inventory number 4), bills and other documents concerning goods handled by the factory and repairs to its buildings and notes concerning customs and mores in Japan and other places (no. 13). Worth noting also are a catalogue of objects sent to Blomhoff by the shogun's chief botanist in Edo (no. 6) and the extensive list of gifts required by the shogun for 1824 (no. 7). An intriguing part of the collection is formed by the letters written to Blomhoff in Japanese (almost completely in hiragana script) (no. 14) by (or for) a woman, presumably his mistress, a woman called Hana, who addressed him as “Captain” (“Kapitan” or “Mr. Ka” (see Legêne below, pp. 244-247) and the illustration on p. 13 below.

This archival collection was acquired by the National Archives of the Netherlands in 1907. An important addition to the original collection is the account made by E.H. Bergsma, Titia's father, for Blomhoff and Titia's son Johannes written around 1827 (no. 15), a photocopy of which was donated to the National Archives in 1996.

Literature

Bersma, René P. *Titia: The First Western Woman in Japan*. Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2002.

De hofreis naar de shōgun van Japan. Naar een persoonlijk verslag van Jan Cock Blomhoff, bezorgd door F.R. Effert, ingeleid en geannoteerd door Matthi Forrer. Leiden: Hotei Publishing, 2000.

Legêne, Susan. *De bagage van Blomhoff en Bruegel. Japan, Java, Tripoli en Suriname in de negentiende-eeuwse Nederlandse cultuur van het imperialisme*. Amsterdam: Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1998.

Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek. Vol. I, pp. 374-375. Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1911.

Note on the microfiches

The microfiches were made by Moran Micropublications by first filming on 35 mm microfilms the original documents made available by the National Archives and then reformatting these to 105 mm format (microfiche). The microfiches are numbered consecutively from 1 to 24. The headers are in Dutch and give the inventory numbers found on the fiche, among other information.

A great effort was made to film the documents in the appropriate text direction. For documents in Dutch this is of course left to right; for documents in Japanese right to left. For Japanese documents too long to be filmed in a single exposure (especially in inventory number 14, but also elsewhere), first the right side was filmed and then the left side with a significant overlap between the two shots to avoid loss of text. At times it was necessary to film the reverse of documents to capture small fragments of text. Again, especially in inventory number 14, but also in numbers 11-13, documents contained both Japanese and Dutch texts written in different directions. In these cases the documents were filmed twice, rotating the document as appropriate to achieve easy legibility for both languages. Inevitably perhaps in this complicated process a tiny number of filming errors were made, for which the publisher apologizes.

Acknowledgment

The publisher wishes to thank Dr. Matthi Forrer, head of the Research Department at the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, for his help and advice with the Japanese texts in this collection. Any errors are of course the responsibility of the publisher.

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Nationaal Archief
PO Box 90520
2509 LM Den Haag
The Netherlands

Tel + 31 70 331 5400

Fax + 31 70 331 5540

E-mail: info@nationaalarchief.nl

Citeer- en aanvraaginstructie (how to cite this collection in publications)

Bij het citeren in annotatie en verantwoording dient het archief tenminste éénmaal volledig en zonder afkortingen te worden vermeld als volgt:

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Dit archief is openbaar.

VERZAMELINVENTARIS
J. COCK BLOMHOFF

Nummer toegang: 2.21.005.37

Aanwinst 1907 XXXVI
Bewerking van
Verslagen omtrent 's Rijks Oude Archieven 1907, p. 108

Stukken afkomstig van Jan Cock Blomhoff

door D.J. Kortlang

Den Haag 2005

INLEIDING

Jan Cock Blomhoff, geboren 5 augustus 1779, cadet in het leger van de bondgenoten tegen de Fransen 1794; verlaat de militaire loopbaan 1795; neemt dienst bij het door de prins van Oranje opgerichte regiment Jagers 1799; vertrekt met dit korps naar Engeland en wordt daar afgedankt 1802; begeeft zich naar Java 1805; treedt daar in 1808 weer in krijgsdienst en wordt 1ste luitenant-adjutant bij de staf van de generaal Daendels; pakhuismeester bij de Nederlandse factorij op Decima 1809; in 1813 met de titel van provisioneel opperhoofd van die factorij afgevaardigd naar Java om met de Engelsen een handelsverdrag te sluiten; wordt bij zijn aankomst door Raffles gevangen genomen en naar Engeland gezonden; wordt na de herstelling van Nederlands onafhankelijkheid administrateur-boekhouder bij 's-Rijks approvisionnement-magazijnen voor het leger te Dordrecht; opperhoofd van Decima, 1816-1823; leeft na zijn terugkeer in het vaderland in 1824 ambteloos en overlijdt 13 oktober 1853.

INVENTARIS

1. Translaat-beschikkingen en getuigschriften door de autoriteiten van Nagasaki afgegeven aan J. Cock Blomhoff, opperhoofd van de Nederlandse factorij op Decima, 1817-1823
Fiche 1
2. Kwitantie wegens terugbetaling van gelden, door de Nederlandse factorij op Decima ter leen opgenomen van de geldkamer en van het opperhoofd in Osaka, 1819
Fiche 1
3. Brief van de resident van Batavia aan J. Cock Blomhoff, opperhoofd van de Nederlandse factorij op Decima, 1822 juni 25
Fiche 1
4. Brieven van Japanners, in het Nederlands, aan J. Cock Blomhoff, opperhoofd van de Nederlandse factorij op Decima, 1822-1826 [merendeels ongedateerd]. 111 stukken
Fiche 1-6
5. Schuldbekentenis van J. Cock Blomhoff, opperhoofd van de Nederlandse factorij op Decima, voor een geldsom ten behoeve van de factorij geleend van de keizerlijke Japanse geld kamer, 1823 november 18
Fiche 6
6. “Katalogus van voorwerpen door den Japansche keizerlijke dockter Botanicus in Jedo mij toegezonden bij mijn vertrek”; Catalogus van voorwerpen opgesteld door de keizerlijke Japanse botanicus in Jedo, 1823
Fiche 6-7
Publisher’s note: The text of the original was quite faded.
7. “Eijsch van Zijn Keizerlijke Majesteit voor het aanstaande anno 1824”; Eis van de Japanse keizer voor het jaar 1824 [1823]
Fiche 7-8
8. Assurantiepolis door J. Cock Blomhoff gesloten voor het schip *Jorina* varende van Batavia naar Rotterdam, 1824 juli 7 [English]
Fiche 8
9. Kopie-brief van de directeur-generaal van Financiën te Batavia aan de gewezen negotieboekhouder J.F. van Overmeer Fisscher, betreffende een fout in de rekening van Japan over 1823, met bijlage, 1829 april 8
Fiche 8
10. Rekening van betaald “cappitgel” (gedurende een hofreis naar Jedo?), z.d.
Fiche 8-9
11. Rekening en andere stukken betreffende reparaties aan de gebouwen van de Nederlandse factorij op Decima, z.d.
Fiche 9
12. Lijsten en afrekeningen van goederen door de Nederlandse factorij op Decima aan verschillende Japanse autoriteiten geleverd, z.d. 16 stukken
Fiche 9-13
13. Aantekeningen betreffende zeden, gewoonten, instellingen, voortbrengselen enz. in Japan, Korea, Gujarat, de Nederlandse handel in Japan, enz., z.d. 17 stukken
Fiche 13-15
14. Japanse stukken, z.d..
Fiche 15-19

Publisher’s note: The order in this file was not always apparent. A number of the documents were pieces written on small single sheets of paper that appeared to be part of a larger text, for example, the beginning , middle part or closing and

signature of a letter. Consulting expert help, the publisher made a concerted effort to reconstruct whole texts as much as possible by putting the fragments together using criteria of handwriting, format, type of paper, etc. Given the difficulty of the script and the Japanese in use in the early nineteenth century as well as the relative obscurity of these texts, it is hard to say how well this effort succeeded. Feedback by researchers using this material is therefore most welcome and any corrections or comments will be posted on our website.

See also, the information on this file in the Publisher's Preface, p. 5 above, and the "Note on the microfiches", p. 6 above.

Aanvulling 1996

15. "Aanteekeningen voor Johannes Cock Blomhoff van hetgeen hem en zijne ouders is overkomen", bevattende onder andere een verslag van de reis van Jan Cock Blomhoff en zijn vrouw en zoontje naar Decima en de terugkeer van beide laatstgenoemden naar Nederland over de periode (1804) 1815-1821, opgesteld door mr. E.H. Bergsma (1755-18281), schoonvader van Jan Cock Blomhoff [ca. 1827]
1 omslag (fotocopie)

Fiche 20-24

Note: Greeting “Kapitan” (captain) in a letter to Jan Cock Blomhoff from inventory no. 14. Transcription courtesy of Dr. Matthi Forrer, National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.

