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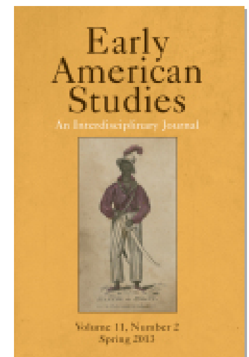
Victor Enthoven



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"That Abominable Nest of Pirates"

St. Eustatius and the North Americans, 1680–1780

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ABSTRACT The aim of this essay is to depict the long-standing trade relations between St. Eustatius and the thirteen British North American colonies between 1680 and 1780. For Americans, the otherwise virtually unknown Caribbean island of St. Eustatius is intimately linked to the history of the American Revolution. Indeed, the enduring relationship between them was instrumental to the growth of both sets of colonies and ultimately to the success of the American Revolution. Yet the connection that linked the tiny Dutch island with the mainland Anglo-American colonies was far deeper than is often realized in the existing historiography, which focuses predominantly on the Revolutionary years. St. Eustatius and the thirteen North American colonies were natural allies in the war against protectionism.

INTRODUCTION

At ten o'clock in the morning of Saturday February 3, 1781, Admiral Lord Rodney's ships appeared before the island of St. Eustatius [Statia], coming to anchor at their stations at eleven o'clock. When this presence became widely known through the town—not at once, for ashore the island was intent on its business and the antennae of the Jews, normally so sensitive to the faintest vibrations of danger[,] were necessarily retracted on the Sabbath—it brought a collective alarm to Statia and, among some of those present, a special fear of arrest. The British descent on the Piratical Rebel ships, safe, as they had assumed themselves to be in the harbour of St. Martin, was fresh in memory: now—and again wrongly—it was assumed that it was the turn of the five armed American ships in Statia's roadstead. With their crews and merchant passengers, this chilling visitation threatened two thousand men: but no less a frisson would have been shared by the captains and the crews of those twelve English merchant vessels which had so artfully made use of Admiral Hood's protection before disappearing from the convoy at a convenient moment. To these oppor-

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Figure 1. The interior of a coffeehouse. The customers, with one exception, are deeply interested in and dismayed at the news in the *Gazette Extraordinary,* which the title shows regards Lord Rodney's capture of the island of St. Eustatius. Print, William Bunbury, 1781. British Library, no. AN321183001.

tunists, in particular, interrupted thus as they unloaded their cargoes at Statia's warehouses, Rodney's dramatic appearance was indeed the very "thunderclap" he claimed it to be. It could not have been far from their thoughts that the seizure of their own vessels and impressment into His Majesty's navy would follow in short order.[1]

Thus Johannes de Graaff, governor of the Dutch island St. Eustatius (1776–81), reported the arrival of the British expeditionary force under the

1. *Nieuwe Nederlandsche Jaerboeken* (April 1782), cited in Ronald Hurst, *The Golden Rock: An Episode of the American War of Independence* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1996), 110–11.

command of Admiral George Rodney and General John Vaughan, February 3, 1781. A few weeks earlier, King George III had declared war on the Dutch Republic. When Benjamin Franklin read the declaration of war, he wrote to Charles W. F. Dumas, the correspondent of the Committee of Secret Correspondence in The Hague: "Surely there never was a more unjust War, it is manifestly such from their own manifesto."[2] What followed was one of the most shameless criminal acts in history. Edmund Burke (1729–97; member of the House of Commons since 1765) lamented during a debate in Parliament in December 1781: "The Americans our subjects, and the Dutch our natural allies, were treated with uncommon severity. . . . The poor Jews at St. Eustatius were treated in a worse manner."[3] Rodney and his men deported the Jewish merchants from St. Eustatius to St. Thomas and, like a swarm of locusts, stripped the island bare. Rodney himself was surprised at the magnitude of the spoil. "The riches of St. Eustatius," he wrote to his wife, "are beyond all comprehension; there were one hundred and thirty sail of ships in the road," besides the navy vessels. The Dutch convoy, which had left the island a few days before and was overtaken by his subordinates, was valued at more than half a million pounds sterling. "All the magazines and store-houses are filled, and even the beach covered with tobacco and sugar." On March 26 the admiral reported, "Upwards of fifty American vessels, loaded with tobacco, have been taken since the capture of this island." All together, the value of the loot was estimated by sober authorities at more than three million pounds sterling. Besides the inhabitants of other nations, more than two thousand American merchants and seamen were captured.[4]

For Americans, the otherwise virtually unknown Caribbean island of St. Eustatius is intimately linked to the history of the American Revolution. The symbolic moment was on November 16, 1776, when the cannons of Fort Oranje fired their ritual greeting to the rebel ship *Andrew Doria* (also known as the *Andrea Doria*), the "first salute" by a foreign power of the new American flag. The ship's red-and-white-striped flag represented America's new Continental Congress; the thirteen British North American colonies

2. Benjamin Franklin to Dumas, January 18, 1781, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin,* www.franklinpapers.org.

3. Edmund Burke, *The Speeches of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke in the House of Commons and in Whistminster Hall,* 4 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1816), 2:318–19.

4. J. F. Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution," *American Historical Review* 8 (1903): 700.

had only just declared their independence on July 4, 1776.[5] Indeed, the long-standing relationship between them was instrumental in the growth of both sets of colonies and ultimately in the success of the American Revolution. Yet the connection that linked the tiny Dutch island with the mainland Anglo-American colonies was far deeper than is often acknowledged by the existing historiography, which focuses predominantly on the Revolutionary years.[6]

The aim of this essay is to depict the long-standing trade relations between St. Eustatius and the thirteen British North American colonies between 1680 and 1780. Since the 1680s North American entrepreneurs and seafarers had taken over the role as carriers in the West Indies from the Dutch. From then on St. Eustatius was a regular stopover for them. St. Eustatius and the thirteen North American colonies were natural allies in the war against mercantilist protectionism. For St. Eustatius, North American provisions and building materials were essential to procure sugar from the French and British West Indies. Furthermore, the islanders were dependent on the carrying capacity of the Americans. For the North Americans, on the other hand, the free port of Statia was a market to procure raw materials for the distilling industry, consumer goods, and cash. As a result of the American connection, St. Eustatius grew spectacularly, becoming one of the busiest ports in all America.[7] On the other hand, after 1780 for both St. Eustatius and the North American colonies the situation changed fundamentally. St. Eustatius lost its unique role as emporium. Inter-imperial interloping and smuggling was on the retreat as even the British established free ports.[8] Meanwhile, the thirteen North American

5. Barbara W. Tuchman, *The First Salute* (New York: Knopf, 1988), 15.

6. Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution"; Tuchman, *The First Salute;* Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas, 1680–1791,* ed. Maria J. L. van Yperen (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1985); Wim Klooster, *Illicit Riches: Dutch Trade in the Caribbean, 1648–1795* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1998), 89; Hurst, *The Golden Rock.*

7. Michael J. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680–1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 165.

8. J. de Hullu, "De handel van St. Eustatius in 1786," *West-Indische Gids* 3, no. 1 (1922): 35–50; J. de Hullu, "Memorie van den Amerikaanschen Raad over de Hollandsche bezititngen in West-Indië in juli 1806," *West-Indische Gids* 4, no. 1 (1923): 387–98; J. de Hullu, "St. Eustatius, St. Martin en Saba op het laatst van den 18de eeuw," *West-Indische Gids* 9, no. 2 (1928): 385–88; Frances Armytage, *The Free Port System in the British West Indies: A Study in Commercial Policy, 1766–1822* (London: Longmans, 1953); Theodore C. Hinckley, "The Decline of Caribbean Smuggling," *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 15, no. 1 (1963): 107–21; Wim

colonies freed themselves from British rule. No longer subjected to the trade constraints of the Acts of Navigation, over time the Americans became the carriers of the world.[9]

The story of this relationship is told chronologically, and it has a dual purpose. First, it presents the never-before-told story of the economic development of St. Eustatius between 1680 and 1780. For this purpose, new and extensive quantitative information will be presented. Second, by distinguishing different phases, it becomes clear how the ebbs and flows of this emporium were affected by other developments in the Atlantic world, in particular war and peace. The argument rests on three premises. First, the combination of Dutch free trade ideology with the poverty of resources on St. Eustatius led the Dutch to privilege interloper trade. The Dutch–North American trade was thus a symbiotic relationship between material needs and ideology. Second, Anglo-Americans were drawn to St. Eustatius by their negative balance of payments with Britain. This led to an extensive Dutch–North American trade, which in the end helped provoke and then support the American Revolution. In that respect, Dutch free trade ideology suited the North Americans much better as an economic system than the British closed system of protection and mercantilism. Finally, documenting the St. Eustatius–North American trade helps us better understand the American Revolution's origins and success. These premises are addressed in more detail in the first section. An introduction to the physical and human geography of St. Eustatius follows in the second section. Sections 3 through 7 describe the subsequent phases of development up to 1780.

1. SETTING THE STAGE

From its founding in the 1620s, the Dutch West India Company (WIC) had claimed a commercial exclusivity over shipping to its overseas settlements similar to that of the other European powers. In the 1630s, however, it did something revolutionary: it opened most of its territories, with the notable exception of West Africa and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, to all Dutch vessels, both company and private, and permitted direct trade from its colonies to their Spanish, French, and English neighbors. By the 1650s

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Klooster, "Inter-Imperial Smuggling in the Americas, 1600–1800," in Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault, eds., *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500–1830* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 176–79.

9. James R. Fichter, *So Great a Proffit: How the East Indies Trade Transformed Anglo-American Capitalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Dutch entrepreneurs had become the dominant force in the Caribbean. In 1688 the WIC directors went a step further and allowed foreign ships to trade with St. Eustatius. Ships that had not departed from a Dutch port (usually foreign ships) were obliged to pay a 2 percent recognition fee to the company, on both incoming and outgoing goods. Over time the obligations for foreign ships changed but were never retracted.[10]

The Dutch ideology of a borderless free-market Atlantic economy was a threat to the developing mercantilism of the other empires. It conflicted irreconcilably with Iberian, French, and English protectionism, for Dutch commerce depended on breaching their closed commercial systems. Dutch vessels undercut mercantilism when they traded in the ostensibly closed ports of English, French, and Spanish colonies. Merchants and mariners from foreign colonies did as well when they visited Dutch "free ports" such as St. Eustatius. Visiting a free port open to all to trade was a violation of their empires' laws.[11]

The thirteen North American colonies were a special case. For these overseas settlements the imperial economic scheme was in theory rather straightforward. The export of commodities, preferably staple goods like tobacco, would generate credit in the metropolis to finance the import of provisions and dry goods. The Navigation Acts had regulated this process since their initial passage in 1651. They were designed to generate revenue for England's treasury, encourage the growth of England's merchant marine, and exclude foreigners—particularly the Dutch—from the valuable colonial trades. The plan had just one tiny flaw. The colonies, especially New England and the middle colonies, suffered considerable deficits in the commodity trade with Great Britain. Pennsylvania, New York, and New England made some effort to reduce the deficit by exporting commodities to southern Europe, the Wine Islands (Madeira, the Azores, and the Canary Islands), Africa, and the West Indies. Much of the deficit was made up through the provisions of shipping and other commercial services and through the sale of ships. Over time, colonial merchants expanded their activities, beginning as commission agents and later becoming both independent exporters and the owners and operators of their own ships. Though

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10. Resoluties van Heren X en Staten-Generaal betreffende de betaling van recognitie door vreemde schepen, 1675–1750, Nationaal Archief, The Hague (hereafter NA), Collectie Verspreide West-Indische Stukken 172.

11. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 161–62; Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, eds., *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

Figure 2. View of St. Eustatius from the southeast. In the middle, on the seashore, is Lower Town. On the right is Upper Town. Print, A. Nelson, 1774. Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam, no. A.1029(02)1.

this development occurred first in colonies that lacked a staple export, eventually indigenous merchants and shipowners were active everywhere.[12]

2. LITTLE AMSTERDAM: ST. EUSTATIUS' DEVELOPMENT AS A FREE PORT

The physical geography of the island explains much about the appeal of trade as its economic mainstay. The human geography of the colony reflected the development of its trade, including the major shift from selling slaves to selling sugar. All these trades involved North Americans to one degree or another, knitting together St. Eustatius and British North America in a symbiotic relationship of mercantile and social networks that culminated in the American Revolution.

Edmund Burke described the island as follows in 1781: "This island was different from all others. It seemed to have been shot up from the ocean by some convulsion; the chimney of a volcano, rocky and barren. It had no produce. . . . It seemed to be but a late production of nature, a sort of *lusus naturae,* hastily framed, neither shapen nor organised, and differing in qualities from all other. Its proprietors had, in the spirit of commerce, made it an emporium for all the world; a mart, a magazine for all the nations of

12. John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607–1789* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 79–83; Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 1–16.

the earth. . . . Its wealth was prodigious, arising from its industry, and the nature of its commerce."[13]

The island's harbor made the colony's fortune. Made up of two extinct volcanoes, St. Eustatius is not as well suited for plantation agriculture as some of the other Leeward Islands. Consequently, other Europeans had not yet colonized it before the Dutch arrived in 1636. There are only about 1,400 acres of arable ground on the island, situated along the spine of land connecting the two peaks. The Dutch began growing tobacco, then sugar, employing an increasing number of enslaved Africans to do the work. It was not long, however, before they realized that the rocky island's most precious asset was the deep, protected anchorage on its west side. Called Oranje Baai (Orange Bay) by the Dutch, it made for an ideal port: free of navigational hazards, directly approachable from the sea, and easily defended from the high cliffs surrounding it. A sandy beach extending the length of the shoreline provided a ready storage space for goods even without the warehouses built later.[14]

Freshwater was scarce. The island's relatively low relief means that little rain falls, keeping it relatively dry, and there are no swamps. The Dutch built cisterns, but there were years in which the cisterns were empty and water had to be shipped from neighboring islands. Arriving ships sometimes had difficulty obtaining freshwater from the government's reservoirs. In that case, they had to purchase water from someone else on the island or sail to another island. The lack of water prevented St. Eustatius from developing into a full-fledged plantation economy. The size of the population, including the slaves, remained small (see table 1). But the benefits far outweighed the setbacks. Yellow fever, one of the main killers in the Caribbean, was virtually unknown on the island, as was malaria. Everything indicates that living conditions were comparatively good. Life expectancy on the is-

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13. Debate on Mr. Burke's Motion relating to the Seizure and Confiscation of Private Property in the Island of St. Eustatius, May 14, 1781, in *Parliamentary History of England, from the Norman Conquest in 1066 to the Year 1803,* ed. William Cobbett, 36 vols. (London: T. C. Hansard, 1806–20), 22:220–21.

14. Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580–1680* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1971), 261–63; Christian J. Koot, *Empire at the Periphery: British Colonists, Anglo-Dutch Trade, and the Development of the British Atlantic, 1621–1713* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 136–38; Norman F. Barka, "Citizens of St. Eustatius, 1781: A Historical and Archaeological Study," in Robert L. Paquette and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *The Lesser Antilles in the Age of European Expansion* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 226.

Table 1
Population of St. Eustatius, 1665–1790

Year	*Whites*	*Free people of color*	*Slaves*	*Total*
1665	330	?	840	1,170
1715	524	?	750	1,274
1723*	426	?	871	1,297
1729	431	?	944	1,375
1732	532	?	911	1,443
1738	627	?	1,191	1,818
1741	539	?	1,239	1,778
1747	1,002	?	1,513	2,515
1758	868	?	1,479	2,347
1762	778	?	1,339	2,117
1768	872	?	1,226	2,098
1779	1,574	?	1,631	3,205
1784	872	113	2,962	3,947
1790	2,375	511	4,944	7,830

*Seventy-five Christian and five Jewish households, all European.

Source: Lijst van alle hoofden, January 20, 1723, NA, NWIC 1181, no. 173; Lijst van alle duijtes hoofden, January 20, 1723, NA, NWIC 1181, no. 174; Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade,* 197; Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 165; Barka, "Citizens of St. Eustatius," 223–38; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 131, 138, 152; Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden in de achttiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: S. Emmering, 1979), 157, 232.

land was similar to that in Europe. Statians boasted of living on one of the healthier Caribbean islands.[15]

The environmental conditions, combined with the Dutch free trade ideology, resulted in a transition in St. Eustatius' commercial and social composition from plantation to emporium, or what Michael Jarvis in his study

15. J. de Hullu, "Het leven op St. Eustatius omstreeks 1792," *West-Indische Gids* 1, no. 2 (1919), 44–50; Marijke Koning, "De natuurlijke verklaring. St. Eustatius en de oorzaak van de plantage-economie," in Maritza Coomans et al.,, eds., *De Horen en zijn echo* (Bloemendaal: Stichting Libri Antilliani, 1994), 239–42; Log of the *Dordregt,* May 31, 1759–March 27, 1760, NA, Archieven van de Admiraliteits-colleges 1153 (D); NA, Archieven van St. Eustatius, St. Maarten en Saba (1709–1828), 127 f. 588.

of Bermuda has called "the shift from field to sea."[16] Geographically, economically, and socially the island was split in three: the countryside, Upper Town, and Lower Town. The countryside with its plantations encompassed the areas between the Quill and the volcanic hills to the north and was a domain of slavery. On average, the slave population was around a dozen per plantation. The number of plantations increased from thirty-five in the 1730s to seventy-five in the 1750s. Hundreds of slaves lived in the countryside with only a few Europeans. The plantation slaves, however, represented less than half of the slave population.[17]

The Dutch-speaking European elite lived in Upper Town, in the shadow of fort Oranje. According to Admiral Rodney in 1781: "The Upper Town is upon a steep Cliff, at least seventy foot perpendicular. You ascend to it by a zig zag road, very difficult, steep, & must have cost the Expense of much Blood, had the enemy defended it. The Town is neat, well laid out, healthy, airy and for the West Indies Beautiful. In it resided the Governour and all the Principal People."[18] A few Dutch families dominated the island's economic and political life. Newcomers found it almost impossible to gain admission into their circle. The Heyliger, Doncker, De Windt, Lindesay, Markoe, and Cuviljé families formed a closely knit oligarchy. They owned the plantations, divided the company jobs among themselves, were the captains of the militia, and dominated the sugar trade. Their family members settled in every corner of the Caribbean, not only on the Dutch islands of Saba, St. Martin, Curaçao, and Aruba, but especially on the Danish West Indian islands. As the largest European group on St. Thomas, Dutch planters dominated culture, politics, and the economy almost from the outset. Creole Dutch became the colony's lingua franca.[19] The tentacles of the Statia families extended to North America. For example, Nicolaas Heyliger (who died in 1699) married Anna Bartlett from Marblehead and settled

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16. Jarvis noticed many similarities between Bermuda and St. Eustatius. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 64, 162.

17. Richard Grant Gilmore, "All the Documents Are Destroyed! Documenting Slavery for St. Eustatius, Netherlands Antilles," in Jay B. Haviser and Kevin C. MacDonald, eds., *African Re-Genesis: Confronting Social Issues in the Diasp*ora (London: UCL Press, 2006), 73–74; Barka, "Citizens of St. Eustatius," 228–29; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 89; R. Grant Gilmore, "Shawn Lester Burials: White Hook or *Witten Hoek* Area Excavation" (St. Eustatius: St. Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research, 2011), available at www.secar.org/docs/SE_61_Union_Plantation_Final_Report_2010.pdf.

18. Cited in Barka, "Citizens of St. Eustatius," 228.

19. Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 14, 32–36.

in Salem, Massachusetts. Abraham Markoe moved to Philadelphia around 1770.[20] Admiral Rodney in 1781 found few of the island's elite to be involved in illegal practices.[21]

Lower Town was the center of the island's maritime and commercial activities. A visitor observed in 1792: "I go from the mountain to the Bay [Oranje Baai], where all the warehouses are about 600, I should think. This makes a small city in itself. . . . The roadstead is always full of Spanish, American, French, and English barks that come and go every day and with whom we do business; the Bay is Little Amsterdam."[22] Between one hundred and two hundred barks and schooners harbored in Oranje Baai during the eighteenth century, most of them Bermuda-built. At least half of the island's population was directly involved as sailors in the shipping industry, supplemented by dozens of porters, joiners, coopers, and blacksmiths. The mariners and artisans were a heterogeneous group of whites, creoles, free people of color, and slaves, coming from Statia, Europe, Africa, and the West Indies. Hundreds of Barbadians were employed on Statian vessels, for example.[23] Lower Town housed most of the private merchants, active in all sorts of shady wheeling and dealing. Some 160 merchants can be identified

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20. M. R. H. Calmeyer, "Het geslacht Heyliger. Planters, reders en regenten op de Bovenwindse Antillen," *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie en het Iconografisch Bureau* 27 (1973): 97–180; M. R. H. Calmeyer, "Het geslacht Heyliger. Planters, reders en regenten op de Bovenwindse Antillen. Aanvullingen en verbeteringen op het artikel in Jaarboek 1973," *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie en het Iconografisch Bureau* 29 (1975): 270–84; M. R. H. Calmeyer and Ariëtte Schippers, "Het geslacht Zymonsz Doncker. Zeeuwse kolonisten op de Bovenwindse Antillen," *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie en het Iconografisch Bureau* 37 (1983): 193–203; M. R. H. Calmeyer, "Het geslacht Cuviljé op de Bovenwindse Antillen," *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* 95, no. 3 (1978): 70–95; Abraham Markoe Jr. Correspondence, box 1, folders 6–7, and box 2, folders 1–3, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Collection 1935 (Markoe Family Papers, 1773–1940); Henery B. Hoff and F. Kenneth Barta, "De Windt Families of the West Indies," *Genealogist* 3 (1982), 106–27; Svend E. Holsoe and Betsy Resende, "Virgin Island Families: de Windt/de Wint," at "Virgin Islands Families," www.vifamilies.org/dlistings.html; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 151–52. For contacts between St. Eustatius and Marblehead, see Daniel Vickers, "An Honest Tar: Ashley Bowen of Marblehead," *New England Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (1996): 531–53.

21. G. B. Mundy, *The Life and Correspondence of the late Admiral Lord Rodney*, 2 vols. (London: Murray, 1830), 2:45.

22. Quoted in Barka, "Citizens of St. Eustatius," 227.

23. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 88, 123, 169, 411; De Hullu, "St. Eustatius, St. Martin en Saba," 385–88.

for the 1750s (see Appendix I). Fewer than 10 percent of them belonged to the elite families of Cuviljé, Doncker, Heyliger, Lindesay, and De Windt. The rest formed the island's middle class, which had three origins. The largest group, consisting of 101 males in 1781, had Dutch roots and names such as Aertsen, Backer, Cannegieter, Van Put, and Van Veen. A specific Dutch subgroup were the Jews. In 1723 there were five Jewish families, consisting of over twenty persons, predominantly Sephardim hailing from Amsterdam. They enjoyed freedom of religion on the island.[24] The second largest group came from the French sugar islands, men such as Foulquier, Godet, Pubaud, Beauyon, and Riorteau. A third group hailed from the British Empire, including Britain, the British West Indies, and British North America. In 1758 there were several Bermudan merchant houses in Lower Town. North Americans had merchant houses there as well. Thomas Allen, a New Londoner in partnership with Francis Goelet of New York, for instance, maintained correspondence with merchants in Salem, Newburyport, Boston, Newport, New London, New York, Philadelphia, and Savannah. During the 1770s Samson Mears acted as agent for Aaron Lopez from Newport. The Philadelphia merchant Thomas Riche used the firm of Hurley and Gurley, later Gurley and Riche (Gurley's new partner was John Riche, Thomas's brother). During the 1770s Henry Johnston and Fergus Peterson acted as agents for Glaswegian merchant house Alexander Houston and Company. In 1781 some thirty-four Scots lived on the island. And there were Irish as well, with the merchant house of Haffey.[25] Over time,

24. Lijst van alle duijtes hoofden, January 20, 1723, NA, NWIC 1181, no. 174; Everard Raecx to Heren X, February 5, 1731, NA, NWIC 1184, no. 1; J. Hartog, *The Jews and St. Eustatius* (Aruba: n.p., 1976).

25. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 353; Francis Goelet, *The Voyages and Travels of Francis Goelet, 1746–1758,* ed. Kenneth Scott (New York: Queens College Press, 1970); Goelet to Allen, December 24, 1755, and Allen to Jos. Chew, March 10, 1757, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Allen Family Collection; Stanley F. Chyet, *Lopez of Newport: Colonial American Merchant Prince* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), 147–48; Samson Mears to Aaron Lopez, American Jewish Historical Society, New York (hereafter AJHS), Aaron Lopez Papers, box 11, folder 39; James H. Soltow, "Thomas Ruch's 'Adventure' in French Guiana, 1764–1766," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 82, no. 4 (1959): 409–19; Alexander Houston to Henry Johnston, March 22, 1777, December 4, 1777, and January 28, 1778, National Library of Scotland (hereafter NLS), Edinburgh, MS 8793 (letter book, 1776–78), f. 204, 284, 352; Alexander Houston to Fergus Peterson, January 3, 1780, NLS, MS 8794 (letter book, 1778–81), f. 256; Douglas J. Hamilton, "Scottish Trading in the Caribbean: The Rise and Fall of Houston and Co.," in Ned. C. Landsman, ed., *Nation and Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press,

as trade with North America intensified, English-speaking merchants became so dominant that English surpassed Dutch as the island's prevailing language. The British traveler Janet Schaw provided a depiction of Lower Town on the eve of the American Revolution, in 1775:

> I understand, however, that the whole riches of the island consists in its merchandize, and they are obliged to the neighboring islands for subsistence; while they in return furnish them with contraband commodities of all kinds. The town consists of one street a mile long, but very narrow and most disagreeable, as every one smokes tobacco, and the wiffs are constantly blown in your face.
>
> But never did I meet with such variety, there was a merchant vending his goods in Dutch, another in French, a third in Spanish, etc., etc. They all wear the habit of their country and the diversity is really amusing. The first that welcomed us ashore were a set of Jews. As I had never seen a Jew in his habit, except Mr. Diggs in the character of Shylock, I could not look on the wretches without shuddering.[26]

A Pirates' Nest

By 1680 St. Eustatius was a full-scale trading depot with extensive and diverse support networks. Lying among the Leeward Islands, St. Eustatius was also a perfect base for smugglers. The small island, stocked with Dutch traders, enslaved Africans, European goods, and other necessaries, provided neighboring English and French planters with relatively easy access to all Dutch commerce had to offer, drawing the complaints of their governors. Thomas Lynch, governor of Jamaica, reported in June 1671 that several masters at Montserrat "told us most of ye produce of that Island [Montserrat] & Antego is carryed away to Statia by ye Dutch, & assured us that the last yearse they fetched thence in sloopes neere 40,000 Lb Tobacco." The tobacco sent to Dutch St. Eustatius was a significant part of the two islands' production.[27] In May 1687 Captain George Loe, investigating the "de-

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2001), 94–126; Douglas J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750–1820* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 71, 88–90; Mark S. Quintanilla, "'From a Dear and Worthy Land': Michael Keane and the Irish in the Eighteenth-Century Irish West Indies," *New Hibernia Review* 13, no. 4 (2009): 59–76.

26. Janet Schaw, *Journal of a Lady Of Quality, Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the Years 1774 to 1776,* ed. Evangeline Walker Andrews (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 135–36.

27. Thomas Lynch to unknkown recipient, June 4, 1761, National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA), Colonial Office (CO) 1/20 f. 188; Christian J. Koot, "In Pursuit of Profit: Persistent Dutch Influence on the Inter-Imperial Trade of New York and the English Leeward Islands, 1621–89" (Ph.D. diss., University of Dela-

frauding of the royal revenue in the Leeward Islands," described how smugglers used St. Eustatius: "There are generally several great ships lying at Statia [and] on their way from Holland they generally touch at all our islands on pretext of watering [and] all the planters go aboard and . . . agree for what is on board. . . . Having disposed of their cargoes the ships go back to Statia, where they wait for the planters to send their sugar."[28] The Dutch "sell European goods thirty per cent, cheaper than we [the English] and will pay dearer for American Goods." Between January and August 1688, eight ships with a full cargo of French and English sugar had left the island for the Dutch Republic, while four hundred hogsheads of sugar still lay in the WIC's warehouse.[29] By 1690 the reputation of St. Eustatius was such that the former British West Indian planter Dalby Thomas claimed that a "great quantity of Commodities [was] sent out of the Leeward Caribee Islands, and sold to the Dutch . . . under the name St. Eustace Sugar" in his pamphlet urging greater imperial attention to the Caribbean, *An Historical Account of the Rise and Growth of the West-India Collonies.*[30]

St. Eustatius had a "Wild West" quality in the late seventeenth century. Its nominal ruler was the Dutch West India Company, but its negligible profits provided little incentive to invest much in its administration. As subcontractors of the Spanish *asiento,* the company's interest lay with Curaçao and its slave market. Violent eruptions of family feuds and rivalries made the island difficult to govern. At the same time, it was regularly attacked and plundered during the era's long series of wars. The last such attack was in January 1713, when Jacques Cassard (1679–1740) ransacked the island. The lawlessness and looting seriously hampered the island's development. The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) soon brought peace, but it also deprived the company of its role in the *asiento* trade. Only then did the WIC slowly gain some control over the island. This is best illustrated with the island's development as a slave market.[31]

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ware, 2005), 234. For the contacts between St. Eustatius and the British islands into the first decade of the eighteenth century, see Koot, *Empire at the Periphery,* 182–201.

28. Report of George St. Loe, May 1687, *Calendar of State Papers: Colonial Series, America and the West Indies, 1574–1738,* ed. W. Noel Sainsbury, J. W. Fortescue, and Cecil Headlam, 44 vols. (London: Public Records Office, 1860–1953), 12:378–79

29. Letter to Heren X, August 24, 1688, NA, NWIC 1180, no. 38.

30. Koot, *Empire at the Periphery,* 138.

31. L. Knappert, *Geschiedenis van Bovenwindsche eilanden in de achttiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: S. Emmering, 1979), 6–36; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 129–31; Han Jordaan, "The Curaçao Slave Market: From *Asiento*

Slave Market

The Dutch West India Company did not initially recognize the island's potential as an outpost of the slave trade. Preoccupied with the slave market on Curaçao, it largely neglected St. Eustatius. The few enslaved Africans sent by the company to St. Eustatius were destined for the dozen or so sugar plantations on the island. The slaves, however, were too few or of inferior quality for the planters' needs, many of them being so-called macron slaves from Curaçao: older slaves or those with some physical or mental impairment that made them unacceptable for the *asiento* trade. In 1687 some fifty slaves arrived on St. Eustatius. According to Lucas Schorer, commander of St. Eustatius 1686–89, the island was actually in need of at least 150 slaves at that time, an observation shared by the planters.[32]

St. Eustatius' neighbors noticed the island's potential to become an international depot for slaves before the Dutch did. In the 1680s agents of the Royal African Company complained that leading colonists on Nevis as well as St. Christopher's often talked about how much cheaper and easier it was to buy slaves from the Dutch at St. Eustatius than from the Royal African Company. The English company feared that the Dutch would "'establish a magazine for negroes'" on the island.[33] The Dutch, however, could not yet supply the needs of the plantation owners on the surrounding islands. When, a year later, several vessels coming from the French and English islands with sugar arrived hoping to acquire some six hundred slaves, they left empty-handed.[34] Isaac Lammont, commander of St. Eustatius 1701–4, immediately realized that the island would make an ideal slave-trading station. In 1701 he requested that the WIC assign several slave transports for this purpose. He claimed that he could sell three thousand to four thousand slaves annually. As he put it, the "trade would render much profit to Your Honors and also be the only means to end the interloper trade here, as the foreign planters would rather buy from me than from interlopers."[35]

Trade to Free Trade, 1700–1730," in Postma and Enthoven, *Riches from Atlantic Commerce,* 219–57.

32. Lucas Schorer to Heren X, August 5, 1687, NA, NWIC 1180, no. 9; Request of planters, August 16, 1688, NA, NWIC 1180, no. 33; List of negroes shipped from Curaçao, NA, NWIC 1180, no 44, October 26, 1688; Johannes Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 197.

33. Koot, *Empire at the Periphery,* 128–29.

34. Letter to Heren X, August 24, 1688, NA, NWIC 1180, no. 38.

35. Isaac Lammont to Heren X, November 14, 1701, NA, NWIC 248, no. 19, cited in Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade,* 197.

Without a reliable supply of slaves, the islanders had turned to private traders interloping in the WIC's slave-trade monopoly. Ruud Paesie estimates that an average of four Dutch interloper slave ships, each with a human cargo of three hundred Africans on board, sailed annually between 1675 and 1730. Most of these illicit slavers called at St. Eustatius. Initially they anchored in one of the remote bays of the island. In 1687, for instance, an interloper from Flushing anchored on the leeside of the island. In four weeks' time two hundred slaves were sold to French and English planters and a return cargo taken on board.[36] In 1717 four to five interlopers lay at anchor at the same time in Tommelendijkbaai. News of newly arrived interlopers spread like fire across the Caribbean. As a contemporary English book described it:

> Its road is the Place where Dutch interlopers from the Coast of Africa seldom fail to call at. In a few Days all our Leeward Islands are informed of this. In Places, such as our Islands are, it is not much to be wondered at if there are Persons who run some Hazard for the Hope of a considerable Gain; so that all the ready Money which they can advance at any rate, is carried by them on Board these Ships, where Negroes are sold to them frequently 20 per Cent. Cheaper than our own Ships do afford them. This ready money is a great Temptation to some planters who sell their sugars to them at less than the current Price; and under Pretence of sending it in Sloops to our own shipping it is sent on Board these Interlopers.[37]

By 1715 the illicit slave trade had shifted onshore and become so bold that when the new administrator (*fiscaal*) Johannes Meijer arrived at Oranje Baai, his ship was shot at by the interlopers *Jager* and *Vergulde Vrijheid.* The two ships' masters went on land daily to sell their slaves publicly. The sugar and cacao they traded for were weighed in the company's weighing house with one of the WIC employees, Jacob Stevens, assisting the interlopers.[38]

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36. Schorer to Heren X, August 5, 1687, NA, NWIC 1180, no. 9; Knappert, *Geschiedenis van Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 86–87; Jean Baptiste Labat, *The Memoirs of Père Labat, 1693–1705,* ed. John Eaden (London: Frank Cass, 1970), 61–62, 210.

37. Elizabeth Donnan, ed., *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America,* 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1930–35), 2:xxi, quoted in Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 119.

38. Johannes Schorer et al. to Heren X, April 18, 1719, NA, NWIC 1181, no. 41; Ruud Paesie, "Lorrendraaiers, enterloopers en octrooidieven. De Zeeuwse smokkelhandel op West Afrika tijdens het zeventiende-eeuwse handelsmonopolie van de Tweede West-Indische Compagnie, 1764–1700," *Archief. Mededelingen van het Koninklijk Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen* (2005): 36–37; Ruud Paesie, *"Lorrendrayen op Africa." De illegale goederen- en slavenhandel op West Afrika tijdens*

These illegal activities were a needle in the eye of the WIC directors. But they also revealed St. Eustatius' potential as a slave market. With the *asiento* now expired, the company began to direct the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the island in the 1720s, and St. Eustatius briefly became the cornerstone of the Dutch slave trade. The first company slave ship, *Leusden,* arrived from Africa in 1721.[39] Over that decade, twenty-three WIC ships disembarked nearly 11,000 slaves at the island. Three of these ships disembarked only a portion of their slaves on the island, taking the remainder to Curaçao. The last WIC slaver, *Phenix,* arrived in 1729. To accommodate this trade, a two-story slave house was built in the Waterfort (fort Amsterdam), near the shoreline. It could house 400–450 slaves awaiting transshipment.[40]

Almost all slaves landed on St. Eustatius were sold to foreign buyers. In the years 1721–23 over one thousand slaves were sold to the English from Saint Christopher (Saint Kitts). Martinique and Guadeloupe were the next-most-frequent destinations.[41] North Americans purchased some 5 percent of the available slaves (see table 2). That would mean that during the 1720s, on average around fifty enslaved Africans were shipped to British North America annually, almost exclusively to New York and New England.

The case of the *Gouden Put,* master Benjamin Kreeft, can illustrate how the St. Eustatius slave market operated. The ship had taken 390 enslaved Africans on board from the Congo area. During the middle passage 18 Africans died. After arriving at St. Eustatius on June 28, 1725, another 7 slaves passed away. In the end, a total of 365 Africans were put up for sale. The slaves were sold in two ways. Between July 4 and August 13, 1725, 326 healthy slaves were sold for a fixed price directly to the buyers (*verkocht uit de hand*). On August 14, the day after the last healthy slaves were sold, 38 *macrons* were auctioned. Finally, a last sick slave was auctioned on January

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het achttiende-eeuwse handelsmonopolie van de West-Indische Compagnie, 1700–1734 (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 2008), 250–55; Ruud Paesie, "Van monopolie naar vrijhandel; de illegale slavenhandel tijdens het octrooi van de Tweede West-Indische compagnie, 1674–1730," *Oso. Tijdschrift voor Surinamistiek en het Caribische gebied* 28, no. 2 (2009): 103–21; Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade,* 198.

39. Between 1719 and 1726 the *Leuden* made four slave voyages to St. Eustatius. Leo Balai, *Het slavenship* Leusden. *Slavenschepen en de West-Indische Compagnie, 1720–1738* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2011), 137–61.

40. Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade,* 199–200; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 136–37, 185.

41. William Hart to Board of Trade, February 15, 1726/7, in Donnan, *Documents,* 2:336; Klooster *Illicit Riches,* 119.

Table 2
North American buyers of slaves, 1725–1727

		North Americans		
Slaver	*Slaves sold*	*Slaves purchased*	*Name*	*From*
Gouden Put	326	2	Simon Bako	New York
		1	Titus Patriq	New London
		34	Henricus Roo	New York
Phenix	433	8	Joseph Kait	Rhode Island
Duin	90	2	George Barroco	Boston
Rusthof	347	6	Isaaq Dupie	Boston
		11	Obadiah Hunt	New York
		4	Richard Irens	Boston
Total	1,196	68		

Source: Account of the *Gouden Put,* 1725, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 18; Account of the *Phenix,* 1726, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 33/34; Account of the *Duin,* 1726, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 56; Account of the *Rusthof,* 1727, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 89.

10, 1726.[42] The net proceeds of this human cargo were 26,492 pesos. The money was used to purchases a cargo of sugar, cotton, and fustic to be shipped with the *Phenix,* master Jacob Vallee (see table 3).

The WIC slave trade came to an end in 1730 for several reasons. First, Jacobus Stevensen, commander of St. Eustatius 1721–22, had started to sell the slaves to French planters on long-term credit. Johannes Lindesay, commander of St. Eustatius 1722–28, in conjunction with his business associate Joanz Doncker, extended this practice. The outstanding credit to the planters increased from 34,727 guilders in 1722 to 377,909 guilders in 1728. P. J. Spiering and Theodore Godet were send to Guadeloupe and Grande-Terre to collect the debts, but in vain; a sum of 276,099 guilders was never collected. Second, Everard Raecx, commander of St. Eustatius 1728–33, saw no future for the slave trade, claiming the English were flooding the market, and that slave prices had dropped significantly.[43]

42. Account of sales, 1725, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 18. "The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database," slave voyage no. 10157, www.slavevoyages.org.

43. Johannes Lindesay to Heren X, May 14, 1727, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 75; Raecx to Heren X, February 5, 1731, NA, NWIC 1184, no. 2; Raecx to Heren X, April 16, 1731, NA, NWIC 1184, no. 7; Accounts, 1717–40, NA, NWIC 269; Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade,* 200.

Table 3
Account of the *Gouden Put*, master Benjamin Kreeft, 1725

Slaves		*Pesos*			
Purchased in Africa	390				
Died on middle passage	18				
Died on the island	7				
Total for sale	365				
Sold	326	25,529			
Public auction	39	2,215			
Gross total		27,744			
Less 1½ and ½% for the commanders		554			
Less ship's provisions		698			
Net total		26,492			
Shipped in the Phenix, *master Jacob Vallee, August 3, 1726*					
				Lbs.	
Sugar			24,016	538,413	873½ hogshead
Cotton			1,041	7,141	27 bales
Fustic or yellowwood			206	41,295	
Less		25,263			
Less hoops, nails, and cooper		1			
For the company directors		1,228			

Source: Account of the *Gouden Put*, 1725, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 18; Account of the *Phenix*, 1726, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 33/34.

Figure 3. Slaves working on a sugar cane plantation on St. Eustatius, ca. 1760. A: storage. B: sugar mill. C: house. D: field with sugar cane. Journal of Johannes Veltkamp, ca. 1760, Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam, no. A.1710(03).

Third, during the 1730s the WIC withdrew from human trafficking and officially opened up the trans-Atlantic slave trade to private companies.

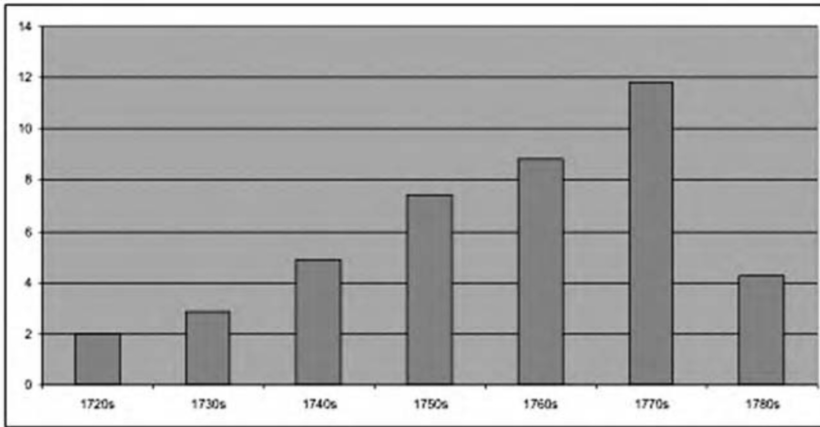
King Sugar

Sugar had became an important product to the island in the seventeenth century. After 1730, however, sugar was truly king. Between 1720 and 1780 sugar exports to the Netherlands grew sixfold (see graph 1). The culmination came in 1779, when a staggering 22.7 millions pounds of sugar were exported. St. Eustatius had surpassed the plantation colony of Suriname as the main supplier for the Dutch sugar refiners.[44]

Where was all this sugar coming from? Only a small portion of the sugar was produced on the island itself, where production expanded from 450,000 pounds in 1740 to 590,000 pounds in 1781.[45] Almost all the sugar sold from the island was imported. To procure it, Statian merchants supplied the

44. St. Eustatius re-exports consisted of sugar (72 percent), coffee (15 percent), tobacco (6 percent), and not specified (7 percent). Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 191; Postma and Enthoven, *Riches from Atlantic Commerce,* 453–56.

45. W. R. Menkman, "Sint Eustatius' gouden tijd," *West-Indische Gids* 14, no. 1 (1933): 369–96, esp. 385; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 185; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 95.



Graph 1. Annual average sugar re-exports per decade from St. Eustatius to the Dutch Republic, 1721–90 (millions of pounds). Source: Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 226–27.

French, British, and Spanish planters with dry goods, provisions, building materials, and African slaves, which were imported from the Dutch Republic, Ireland, the Wine Islands, North America, and Africa. St. Eustatius was like a spider in a web spanning most of the Atlantic world (see table 4). Only a small number of all incoming ships, some 5 percent, participated in the import trade (see Appendix II). They came from different parts of the Atlantic world, carrying different goods, all of them passing through St. Eustatius.

The Dutch Republic usually sent a dozen or so ships a year to St. Eustatius. They carried dry goods like hats, silk stockings, paper, glass objects, axes, pots and pans, and fabric, especially Osnaburg linen, a cheap and coarse fabric used to clothe slaves. Ireland supplied the Caribbean with salted provisions, butter, and cheese. Much of this went to the French islands, but some went also to the Dutch plantation colonies in Guyana. Occasionally, a Dutch ship called at an Irish port. British ships, presumably coming from North America, also sailed via Ireland to St. Eustatius. In periods when France was at war with Britain, many Dutch and American ships visited Ireland to get provisions for the French West Indies.[46]

46. Bertie Mandelblatt, "A Transatlantic Commodity: Irish Salt Beef in the French Atlantic World," *History Workshop Journal,* no. 63 (2007): 18–47; Thomas M. Truxes, *Irish-American Trade, 1660–1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

The Wine Islands acted as supplier of wine for the Atlantic world. North Americans were more active in this trade than the Dutch. In years of peace, a dozen or so British North American ships arrived in St. Eustatius from Madeira. During the American Revolution in particular, Madeirans exported significant quantities of wine to St. Eustatius and Curaçao.[47]

The remainder of the provisions, especially cheese, fish, flour, and bread, came from North America—cheese and fish predominantly from New England, flour and bread mostly from New York and Philadelphia. Livestock was a typical North American commodity: sheep and poultry were consumed; horses and mules were used to power sugar mills. The North Americans also supplied building materials, such as planks, shingles, hoops, staves, bricks, turpentine, and tar. North American candles were made of spermaceti, a wax from the sperm whale. The candle-making industry was centered in New England. Another specifically North American export commodity was wooden furniture.[48]

Between 1731 and 1775 on average one private slaver called annually at St. Eustatius, delivering between two hundred and three hundred enslaved Africans.[49] Many of the private slavers were foreign. In 1753, for instance, some English slavers visited St. Eustatius. Without paying the company's duties, they landed the enslaved Africans and purchased large quantities of sugar, which resulted in a drop in the export of sugar to the Netherlands.[50]

Press, 1988), 150–246; Thomas M. Truxes, ed., *Letterbook of Greg & Cunningham, 1756–1757: Merchants of New York and Belfast* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 211. For Irish provisions shipped to Berbice, see Directors minutes, September 3, 1725; October 8, 1725; October 15, 1726; October 1, 1727; March 14, 1729; April 13, 1729; and June 27, 1729, NA, Archief van de Sociëteit van Berbice 13.

47. David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 115–21.

48. James B. Hedges, *The Browns of Providence Plantations: Colonial Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 89; Geoffrey N. Gilbert, "Baltimore's Flour Trade to the Caribbean, 1750–1815," *Journal of Economic History* 37, no. 1 (1977): 249–51; Marc Egnal, "The Changing Structure of Philadelphia's Trade with the British West Indies, 1750–1775," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 99, no. 2 (1975): 156–79.

49. Postma, "Reassessment," in Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, eds., *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 305–8; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 120; Corrie Reinders Folmer-van Prooijen, *Van Goederenhandel naar slavenhandel. De Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie, 1720–1755* (Middelburg: Koninklijk Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen), 148–52.

50. Minutes, Heren X, September 13, 1783, NA, NWIC 842.

Table 4
Incoming and departing vessels, St. Eustatius, 1744, 1762, 1776, and 1785

	Incoming from				*Departing to*			
	1744	*1762*	*1776*	*1785*	*1744*	*1762*	*1776*	*1785*
French islands	127	245	291	238	249	188	236	451
British islands	518	734	618	352	567	739	490	400
Flag changing islands	32	73	154	155	31	88	165	152
Dutch colonies	380	564	451	625	285	736	391	508
Danish islands	24	163	68	100	26	176	61	91
Spanish islands	10	112	49	17	12	145	58	30
North America	37	62	55	89	41	33	59	46
Dutch Republic	13	28	44	11	7	55	23	16
Not specified	22	35	26	53	21	13	35	26
Total	1,163	2,016	1,756	1,640	1,239	2,173	1,518	1,720

Source: Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 204–5; Cees. D. M. J. Leebeek, "Sint Eustatius als Caraibische stapelmarkt. Handel en scheepvaart tijdens de Zevenjarige Oorlog, 1756–1763" (paper delivered at the University of Leiden, 2006).

Note: One should use the figures produced by Goslinga with caution. For 1744 and 1762 I found significant discrepancies between his figures and the shipping lists.

Because of a lack of sources, the function and character of the island's intra-Caribbean trade is still obscure, despite some excellent publications.[51] The shipping lists, however, make three things clear: (1) the number of incoming and departing ships; (2) the last port of call and the next destination of the ships; (3) the origin of the staple goods. Table 4 gives an overview of the first two aspects, and table 5 of the third. Despite the fact that the shipping lists do not mention the flag or nationality of the ships, two things are certain. First, vessels from St. Eustatius and North America (including Bermuda) took care of the intra-Caribbean shipping. Second, the former left the island in ballast or with a cargo of provisions or sundries (or both).[52] Of course, the re-export of staple goods reflects the volume of the intra-Caribbean trade. The re-export was primarily directed to the Netherlands—conducted by the WIC, private merchants, and the masters of the Dutch ships on account for the shipowners—but a significant quantity of sugar, molasses, and rum also ended up in British North America.

When the WIC dominated the slave trade in the 1720s, it was a major exporter of staple goods. Table 3 illustrate how the proceeds from the *Gouden Put* were shipped to the Netherlands. The merchants and planters paid for the slaves mostly in sugar (see table 6). Occasionally the company used a private ship. In 1723, for instance, Commander Johannes Lindesay shipped on account and risk for the company in the frigate *St. Christopher,* master William Harris, 614 hogshead of sugar and 10 bales of cotton to Middelburg. For freight the company had to pay for the sugar four and a half *duiten* per pound, and for the cotton nine *duiten* per pound.[53] The company's re-export dwindled rapidly after 1730, only occasionally shipping moderate amounts of sugar to the Netherlands.[54]

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51. The combination of a hurricane in 1772 and the 1781 raid by Rodney destroyed all archives on the island. The most important source for the island's history is the so-called *overgekomen brieven en papieren* (OBP). These letters form the formal correspondence from the authorities on the island to the WIC's directors; they contain general information on the commercial state of the island, specific incidents of, for instance, privateering, the commercial activities of the WIC, especially for the earlier years, the exports to the Dutch Republic, a poll tax, and shipping lists. The activities of private merchants active in the intra-Caribbean trade are missing from these letters.

52. For an assessment of the shipping lists, see Menkman, "Sint Eustatius gouden tijd"; Generale lijst der schaden, March 5, 1761, NA, NWIC 1191, no. 13; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 209, 225.

53. Bill of lading, *St. Christopher,* September 26, 1723, NA, NWIC 1182, no. 38.

54. J. J. Reesse, *De suikerhandel van Amsterdam. Van het begin der 17de eeuw tot 1813* (Haarlem: Kleynenberg, 1908), cxxi–cxxiii.

Table 5
Origins of staple products of St. Eustatius

Product	*Origin*
Sugar	90 percent from the French islands, particularly Guadeloupe
Molasses	From all over the Caribbean
Rum	25 percent from the Danish islands, the rest from all over the Caribbean
Coffee	80 percent from the French islands, the rest mostly from the British West Indies
Hides	45 percent from Venezuela and 45 percent from St. Kitts
Cacao	From the French and British islands and Venezuela
Cotton	Predominantly from St. Martin and Grenada
Ginger	Predominantly from Martinique
Pimento	Not specified
Logwood*	From the Bay of Honduras
Salt	80 percent from St. Martin
Wax	From Baltimore and Philadelphia
Indigo	80 percent from South Carolina, the rest from Saint Domingue
Tobacco	90 percent from the Chesapeake, the rest mostly from Puerto Rico

*Logwood included dyes, such as fustic (yellowwood) and campeche (bloodwood), guaiacum (*Lignum vitae*), and mahogany. A dozen North American ships maintained contacts between the Bay of Honduras and St. Eustatius annually. Karl H. Offen, "British Logwood Extraction from the Mosquitta: The Origin of a Myth," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (2000): 113–35; Nicholas Rogers, "Caribbean Borderland: Empire, Ethnicity, and the Exotic on the Mosquito Coast," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26, no. 3 (2002): 117–38; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 194–96.

Source: Menkman, "Sint Eastatius gouden tijd," 389–90; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 209, 225; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 92–95.

Not only did the Statian planters use the staple products to procure slaves, but they also exported them on their own account. Jan Symonsz Doncker Jr. (born circa 1690), for instance, was a planter (he owned at least three plantations) and a successful merchant. He was married first to Petronella Salomons (daughter of Johannes Salomons) and later to Judith Groeneveld. Around 1730 he exported 600–700 hogshead (360,000–490,000 pounds) of sugar annually, depending on the success of his trade

Table 6
Proceeds from the sale of slaves from the *Phenix*, 1729

Purchased from	*Sugar*	
	Hogsheads	*Lbs.*
	223	141,542
Shipped in the Waalwijck, *master Dirck Houthuijsch*		
Abraham Heyliger	5	2,866
Johannes Markoe	29	18,580
Abraham Lucas Raapsaat	5	2,950
Cornelis de Wever	6	3,915
Johannes Salomons	29	19,907
Josias Jaques	5	3,312
Judith Groeneveld, housewife of Jan Burtel	10	6,844
Susanna Peets	50	30,415
Lucas Doece Groebe	19	11276
Simon de Graaff	5	3,645
Widow of Jacob Steevens	15	10,182
Widow of Lucas Benneks	4	2,926
La Borde	11	5,508
Monsigneur Bouchar	20	13,136
Shipped in the Magalena, *master Edward Baijlij*		
Pieter Biglij	2	1,179
Wife of Lowes Peets	8	4,901

Source: Invoices of the *Waalwijck* and the *Magalena*, 1729, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 155.

with the French.[55] The private merchants consigned their commodities to their agents in the Netherlands. The merchant houses of Thomas and Adriaan Hope and Joan Hodshon in Amsterdam and Jean Guépin in Flushing acted as major recipients of staple products from St. Eustatius.[56]

55. Calmeyer and Schippers, "Het geslacht Zymonsz Doncker," 197; Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 76–77.

56. Manifest of the *Johannes and Agatta*, July 11, 1752, NA, NWIC 1188, no. 60; manifest of the *Unie,* December 29, 1755, NA, NWIC 1189, no. 7; manifest of the *Statiaanse Vriendschap,* February 18, 1756, NA, NWIC 1189, no. 8. For Thomas

Table 7
Goods shipped in the *Zeefortuijn*, 1727

From	*Sugar Lbs.*	*Cotton Lbs.*	*Indigo Lbs.*	*Fustic Lbs.*
David Graij	102,005	871	124	72,780
David Graij	1,212			
Johannes Lindesay, commander	5,090			
Pieter Heyliger	3,249			
Simon de Graaf	33,354			
Cornelis van der Woestijne	14,826			
Heirs of Lucas Benners	4,683			
Jan Seijs	3,186			
Jan Vergult	1,373			
Paulus Marsel	1,143			
Le Marquis de Jenectere	50,094			
Total	220,215	871	124	72,780

Source: Manifest of the *Zeefortuijn,* August 12, 1727, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 81.

Statian entrepreneurs also acted as correspondents and agents for Dutch shipping firms. The private Dutch ships arrived with sundries and returned with hundreds of thousands pounds of sugar and other staple commodities. One such ship was the *Zeefortuijn,* destined for Flushing (see table 7). Master David Graij sold the cargo of the ship; in return he purchased for the shipowners 181 hogshead of sugar, 5 bales of cotton, 1 barrel of indigo, and 72,780 pounds yellowwood. For his own account he bought two hogshead of sugar. Furthermore, the *Zeefortuijn* shipped some two hundred hogsheads of sugar for Statian merchants. The Marquis de Jenectere hailed from Guadeloupe; his 87 hogshead of sugar were consigned to Pierre Dutilt.[57]

One infamous shipping enterprise active in the St. Eustatius trade was

and Adriaan Hope, see Marten G. Buist, *At Spes Non Fracta. Hope & Co., 1770–1815* (The Hague: Martinis Nijhoff, 1974); for Joan Hodshon, see J. W. van Sante, *Het dagverhaal van Aafje Gijsen, 1773–1775* (Wormerveer: Uitgeverij Noord-Holland, 1986), 51–53; for Jean Guépin, see Settlements between the MCC and Jean Guépin, 1748–90, Zeeuws Archief, Middelburg (hereafter ZA), MCC 1572.

57. Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 221; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 225–26; manifest of the *Zeefortuijn,* August 12, 1727, NA, NWIC 1183, no. 81.

Figure 4. View of the roadstead of St. Eustatius. Print by Karel Frederik Bensdorp, 1780. Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam, no. A.0869(02).

the Middelburgse Commercie Compagnie (MCC), the largest Dutch private slaving firm. After 1765 Benners and Zoon acted as agent for the MCC. They informed the directors in Middelburg about all sorts of events taking place on St. Eustatius, and they assisted the shipmasters in selling their cargo, collecting debts, and purchasing a return cargo. Benners also acted as agent for Snouck Hurgronje and Louisijn of Flushing. After Benners and Zoon went bankrupt in 1778, Jan Hendirksz Schimmel became the new MCC correspondent. De Vijver and Graves acted as agent for Gedeon Jeremie Boissevain (1741–1802) of Amsterdam.[58]

3. SUGAR, MOLASSES AND RUM

A second outlet for the staple re-export, especially for sugar, was North America. For the year 1770 John MacCusker has estimated that 4.9 million pounds of sugar, tens of thousands of gallons of molasses, and hundreds of thousands of gallons of rum left St. Eustatius for the British mainland colonies. This was maybe as much as one-third of the island's sugar re-export.[59] So significant

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58. Letters from St. Eustatius, 1746–1773, ZA, MCC 57.1; Letters from St. Eustatius, 1774–94, ZA, MCC 57.2. I would like to thank Ad Tramper for providing me with this information. Peter de Bode, "'Wij konde geen andere gelegenheid onder gelijde van 't convoij vinden.' De handelsvloot van Sint-Eustatius gekaapt," in Erik van der Doe, Perry Moree, and Dirk J. Tang, eds., *De smeekbede van een oude slaaf en andere verhalen uit de West* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2009), 92–101; for Gedeon Jeremie Boissevain, see Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Archief van de Familie Boissevain en Aanverwante Families, 394–1.

59. Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 95; John J. McCusker, "The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1650–1775" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1970), 337–38; Menkman, "Sint Eustatius' gouden tijd," 383–85; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 227–28.

was the North American connection that the fate of St. Eustatius' trade after 1730 can best be followed through the North American contacts.

Carriers of the Caribbean

By the eighteenth century British colonists had taken over the role of carriers of the Caribbean's trade from the Dutch; New Englanders especially became "the Dutch of England's empire."[60] At least four developments, but maybe several more, contributed to this transformation. First, the Dutch had receded from the West Indies carrying trade during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, thanks in large part to the wars against France. France's *guerre de course* made the Atlantic crossing hazardous. On the high seas a total war raged.[61] During the Nine Years' War (1688–96), for instance, some eight thousand ships were seized by the belligerents. The War of the Spanish Succession (1702–13) repeated the feat with some seven thousand prizes.[62] During the period 1680–1720, the number of Dutch ships equipped for a trans-Atlantic destination plummeted to less than half that in the decades before 1680 and in the years after 1720.[63] In those same years the economies of British North America and the islands had become tightly intertwined as the West Indian sugar islands became indispensable to the development of the mainland colonies. The British West Indies served as a major market for colonial exports, particularly provisions and building materials. They also supplied a variety of goods that the continental colonists imported, processed, consumed, and re-exported. Finally, they

60. McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America,* 92.

61. *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, 1689–1692,* 183, no. 579, 21 November 1689; 467, no. 1560, June 1691. J. M. Hemphill, "Virginia and the English Commercial System, 1689–1733: Studies in the Development and Fluctuations of a Colonial Economy under Imperial Control" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1964), 32; Douglas Bradburn, "The Visible Fist: The Chesapeake Tobacco Trade in War and the Purpose of Empire, 1690–1715," *William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (2011): 361–86.

62. J. S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies, 1660–1760* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987); J. Th. H. Verhees-Van Meer, *De Zeeuwse kaapvaart tijdens de Spaanse successieoorlog, 1702–1713* (Middelburg: Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen, 1986), 138; J. Francke, *Utiliteyt voor de Gemeene Saake. De Zeeuwse commissievaart en haar achterban tijdens de negenjarige Oorlog, 1688–1697* (Middelburg: Koninklijk Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen, 2001), 330–35.

63. G. N. Clark, *The Dutch Alliance and the War against French Trade, 1688–1697* (London: Longmans, 1923), 130–40; W. Th. Morgan, "The British West Indies during King William's War, 1689–1687," *Journal of Modern History* 2, no. 3 (1930): 378–409; G. H. Guttridge, *The Colonial Policy of William III* (London: Frank Cass, 1966), 155; Enthoven, "An Assessment of Dutch Transatlantic Commerce," 439.

provided an important source of foreign exchange that helped balance colonial accounts and pay for British manufactures. The Chesapeake, New York, and especially New England ports had all forged strong contacts with the West Indies by the end of the seventeenth century.[64] In the words of one New Englander: "The general course of our [Boston] trade to the West Indies has been this. Our vessels (except those bound for Suriname, and some that go directly to Jamaica) call at Barbados to try the market from thence they proceed to Antigua, Nevis and St. Kitts, and in case they meet with a tolerable market at either of those islands, they always embrace it, if not, they then proceed, some to Jamaica, others to St. Eustatia, and the other foreign islands, where they dispose of their cargoes, which our own islands don't want."[65] Two examples illustrate the nature of the connections

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64. McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America,* 145; John C. Coombs, "Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake–West Indian Commerce and the Coastwise Trade in Slaves," available at "International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World, 1500–1825," www.fas.harvard.edu/~atlantic/Conferences/conferenceanniversaryabstracts.html; Dennis J. Maika, "Commerce and Community: Manhattan Merchants in the Seventeenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1995); Richard Pares, *Yankees and Creoles: The Trade between North America and the West Indies before the American Revolution* (London: Longmans, 1956); Cathy Matson, *Merchants & Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Koot, *In Pursuit of Profit;* Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955); Herbert C. Bell, "The West India Trade before the American Revolution," *American Historical Review* 22, no. 2 (1917): 272–87. South Carolina would establish trade contacts, based primarily on the export of rice, with the West Indies during the eighteenth century; Jack P. Greene, "Colonial South Carolina and the Caribbean Connection," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 88, no. 4 (1987): 192–210. For Philadelphia, see Michelle L. Craig, "Grounds for Debate? The Place of the Caribbean Provisions Trade with Philadelphia's Prerevolutionary Economy," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 128, no. 2 (2004): 149–77; Thomas M. Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1986); Agnes M. Whitson, "The Outlook of the Continental American Colonies on the British West Indies, 1760–1775," *Political Science Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (1930): 56–86; James G. Lydon, "Philadelphia's Commercial Expansion, 1720–1739," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 91, no. 4 (1967): 401–18. For early North American contacts with Suriname and Curaçao, see Claudia Schnurmann, *Atlantische Welten. Engländer und Niederländer im amerikanisch-atlantischen Raum, 1648–1713* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1998).

65. "The general course of our trade to the West Indies," December 1763, Massachusetts Archives, Boston (hereafter MA), Massachusetts Archives Collection (1629–1799), vol. 22, f. 330.

to St. Eustatius. In January 1734 the Boston sloop *Africa,* master Samuel Rhodes, sailed to St. Eustatius, carrying a cargo of fish, candles, Madeira wine, shoes, desks, pork, oil, staves, and bricks. On arrival, Rhodes disposed of these goods and with the proceeds obtained 173 hogsheads of sugar, 13,000 gallons of rum, and sundries. He continued his voyage to West Africa, where he obtained two hundred enslaved Africans. Dysentery broke out among the slaves and many died. On the homeward voyage Rhodes again stopped at St. Eustatius, where he was able to sell his remaining slaves, only on condition of accepting part of his payment in cocoa instead of cash. In 1752 the Rhode Island sloop *Charming Polly,* master Richard Penmure, was directed to go first to St. Vincent, then to Saint Domingue, and then to St. Eustatius. Penmure was to sell his cargo as he could, for cash if possible, and with only money in hand, he was to go to Hispaniola and there buy indigo, sugar, and molasses for the voyage home.[66]

New Englanders learned that the shipping business itself could generate considerable credits, and merchants soon accepted both the risks and the benefits of the "carrying trade." They created a well-integrated commercial economy based on a growing fleet. With 730 merchant and fishing vessels in 1676, Massachusetts was the preeminent maritime power in colonial America. It had a thriving fishery and an extensive network of coastal, intercolonial, and trans-Atlantic trades. Other English New World settlements would turn to the sea, too, as, for instance, Bermuda did. Between 1685 and 1715 this small island, situated between the Caribbean and North America, converted from a plantation settlement to a maritime economy that included St. Eustatius. For example, the Bermudan Seth Place, an emigrant to the Dutch island, engaged a French-owned, Bermuda-built sloop manned mainly by Bermudan mariners to ship seventy African slaves from St. Eustatius to Martinique in exchange for cash and French sugar.[67]

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66. Amelia C. Ford and Samuel Rhodes, "An Eighteenth-Century Letter from a Sea Captain to His Owner," *New England Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1930): 136–45; "The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database," Slave voyage no. 25,178; Charles M. Andrews, "Anglo-French Commercial Rivalry, 1700–1750: The Western Phase, II," *American Historical Review* 20, no. 4 (1915): 761–80, esp. 764; *Commerce of Rhode Island, 1726–1800,* 2 vols. (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1914), 1:60–61.

67. McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America,* 92; Bernard Bailyn and Lotte Bailyn, *Massachusetts Shipping, 1697–1714: A Statistical Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Licenses granted, 1686–88, and Register of vessels, 1697–1714, MA, Massachusetts Archives Collection (1629–1799), vol. 7, Commercial, 1685–1714: f. 15–67, and f. 85–522, respectively; Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 66, 353, 496.

British North America's carrying trade thrived also in part because it was based on a new generation of small and medium-sized vessels like the Baltimore clipper, the Bermuda sloop, and the Bahamian schooner. Sloops were the single most common vessel in American and Caribbean waters. These single-masted, fore-and-aft-rigged vessels ranged in size from 5 to more than 140 tons. Four to eight men were generally sufficient to man a sloop. Evolving as a hybrid between sloops and ketches, schooners shared many of the sloop's traits. These two-masted vessels divided their canvas area between two smaller and more manageable fore-and-aft sails, enabling them to sail with one fewer sailor than sloops of the same size. Both vessels suited the character of the colonial economy and were in many ways better than the larger European-built ships. They were cheap and easy to build, given the abundance of timber, and their construction was relatively simple and straightforward.[68]

New Yorkers, together with New Englanders and later entrepreneurs from the middle and southern colonies, expanded their contacts from the British Caribbean to all the West Indies, South America, and Europe. St. Eustatius would act as a pivot in this system. In 1736, for instance, 138 foreign ships left the island with a cargo of staple goods (see table 8). Despite the fact that the nationality of the ship is not mentioned, judging by the name of the ship or its master, all of them were British, presumably North American (and Bermudan). The vast majority left St. Eustatius for an American port, but a few dozen left the island for another destination. Actually, many hundreds of ships called at St. Eustatius without landing any goods or departed from the island without taking on any cargo. Most of these ships were North American.[69]

The Molasses Act of 1733

When the WIC's slave trade came to an end in 1730, the economic prospects for St. Eustatius were rather bleak. After all, the island's own resources were limited. Luckily, the Statians got help from an unexpected ally: Whitehall. The illicit import of sugar, rum, and molasses from the French, Dutch, Danish, and Spanish West Indies to the North American British colonies was a thorn in the side of the British planters and West Indian

68. Howard I. Chapelle, *The Baltimore Clipper* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1930); John Leather, *The Gaff Rig Handbook: History, Design, Techniques, Developments* (Penryn, Cornwall: Waterside Publications, 1994); Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 122–24.

69. Menkman, "Sint Eustatius' gouden tijd," 372.

Table 8
Re-exports from St. Eustatius in foreign ships, 1736

	Ships	*Molasses Gallons*	*Sugar Lbs.*	*Rum Barrels*	*Ginger Lbs.*	*Coffee Lbs.*	*Cotton Lbs.*
North America	104						
Boston	12	34,908	84,147	50	196	208	1,451
Rhode Island	64	237,674	102,212	1,085		2,159	749
New London	1			200			
Salem	7	16,737	8,914	27		769	250
Long Island	1	1,243		8			
New York*	4	6,754	2,106	23			
Maryland	2	1,162		3			
Virginia**	4	2,583	4,529	12			157
Newfoundland	3	9,329	22,909	69	325		
Cape Breton	3	24,585	16,023	34			
Bermuda	3	176	3,038	1			
French islands (Guadeloupe)	1	825					
British islands	15	10,584	393,453	1	2,046	494	
Dutch islands	3		1,460	101	227		
Danish islands (St. Thomas)						2919	
Wine Islands (Madeira)	2	9,227		12			124
Europe	4		261,468	164		11,050	6,306
Not specified	7		1,380	269			21,450
Total	138	355,787	901,639	2,059	2,794	15,599	30,487

*Robert Sanders shipped French sugar from St. Eustatius to New York for Robert and Richard Ray, city sugar refiners. Matson, *Merchants & Empire*, 211.

**For trade contact between Virginia and the West Indies, see Coombs, "Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake–West Indian Commerce and the Coastwise Trade in Slaves"; Francis C. Huntley, "The Seaborne Trade of Virginia in Mid-Eighteenth Century: Port Hampton," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 59, no. 3 (1951): 297–308; David C. Klingaman, "The Development of the Coastwise Trade of Virginia in the Late Colonial Period," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 77, no. 1 (1969): 26–45.

Source: Ledger, St. Eustatius, 1736, NA, NWIC 1185, no. 8.

merchants. In 1733 Parliament adopted the Molasses Act in response of the declining trade of the sugar islands, imposing heavy duties on rum, molasses, and sugar imported into the American colonies from the non-British West Indies. The British West Indian lobby hoped to force North Americans to buy only their own, more expensive sugar products. In North America the act was routinely evaded. Bribery at a customary rate of a farthing to a halfpenny a gallon, a fraction of the statutory sixpenny rate on foreign molasses, was generally sufficient to clear customs at New York and Massachusetts. As a result, St. Eustatius, more than before, became a conduit through which cheap French molasses and sugar continued to reach North America. For New York most of the sugar and molasses was imported from St. Eustatius. To oversee these illicit shipments, North American firms dispatched scores of factors to take up residence in non-British Caribbean islands. Far from cutting contacts between North America and the foreign Caribbean, the Molasses Act resulted in more sustained transnational interaction. The white population of Lower Town swelled as French and North American merchants who specialized in subverting their nations' trade laws moved in.[70]

4. WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION, 1739–1748

Whitehall once again helped the economy of St. Eustatius during the War of the Austrian Succession. Initially, the island did not benefit much from the war—quite the contrary. In those days the Anglicizing process on the island was beginning to assume clear proportion, which meant a presence of a strong pro-British faction, which opposed trade with the enemy. When scores of Statian vessels fell victim to British privateers, however, this changed.[71] So, when on June 3, 1744, the French entered the war and British naval supremacy severed the French lines of communication, Statian entrepreneurs took advantage of new opportunities. Over forty merchants traded with the French islands (see table 9). In 1745 and 1746 they equipped 262 and 290 ships respectively to one of the French islands. In an attempt to deceive the British war ships and privateers, the Statian ships

70. McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America,* 161–64; Alvin Rabushka, *Taxation in Colonial America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 305, 449, 735; Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 165; Matson, *Merchants & Empire,* 213–14; Pares, *Yankees and Creoles,* 59–61.

71. Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 211–13, 221–22; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 203–8; Jan de Windt to Heren X, July 7, 1745, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 13; Abraham Pietersz Heyliger to Heren X, September 4, 1745, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 67.

carried papers that stated their destination as one of the Dutch colonies in Guyana (see table 10). In 1745 at least 168 Statian vessels reached Guadeloupe. They purchased sugar for 26–27 livres a pound and sold it at 45 livres in St. Eustatius. That year a dozen ships from St. Eustatius, valued at 87,353 pesos, fell victim to the British on allegations of illicit trading with the French. Despite these losses, trade with the French islands increased (see graph 2). Merchants in the Dutch Republic also benefited from the war. The MCC, for instance, specially equipped several ships to sail directly to St. Eustatius with china, furniture, sailcloth, and specie. Furthermore, French merchants living in Holland obtained licenses to sail to the French islands. One of them was François Libault of Amsterdam, who sent three ships to Saint Domingue in 1744.[72]

The French sugar re-export from St. Eustatius did not go unnoticed. On August 17, 1746, the English minister-plenipotentiary at The Hague, Robert Trevor, Viscount Hampden (1706–83), wrote to the States General: "The King having repeatedly received intelligence that the Governor of the Island of St. Eustatius, as a result of an odious affinity for the enemies of His Majesty, constantly furnishes the inhabitants of the French islands, not only with all manner of victuals, but also with arms and warlike stores and with everything that their armateurs require for their constructions." Johannes Pietersz Heyliger, commander of St. Eustatius, 1743–52, proclaimed the innocence of the island's merchants, replying that no activities were conducted from the island that went against the commercial treaty of 1674. Statian merchants had not shipped any war provisions to the French. On the contrary, tens of thousand of pounds of gunpowder had been shipped to the British colonies.[73]

Free Ships, Free Goods

On December 1, 1674, after three intense conflicts over the previous twenty-two years, the king of England and the States General signed a treaty regulating navigation and commerce of the citizens and subjects of

72. Reinders Folmer-van Prooijen, *Van Goederenhandel naar slavenhandel,* 142; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 92–93; Memorie, January 25, 1747, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 126; Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 221–22.

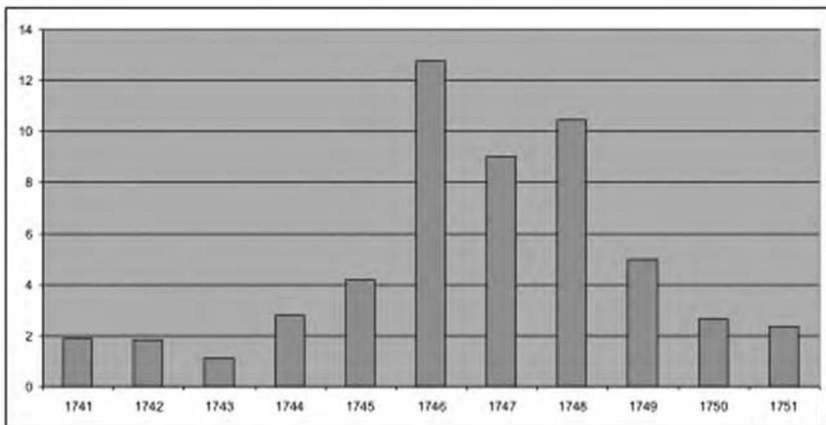
73. Robert Trevor to States General, August 17, 1746, NA, SG 5965 (liassen Engeland); Johannes Pietersz Heyliger to chamber Zeeland, December 17, 1746, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 110; Johannes Pietersz Heyliger to Heren X, February 27, 1747, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 119; Jan de Windt to Heren X, December 16, 1746, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 121; Jan de Windt to Heren X, December 16, 1746, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 123.

Table 9
Statian merchants trading with the French West Indies, 1745–1746

Ache, Jacques	Heyliger, Abraham Pietersz	Precotier, Olivier de
Allier, Jan Pieter	Heyliger, Johannes	Puesch, Louis
Annen, David	Heyliger, Nicolaas Jansz	Raij, Nicolaas
Artsen, Jan	Heyliger, Nicolaas Pietersz	Ravene, Andries Z.
Banjamin, Phillip (J)	Heyliger, Pieter, Sr.	Rice, Elizabeth
Blake, Joseph	Howell, Jan	Robles, Joseph (J)
Cuviljé, Pieter	James, Jan	Runge, Ernst Christiaan
Doncker, Abraham Z.	Kipp, Hendrik (J)	Runnels, Pieter
Doncker, Jacobus Z.	Levi, Henry (J)	Stewart, Robert
Frederie, Jan Godlieb	Markoe, Andries	Windt, Jan de, Jr.
Gillard, Edward	Maxwell, George	Windt, Jacobus de
Godet, Martin du Dubois	Maxwell, Wm.	Wisse, Cornelis
Graaf, Simon de	Meadowcroft, Jan	Wisse, Jacob
Groebe, Pieter Cornelis	Oyen, Olivier	Wisse, Pieter
Haley, Daniel	Palmer, Nathaniel	Woodhouse, Jan
Haley, Jan	Pfeiffer, Andries Julius	

Note: (J) = Jewish merchant.

Source: Notificatie, December 11, 1746, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 120; Wij Johannes Pietersz Heyliger, December 16, 1746, NA NWIC 1187, no. 121; Memorie, January 25, 1747, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 126.



Graph 2. Annual sugar re-exports from St. Eustatius to the Netherlands, 1741–51 (millions of pounds). Source: Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 226–27.

Table 10
Declared destination of Statian ships trading with the French West Indies, 1745–1746

Date		*Total*	*Guyana*	*French West Indies*		*Not specified*
				Guadeloupe	*Not specified*	
1745	January	13	13			
	February	19	15		4	
	March	36	36			
	April	24	24			
	May	24	24			
	June	35	35			
	July	21	21			
	August	14	14			
	September	12	10	2		
	October	16	16			
	November	22	19			3
	December	26	21	1		4
1746	January	32	16	9	1	6
	February	38	16	15	1	6
	March	50	20	16	3	11
	April	29	6	14	1	8
	May	37	10	13	1	13
	June	21	3	1	6	11
	July	17	4	4	3	6
	August	—				
	September	19	2	3	3	11
	October	10	1	5	1	3
	November	13	2	8	2	1
	December	24	1	6	6	11

Source: Extract getrokken uijt alle de manifesten, 1745–46, NA, NWIC 1187, nos. 124 and 125.

the two countries, allowing them to sail to each other's ports. The colonies were off-limits, with the exception of the free ports of Curaçao and St. Eustatius. From then until 1780, the Dutch Republic and England were frequent allies, their cooperation backed up by formal treaties.[74]

Since the early days of the Dutch Revolt, the Dutch motto had been that the seas are free. A free ship meant a free cargo. In other words, the cargo in a neutral ship (that is, a Dutch ship) was free to be shipped to any place in the world.[75] The commercial treaty of 1674 with England established the principle of "Free Ships, Free Goods," meaning that in time of war the two countries would consider the cargo in a neutral ship to be neutral, too.[76] The English had drafted the 1674 treaty. The Dutch introduced a few alterations into the final text, but none was fundamental. Indeed, it is not surprising that England should be the first to assert or extend the rights of neutrals, for in 1674 the Dutch were still at war with France, and England was making the most of its neutrality. The explanatory convention of 1675, by which neutral ships were to be free to trade even from one enemy port to another, was made at the express wish of England. During the War of the Austrian Succession this had clearly backfired for the British. Worse was yet to come.[77]

5. DEFYING THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The Seven Years' War (1756–63) was for St. Eustatius in many ways a repetition of the War of the Austrian Succession, but on a much larger scale: more sugar than ever was re-exported to the Dutch Republic: almost 18 million pounds in 1761 (see graph 3). This time, however, the British were prepared. At the start of the war, the Lord Commissioners of Prize Appeals had adopted the Rule of War of 1756, which made a distinction between "fair" and "unfair" neutral traders, a contrast commonly made be-

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74. Akte van Tractaat, December 1, 1674, NA, SG 12589.145.

75. Hugo Grotius, *The Free Seas,* ed. David Armitage (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004); Hugo Grotius, *Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty,* ed. Martine van Ittersum (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006).

76. Akte van Tractaat, December 30, 1675, NA, SG 12589.163; Akten van Tractaat, January 16, 1676, NA, SG 12589.168; Akte van Tractaat, March 3, 1678, NA, SG 12589.172; Hugh Dunthorne, *The Maritime Powers, 1721–1740: A Study of Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Age of Walpole* (New York: Garland, 1986), 12; Friedrich Edler, *The Dutch Republic and the American Revolution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1911).

77. Richard Pares, *Colonial Blockade and Neutral Rights, 1739–1763* (1938; repr., Philadelphia: Porcupine, 1975), 180.

tween trading *with* an enemy and trading *for* him. In its basic form this law claimed that neutrals could not expect to be allowed to trade freely during war in areas from which they were excluded in peace. It ruled that Britain would not trade with neutral nations who were also trading with the enemy. The rationale was that the neutral nation was aiding the enemy. It also ruled that Britain would not open trade with any nation during wartime. The British Prize Courts then ruled that the treaties concerning neutral rights did not apply to America. In practice they had annulled the Treaty of 1674.[78] In Holland, however, the origin of the treaty was not forgotten, as was explained to the British ministry:

In 1674, when this treaty was made, the Republicq had just made up with England and was at war with France. The articles, which stipulate free ship, free goods and determine what is counterband and what not, were at that time to the advantage of England and prejudical of the Republiek, and the Republiek had then as strong reasons for not agreeing to these articles, if she had consulted her present interest then alone, as England may at present have for not executing them litterally. I do not suppose my opinion, which in the station I am in must pass for a partial one, will have any influence. But I declare that, if England and the Republicq changed situations, I should in the like case plead for England in favour of the letter of the treaty just as I now do for the Republiek. For my determination is never to make nor to admit of commentary's treaty's. I heartily wish my apprehension may be groundless and hope your Grace will forgive the freedom with which I open my self to you.[79]

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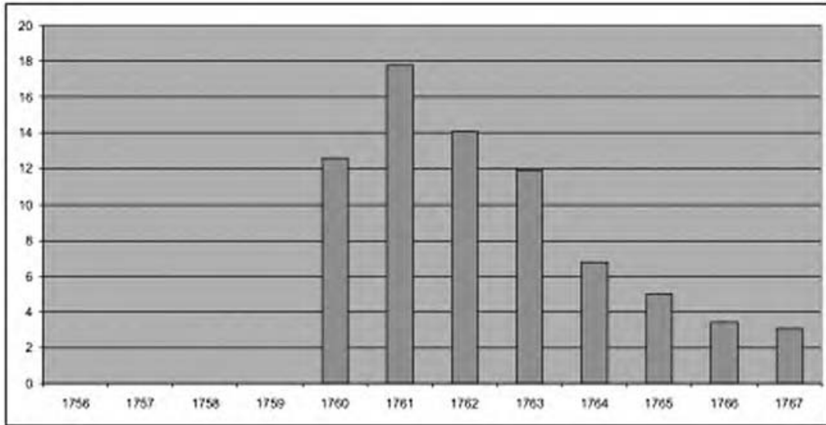
78. Ibid., 108–225; Klooster, "Inter-Imperial Smuggling," 172; Carter, *The Dutch Republic,* 101, 109. For the Dutch debate on commercial neutrality and the Rule of 1756, see Koen Stapelbroek, "The Dutch Debate on Commercial Neutrality, 1713–1830," and Tara Helfman, "Commerce on Trial: Neutral Rights and Private Warfare in the Seven Years' War," in Koen Stapelbroek, ed., *Trade and War: The Neutrality of Commerce in the Inter-State System* (Helsinki, 2011), available at https://helda.helsinki.fi/handle/10138/1/search?etal = 0&query = koen + stapelbroek &sort_by = 0&page = 2&order = DESC&rpp = 10; Victor Enthoven, "'Free Ships, Free Goods': Dutch Political Economy and the British Attack on Maritime Trade," in Philip Stern and Carl Wennerlind, eds., *Rethinking Mercantilism: New Perspectives on Early Modern Economic Thought* (forthcoming).

79. Willem Bentinck to Thomas Pelham-Holles, First Duke of Newcastle, April 27, 1756, *Archives, ou correspondance inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau,* ed. G. Groen van Prinsterer et al., 26 vols. (Leiden: S. & J. Luchtmans, 1835–1915), 21 (1756–59):143, available at www.historici.nl/retroboeken/archives/#page = 181& accessor = toc1&source = 22&view = imagePane.



Graph 3. Annual sugar re-exports from St. Eustatius to the Netherlands, 1756–67 (millions of pounds). Source: Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 226–27.

At the opening stages of the war, Great Britain operated carefully, to avoid giving offence to the Dutch at sea. The victims were mainly Dutch ships engaged in the French coastal trade in Europe. In the spring of 1758, however, an all-out war was launched on the neutral trade between the Netherlands and the West Indies. At one moment in 1758, seventy-four Dutch vessels were lying idle in British or colonial ports, waiting to be processed in Admiralty Courts. Seventeen of them had been trading directly to or from French Caribbean settlements. Over a hundred Dutch West Indiamen were seized by British privateers in 1757 and 1758, for a loss of between ten and twenty million guilders.[80] Sir Joseph Yorke (1724–95; ambassador in The Hague 1751–80) informed Robert Darcy (1718–78, 4th Earl of Holderness and secretary of State 1751–61) in detail about how St. Eustatius operated as an emporium, both legal and illicit, at least in British eyes (see Appendix III). The "fair trade" was conducted by merchants from the Netherlands and St. Eustatius for their own account, without any correspondence with the enemy. Vessels flying the French colors were allowed to call at St. Eustatius and to barter the produce of their islands for provisions, after which the sugar had to be shipped in Dutch bottoms to Europe. The

80. Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 103; Carter, *The Dutch Republic,* 87, 99, 106, 109, 111, 118, 119, 121, 123; Pares, *Colonial Blockade,* 255–78; *Nederlandsche Jaarboeken* (1758), 924–78; C. M. Hough, *Reports of Cases in the Vice-Admiralty of the Province of New York and in the Court of Admiralty of the State of New York, 1715–1788* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925).

illicit trade, on the other hand, was conducted in two ways: (1) merchants in Holland acted on behalf of French entrepreneurs, and (2) Statian brokers traded on account for French West Indian planters. In the latter instances the Dutch were trading for the enemy. The crisis, however, did not develop into an Anglo-Dutch maritime war. In 1759 Willem Bentinck (1704–74), Heer van Rhoon en Pendrecht, wrote to Prime Minister Thomas Pelham-Holles (1693–1768), Duke of Newcastle:

> I can not forbear giving your Grace fairly and openly my opinion on the present disputes between England and the Republick. The direct trade to and from the French colonys has been given up by us. The trade from and to our own establishments ought to remain untouched and uncontrouled and what ever is brought from thence on Dutch bottoms, ought to be considered as Dutch property and fall into the denomination of free ships, free goods. Give me leave to tell you, that our islands, I mean St Eustatia and Curaçao, are worth little and Curaçao particulary not worth sixpence to the Republick without the clandestine trade carry'd on between the English, Spaniards, French and Dutch, contrary to all treatys. The great profit of your trade in America arises from the smuggling-trade in and with colonys or establishments of other nations, which trade, tho' prohibited, it is not possible to prevent. This is a fact better known to you than to us. And I may, I believe, venture to say that Jamaica, tho' in itself so much more considerable, is much in the same case as our colonys. And it is not possible, in effect, for us, to admit of any further limitation on this point, than that of not trading directly to and from the French colonys.[81]

The Dutch were willing to give up direct trade to the French West Indies, at any rate on French account. That is to say: "We [the States General] have given up the direct trade to the French colonies, without admitting that the Treaty of 1674 does not extend to the West Indies." At the same time, the Privateers' Act of June 1759 restricted privateering.[82]

During the Seven Years' War intra-Caribbean trade boomed (see table 11). North American and Dutch entrepreneurs were more than willing to

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81. Bentinck to Newcastle, January 16, 1759, in *Archives,* 22 (1759–66):5–6, available at www.historici.nl/retroboeken/archives/#page = 18&accessor = toc1&source = 23&view = imagePane.

82. Bentinck to Newcastle, February 2, 1759, in *Archives,* 22 (1759–66):29, available at http://www.historici.nl/retroboeken/archives/#page = 18&accessor = toc1&source = 23&view = imagePane; Carter, *The Dutch Republic,* 107, 109, 116, 124; Pares, *Colonial Blockade,* 255–79; David J. Starkey, *British Privateering Enterprise in the Eighteenth Century* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), 163.

supply the besieged French settlements. The Dutch were neutral, but British Americans accepted the British imperial claim that this meant they were trading with the enemy. Governor Charles Hardy of New York was informed that in Canada the French "depend on what can be sent from Europe and what they can purchase at the Dutch islands of St. Eustatius and Curaçao." New York Judge Lewis Morris complained that the Dutch islands had become little more than "public factors for the enemy." They transshipped provisions from Ireland to the French. In June 1756 a New York master saw five ships arriving at St. Eustatius with provisions from Ireland. Two years later a Waterford merchant declared that 50,000 to 60,000 barrels of provisions had been sent to the island. Nearly all the food went to the French.[83] Despite the fact that in January 1759 the British conquered Guadeloupe and opened an illicit trade to Martinique, the re-export of sugar from St. Eustatius increased.[84]

Trade with the French came at a high price for St. Eustatius. A distressed Jan de Windt, commander of St. Eustatius, 1754–75, wrote: "In spite of all my efforts to maintain good relations with the British of the neighbouring islands . . . their privateers are committing blatant acts of hostility against our ships." Many more complaints followed. During the first few months of 1758 the British confiscated more than sixty Statian vessels. By 1761, 238 Statian vessels had been seized, causing damages worth 1.2 million pesos, or over 3 million guilders, while many merchants had not yet handed in their claims, and the war would last for another two years.[85]

It was not just the Irish and the Dutch who traded with the French during the war. Between one-half and one-third of all ships arriving at St. Eustatius were North American. As the bilateral trade was limited, it is clear that hundreds of American ships were trading with the enemy. By the spring of 1756 it had become customary for North American ships to clear customs at Nevis or St. Christopher and then head straight for St. Eustatius or Curaçao. There the ships were neutralized with a new identity. This was no problem. Agents at Lower Town on St. Eustatius and Willemstad on Curaçao worked closely

83. Thomas M. Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 57–58; Klooster, "Inter-Imperial Smuggling," 171–73; Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 93.

84. Jan de Windt to Heren X, December 24, 1759, NA, NWIC 1190.

85. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 210; Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 261; Jan de Windt et al. to Heren X, June 5, 1758, NA, NWIC 1190, no. 46; Jan de Windt to Heren X, May 20, 1758, NA, NWIC 1190, no. 47; Generale lijst der schaden, March 5, 1761, NA, NWIC 1191, no. 13.

Table 11
Incoming and departing vessels, St. Eustatius, 1759–1763

	Incoming from					*Departing to*				
	1759	*1760*	*1761*	*1762*	*1763*	*1759*	*1760*	*1761*	*1762*	*1763*
French islands	298	400	363	245	263	330	462	400	188	200
British islands	671	582	751	734	770	707	630	789	739	750
Flag-changing islands	42	63	33	73	140	59	86	62	88	109
Dutch colonies	395	359	520	564	620	488	492	685	736	855
Danish islands	88	100	122	163	166	103	91	135	176	200
Spanish islands	28	39	79	112	135	96	125	127	145	178
North America	137	105	92	62	90	42	51	44	33	61
Dutch Republic	22	42	37	28	29	40	67	76	55	65
Not specified	45	61	58	35	55	14	14	25	13	14
Total	1,726	1,751	2,055	2,016	2,268	1,879	2,018	2,343	2,173	2,432

Source: *Leebeek, "Sint Eustatius als Caraibische stapelmarkt."*

with correspondents on the North American mainland and had little trouble procuring forged certificates. On St. Eustatius the Americans repacked the sugar in new barrels to disguise its French origin.[86]

Recently Thomas Truxes has described the North American trade with the enemy as an act of defying empire. North American merchants had turned their backs on king and empire at a moment of national peril. Whitehall saw them as unpatriotic, even perverse. The war had exposed the bankruptcy of the British political economy of protectionism. The Seven Years' War had been a step in hollowing out the British Empire, and St. Eustatius had been in the thick of it.[87]

6. A CONSUMER MARKET

The people living in overseas settlements depended on imports from Europe for many consumer goods. Initially the demand was for very mundane goods, such as tools and cheap linen. Over time a demand for more luxurious consumer goods developed as the colonial elite tried to uphold a fashionable European lifestyle. In other words, the Americans wanted to drink their tea from Wedgwood china. Both had to be imported. For the British, tea became a central problem of the empire. Many Americans had grown accustomed to drinking tea by the middle of the eighteenth century.[88] As a result of the Seven Years' War and the occupation of the newly acquired territories in Canada, colonial governments had to pay for billeting newly arrived British troops. Parliament passed several acts to raise revenue in the colonies, such as the Revenue Acts (1764), the Stamp Act (1765), and the Townshend Acts (1767), including a duty on tea and other commodities

86. Truxes, *Defying Empire,* 60–61; De Windt to Heren X, February 8, 1755, NA, NWIC 328.

87. Truxes, *Defying Empire,* 200–205.

88. S. J. Hornsby, *British Atlantic, American Frontier: Spaces of Power in Early Modern British America* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2005), 107–8, 120; M. V. Vicente, *Clothing the Spanish Empire: Families and the Calico Trade in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); I. K. Steele, "Empire of Migrants and Consumers: Some Current Atlantic Approaches to the History of Colonial Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 99, no. 4 (1991): 489–512; S. D. Smith, "The Market for Manufactures in the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1698–1776," *Economic History Review* 51, no. 4 (1998), 676–708; Matson, *Merchants & Empire,* 182, 270–71; T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Figure 5. Figures representing the five countries at war. A tall Dutchman stands looking up with a face of despair; in his left hand he holds a paper inscribed, "Eustatia lost, Oh! Oh!" He says, "I shall die, I'm undone! My best hope is now gone!" The left figure is a laughing English sailor. On the right stand Spain, France, and America. Print by James Gillray, 1781. British Library, no. AN133450001.

Figure 6. The interior of an auction room. Through an open door are seen ships flying the British flag. In the auctioneer's rostrum stands Admiral Rodney, holding up a shoe-buckle and a hammer. He is saying, "This fashionable Pair of Buckles going to be knock'd down to their Original Owner at one Guinea does nobody advance upon one Guinea 2 going going 22s is bid Gentlemen." His clerk, in officer's uniform (General Vaughan), stands below him; he is writing, "The Last days sale . . ." A man stands obsequiously in front of him, hat in hand, saying, "If I purchase the Provision & naval Stores that were formerly mine, may I Ship them to any Neutral Island." Vaughan answers, "Ay Ay, if you give a good price for them you may Ship them to the Devil, & goe with them yourself as super-cargo if you like it." On the side of the rostrum papers are nailed up, inscribed, "Inventories of Effects belonging to the Inhabits of St Eustatia." Below hangs a bunch of keys labeled "Keys of the Stores." Behind the man speaking to Vaughan is a group of three men: a Spaniard in a cloak is seen from behind; a man facing Rodney bids "a Guinea" (his own shoes are without buckles); behind him a Dutchman says, "Twenty two Shillings."

On the left three men stand in conversation; one says, "When will Ad——l Rod——y & Genl: Vaun leave this Island." A Spanish don answers him: "I shou'd imagine tomorrow, as the Sale will be closed to night." The third says, "if he had done his Duty, & had been with his fleet instead of keeping 3 ships of the line here while he was minding the sales we should have beat the French off Martinico."

On the extreme left, looking out to sea, are a Frenchman and a Dutchman. The Frenchman asks, "What ship is that"; the Dutchman (in back view) answers, "The *Sandwich* waiting till the sales are Close'd to take Adm——l Rod——y & Gen Vaun to the Fleet." Outside the door a man is about to enter the auction room. A man standing nearby offers him a paper, saying "walk in Sir heres a Catalogue." Published by Edward Hedges, 1781. British Library, no. AN77864001.

Figure 7. The French admiral grotesquely caricatured is dancing with joy, trampling on a flag inscribed "Colour[s of] England," celebrating the taking by the French of the British convoy with the spoils of St. Eustatius. Print published by Edward Hedges, 1781. British Library, no. AN77863001.

destined for the colonies.[89] The Americans started to boycott British tea, while importing "Dutch tea." By the 1750s legal tea imports were rivaled by the great quantities being smuggled directly from foreign ports.[90]

The character of the import of sundries, especially for the more luxurious consumer goods, was changing. North American ships had often sailed on "adventure" to the West Indies. They wandered, without prearranged plans, from port to port, the master buying, selling, bartering, or carrying freight as occasion offered. They visited St. Eustatius in the hope of getting a return cargo. In 1767 and 1768, for instance, the *Neptune* had sailed from Boston to Newfoundland, where its cargo of farm produce and livestock was bartered for fish. Unfortunately, in Barbados, St. Lucia, and Martinique there was no market for the already decomposing fish. The *Neptune* sailed to St. Eustatius, but after a month the rotting fish was not sold. A last resort was Demerara, where "the worst of bad fish will fetch three pieces of eight."[91] Now, however, such merchants as Philip Cuyler in New York, John Hancock in Boston, and Aaron Lopez in Newport entered into direct correspondence with their suppliers in the Dutch Republic, ordering specific quantities and qualities of tea, especially cheap black Bohea tea, which were sent for their account and on their risk. Cuyler purchased tea from Isaack Clockener and Zoon and Joan Hodshon of Amsterdam.[92] Hancock purchased tea from Joan Hodshon, Thomas and Adrian Hope, and Jean de Neufville in Amsterdam. In October 1759 and March 1760 the Hope brothers, for instance, bought at auction from the Dutch East India Company a massive 595,879 pounds of tea, at a cost of more than one million guilders. There is no doubt that they intended to flood the North American market.[93] During the 1760s Aaron Lopez's whalers in southern waters

89. Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 2000); Rabushka, *Taxation in Colonial America.*

90. Matson, *Merchants & Empire,* 142–43; Jane T. Merritt, "Tea Trade, Consumption, and the Republican Paradox in Prerevolutionary Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 128, no. 2 (2004): 117–48.

91. W. T. Baxter, "A Colonial Bankrupt: Ebenezer Hancock, 1741–1819," *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 25, no. 2 (1951): 115–24.

92. Cornelis Clopper account book, 1751–87, New-York Historical Society Mss BV Clopper, 1751–87; Philip L. White, ed., *The Beekman Mercantile Papers, 1746–1799,* 3 vols. (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1956); Truxes, *Letterbook of Greg & Cunningham;* Philip Cuyler Letterbook, 1755–66, New York Public Library, Mss. 3499.

93. William T. Baxter, *The House of Hancock* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945), 113–18; Benjamin W. Labaree, *The Boston Tea Party* (1964; repr.,

would sometimes pick up a few barrels of Bohea tea sent to St. Eustatius by John Turner and Son, the Lopez correspondent in Holland, and smuggled into Newport. Later, Lopez purchased his tea from Daniël Crommelin and Zonen. To avoid detection, the tea, which normally was shipped in chests, was repacked in barrels and sent on consignment to his agent Samson Mears in St. Eustatius.[94] On the island, the tea was loaded onto an American vessel and smuggled into the thirteen colonies.[95]

By 1770 St. Eustatius had become the main supplier of tea to North America. In March 1770, for instance, the *London Evening Post* announced that over 200,000 pounds of tea had been shipped on board a Dutch vessel bound for St. Eustatius. In 1771 Charles Dudley reported to the Commissioners of Customs in Boston: "It is also well known that St. Eustatius is the channel through which the colonies are now chiefly supplied with tea." By then, according to Carole Shammas, some 75 percent of all tea in British North America was imported clandestinely.[96] The British government responded with the Tea Act (1773), which supported the East India Company and challenged the American colonials on the nettlesome taxation issue. British ships laden with more than 500,000 pounds of tea set off for North America in September 1773. Opposition to the arriving tea shipments developed in Boston and other ports. Public anger was sufficient to induce many of the appointed tea agents to resign their positions before the

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Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1979), 10; Grootboek no. 15, 1756–60, NA, Archief van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie 7184.

94. Bruce M. Bigelow, "Aaron Lopez: Colonial Merchant of Newport," *New England Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (1931): 757–76, esp. 770; Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Aaron Lopez, June 30, 1772, AJHS, Aaron Lopez Papers, box 14, folder 28; Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Aaron Lopez, January 28, 1774, box 14, folder 30; Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Aaron Lopez, March 2, 1774, box 14, folder 30; *Commerce of Rhode Island,* 1:66–67. For the trade contacts of Hope and Crommelin with New York, see Matson, *Merchants & Empire,* 267.

95. Truxes, *Defying Empire*; John W. Tyler, *Smugglers & Patriots: Boston Merchants and the Advent of the American Revolution* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986); Victor L. Johnson, "Fair Traders and Smugglers in Philadelphia, 1754–1763," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 83, no. 2 (1959), 125–49.

96. Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 96; Note on tea smuggled from St. Eustatius, November 6, 1768, MA, Massachusetts Archives Collection (1629–1799), vol. 26 (Hutchinson's Correspondence, 1761–1770), f. 325; Labaree, *The Boston Tea Party,* 10, 36, 53–54; Carole Shammas, "How Self-Sufficient Was Early America?" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 13, no. 2 (1982): 247–72, esp. 265; Klooster, "Inter-Imperial Smuggling," 175.

tea arrived. In New York City and Philadelphia the ships' masters quickly assessed the situation on arrival and headed back to England. In Annapolis one shipowner was forced by angry demonstrators to set fire to his ship and its cargo of tea. The focal point of opposition, however, was Boston, where Governor Thomas Hutchinson, whose relatives were the local tea agents, decided to force the issue, which resulted in the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 1773. Dutch merchants not only reaped profit from this tea battle, but also benefited from the rebellion that followed.[97]

7. THE GOLDEN ROCK

As conflict loomed, North Americans were in great need of gunpowder, arms, and all sorts of other provisions essential for opposing British colonial rule. In 1774 two Boston agents were in Amsterdam procuring arms and powder for the rebels. In August the American vessel *Polly,* out of Nantucket, arrived in Amsterdam and took on 300,000 pounds of powder. In October a Rhode Island vessel took on assorted firearms and forty small cannon. On October 19, 1774, the British government expressly prohibited the exportation of warlike stores and ammunition to the American colonies. A few days later the HMS *Welles* appeared before the Texel roadstead (the entrance to the Amsterdam harbor), effectively blockading the Rhode Island ship.[98] Under British pressure, the States General forbade the export of war supplies to the rebels. A better way to get ammunition to the Americas was to load it for the coast of Africa and then take it to St. Eustatius, where "their cargoes, being the most proper assortments, are instantly bought up by the American agents." By the end of 1774 it was noted that there had lately been a prodigious increase in the trade from St. Eustatius. Nathaniel Shaw Jr., a New London merchant, for instance, ordered via his agent Peter van der Voort and Company in December 1774: "You must send me Eight or Nine Casks of [gun]powder by the first opper. If I Should want Four or Five hundred Casks do you think it may be had in St. Eustatia or Curraso [Curaçao]."[99]

In Zeeland, the province specializing in the West Africa trade, the gun-

97. Labaree, *The Boston Tea Party,* 6–13; Benjamin L. Carp, *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party & the Making of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

98. D. A. Miller, *Sir Joseph Yorke and Anglo-Dutch Relations, 1774–1780* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), 30–31, 39.

99. Nathanial Shaw Jr. to Peter van der Voort and Co., December 15, 1774, in Ernest E. Rogers, *Connecticut's Naval Office at New London during the War of the American Revolution* (1933; repr., Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2008), 263.

powder mill Eendracht increased its production from 170,848 pounds in 1776 to 367,535 pounds in 1779. In 1777 Snouck Hurgronje and Louisijn of Flushing shipped in the *Hoop* 3,000 barrels of gunpowder and 750 firearms to St. Eustatius.[100]

Close contacts between the rebels and kindred spirits in the Dutch Republic were forged. The Committee of Secret Correspondence, chaired by Benjamin Franklin, appointed Charles W. F. Dumas as its correspondent in The Hague in 1775. Franklin had visited the Netherlands in 1766 and probably met Dumas then. Dumas was a great American enthusiast and maintained close contacts with members of the Patriotic party, including Joan Derk van der Capellen tot den Pol and E. F. van Berckel, who was Amsterdam's highest executive officer. These contacts also included the Amsterdam merchant Jean de Neufville, who had traded with North America long before the war. In 1757 a Mr. De Neufville had corresponded with James Duncan of Rhode Island. De Neufville was appalled by the severance of these trade connections and saw America as threatened with "absolute slavery."[101]

On March 20, 1775, the Second Virginia Convention met and decided to arm the militia. Several members of the convention were in contact with a "reputable merchant" who not only agreed with their cause, but was in an exceptional location to be of aid to the Virginia colony: St. Eustatius. A transaction for gunpowder with Isaac van Dam, a New Yorker of Dutch descent, soon followed. Van Dam became the rebels' principal agent on the island. More transactions followed. The New York merchants Philip Livingston, John Alsop, and Francis Lewis, on behalf of the Committee of Secret Correspondence, chartered the sloop *Lucretia,* master Cornelius Haight. He took a cargo of flour to the West Indies and shipped back 388 kegs of gunpowder from St. Eustatius in December 1775. After van Dam's death on March 7, 1776, Abraham van Bibber of the Baltimore firm Lux and Bowley replaced him. Ammunition, arms, and powder were obtained

100. Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution," 687; W. R. Menkman, "Het voorspel der verovering van St. Eustatius in 1781," *West-Indische Gids* 15, no. 1 (1934): 321–37, esp. 328; Robert T. Fruin, *Dépêches van Thulemeyer, 1763–1788,* ed. Herman T. Colenbrander (Amsterdam: Müller, 1912), 137–53; Afrekening kruitmolen Eendracht, 1776–80, ZA, Familiearchief Mathias-Pous-Tak van Poortvliet 139a.

101. See the Papers of Benjamin Franklin, www.franklinpapers.org; De Neufville and Son to John Jay, July 28, 1779, Columbia University, John Jay Papers no. 12596, available at http://wwwapp.cc.columbia.edu/ldpd/jay/item?mode=item&key=columbia.jay.125 96; *Commerce of Rhode Island,* 1:72.

not only from ships calling at St. Eustatius, but also from French islands.[102] Isaac Gouverneur, correspondent for Willing and Morris of Philadelphia, presented the Provincial Congress of New York with some cannons in October 1775. Later the house of Curson and Gouverneur became the agent of the Continental Congress on St. Eustaius. The firm had extensive contacts with merchant houses in the Dutch Republic, including Nicolaas and Jacob van Staphorst, Alexander Honingman, Robout van Loon, Johannes Hoffma, and Jacob van Bunschoten, all of Amsterdam, and Hassell and Tasker of Rotterdam.[103] The British, French, and Prussian diplomatic representative in The Hague, Sir Joseph Yorke, abbé Desnoyers (chargé d'affaires 1774–76), and Friedrich Wilhelm von Thulemeier (1733–1811; extraordinaris envoyé 1763–88), were aware of this.[104]

The illicit trade soon led to an effort to establish legitimate trade contacts between the republic and the rebelling colonists. In 1776 Jean de Neufville met in Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) William Lee, a brother of Arthur Lee, the American ambassador to Paris, and his secretary, Samuel Witham Stockton, and told them of his hope of reestablishing the trade. They drafted a plan for a treaty of commerce and amity. Upon De Neufville's

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102. Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution"; Donald E. Reynolds, "Ammunition Supply in Revolutionary Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 73, no. 1 (1965): 56–77; Shelley B. Joel Watson, "Death Be Not Proud: A Denouement of How One Man and His Death Made One Small Island Become More Detrimental to England Than All the Forces of Her Enemies," in 2009 accessed at www.joelspages.com; Menkman, "Het voorspel der verovering van St. Eustatius." For the dealings of the Continental Congress with St. Eustatius see "A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates," http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html; George M. Curtis, "The Goodrich Family and the Revolution in Virginia, 1774–1776," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 84, no. 1 (1976): 49–74; Margaret L. Brown, "William Bingham: Agent of the American Continental Congress in Martinique," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 61. no. 1 (1937): 54–87.

103. J. A. Stevens, *Colonial Records of the New York Chamber of Commerce, 1768–1784* (New York: B. Franklin, 1971), 136–37; Hurst, *The Golden Rock,* 65–73; intercepted letters from Curzon and Gouverneur, 1781, TNA, CO 246/1.

104. Knappert, *Geschiedenis van de Bovenwindsche eilanden,* 272–76; letters and extracts from Sir Joseph Yorke's correspondence in Holland, 1776–80, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Sparks 72; correspondence between Comte de Vergennes and Abbé Desnoyers concerning the American Revolution and the attitude of Holland, 1776–81, Houghton Library, MS Sparks 83 f. 36; Fruin, *Dépêches van Thulemeyer*, 137–238; Edler, *The Dutch Republic;* Miller, *Sir Joseph Yorke;* H. M. Scott, "Sir Joseph Yorke, Dutch Politics and the Origins of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War," *Historical Journal* 31, no. 3 (1988): 571–89.

return to Amsterdam, he received the strongest encouragement from Dumas, Van de Capellen, and Van Berckel. The burgomasters of Amsterdam endorsed the plan and Van Berckel signed this letter of intent on September 4, 1778, along with William Lee and De Neufville. Dumas sent a copy to Franklin in Paris and another to Congress.[105]

In the meantime business boomed at St. Eustatius, which by now had become the Golden Rock (see graph 4). During the early 1770s, 2,000 ships visited the island annually. By 1779 that number had risen to 3,500.[106] Sugar, however, was no longer king. In 1779 alone over 12,000 hogsheads of tobacco and 1.5 million ounces of indigo were shipped to St. Eustatius from North America, in exchange for arms, powder, naval stores, and other goods from Europe. That year the export was valued at 3.7 million pesos, or 9.25 million guilders.[107] Gunpowder generated exorbitant profits—in excess of 120 percent. No wonder merchants were lured into this high-risk but lucrative trade. Dozens of Dutch merchant houses were active in the elusive business of arms shipments to the rebels, but three were of particular importance: Crommelin and Zonen, Nicolaas and Jacob van Staphorst, and De Neufville and Zoon.[108] Admiral Rodney would later declare: "This rock [St. Eustatius] of only six miles in length and three in breadth has done England more harm than all the arms of her most potent enemies and alone supported the infamous American rebellion."[109] A consequence of the Amsterdam treaty was the appointment of Henry Laurens, a South Carolina planter and merchant who had served as president of the Continental Congress and as the American minister to the United Provinces. He was commissioned to borrow $10 million, but it took him almost a year to wrap

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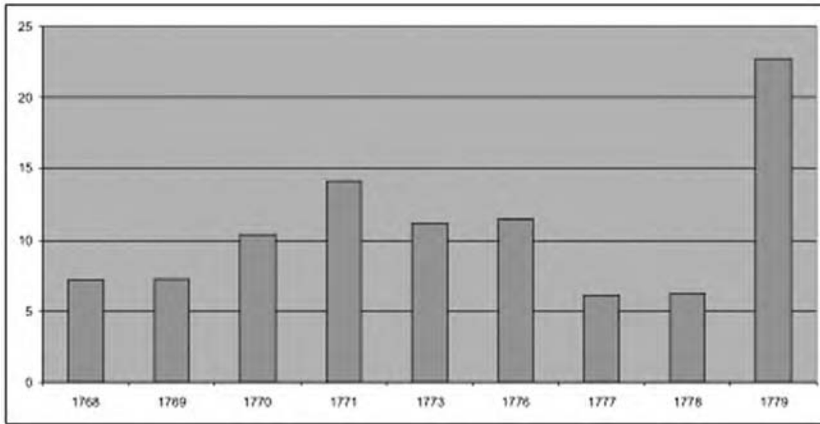
105. Declaratoir of Pensionaris E. F. van Berckel, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Archief Burgemeesters 538 (folder Amerika); P. J. van Winter, *Het aandeel van den Amsterdamschen handel aan de opbouw van het Amerikaansche Gemeenebest,* 2 vols. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1927), 1:34–35; Edler, *The Dutch Republic,* 88–91; J. W. Schulte Nordholt, *Voorbeelden in de verte. De invloed van de Amerikaanse revolutie in Nederland* (Baarn: In den Toren, 1979), 61–71; Milton Rubincam, "Four Unpublished Letters of William Lee, 1779–1780," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 50, no. 1 (1942): 38–46.

106. The numbers of arriving ships: 2,531 (1768), 2,302 (1769), 2,505 (1770), 2,443 (1771), 2,358 (1773), 1,695 (1775), 1,810 (1776), 2,428 (1777), 2,795 (1778), 3,551 (1779). Menkman, "St. Eustatius gouden tijd," 372.

107. Reesse, *De suikerhandel van Amsterdam,* cxx; Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Guianas,* 224.

108. Edler, *The Dutch Republic,* 37–56; Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution," 687; Van Winter, *Het aandeel van den Amsterdamschen handel.*

109. Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution," 695.



Graph 4. Annual sugar re-exports from St. Eustatius to the Netherlands, 1768–79 (millions of pounds). Source: Klooster, *Illicit Riches,* 226–27.

up his business and set sail for Holland. On September 3, 1780, the packet *Mercury,* bound for the United Provinces from Philadelphia, was intercepted by HMS *Vestal.* On the approach of the *Vestal*'s boarding party, and in full view of the crew, Laurens threw a weighted bag overboard, one that remained afloat long enough to be retrieved. It contained the Amsterdam Pact of Amity and Commerce, as well as correspondence between American and Dutch officials concerning financial aid to the colonies.[110]

The British had their smoking gun. Allegations laid before the House of Commons claimed that "[St. Eustatius] had given every protection to our rebellious subjects [in North America]." A Mr. Eyre advocated "vigorous measures" against Holland. It was notorious, he stressed, that the Dutch were not only busily employed in carrying naval stores to the French, but in more than one instance they had openly countenanced the Americans in their revolt. He advised the seizure of St. Eustatius, "that abominable nest of pirates," the heart of the Dutch contraband trade.[111] On December 20, 1780, the British government sent to Ambassador Yorke a manifesto severing diplomatic relations with the States General. Five days later war between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic was declared. Yorke recom-

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110. Hurst, *The Golden Rock,* 55; Edler, *The Dutch Republic,* 151; Miller, *Sir Joseph Yorke,* 95.

111. *Parliamentary History,* vol. 21 (1780–81), cited in Rawle Farley, "The Economic Circumstances of the British Annexation of British Guiana, 1795–1815," *Revista de Historia de America* 39 (1955): 21–59.

mended his government capture St. Eustatius in order to sever the intercourse between Holland and the American rebels.[112]

St. Eustatius' end came within months of Britain's declaration of war against the Dutch Republic. Unaware of the breakdown of Anglo-Dutch relations, Dutch Rear-Admiral William Crul had left the United Provinces for the West Indies with a squadron of eleven ships in October 1780, planning to disperse and sail to different Dutch settlements when they reached the other side of the ocean. Crul left an undefended St. Eustatius on February 1, 1781, to convoy twenty-three merchantmen back to the Netherlands. Two days later Admiral Rodney took the island and captured the Crul convoy. Rodney confiscated two hundred ships, along with goods in the island's warehouses, the estimated value of which was three million pound sterling. More than two thousand Americans were taken prisoner. The British derived little long-term benefit from their victory, however.[113] They dispatched the bulk of their spoils for home in a thirty-four-merchant-ship convoy commanded by Commodore William Hotham. Only eight of the merchant vessels, together with the warships, made it to England. A French fleet captured the rest. Then, in November 1781, a French force under Governor François-Claude-Amour de Bouillé captured St. Eustatius. The island returned to Dutch rule, but its relationship with North America had changed for good, as the bulk of the fighting shifted from North America to the Caribbean. No longer was it the Golden Rock that fed the American Revolution. Once again it faced the challenge of surviving an imperial war.[114]

CONCLUSION

During the last two decades of the seventeenth century, helped by a relative healthy environment and encouraged by a Dutch free-trade ideology, St. Eustatius shifted from a plantation colony to an emporium. The

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112. Edler, *The Dutch Republic,* 181.

113. Papers of George Brydges Rodney, 1st Baron Stoke-Rodney, TNA, PRO 30/20, especially 21/5, 21/6, 22/9, 24/4, 25/8, 26/7; Account of St. Eustatius sales, 1781, TNA, HCA 2/321.

114. Hurst, *The Golden Rock,* 150; Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution," 700–708; Kenneth Breen, "Sir George Rodney and St. Eustatius in the American War: A Commercial and Naval Distraction, 1775–81," *Mariner's Mirror* 84, no. 2 (1998): 193–203; Edler, *The Dutch Republic,* 182–85. For the island's history after 1781 see Gilmore, "All the Documents Are Destroyed!"; Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and in Surinam, 1791/5–1792* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990), 142–44; and the articles by De Hullu listed in note 8.

island's trading history evolved in several phases. From the late seventeenth century until 1729, the island was an international slave market. After 1730 sugar, especially from the French West Indian islands, was king. North American provisions and building materials were essential to procuring the sugar from the French and British West Indies. Furthermore, the islanders were dependent on the carrying capacity of the Americans. Relations with North America intensified after the Seven Years' War, resulting in St. Eustatius' becoming the "Golden Rock" during the 1770s. The economic ebbs and flows of the island emporium were affected by external developments in the Atlantic world, in particular the wars of Great Britain, first with the French, then with the North Americans. In time of war St. Eustatius' trade flourished. In peacetime commerce stagnated, especially the export of sugar.

St. Eustatia's unique place in world history as a free port defying mercantilism was well known and acclaimed. The French philosopher Guillaume Thomas François Raynal (1713–96), for instance, in 1770 presented an enticing image of the Golden Rock. For him the minuscule island, aided by illicit trade and contraband, prevailed over the odious yoke of monopoly that weighed heavily on the neighboring islands. Raynal recognized the island as the general emporium of the French Antilles, and during the Seven Years' War merchants from a variety of nations met up with one another in its roadstead, under the warranty of freedom of access granted to one and all, irrespective of country of origin.[115]

A similar image was depicted in 1776 by the political economist Adam Smith (1723–90) in his *Wealth of Nations,* when he pointed out the economic fertility of the barren Dutch islands: "Curaçao and [St.] Eustatia, the two principal islands belonging to the Dutch, are free ports open to the ships of all nations; and this freedom, in the midst of better colonies whose ports are open to those of one nation only, has been the great cause of the prosperity of those two barren islands"[116]

For another Scottish economist, Adam Anderson (1692/3–1765), the is-

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115. Guillaume Th. F. Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique, des établissemens & du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes,* 6 vols. (Amsterdam: n.p., 1770), 4:246–48; between 1775 and 1783 a Dutch translation was published: *Wysgeerige en staatkundige geschiedenis van de bezittingen en den koophandel der Europeaanen, in de beide Indiën,* 10 vols. (Amsterdam: M. Schalekamp, 1775–83); Guido Abbattista, "Edmund Burke, the Atlantic American War and the 'Poor Jews at St. Eustatius': Empire and the Law of Nations," *Cromohs*, 13 (2008): 1–39, esp. 5.

116. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. R. H. Campbell, A. S. Skinner, and W. B. Todd, 2 vols. (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1981), 2:571.

land stood as tangible proof of how, in a condition of free trade, profitable commerce could thrive in conditions of natural sterility or even warfare: "barren and contemptible in itself, [St. Eustatius] had long been the seat of a very great and lucrative commerce, and might, indeed, be considered as the grand free port of the West Indies and America, and as a general magazine to all nations. Its richest harvests were, however, during the seasons of warfare among its neighbours, in consequence of its neutral state and situation, with its unbounded as well as unrestrained freedom of trade."[117]

For North Americans, St. Eustatius played an important role in defying the British Empire. Initially, the free port of St. Eustatius was a market for procuring raw materials for the distilling industry, consumer goods, and cash. The trade helped the Americans ease their negative balance of payments with Britain. During the Seven Years' War, the island supported the North Americans in their forbidden trade with the French islands. Afterward, Dutch merchant houses helped supply the burgeoning North American consumer market, especially with tea. St. Eustatius was in the thick of this illicit trade. Finally, the Golden Rock supported the American revolutionaries with vital arms and ammunition. All necessary provisions continued to reach the colonies through St. Eustatius, supplied not only by enemy and neutral nations but also by British merchants working out of the homeland and the British Antilles.[118] For this aid, however, the islanders had to pay a high price: the pillage by Rodney in 1781. The long-standing trade contacts between the North American British colonies and St. Eustatius were created by a combination of material needs and ideological beliefs about free trade. In the words of the historian of Bermuda's colonial trade, Michael Jarvis, the "blooming of St. Eustatius from a 'useless island' into a busy international emporium nicknamed 'the Golden Rock' testifies to Dutch wisdom and the flaws in Spanish, French, and British mercantilism."[119]

117. Adam Anderson, *Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce*, 4 vols. (London: J. White, 1801), 4:329; Abbattista, "Edmund Burke," 5.

118. Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 213.

119. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade,* 184.

APPENDIX I. MERCHANTS AND SHIPOWNERS, ST. EUSTATIUS, 1750S

Aertsen, G.
Allier, Jan Pierre
Amyot, Andre
Amyot, Paul
Atkinson, Thomas
Backer, Cornelis
Bankes
Beakes, John
Beauyon, Anth.
Benjamin, Philips
Bey, Jan
Blake, Joseph
Blyden, Abel
Bogaard, Jacob
Bolen, Marten
Boswell
Brandligt, J. R.
Breet, Adriaan
Buck, Arent
Bunting, Benjamin
Burke, Myles
Cadet, Jan
Campell, Angus
Cannegieter, Anthonie
Chan, Pieter de la
Churcilt, Edward
Clarton, Francis
Colladon
Cool, Abraham
Cornelise, Pieter
Coudre, Jean la
Crooke, William
Cuviljé, Cornelis
Cuviljé, Pieter
Dam, Jurriaansz
Dekker, Symon
Den, John
Desmond, Pieter
Doncker, Abraham Z.
Doncker, Jacobus Z.
Droep, Cornelis Jan
Elia
Evertsen, L.
Fitzpatrick, Jan
Fletcher, William
Foulquier, Jan
Freeman, James
Freny, Chr. Fred.
Fronchin, Bernard
Gibb
Godet, Gideon
Godet, Martin du Brois, Jr.
Govan, Jan
Graaf, Johannes de
Graaf, Simon de
Groebe, Doeke
Groebe, Pieter
Cornelis
Gurly, Pieter
Haley, Daniel
Hector, Dirk
Hendricks, Pieter
Henriques, Abraham
Hesse
Heyliger, Abraham, Jr.
Heyliger, Johan
Heyliger, Johannes
Heyliger, Raapsaad
Heyliger, Willem
Heyliger, Willem Jan
Heyliger Johz., Pieter
Heyns, Wodrop
Hoffmeijer, Christiaan
Hoheb, Samuel
Hopkins, Sam Spenc.
Irlaleij, Daniel
James, George
James, Jan
Janse de jonge, Jans
Janstroijer
Jemmions, Charles
Jemmions, James
Jordaan, Sander
Ketterling, Theodor
Klint, Simon
Kock, Klaas
Kraamer, Dirk
Lakenman, Leendert
Lawrence, Nathaniel
Lee, James
Lindesay, Gerard
Low, Cornelis Pr.
Malmberg, Jan
Meester
Mendes
Moreau, Mathieu
Morgan, Henry
Mussendam, Charles
Navaret, Jan
Nolob, Hendrik
Noordberg, Jonas
Nouvit, Charles Lee
Openkins, Thomas
Oyen, Olivier
Oyer, Jan
Packwood, John
Packwood, widow of
Pascaud, Anthonie
Penneston, Jeremia
Pennettes, Jan

Perkins, Thomas
Piekman, widow of
Pieterse, Booy
Pleen, Hendrik
Pronk, Tiede
Pubaud, Christiaan Hendrick
Puech, Louis
Put, Jan van
Raaven de jonge, Jan
Ravene, Abraham
Ravene, Andries
Renners, Lucas Jacobs
Renou, Alphons
Rigail, Jan, Jr.
Riorteau, Isaac
Rooseveldt, Adolphus
Rouvelet, François
Rummels Pieter, Jr., heirs
Runge, Ernst Christiaan
Runnels, Abraham
Runnels, Pieter
Sampson, Raphael
Sandhagen, George
Schooning, Jan
Scott, James
Seijs, Jacobus Z.
Shano, Isaac
Sillivan, Dennis
Simmons, Jacob
Simmons, Pieter
Sirach, Jean George
Stevens, Cambell
Stevenson, Cornelis
Stevenson, Robert
Stewart, Robert
Stroyer, Jan
Texier, Bernard
Texier, Jacques
Thomasius, Jacob
Tronchin, Rernard
Upton, George
Veen, Jacob
Veen, Jan van
Velaan, Jacob
Vensel
Vries, Klaas Martens de
Waag, Philips
Warner, John
Warren, Robert
Wels, Samuel
Windt, Jan de
Witt, John de
Young, William

Source: Request of merchants and ship owners to Jan de Windt, January 18, 1758, NA, NWIC 1190, no. 38; Generale lyst der schade, March 5, 1761, NA, NWIC 1191, no. 13.

APPENDIX II. SELECTION OF INCOMING AND OUTGOING SHIPS, 1744

Selection of incoming ships, St. Eustatius, 1744

		Total	*Dutch Republic*	*Ireland*	*Wine Islands*	*North America*	*Africa*
No. of ships		69	7	5	7	49	1
Dry goods	Cargo	9	5	1	3		
Provisions							
Butter	Barrels	1,154		820	9	325	
Meat/pork/ham	Barrels	2,353	100	1,697		556	
Cheese	Barrels	3,298		50		3,248	
Fish	Barrels	1,767		51		1,716	
Oil	Barrels	150			120	30	
Flour	Barrels	3,129				3,129	
Bread	Barrels	344				344	
Onions	Bushels	1,514				1,514	
Corn	Bushels	1,550				1,550	
Beverages							
Brandy	Barrels	413	250		163		
Wine	Pipes	311	8		303		
Beer	Hogsheads	164	10		30	124	
Livestock							
Sheep		116				116	
Horses		69				69	
Oxen		1				1	
Building materials							
Planks	Feet	273,800				273,800	
Shingles		425,000				425,000	
Hoops		50,463				50,463	
Staves		122,100				122,100	
Bricks		44,000				44,000	
Turpentine	Barrels	38				38	
Tar	Barrels	36				36	
Candles	Boxes	3,040				3,040	
Furniture	Pieces	13				13	
Africans*		350					350

*The *King David* from Bristol, master Edmund Holland. "The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database," slave voyage database no. 17,109, www.slavevoyages.org.

Source: Shipping list, 1744, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 08.

Selection of outgoing ships, St. Eustatius, 1744

		Total	*Dutch Republic*	*North America*	*Madeira*	*Guyana*
No. of ships		173	12	67	10	84
Dry goods	Cargo	23				23
Provisions						
Butter	Barrels	349				349
Meat/pork/ham	Barrels	682				682
Cheese	Lbs.	3,000				3,000
Fish	Barrels	940				940
Oil	Barrels	148				148
Flour	Barrels	1,159				1,159
Bread	Barrels	66				66
Onions	Bushels	77				77
Beverages						
Brandy	Barrels	5				5
Wine	Pipes	325		62		99
Beer	Hogsheads	48				48
Livestock						
Sheep		44				44
Horses/mules		36				36
Building materials						
Planks	Feet	23,600				23,600
Shingles		31,000				31,000
Hoops		5,000				5,000
Bricks		14,000				14,000
Tar	Barrels	14				14
Candles	Boxes	240				240
Africans		194				194
Staples						
Sugar	Lbs.	2,800,514	2,784,355	13,46	21,297	1,400
Molasses	Gallons	200,727		141,789	58,938	
Rum	Barrels	249	40	128	81	
Tobacco	Hogsheads	11,321	11,321			
Cotton	Lbs.	114,275	107,432	5,808	1,035	
Coffee	Lbs.	11,333	11,141	192		
Cacao	Lbs.	3,457	3,457			
Indigo	Lbs.	140	140			

Source: Shipping list, 1744, NA, NWIC 1187, no. 08.

APPENDIX III. SOME ACCOUNT OF THE ST. EUSTATIA TRADE, 1759.

The St. Eustatia trade may be considered as threefold, the one a fair trade, and the other a masked trade in 2 different shapes.

The fair trade I call that which is carried on by Dutch burghers or inhabitants of this country, or of St. Eustatia really & truly for their own account, and without any correspondence with the French Islands. As St. Eustatia is a Free Port, it is equally free for a French bark to come there and vend the produce of their islands, as it is for an English one.

A burgher of St. Eustatia may barter such commodities as he may have of his own, or from his correspondents, and it makes no difference in the property, if such goods thus bartered are shipped on board the vessels going to Europe, from *barks* or from the shore.

The illicit trade is carried on 1. by people of Holland, for account of their *friends in France,* and 2. by people of St. Eustatia for account of their *friends in the French islands.*

They consign to their correspondents in Holland, such cargoes, as their own property, and order them to be insured as such, and they are claimed, in case of capture, by the Dutch correspondents as Dutch property; some few of whom indeed know no better than that they are so, as the secret often is only between the proprietor in the French Islands, and the loaders at St. Eustache.

The people in Holland, who cover for their friends in France, are qualified by an underhand method, of having the property of the effects assigned to them at a certain price, with a proper indemnification as to any loss which may occur, but in this transaction, money is very often advanced by the Dutch merchants, upon the cargo.

Those who consign from St. Eustatia, draws bills on the correspondents to whom they consign the goods in Holland, to the order of the French proprietor at Martinique or Guadeloupe, who remits these bills to his friends in France, and thus the French get home the extra product of their colonies, after deducting what they have taken at St. Eustatia in provision & European Commodities.

It must be observed that such bills are often suffered to be protested in Holland, by the correspondent upon whom they are drawn, when the goods are not arrived before the bill is presented, which is a strong proof of the French property.

By this it is easily perceived that in short time this system of covering may be brought to such perfection as to make it impossible to distinguish what is real Dutch property from what is covered.

The two latter methods must naturally bring on great obstruction to the licit trade, which is not to be protected without giving a sanction to the illicit branches; as there is no possibility of distinguishing them, but by bringing up all vessels, coming from St. Eustatia, and examining the papers to the bottom, by a fair trial, which will remain a grievance upon the fair trade.

As to the distinction made in Doctors Commons [the High Court of Admiralty], between goods, laden from the *shore,* or from *barks,* it is far from procuring the desired end; since it is known, that goods which must be believed to be entirely Dutch property, have been condemned because they were loaded from *barks,* whilst others, which were French property, have been free, because the loaders had used the precaution to have them first landed upon the shore.

If the Dutch are so strong in their claim of a privilege by treaty of carrying on a trade, even with French property, they tacitly confess by the many shifts which they use, that they have no right to carry on the French *transito* trade by St. Eustatia.

The hardship is certainly very great for the fair St. Eustatia trader who barters his provisions etc. for French produce, which he is getting home in Dutch bottoms, even the distinction of loading from barks, or the shore is a hardship upon him, & subjects him to suffer innocently, without making it in the least more difficult for the coverer to carry on his illicit trade.

The only method to put a stop to the illicit trade is to appoint a number of proper cruisers to interrupt, & annoy the trade, carried on between the French & Dutch islands; or (if the Dutch are obstinate in not coming into such regulations as are wanted) to prohibit their bringing home to Europe any of the produce of the French Islands. France did the same to them last war, in regard both to British products in general, and British manufactures.

The *trade of the barks* is sometimes carried on between the two islands, by a sole permission of the governors of the French Islands, and a secret understanding between them & the Dutch governors.[120]

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120. Joseph Yorke to Lord Holdernesse, February 13, 1759, British Library, London, Egerton MS 3451 f. 65.