



Introduction lesson

Les 1.1: Purchase and ship

The ship

The MCC built her own ships. The build of The Unity lasted four years. The Unity was a snow ship, a small sailing vessel. The ship was 22.50 meters long, 3.20 meters deep and 7 meters wide. The content was 170m³.

There were also a small boat and a rowing boat. Both smaller vessels were brought on board. They were used for trade along the African and American coast.

The name of the ship was depicted via the figurehead of a lion. On the transom at the back of the vessel, the name was cut out in a wooden ribbon.

The MCC ships were given a standardized package of supplies for the journey. After the voyage, where needed, The Unity was repaired in a dock in Middelburg.

Trade load or cargason

The load of goods that was brought aboard in Zeeland, consisted mostly of goods for Western Africa, was also called cargason. The *'factuura van cargazoen goederen'* is a list of all trade goods and the way in which they were transported.

Most of the cargo was packed in 89 numbered crates, barrels and a package.

The cargo consisted mostly of:

- guns
- trumpets and mirrors
- glassware
- tobacco pipes
- knives
- lead
- copper
- beads
- pad locks
- pewter bowls
- textile and snuff boxes
- tobacco

The captain played a crucial role when it comes to the cargason. He was responsible for the trade. Together with the first mate the captain inspected the trade load aboard the ship in the days prior to departure. During the journey he and the first mate maintained the trade records.

More information

The build of the ship: <http://eenigheid.slavenhandelmcc.nl/middelburgse-commercie-compagnie-en/ship-the-unity/?lang=en>

The cargason: <http://eenigheid.slavenhandelmcc.nl/trajecten-van-de-reis-en/voorbereiding-en/inkoop-cargazo-en/?lang=en>