



## Introduction lesson

### Lesson 6.1: Return cargo and preparations for the voyage home

#### Waiting

After the Africans were sold, the bedding, the slave houses (toilets), the bulkhead and the slave kitchen was broken down. The ship was cleaned and maintenance was done. The delivery of the return cargo was awaited on the river Demerary. During the 6-week stay in Demerary the crew had little to do. Much of the necessary maintenance to The Unity had been done while in the Essequibo colony. The sails were aired regularly, the anchor ropes were repaired and firewood was chopped.

#### Captain

Most of the time, while the ship was in Demerary, captain Menkenveld was not on board the ship. On November 4<sup>th</sup> he left with a tent boat to Essequibo. Only on December 17, 1762, when the ship was ready to begin the voyage home, did the captain return on board. In the meantime he presumably purchased the return cargo, amongst other things.

#### Surgeon's mate departs

On September 4<sup>th</sup> 1762, surgeon's mate Louis Bernard departed The Unity with all his possessions to remain in Essequibo. Surgeons were in high demand in the colonies. Due to disease and maladministration most surgeons did not last long.

#### Deserters or runaway's

Two Spanish sailors aboard The Unity decided to desert. When Anthonie Colombo and Alonso Madroes went to chop firewood on November 16, 1762, they took off. Twelve days later Alonso Madroes returned to The Unity. He stated that he lost his mate when they went strolling through the woods at night. The ship's council convened and decided to take Alonso Madroes back to Middelburg, because they were not allowed to leave 'scoundrels' in the colony. His earned wages were garnished.

#### New sailor

On December 17, 1762 a new sailor boarded the ship: Johannes van de Putte. He previously worked on the ship De Spoorse Galij owned by Adriaan Spoors from Middelburg. The ship was superannuated and the sailor wanted to return to his homeland. In exchange for work on the ship he was allowed to have meals and sail back to Middelburg.

#### Return cargo

In November barrels and bags of sugar, coffee and other products from the plantations were brought aboard daily. These barrels and bags were branded, which made it possible to trace the products back to their origin later. The last barrels of sugar were brought aboard on December 12<sup>th</sup>. A postal bag was also brought along, with letters from the colonists to their family in the Netherlands. Lastly water barrels were loaded and the ship was ready for departure to the Netherlands.

#### More information

Events in Essequibo: <http://eenigheid.slavenhandelmcc.nl/trajecten-van-de-reis-en/west-indie-en/kolonie-essequibo/?lang=en>

Return cargo: <http://eenigheid.slavenhandelmcc.nl/trajecten-van-de-reis-en/west-indie-en/wachten-in-demerary/?lang=en>