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Forthcoming



THE HAARLEM SHIPWRECK (1647): The Origins of Cape Town

DR BRUNO WERZ

The Haarlem Shipwreck (1647) explores the story around one of the earliest recorded maritime accidents in Table Bay. In this gripping investigation, based on detailed archival research, Bruno Werz chronicles the demise of the ship, and the sojourn of 62 of its survivors on the shores of the bay. These events, seemingly inauspicious, led to the establishment five years later of the Dutch East India Company refreshment station along the trade route, and from these pragmatic arrangements grew the settlement of Cape Town, to become the 'Mother City' of the present-day multiracial and multicultural society of South Africa. This superbly researched book promises to be a source publication with a difference. Readers view transcriptions in 17th-century Dutch of original VOC manuscripts (with translations): such as the survivors muster roll, and letters dispatched with a visiting English ship, the Sun. The prize document of the collection is the hitherto unpublished journal kept by junior merchant Leendert Jansz while stranded on the shores of Table Bay, freshly capturing impressions of the people and surroundings untrammelled by the long telescope of our subsequent experience of history.

About the authors

Dr Bruno Werz, FSA, is a leading authority on maritime archaeology and history. His projects include underwater excavations of the VOC ships Oosterland and Waddinxveen (1697) in Table Bay, an extensive survey of sunken ships around Robben Island, and the excavation of sub-Saharan Africa's earliest shipwreck near Oranjemund, Namibia. He is the discoverer of the world's oldest artefacts from under the sea. Werz has lectured and published widely and is a member of the Royal Society of South Africa and other professional organisations. He was elected a Fellow of the prestigious Society of Antiquaries of London in recognition of his achievements. Werz is currently research co-operator for the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies of the University of Pretoria and Chief Executive Officer of the African Institute for Marine and Underwater Research, Exploration and Education (AIMURE; website: <http://www.aimure.org>).

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