

THE COLLECTING ACTIVITIES OF JAMES CUNINGHAME FRS ON THE
VOYAGE OF *TUSCAN* TO CHINA (AMOY) BETWEEN 1697 AND 1699

by

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James Cuninghame's visit to China (1697–99) yielded a great deal of valuable information on both natural and artificial objects as well as items of contemporaneous trade interest (for example china clay and a scarlet dye). However, the circumstances surrounding the voyage have long been unclear. Although it has previously been assumed that Cuninghame must have travelled on an East India Company vessel, it now seems that he was aboard *Tuscan*, one of two private trading ships (interlopers) bound for Amoy under the command of Henry Gough. After an incident in La Palma (Canary Islands), only *Tuscan* proceeded to China after her release by the Spanish authorities. Study of surviving correspondence between Cuninghame and a Canarian cleric, Juan Bautista Poggio, has contributed to a better understanding of the events in the early part of the voyage. Cuninghame made extensive natural history collections during the six months that *Tuscan* remained in Amoy, before returning to England in 1699, where his specimens delighted his London supporters, James Petiver and Hans Sloane.

Keywords: natural history collections; James Petiver; Juan Bautista Poggio; Hans Sloane; *Tuscan*; Xiamen

INTRODUCTION

James Cuninghame¹ (*ca.* 1665–1709) FRS is perhaps best known as the earliest European who 'made botanical collections in China and whose rich herbarium safely arrived home'.² Although very little is known of his early life, he was a Scot³ who, in 1686, was studying medicine at Leiden⁴ (where he was recorded as of 21 years of age, making the year of his birth *ca.* 1665). He subsequently made a voyage to and from the East Indies, probably arriving back in England in the second half of 1696, and was by then already collecting natural curiosities and was in contact with Hans Sloane, Secretary to the Royal Society.⁵ In 1697, Cuninghame was evidently in London and made the acquaintance of

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Sloane's circle of contacts, perhaps most notably the London apothecary and collector James Petiver (1665–1718), with whom he developed an active correspondence. Informed by Cuninghame that he was intending to travel to China, Petiver prepared for his friend a detailed list of the desirable plants that he should seek there,⁶ also encouraging him to obtain drawings or paintings of plants as well as any other natural curiosities that he encountered (Petiver also had a particular interest in insects and shells).

Cuninghame left England late in 1697 bound for the Chinese island of Amoy (present-day Xiamen) via La Palma in the Canary Islands; during a six-month stay in Amoy he collected large numbers of specimens of plants and animals for Petiver and Sloane, and also commissioned nearly 800 paintings of useful plants from Chinese artists. Arriving back in England in mid-1699, Cuninghame was feted by his friends and proposed by Sloane himself for election as a Fellow of the Royal Society.⁷

Within six months, Cuninghame was again to join a ship bound for China, this time as ship's surgeon on *Eaton*, an East India Company (EIC) ship sailing to the island of Chusan (present-day Zhoushan) with hopes of establishing a trading station there. However, trading conditions proved very difficult and eventually caused the EIC to shift trading efforts in 1702 to Cochinchina (present-day Vietnam), where the company established a 'factory' on the island of Pulo Condore. Despite an order to abandon the post on grounds of expense and move to Banjarmassin in Borneo, the factory was still in place in early 1705 when a local dispute resulted in the massacre of most of the British party apart from Cuninghame.⁸ Although wounded, he survived and was taken to the mainland and imprisoned for two years. Finally released in April 1707, he made his way to Batavia (now Jakarta) and was then sent by the company to become chief of the factory at Banjarmassin. Three weeks after his arrival, the factory was attacked and destroyed (although with far less loss of life than in Pulo Condore). Finally attempting to return to England in the autumn of the following year, Cuninghame wrote to Sloane and Petiver from Calcutta in January 1709 announcing his plans.⁹ However, this was the last that his friends in London were to hear from him, for his ship *Anna* (on which he was travelling home) disappeared without trace after leaving Bengal.¹⁰

COLLECTIONS

During his three visits to the East Indies (*ca.* 1696–97, 1698–99 and 1699–1709), Cuninghame collected extensive quantities of botanical material that found its way into the herbaria of James Petiver, Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753) and King William III's botanist, Leonard Plukenet (1642–1706).¹¹ Smaller numbers of his specimens also reached the collection of the Oxford botanist William Sherard (1659–1728) and the EIC Treasurer, Charles Du Bois (1665–1740)¹², as well as that of the antiquary and politician Philip Carteret Webb (1702–70).¹³

In China, Cuninghame collected principally on the islands of Amoy (1698–99) and Chusan (1700–02), with a little material from the 'Crocodile Islands' (the Matsu Islands, northeast of Fuzhou). He was an enthusiastic and conscientious collector who acquired specimens (and not only of plants) whenever and wherever he touched land. As a consequence, his collections also reflect his (albeit often brief) presence in the Canary Islands (La Palma, 1698), Ascension (1699), St Helena (before 1697), the Cape of Good Hope (before 1697, and in 1699 and 1700), Java (1698), Malacca (1699), Pulo Condore (1702–05) and Cochinchina (1705–07) and are among the earliest that survive from many of these locations.

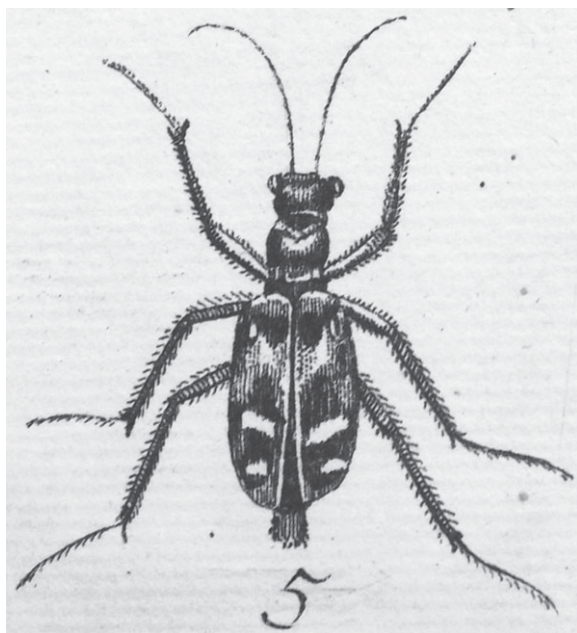


Figure 1. 'Cantharis CHUSAN. viridis elegantissimè variegatus. Mr Cuninghame sent me this, being one of the most elegant of the Beetle kind', from Petiver's *Gazophylacii naturae*, tab. 50, f. 5 (1702). (Reproduced by kind permission of the Natural History Museum, London.)

Once they had reached his British correspondents, Cuninghame's specimens, because of their unusual provenance and novelty, not only graced their owners' collections but were often actively used as the basis for published descriptions (and some engravings). Among the 1000 species described briefly by James Petiver in his *Musei Petiveriani* (1695–1703), well over 50 mention Cuninghame as the source of the material on which they were based, with the specimens including snakes, shells, butterflies and beetles, as well as plants. Petiver's subsequent *Gazophylacii naturae* (1702–09) was heavily illustrated, and Cuninghame's collections feature strongly here, too, with, for example, shells from Ascension (tab. 9, f. 9) and Pulo Condore (tab. 48, f. 14), moths (tab. 18, f. 3) and beetles (tab. 50, f. 5; see figure 1) from Chusan, and a millipede (tab. 74, f. 3) from the East Indies. Eighty of Cuninghame's Chusan plants were described by Petiver in 1703; in 1705 Leonard Plukenet, too, published a large number of descriptions and engravings based on duplicates of Cuninghame's specimens from Chusan.¹⁴ John Ray noted 22 of Cuninghame's plant collections from Amoy in a supplement to the third volume of his *Historia Plantarum* (1704),¹⁵ and a small number of geological specimens collected by Cuninghame reached the physician and geologist John Woodward (1665–1728), who described them and in whose collection they still survive.¹⁶

THE VOYAGE TO AMOY (1697–99)

What we believe to have been Cuninghame's first visit to China found him leaving England bound for the Chinese island of Amoy on what would prove to be a highly productive



Figure 2. A specimen of the Plain Tiger (or African Monarch) butterfly (*Danaus chrysippus*), now among Hans Sloane's insects, collected for James Petiver by James Cuninghame in La Palma (Canary Islands) in January 1698. Sandwiched between two wafers of mica and mounted on a page in a bound volume (allowing both upper and lower surfaces of the specimen to be viewed), this unconventional (and apparently short-lived) approach to the preservation of Lepidoptera seems to have been remarkably successful, to judge from the state of the surviving insects. From Petiver's Insects, vol. 1, f. 19. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Natural History Museum, London.) (Online version in colour.)

expedition. Information on his journey from England to Amoy and back, between late 1697 and mid-1699, comes chiefly from a collection of his own manuscripts¹⁷ linked with this voyage. They show that on her way out from England, the first landfall made by Cuninghame's ship, in January 1698, was the island of La Palma in the Canary Islands. There Cuninghame collected plant material that comprises the earliest recorded herbarium collection from the archipelago. The specimens, now chiefly within Hans Sloane's herbarium, have been the subject of a detailed study by Santos-Guerra *et al.*¹⁸ showing that Cuninghame documented the presence of a remarkable 158 taxa on the island at that time, including 1 lichen, 9 bryophytes, 15 ferns, 2 gymnosperms and 131 flowering plants, some 10% of the constituents of the flora of the island. Nine of the species or subspecies he collected are known to occur only on La Palma, with a further 24 restricted to the Canary Islands archipelago. The species present suggest that Cuninghame was unable to travel to any higher-elevation ecosystems on the island, but his specimen of *Polygonum maritimum* is the only known record of this species from the island; his collection of *Salsola divaricata* confirms the presence there in 1698 of a species that has not been recorded on the island since 1891. A surviving butterfly specimen (figure 2) in one of James Petiver's two bound volumes of insects shows that Cuninghame also collected Lepidoptera on the island.

Cuninghame's ship departed from La Palma, heading south, before mid-February 1698, when he recorded crossing the Equator; there he gave accounts of a cnidarian ('*Urtica marina* or Sea-qualm'), small fishes found in the stomach of a 'bonitoe', a 'Sucking Fish I took of a Shark', various birds including a 'Petrill', '2 sorts of Mews' and an 'Alcatrass' (albatross) with a 10-foot wingspan.¹⁹ Approaching the Cape of Good Hope, Cuninghame remarked on seeing 'black Mollemucks' (frigate-birds) and 'Gennets or Manga Veludas' (Cape gannets). The ship seems not to have called at the Cape of Good Hope and, moving into the Indian Ocean, Cuninghame continued his observations of birds, noting various sorts of boobies and a 'Tropic bird', and providing detailed descriptions (including the habits and calls) of those birds he had managed to catch (including a 'black Noddie').²⁰ By June, the ship had reached Java and docked at Batavia, where Cuninghame listed 121 plant species that he had collected.²¹ In July the ship arrived in Amoy, where Cuninghame described three species of fish, including two 'Whatyaw' (mudskippers),²² one of which was 'a small fish with seven fins, two small



Figure 3. Two plant specimens collected by Cuninghame during his stay in Amoy (June 1698 to January 1699) accompanied by his original labels on red paper. From Hans Sloane's herbarium, HS 247, fol. 32. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Natural History Museum, London.) (Online version in colour.)

semicircular ones under his gills, one redish on each side near his gills, which he makes use of instead of feet when on shoar among the mud (for they are somewhat amphibious)'.

During the next six months in Amoy, Cuninghame's manuscript lists indicate that he collected a further 176 plant species and seed samples of 84 species,²³ some of which (figure 3) survive among Sloane's collections. In addition he collected 40 samples of 'Miscellanea' (including a sample of 'Poco-sempei', the so-called Vegetable Lamb of Tartary, along with the observation that it is the root of a fern), and commented on the manufacture of brass and paper, the extraction of saltpetre, edible birds' nests and the harvesting of 'Ambergreese'.²⁴ He was also sufficiently impressed with a striking scarlet dye (derived from the seeds of *Gardenia*) to prepare a 1000-word account of the method and to send samples of the primary raw materials to Sloane.²⁵ Cuninghame also commissioned from Chinese artists nearly 800 watercolours of useful plants in Amoy; he took these back to England, showing them at a meeting of the Royal Society shortly after his return.²⁶

After a six-month stay on the island, Cuninghame started his return journey to England in January 1699. In February the ship was in Malacca (where Cuninghame listed 35 plant collections), and by April she had reached the Cape of Good Hope (where eight species

that Cuninghame believed to be introductions from Europe were listed).²⁷ After a pause there, she called briefly at the island of Ascension (where Cuninghame himself recorded having collected four species of plant²⁸) before continuing her run home to England.

THE 1697–99 NEW COMPANY VOYAGES OF *TRUMBULL* AND *NASSAU*

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the (only sporadically successful) efforts by the EIC to establish trading links with China were focused on Bantam (Taiwan) and Amoy, and latterly on Canton. In 1676 the company established a trading foothold with a factory in Amoy, but five years later they were forced to give it up (although access to the harbour continued to be permitted to trading ships).²⁹ It has been assumed that, at the time of his voyage to Amoy (his first visit to China), Cuninghame was employed as a surgeon, either by the EIC or by its younger rival, the New Company. The latter company's records show that only two ships (*Trumbull* and *Nassau*) were sent out to the island in the 1697/98 sailing season,³⁰ and the not unreasonable assumption has therefore been made that Cuninghame was likely to have been aboard one or other of them.³¹

The records of the New Company supply useful information about these two ships (which were originally intended to sail together) and their voyages to Amoy and back. An almost contemporaneous copy of the log of *Trumbull* (sometimes referred to as *Trumball*) survives, prepared by her first mate, Joseph North.³² This shows the ship sailing from Gravesend on 17 November 1697 under Capt. Henry Duffield with two supercargoes (chief traders), Nathanael Maidstone³³ and Peter Power. Skirting the Canary and Cape Verde Islands, *Trumbull* called at the Cape of Good Hope, Bencoolen (Bengkulu) and Batavia before reaching the island of Amoy in mid-July 1698. After some six months spent trading, *Trumbull* left Amoy on 17 January 1699 on her homeward journey, retracing her outward course but calling only at Batavia and St Helena before reaching England in mid-June 1699.

Unfortunately, the log of *Nassau*, under Captain Marmaduke Rawdon, with Christopher Brewster and John Hillars (supercargoes) and Walter Keir³⁴ (surgeon) on board, has not been traced. However, New Company records show that she sailed from England on 12 October 1697, more than a month earlier than *Trumbull*, and was to proceed to Cádiz to take on bullion (£20 000 worth of dollars) and wine (100 pipes of sherry and 'Mallaga' wine) before sailing to Bencoolen to take on 200 tons of pepper, then to Batavia to try to sell some of her cargo, before proceeding to Amoy. There she was instructed to purchase, among other things, copper, green ginger, 'Sanguis Draconis', Black Sticklack and indigo. Although *Trumbull* was ordered to catch up with *Nassau* in Cádiz,³⁵ she was late in leaving England and seems to have met up with *Nassau* only in Bencoolen. Although the two ships may have sailed together from there to Amoy, they seem to have become separated at some point on the return journey, *Trumbull* arriving back in England more than three months earlier than *Nassau*.³⁶

JAMES CUNINGHAME'S ITINERARY TO AND FROM AMOY, 1697–99

Although the overall timetable indicated in Cuninghame's notes is not dissimilar to that provided in North's very precise account of *Trumbull*'s itinerary (especially with regard to the period spent in Amoy between July 1698 and January 1699), there are some significant

discrepancies. Cuninghame's account, which is supported by extensive collections of dried plants from each site, records him landing in the Canaries on the way out and in Malacca and Ascension on the way home, but *Trumbull*'s log omits any mention of landing at these places. In the light of these discrepancies, Jane Kilpatrick³⁷ has concluded that, as Cuninghame clearly could not have sailed on *Trumbull*, he must therefore have been on *Nassau*. In the absence of the latter's log, Kilpatrick's interesting account (in which she focused on Cuninghame's botanical activities in China) assumed that the ship was *Nassau*, but with the dates of landfall, etc., being those indicated in Cuninghame's manuscript.

Further research has, however, cast doubt on this interpretation. *Nassau* sailed from England on 12 October 1697, so, unless she had an extended stay either in the Downs (the sheltered area off the coast of Kent near Deal) or at Cádiz, a voyage of more than three months (since Cuninghame's notes suggest that his arrival in the Canary Islands was not earlier than mid-January 1698) seems unusually long to have reached the islands from Gravesend. In addition, the New Company's instructions to her sister ship *Trumbull* (with which *Nassau* was expected to sail in convoy) ordered her to sail well to the west of the Canary Islands on her outward journey before making for the Cape and warned against putting in at any of the Macaronesian islands (particularly Cape Verde) except in an emergency.³⁸ An insurrection of some of the crew of Cuninghame's ship evidently did take place in the Canary Islands,³⁹ the imminent signs of which have been claimed as constituting such an emergency.⁴⁰

However, this scenario seems most unlikely in the light of correspondence between James Petiver and Cuninghame. A copy of a letter from Petiver⁴¹ dated 3 February 1698 (that is, after Cuninghame's ship had left England and when she was already in La Palma) shows that Petiver must have been aware before she sailed that she was due to call at the Canary Islands, seeming to rule out an emergency diversion as the reason for the visit:

I recd. Yrs from ye Downs some time since & am now in great hopes it will not be long before I shall hear of yr safe arrival & departure at & from ye Canaries... I hope a warmer season has given you an opportunity at ye Canaries to shew us some insects... wch with whatever else ye send I need not so many words to assure ye will be highly welcome.

It also seems significant that nowhere in the company papers relating to the voyages of *Nassau* and *Trumbull* is there any mention of Cuninghame (something one would expect to see recorded if he had been engaged as surgeon to either ship).

Lastly, there is also evidence that places James Cuninghame in London more than six weeks after *Nassau* had sailed for China. Along with several other prominent collectors of natural curiosities (including James Petiver, Jacob Bobart, Samuel Doody and James Ayrey⁴²), Cuninghame contributed to an *Album Amicorum* belonging to David Kreig, a German physician who was on the point of travelling to Maryland with William Vernon⁴³. In it, Cuninghame wrote:

Impiger extremos currit Mercator ad Indos,
Per mare Pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes.
Haec in memoriam absentis
Amici posuit Tui observantissi-
mus Ja. Cuninghame
Londini Novembr. 26
1697.⁴⁴

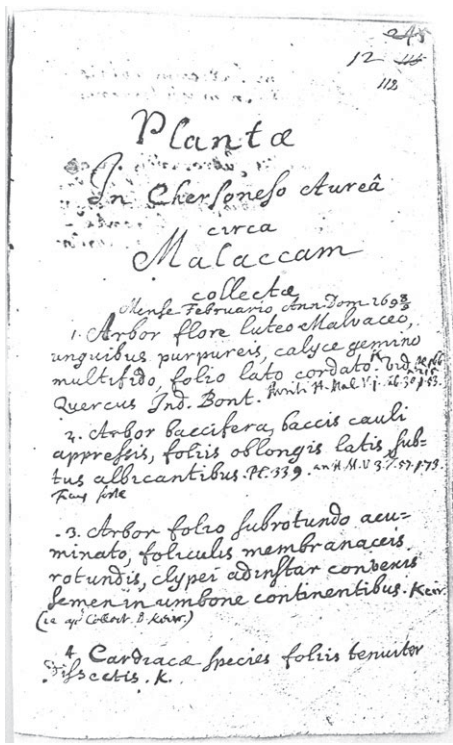


Figure 4. Copy of the opening page of Cuninghame’s catalogue of plants collected around Malacca in February 1699. From Sloane MS 2376, f. 112; original in the British Library. James Petiver has added supplementary notes to many of Cuninghame’s species descriptions, three of the four on this page being annotated by him with ‘K’. The entry for the third species indicates that ‘K’ signifies material collected by ‘D[ominus] Keir’. This is almost certainly Walter Keir, surgeon on *Nassau*. (Reproduced, with permission, from the collections of the Natural History Museum, London.)

[The energetic Merchant hastens to the furthest Indies,
Escaping Poverty through the sea, through rocks, through fires.
James Cuninghame, most attentive to Thee, wrote these lines to remember an absent
Friend, in London on 26 November 1697.]

The conclusion, based on all of the above, can only be that the ship aboard which Cuninghame sailed to China and back was neither *Nassau* nor *Trumbull*. It may also be significant that Cuninghame describes himself here as a merchant (rather than a surgeon), suggesting that he was being engaged for the voyage in the former capacity. So how, and under what circumstances, could Cuninghame have travelled to and from China?

Although there is no mention of the name of a ship in any of Cuninghame’s surviving correspondence, an incidental (and hitherto overlooked) observation made by Cuninghame on the plants that he collected in Malacca in February 1699 seems to reveal it. Among the 34 species described by Cuninghame in his manuscript list (figures 4 and 5)⁴⁵ is *Frutex Corallinus submarinus* (a marine organism, presumably either a branching coral or a coralline alga), which was ‘found among the many Islands in the Straits of Malacca’.⁴⁶ To this information Cuninghame adds ‘where our Ship called *Tuscan* ran aground on

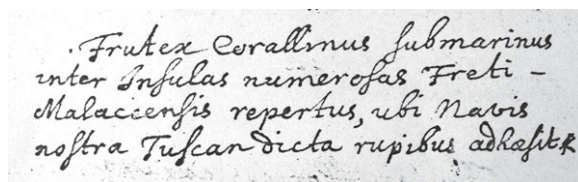


Figure 5. Copy of the entry for *Frutex Corallinus submarinus* in Cuninghame's hand, in which 'Navis nostra Tuscan dicta' appears. From Sloane MS 2376, f. 113; original in the British Library. (Reproduced, with permission, from the collections of the Natural History Museum, London.)

rocks'.⁴⁷ Records show that no ship of that name was engaged by either the EIC or the New Company during this period.⁴⁸

The EIC and the New Company were in dispute over trading rights to the East Indies (the companies had, between them, a theoretical monopoly). However, there were also private traders (known as interlopers) who sought to profit from the import of goods from the East Indies by sending out their own ships,⁴⁹ and it appears that *Tuscan* must have been one of these private trading ships. Such vessels, and their traders and crews, were viewed as acting illegally and were consequently deeply unpopular with the EIC and the New Company, which issued warnings to their employees against assisting them. Instructions to the supercargoes of *Trumbull*, for example, included this advice:

in regard yourselves and those on the *Nassau*, are pursuing one interest directly opposite to that of the Interlopers, we hope you will see all the reason imaginable, to assist and help each other against them, giving one another, at all times, the needful direction, Council, and advice, as belonging to the same Employers ...⁵⁰

Specifically relevant here is this comment: 'We think it is needless to inform you of a thing so publicly known, that Mr Gough⁵¹ is hastening out a ship or 2 for Amoy, and the sooner you get thither the better it will be for yourselves, as well as for us'.

This raises the possibility that Cuninghame might have been travelling on one of Mr Gough's interloping vessels to La Palma and subsequently to China.

THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN JUAN BAUTISTA POGGIO AND JAMES CUNINGHAME, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1698

Further information on the circumstances of the voyage is contained in correspondence⁵² between Cuninghame and Juan Bautista (Baptista) Poggio (1632–1707) and Isidorus Arteaga de la Guerra, two Spanish priests living on La Palma. A notable feature of the visit to La Palma, to which attention was drawn by Dandy,⁵³ was that, having made landfall on the island, some of the English sailors in the party in which Cuninghame was travelling had deserted. In trying to recapture them, the English captain had 'come into collision with the Spanish authorities' with the result that the ship was seized and the crew imprisoned for some days. Dandy reported that Poggio and de la Guerra had shown kindness to Cuninghame and had interceded on his behalf (and that of his compatriots) with the Spanish government in an attempt to secure their release. In this, they were presumably successful, because by mid-February Cuninghame reported crossing the Equator on the way to the Cape of Good Hope.⁵⁴

Dandy's brief account drew heavily on research undertaken earlier by the botanist James Britten (1846–1924), whose handwritten notes on the subject reveal that he neither made nor commissioned a full English translation of the letters between Cuninghame and the priests (which were written in Latin), but instead obtained a precis of them, presumably from one of his ecclesiastical colleagues.⁵⁵ An examination of the correspondence by one of us (P.H.O.), particularly that between Cuninghame and Poggio (the exchange with de la Guerra being predominantly theological), has shown that it contains significant additional information. P.H.O. has therefore translated these 12 letters in an attempt to shed further light on the events of January and February 1698 in Santa Cruz de la Palma.

As well as being a senior cleric on La Palma, Cuninghame's Canarian correspondent, Juan Bautista Poggio, had previously been a lawyer and was, in addition, a prominent musician, lyric poet, playwright and orator.⁵⁶ The 12 surviving letters between the two men are copies, in Cuninghame's hand, of the original correspondence.⁵⁷ Although the first seven are undated, the letters were evidently copied in chronological order and seem to cover a period from some time in the second half of January to 8 February 1698 (the date of Cuninghame's last missive). A full transcription of the original text of the letters, together with an English translation, is available as electronic supplementary material accompanying this article, but particularly relevant extracts are provided and discussed below.

The correspondence opens with a short letter (letter 1)⁵⁸ from Poggio prefaced by an explanation by Cuninghame that it was written 'after [Poggio] had come to the prison in order to see and speak with us' (figure 6). To judge by the high degree of affection with which Poggio addresses him, Cuninghame seems to have had an almost overwhelming effect on the cleric:

As soon as I saw thee, a longing for thee took hold of me and my heart had been imbued with love for Thee, wherefore I am distressed by and grieve for your misfortune. For the rest it will be useful to send someone in our little ship, which is to sail tomorrow to the Duke, our General, living on the Island of Tenerife, who may give you a solution and Absolution. Farewell.

Cuninghame's reply (letter 2)⁵⁹ thanks Poggio for his sympathy, adding:

Truly it seems hard to Us to be detained here for a foolish offence committed as a result of the thoughtlessness of certain people, whence You (thanks to God) have sustained no injury but we have sustained much and shall still sustain it, unless Thy Benevolence may bring help in our sudden liberation through persuasion among the Powerful of this Island: otherwise this delay of time may succeed in preventing our Sailing, which must result now in our unutterable loss

Cuninghame was evidently concerned that delay to the departure of the ship (it was already rather late in the sailing season) could cause her to be too late to catch the monsoon, preventing her from reaching China as planned, with potentially serious trading losses as a result. Cuninghame's next letter (letter 4)⁶⁰ thanks Poggio very warmly for his involvement, adding:

I have no doubt that, with all the circumstances of our offence duly investigated, the Prefects of this Island would send us into Liberty if it were not ruled more by the judgement of the inconstant mob than, as it seems, of the Judges. But if this cannot be achieved without the agreement of the Duke, your General, our Merchant

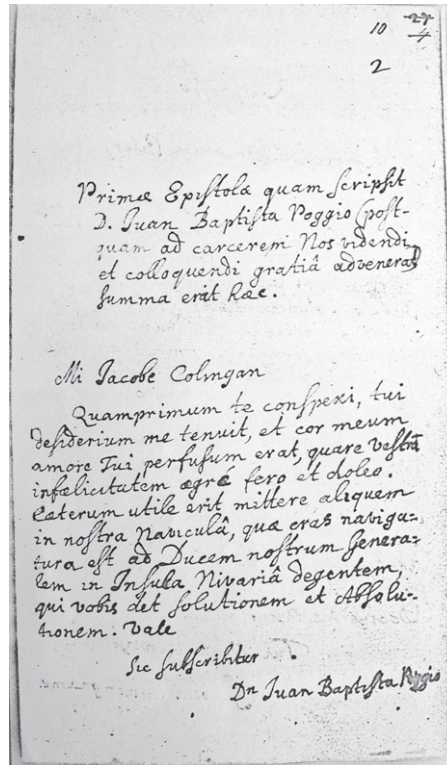


Figure 6. Copy of the opening page of Cuninghame's copy of the correspondence between him and Poggio. From Sloane MS 2376, f. 10; original in the British Library. (Reproduced, with permission, from the collections of the Natural History Museum, London.)

with the Captains of the Ships are fully willing to be detained here and to have as guarantors for the return of the Ship all the English inhabitants of this State, if the possibility will have been granted to only one of them of making the journey to Tenerife without delay; in that it can scarcely be said how much expense the passage of time would bring with it.

This paragraph is significant in that it reveals that the English contingent had not, as has previously been assumed, arrived aboard a single vessel, but rather two of them, under the direction of a single merchant (supercargo). Cuninghame seems to be making the suggestion that, if one of the ships were to be freed to go to Tenerife (presumably to meet the General), the second (with its crew) could continue to be detained in La Palma to prevent the flight of the first ship, with the 100 or so English inhabitants on the islands also acting as guarantors.

Poggio responded (letter 5)⁶¹ with some speculation as to how matters might be resolved:

There is also another remedy, that our Master of Soldiery should release both Ships with their crew by giving to the Duke General guarantors who may bind themselves and that the Captains of the Ships should promise that they will appear before the Duke General in Tenerife.

In a subsequent response (letter 7),⁶² Poggio outlined the arguments that he had put forward in support of the English party's release, among them:

... first your eastern association,⁶³ which is capable of seeking its reparation from Madrid; the English Minister⁶⁴ serving there who will have the ear of my King with benevolence and friendship; the Spanish executive Judge who will come from Madrid to find out about the reparations sought by the association of the Indies; ... the indignation of our King against disturbers ... of the peace; our gratitude towards the British Kingdom for being the defender of Flanders; the necessity of the friendship of your kingdom,

Poggio follows this list with a revealing statement that describes the Spanish case against the British ships and crew, apparently quoting his earlier letter to the Master of Soldiery:

You will say that the British have inflicted great injuries against the Spanish and have committed a great crime, nay a huge offence with major and minor attacks ...; and in order to apprehend their fugitive sailors they have attacked our little ship with arms and violence in our own port and under our arches and forts. ... Joseph Martin⁶⁵, thy Consul, has made and presented a protest composed in the Spanish language which the Advocate of thy Nation Master Melchior Brier⁶⁶ composed and dictated. It is important that protests should be repeated by always persisting. I hope that the Duke General will fill us with gladness and exultation: may it happen thus as I pray and beseech God.

Poggio's hopes for the resolution of the situation seem not to have been misplaced for, in Cuninghame's next letter (letter 8, 2 February 1698),⁶⁷ it seems clear that he and the unnamed chief merchant (supercargo) had at least now been freed from prison (though the latter remained under house arrest):

That during these days that have elapsed I have not seen Thee nor given a response to Thy letter was caused by my abiding in our ship; and my disembarking again onto land was undertaken chiefly for the purpose of visiting Thee.

In a subsequent letter (letter 10, undated but, from its position, apparently written between 2 and 7 February 1698),⁶⁸ Cuninghame reveals that, despite its being

now agreed among all (as I hope) that our apparent hostilities and enmities have vanished into thin air; ... We have so far been detained for eight days,⁶⁹ and no hope of leaving yet shines forth for us. The Consul of our Nation⁷⁰ proceeds slowly in protesting, nay he refuses to do so, because he is afraid that the mind of the Master of Soldiery will be won over to be ill-disposed towards him.

Poggio's last letter to Cuninghame (letter 11, 7 February 1698)⁷¹ reflected the good news that a decision had been reached by the Spanish authorities allowing the release of at least one of the ships, its crew and Cuninghame. However, Cuninghame was not to see Poggio again before his ship left La Palma. In his final letter to the priest (letter 12, 8 February),⁷² he again expressed his thanks to him (as well as to 'the Supreme Governor of all Things'), concluding:

meanwhile, supported by Thy blessing and about to carry with us our longing for Thee, we hope that we shall have, with the Lord's favour, our desired happy issues. Therefore he who is to Thy service wholly devoted says his last farewell to Thee (since there was not an opportunity of seeing Thee), James Cuninghame

In summary, this correspondence reveals various pieces of new information. Significantly, the British party was composed of two ships (rather than one, as has previously been assumed). From Poggio's account it seems that, although the British had been robust in trying to recapture the escapees and had attacked the Spaniards (who may have been protecting them, particularly if the British sailors had expressed a wish to adopt Catholicism), there had been no injuries on the Spanish side. This event must have taken place near the end of January 1698, with the British party then imprisoned for some 10 days before one of the ships and her crew (including Cunninghame) was released, embarking around 8 February 1698 southward towards the Cape of Good Hope.⁷³ It is unclear whether the second ship and her crew remained in La Palma as a condition of the first ship's release. If she did remain in La Palma for a period before returning to England, this might explain how the plant specimens that Cunninghame had collected on the island were transported to England in time for them to be exhibited by James Petiver at a meeting of the Royal Society in October 1698.⁷⁴

ENGLISH AND SPANISH RELATIONS IN THE CANARY ISLANDS, 1697–1703

Although the correspondence between Cunninghame and Poggio reveals some new information about the events in La Palma, it nevertheless leaves several questions unanswered. Because the incident seems to have been fairly serious (Poggio talks about the need for a Spanish executive judge to be sent to the Canary Islands from Madrid), it might be expected that it would have been noted in contemporaneous political papers.

At this period the British had a Consul stationed on the island of Tenerife (adjacent to, and to the south of, La Palma). Between about 1690 and 1702, the position was held by one Edmund Smith, and several of his reports to the Secretary of State for the Southern Department survive among the British State Papers. They generally deal with matters of shipping, trade and piracy and accounts of disputes with the Spanish authorities. Surviving reports to England include two dated 24 March 1697 and 9 February 1699,⁷⁵ the latter commencing with reference to an earlier letter of his dated 7 April 1698. If there was an account of Cunninghame and his companions' visit to La Palma, it seems likely that it would have featured in that 1698 report, which unfortunately seems to have been lost.

The 1699 report and subsequent letters together give a strong impression of the considerable tensions that existed between the Spanish and the 100 or so British people (many of them traders and their families) in the Canary Islands at the time. Smith complained that the Captain-General (presumably Pedro y Ponte y Llerena del Hoyo y Calderón, Conde del Palmar (1624–1705), who held the post between June 1697 and mid-1701⁷⁶), continually obstructed his own attempts, as Consul, to represent the British. Religious friction is also apparent, with Smith's position as Consul coming under attack for allegedly referring to one Mathen Robins as a 'Renegado Dog' for converting to Catholicism⁷⁷ and, by late 1702, he seems to have been replaced as Consul on Tenerife by Ambrose Roope.

After the death of the King of Spain, Charles II, on 4 November 1700, and the start of the Spanish War of Succession (1701–14), matters evidently went from bad to worse for the British in the islands, with a plea being sent by Roope to London for the rescue of some 100 named British subjects from Tenerife.⁷⁸ A subsequent letter reports that, although *Hampshire* arrived off the island to evacuate these people, the Spanish authorities refused her entry and imprisoned the Consul. Joseph Martin, mentioned by Poggio in one of his letters to Cunninghame, is listed (as 'Consul of Palma') as one of those wishing to leave the islands.⁷⁹

CONCLUSION

It is now clear that James Cuninghame's first visit to China (Amoy, 1698–99), which yielded such a rich return in terms of specimens and watercolours of plants, insects, molluscs and others, previously unknown in Europe, was not (as has been assumed) undertaken while he was fulfilling the role of surgeon for one of the East India companies. Cuninghame's name does not appear in the companies' records in this period, and various sources (as has been shown) demonstrate that he could not have travelled on either of the New Company's ships, *Trumbull* and *Nassau*, that sailed for Amoy in 1697.

Instead, it seems probable that he was engaged as a trader by Henry Gough⁸⁰ and travelled with him on *Tuscan*, one of the two ships that Gough sent out together from London bound for China in late 1697 (and of which the New Company was aware, warning the supercargoes of *Trumbull* against assisting them). That *Tuscan* was an interloping vessel is also suggested by the ship's itinerary home. St Helena, in the South Atlantic, was a frequent and convenient staging post for ships of both the Old and New Companies homebound from the East Indies, the island being effectively owned and garrisoned by the EIC at this time.⁸¹ *Trumbull* (a New Company ship) called there on her way home to England in April 1699, but *Tuscan* evidently did not, avoiding St Helena and calling instead at the island of Ascension (in May 1699) to take on water and provisions, a more prudent option than St Helena because the EIC aggressively denied any support to interlopers.⁸²

Although the role of the two East India Companies' employees in collecting specimens and making observations in the East Indies in the early modern period (though often largely incidental to the companies' objectives) was highly significant, the story of Cuninghame's first voyage to China suggests that collectors connected with interlopers also had a part to play. Cuninghame was subsequently employed by the New Company as surgeon to the factory that it was attempting to establish in Chusan in 1700, and from there (as well as later from Cochinchina), evidently building on his developing collecting skills and knowledge, he sent to England a remarkable body of information and specimens from a part of the world then little known or understood in Europe. Described and figured by people such as James Petiver and Leonard Plukenet, information about the natural curiosities that Cuninghame had collected reached new audiences and contemporary natural philosophers such as Sir Hans Sloane, as well as contributing to knowledge about, and the naming of, organisms in the Linnaean era of binomial nomenclature from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards.⁸³

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Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge. John Chainey kindly identified the butterfly specimen collected by Cuninghame in La Palma, and the images of this and of the Amoy plant specimens were prepared by Kevin Webb. Richard Coulton generously shared his transcription of one of James Petiver's more opaque draft letters. We have benefited from Jane Kilpatrick's advice on sources in trying to track down the identity of Cuninghame's ship, and we are grateful for the Canarian perspective provided by Arnoldo Santos-Guerra and Javier Francisco-Ortega.

NOTES

- 1 Cuninghame's surname is variously rendered as 'Cunninghame', 'Cunningham' 'Cuningham' and 'Cuningham' in assorted records but, as he consistently used 'Cuninghame' himself, this spelling is adopted here.
- 2 Emile Bretschneider, *Early European Researches into the Flora of China* (Trübner, London, 1881), p. 37.
- 3 As reported by Leonard Plukenet, *Almagesti botanici mantissa* (London, 1700), p. 59.
- 4 R. W. Innes Smith, *English-speaking students of medicine at the University of Leyden* (Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1932), p. 61.
- 5 The purpose, dates, destinations and other circumstances of these travels are at present uncertain but, at a meeting of the Royal Society held on 10 February 1697, Hans Sloane showed an oil produced from *Ricinus* seeds in St Helena 'from Mr Cuningham, lately come from the East Indies'. 'Y^e same Mr Cuningham related y^t y^e Governor's wife used it for a purge, taking ab^t. 3 spoonfulls of it for a dose': Royal Society, Journal Book Original, vol. 10, p. 17 (JBO/10/17). Some of the seeds were retained by Sloane and they survive as a boxed collection among his 'Vegetables and Vegetable Substances': no. 2703, Natural History Museum, London (NHM).
- 6 See Jane Kilpatrick, *Gifts from the gardens of China* (Frances Lincoln, London, 2007), p. 35.
- 7 Michael Hunter, *The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660–1700, the morphology of an early scientific institution* (British Society for the History of Science, London, 1994), p. 232.
- 8 Although the reason for the massacre has been put down to a contractual dispute with their guards (see summary by Kilpatrick, *op. cit.* (note 6), p. 46), a different perspective is provided by Danny Wong Tze-Ten, in 'The destruction of the English East India Company factory on Condore Island, 1702–1705', *Mod. Asian Stud.* **46**, 1097–1115 (2012), who suggests that the British may unwittingly have been perceived to be supporting a potential insurrection by Cambodian soldiers.
- 9 Cuninghame to Sloane and Petiver, 4 January 1709, Sloane MS 4041, f. 265, British Library (BL).
- 10 For further biographical information on Cuninghame, see James E. Dandy, *The Sloane Herbarium* (British Museum, London, 1958), pp. 117–122; Gordon Goodwin, rev. David J. Mabberley, 'Cuninghame [Cunningham], James', in *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford University Press), consulted online at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6922?docPos=1> (subscription required) on 18 February 2014; Kilpatrick, *op. cit.* (note 6), pp. 34–48; Richard S. Morel, 'James Cunningham—the unluckiest botanist in Asia', <http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/untoldlives/2013/05/james-cunningham-the-unluckiest-botanist-in-asia.html>.
- 11 Sloane acquired the herbaria of both Plukenet and Petiver after their deaths, and their specimens now form part of the Sloane Herbarium at the Natural History Museum in London; see Dandy, *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 175–187.
- 12 The plant collections of William Sherard and Charles Du Bois now form part of the Oxford University Herbaria; see Hermia Newman Clokie, *An account of the Herbaria of the Department of Botany in the University of Oxford* (Oxford University Press, 1964).

- 13 The presence in Webb's herbarium of *Gardenia* specimens that had been collected in China by Cuninghame was recorded by Daniel Solander, 'An Account of the Gardenia: In a Letter to Philip Carteret Webb, Esq; F.R.S', *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond.* **52**, 654–661 (1762); see also Charles E. Jarvis, Ashley DuVal and Peter R. Crane, '*Gardenia jasminoides*—a traditional Chinese dye plant becomes a garden ornamental in Europe', *Curtis's Bot. Mag.* **31**, 80–98 (2014), at p. 85, fig. 3. Although at least one of the specimens originally in Webb's herbarium has been reported in the Natural History Museum's collections (see J. B. Marshall, 'The handwriting of Joseph Banks, his scientific staff and amanuenses', *Bull. Br. Mus. (Nat. Hist.), Bot.* **6**(1), 34 (f. 15) (1978)), the fate of most of his botanical material is unknown.
- 14 Bretschneider, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 46–62, provides an enumeration of the Chinese plants noted by Petiver in his *Musei Petiveriani* (1695–1703), his *Gazophylacii naturae* (1702–09) and in George Joseph Camel and James Cuninghame, 'A Description of Some Coralls, and Other Curious Submarines . . .', *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond.* **23**, 1419–1429 (1703) [17 pages], many of them collected by Cuninghame. Those described by Plukenet in his *Amaltheum Botanicum* (1705) are listed on pp. 62–88.
- 15 John Ray, *Historiae Plantarum tomus tertius*, Appendix, p. 233, Plantae rariores Chinenses, Madraspatanae & Africanæ a d. Jacobo Petivero . . . collatae (S. Smith & B. Walford, London, 1704).
- 16 John Woodward, *A Catalogue of the Foreign Fossils In the Collection of J. Woodward M.D.* (London, 1728).
- 17 Cuninghame, Sloane MS 2376, ff. 1–125.
- 18 Arnoldo Santos-Guerra, Charles E. Jarvis, Mark A. Carine, Michael A. Maunder and Javier Francisco-Ortega, 'Late 17th century herbarium collections from the Canary Islands: the plants collected by James Cuninghame in La Palma', *Taxon* **60**, 1734–1753 (2011); see also Javier Francisco-Ortega, Arnoldo Santos-Guerra, Charlie E. Jarvis, Mark A. Carine, Miguel Menezes de Sequeira and Mike Maunder, 'Early British collectors and observers of the Macaronesian flora: from Sloane to Darwin', in *Beyond cladistics—the branching of a paradigm* (ed. David M. Williams and Sandra Knapp), pp. 125–144 (University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2010), esp. pp. 130–134.
- 19 Cuninghame, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 31–33.
- 20 *Ibid.*, ff. 33–36.
- 21 *Ibid.*, ff. 38–48.
- 22 *Ibid.*, f. 37r,v.
- 23 *Ibid.*, ff. 49–72; many of these specimens survive in Sloane's herbarium.
- 24 *Ibid.*, ff. 73–77.
- 25 *Ibid.*, ff. 78–81v. Samples of the four primary ingredients form numbers 1965–1968 in Sloane's collection of 'Vegetables and Vegetable Substances', NHM.
- 26 The paintings were shown by Cuninghame at a meeting of the Royal Society on 25 October 1699: 'many plants designed and painted, from y^e life, on y^e place he had about 7 or 800 of them drawn in colours, on larger sheets of paper, which, he said, was made of y^e inner part of Bambo bark': JBO/10/146. Cuninghame listed each watercolour (*op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 82–110). The watercolours now form Sloane Add. MS 5292, BL, and form a rare surviving collection of Chinese commercial art from this period (Charles E. Jarvis, Anne Farrer and Clarissa von Spee, unpublished work). For reproductions, see Kilpatrick, *op. cit.* (note 6), p. 38; Jarvis *et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 85, fig. 3.
- 27 Cuninghame, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 112–118.
- 28 *Ibid.*, f. 118v. Other items from here are also credited to Cuninghame, including a shell (Petiver, *Gazophylacii naturae*, *op. cit.* (note 14), tab. 9, f. 9) and two geological samples: 'A blackish earth' and 'sand' (Woodward, *op. cit.* (note 16), p. 1, α .2 (specimen CAMSM E-1-1, Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge); p. 3, $\dagger\alpha$.5 (specimen CAMSM E-1-88)).
- 29 William Foster, *The East India Company 1600–1858*, vol. 1 (*England's quest of Eastern trade*), edited and with a new introduction by Patrick Tuck (Routledge, London, 1933), pp. 331–332.

- 30 Anthony J. Farrington, *A catalogue of East India Company ships' journals and logs, 1600–1834* (British Library, London, 1999), p. 666.
- 31 Francisco-Ortega *et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 18), p. 130; Kilpatrick, *op. cit.* (note 6), p. 35; both believed *Nassau* to have been the ship in question.
- 32 Essex Record Office, D/DS 104/1; microfilm copy Ph 4/46. For further details of *Trumbull*'s itinerary, see Charles E. Jarvis & Joanne Cooper, 'Maidstone's woodpecker—an unexpected avian specimen in the herbarium of Hans Sloane', *Arch. Nat. Hist.* **41**(2), 230–239 (2014).
- 33 Maidstone himself was also a collector, and some of his natural history materials still survive, including the head of a woodpecker—see Jarvis & Cooper, *op. cit.* (note 32).
- 34 Walter Keir (fl. 1696–99) was already acquainted with both Cuninghame and Petiver and had introduced the two men to one another (Petiver to Cuninghame, 'My very kind friend Dr Walter Keir has I understand . . . acquainted you, with my ambition of being known to you', undated but probably late 1696 (Sloane MS 3332, f. 230v).
- 35 India Office Records, BL/IOR/G/12/5, ff. 604v–607 (BL).
- 36 Farrington, *op. cit.* (note 30); *Trumbull* arrived back in England on 12 June 1699, *Nassau* not until 1 September.
- 37 Jane Kilpatrick, personal communication.
- 38 'We would have you in your outward bound voyage make the best of your way towards the Western Islands, and when by judgement you are within 40 or 50 leagues of them shape the course wind and weather will permit so as to keep at least 30 degrees to the westward of the Canary Islands'. In an emergency, *Trumbull* should choose a port 'least lyable to danger of an enemy avoiding all suspected Places especially the isle of May [Maio] and St Jago [Santiago] and other Cape de verde islands where Pyrates usually lye'. IOR E/3/92, f. 311r.
- 39 Dandy, *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 121–122.
- 40 Javier Francisco-Ortega and Arnoldo Santos-Guerra, 'Early evidence of plant hunting in the Canary Islands from 1694', *Arch. Nat. Hist.* **26**(2), 239–267 (1999), state that a mutiny was the reason for the ship calling at La Palma (p. 240).
- 41 Sloane MS 3333, f. 111.
- 42 Jacob Bobart, the younger (1641–1719), Curator of the Physic Garden at the University of Oxford; Samuel Doody FRS (1656–1706), apothecary and Keeper of the Chelsea Physic Garden; James Ayrey (fl. 1697–1706), a merchant in London with a strong interest in natural history.
- 43 David Kreig FRS (d. 1713), German physician and collector (see Dandy, *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 151–152); William Vernon FRS (fl. 1688–1711), Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge (see Dandy, *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 226–228).
- 44 Sloane MS 2360, f. 7. Two Latin hexameters are followed by a prose dedication.
- 45 Sloane MS 2374, ff. 112–116 (BL). James Petiver has added supplementary annotations to many of Cuninghame's species descriptions in this section, including the letter 'K', which he states (f. 113) indicates material collected by 'D[ominus] Keir'. Walter Keir, a friend of Cuninghame and the surgeon aboard *Nassau*, was in Amoy (at the same time as Cuninghame and *Tuscan*) between July 1698 and January 1699. Petiver (*Musei Petiveriani*, p. 45, 1699) records having received plants from Keir (some of which are in the Sloane Herbarium; see Dandy, *op. cit.* (note 10), p. 148) from the 'Streights of Malacca', raising the possibility that *Nassau* and *Tuscan* (despite the New Company's warnings to the former) may, at least initially, have sailed home towards England together. (*Nassau* arrived home a full three months after her sister ship *Trumbull*.)
- 46 '[I]nter Insulas numerosas Freti-Malaccensis repertus' (Sloane MS 2374, f. 113).
- 47 '[U]bi Navis nostra Tuscan dicta rupibus adhaesit' (Sloane MS 2374, f. 113). See figure 5.
- 48 Farrington, *op. cit.* (note 30), p. 666. *Tuscan* was taken up by the New Company for a voyage to India (1699–1700); she left the Downs on 24 January 1700, so could have been so employed after her return to England (with Cuninghame aboard) in June or July 1699.

- 49 See H. V. Bowen, 'The most illustrious and most flourishing commercial organisation that ever existed—the East India Company's seaborne empire, 1709–1833', in *Monsoon traders—the maritime world of the East India Company* (ed. H. V. Bowen, John McAleer and Robert J. Blyth), pp. 91–125 (Scala Publishers Ltd, London, 2011), esp. p. 108.
- 50 IOR/G/12/5, f. 608v, 27 October 1697.
- 51 Presumably Henry Gough (1681–1751), who had first travelled to China at the age of 11 years with his uncle, Sir Richard Gough (1655–1728). Henry Gough subsequently commanded a merchantman for the EIC and was later a director of the company (see Shirley Matthews in Romney Sedgwick, *The history of Parliament. The House of Commons 1715–1754*, vol. 2 (*Members E–Y*) (HMSO, London, 1970), p. 73). He was also one of the trustees of Sir Hans Sloane's will (see Marjorie Caygill, 'Sloane's will and the establishment of the British Museum', in *Sir Hans Sloane: collector, scientist, antiquary, founding father of the British Museum* (ed. Arthur MacGregor), pp. 45–68 (British Museum Press, London, 1994), esp. p. 59).
- 52 Sloane MS 2376, ff. 11–30.
- 53 Dandy, *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 121–122.
- 54 Sloane MS 2376, f. 31 (BL).
- 55 James Britten (1846–1924) was a botanist employed between 1871 and 1924 at the British Museum (later the British Museum (Natural History)) and also active in the Catholic Truth Society. The original precis (dating from 1915) survives alongside Britten's card index of notes on Sloane's herbarium (NHM).
- 56 See Tomás Tabares de Nava, *Apuntes para la Historia de los Poggio*, Sta Cruz de Tenerife: Imprenta Católica; Eugenio Egea Molina, Juan Bautista Poggio Maldonado (1632–1707), <http://temascanarios.blogspot.co.uk/2007/11/hombre-multifactico-abogado-presbtero.html>.
- 57 Sloane MS 2376, ff. 10–21.
- 58 Letter 1: Poggio to Cuninghame, undated, *op. cit.* (note 17), f. 10r.
- 59 Letter 2: Cuninghame to Poggio, undated, *op. cit.* (note 17), f. 10v.
- 60 Letter 4: Cuninghame to Poggio, undated, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 11v–12r.
- 61 Letter 5: Poggio to Cuninghame, undated, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 12v–13r.
- 62 Letter 7: Poggio to Cuninghame, 30 January 1698, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 14r–16r.
- 63 Presumably the EIC.
- 64 Presumably Alexander Stanhope FRS (1638–1707), Envoy Extraordinary to the Spanish Court of Charles II from 1690 to 1699.
- 65 Joseph Martin seems to have been the British Consul on La Palma, Edmund Smith being the Consul on Tenerife.
- 66 This seems likely to have been the Melchior Brier who provided an eye-witness account of the La Palma volcanic eruption of 1677—see S. J. Day, J. C. Carracedo, H. Guillou, F. J. Pais Pais, E. Rodriguez Badiola, J. F. B. Fonseca and S. I. N. Helen, 'Comparison and cross-checking of historical, archaeological and geological evidence for the location and type of historical and sub-historical eruptions of multi-vent oceanic island volcanoes', in *The archaeology of geological catastrophes* (Geological Society Special Publication no. 171) (ed. W. G. McGuire, D. R. Griffiths, P. L. Hancock and I. S. Stewart), pp. 281–306 (Geological Society, London, 2000).
- 67 Letter 8: Cuninghame to Poggio, 2 February 1698, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 16v–17r.
- 68 Letter 10: Cuninghame to Poggio, undated, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 18v–19r.
- 69 Depending on when the letter was written, the initial imprisonment of the men must have occurred at a point between *ca.* 25 and 30 January 1698.
- 70 This is presumably Joseph Martin.
- 71 Letter 11: Poggio to Cuninghame, 7 February 1698, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 19v–20r.
- 72 Letter 12: Cuninghame to Poggio, 8 February 1698, *op. cit.* (note 17), ff. 20v–21r.
- 73 Cuninghame's final letter to Poggio was dated 8 February, so his ship must have embarked promptly thereafter, because he reported crossing the Equator in mid-February.

- 74 JBO/10/65.
- 75 National Archives (NA), State Papers Foreign SP 94/229, Edmund Smith to the Secretary of State, from 'Teneriffe', 24 March 1697 (ff. 62–63); 9 February 1699 (ff. 73–74).
- 76 José de Viera y Clavijo, *Noticias de la historia general de las Islas de Canaria*, vol. 3, pp. 335–344 (Madrid, 1776). The Captain-General, however, seems to have made a much more favourable impression on the sometime pirate and collector William Dampier (1652–1715), who met him in Tenerife in February 1699 (just a few days before Smith's letter was written) and described him as 'having the character of a very worthy person; and governs with moderation and justice, being very well beloved' (quoted from *A Voyage to New-Holland, &c. In the Year 1699*, ed. 3 (James and John Knapton, London, 1729), ch. 1).
- 77 NA, SP 94/229, f. 91.
- 78 *Ibid.*, ff. 244–247.
- 79 *Ibid.*, f. 250, letter from Roope (on behalf of the factory), 29 March 1703.
- 80 Cunninghame was evidently on friendly terms with Gough: 'We're now proceeding in our voyage to Ning-po, where we are assured of a kind reception by Mr Gough's industry' (Cunninghame to Petiver, 29 July 1700, Sloane MS 3321, f. 52, BL); 'I was very glad to hear of your welfare by my good friend Mr Harry Gough' (Cunninghame to Sloane, 22 November 1701, Sloane MS 4025, f. 92, BL).
- 81 See Stephen Royle, *The Company's island. St Helena, company colonies and the colonial endeavour* (I. B. Taurus, London, 2007).
- 82 'We do . . . strictly charge and require our . . . Governor . . . that he do not give or grant any such liberty to trade or refreshment . . . to any English ship or vessel . . . other than such ships or vessels and their men as shall come there in our service' (Royle, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 129).
- 83 The starting dates for binomial nomenclature for most groups of organisms correspond to Carl Linnaeus's works *Species Plantarum* (1753) and *Systema Naturae*, ed. 10 (1758).