SOME EARLY PORTUGUESE BILLS OF LADING, 1625-1708.

By CAPTAIN C. R. BOXER

Professor Chozo Muto in No. 14 of his Bibliography of Anglo-Japanese Relations (XIV) makes some interesting references to English Bills of Lading mentioned in the Diary of Richard Cocks, and other contemporary sources dealing with the English trade in Japan during the early seventeenth century. The learned Professor's observations reminded me of some old Portuguese Bills of lading of about the same period which I acquired in Lisbon some time ago, and which are probably not without interest to students of economic history, as being some of the oldest surviving examples of their kind. The great influence exercised by the Portuguese on the commercial life and methods of the East during the days of their greatness is at last beginning to be recognized by modern historians; for hitherto attention has been concentrated almost exclusively on their political and religious activities—to the virtual exclusion of their equally far-reaching economic influence. Even superficial students of colonial history are probably aware that such modern every-day economic influence, though often less obvious, is at least beginning to be recognized by modern historians.

The original Bill of Lading is preserved in the Handel Museum in Hamburg, and is described by Professor Chozo Muto in No. 14 of his Bibliography of Anglo-Japanese Relations, and is illustrated. The text of this Bill is given below:

CAPTAIN C. R. BOXER

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After the surviving ships had finally sailed for Goa on the 27th March, the luggers Vossa Senhora da China and the merchant Vossa Senhora de Sáo Paulo, which rejoiced in the loss of three vessels, as well as the galleon Sáo Joao and the pinnace Sáo Bento, which disappeared. On the eve of departing for India, a sudden storm arose during the night of January 24th, 1644, which proved fatal. On the eve of departing for India, a sudden storm arose during the night of January 24th, 1644, which proved fatal. It being too late in the season to continue on to Goa, the fleet was forced to winter in the harbour of Mozambique.

Of the bills of lading with which this essay deals, only two are of Eastern origin, the others being connected with Brazil; but the type was clearly a fixed one, and doubtless similar forms were used in the China and Japan trades as well.

The annual India fleet, which left Lisbon for Goa in the spring of 1623 consisted of the carracks Sáo Francisco, Xavzer, Santa Isabel and Nossa Senhora da Conceição, the galleons Sáo André, Sáo Silvio and Sáo Silvio da China, and the pinnaces Nossa Senhora da Guia and Sáo Bento.

The outward voyage was a disastrous one, only the galleon Sáo André arriving at Goa in October of the same year. The squadron left the Tagus on the 25th March; the line was passed on the 1st June and the Cape rounded on the 25th July. The pinnace Nossa Senhora da Guia fell in with the outward-bound English East-Indianman Coaster in the latitude of the Cape and was taken after a "doubtful" twelve-hour action. However, her captors found the vessel so spoiled in the fight that she was allowed to proceed to Mozambique, where she found that her consorts had arrived on the 22nd September. It being too late in the season to continue on to Goa, the fleet was forced to winter in the harbour of Mozambique.
parted company, and was wrecked on the coast of Arabia. It was thus with only three sail (Sr;lo .1
f'nl7lclsco Xav/cr,

and
Vossa Sen/lora da COllcez'fao
out of
his
original eight that the Captain· Major, Dom Antonio Tello, reached the bar of the Mandovi at the end of May, 1624.
The tardy appearance of the survivors of the ill·fated 1623 ileet, was somevath compensated for by the safe
arrival of the eight sail composing the 1624 fleet in September of that year.
This last squadron chiefly consisted
of war·gal1eons destined to proceed to the
Persian
Gulf
against
an Anglo·Dutch force which was expected there in
connection with the operations off
Ormuz. Only three
vessel:
the carracks
Ct'71CO CYzag"as
(Five
Wounds
of Christ),
and
Nossa Smhom da Quielafao, together with the galleon
Sao .foao,
came under the orders of the Admiral
Joao
Pereira
Corte·Real as Captain-Major for the return
voyage in the spring of 1625.
These three vessels wintered in
the bar of Goa, together with the three survivors of Dom Antonio Tello—the two
carracks
Sao Francisco XaliJieJ'
and
Vossa Scnitora ria C'onceifao
and
the galleon
11.f;zeJ'/corri?o—taking in their cargoes of
pepper and other commodities under the protection of the fortresses of Mormugao and Nossa Senhora do Cabo.
This brings us to the raison d'être of this article, namely the
Conceção, or Bill of Lading, from the
Carrack
honra do Concez'fao, which is reproduced in facsimile herewith. The translation of this remarkable document may be read
as follows (the italicised portions are in Ms. in the original):

"I, Diogo Coelho, who now with the help of God, am going for the Kingdom as Second Pilot of the Carrack which

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as follows (the italicised portions are in Ms. in the original):

"I, Diogo Coelho, who now with the help of God, am going for the Kingdom as Second Pilot of the Carrack which
Confirmation of Bill of Lading from The Portuguese Carrack "Nossa Senhora da Conceição", Goa, 1625.

...
addressed to the confessor of His Majesty, all covered with leather, the which I am taking in my cabin and well wrapped up & in good condition, & clearly marked on the outside, and I bind myself by these presents duly signed that, God bringing me in safety with the said Carrack, I will give and deliver it thus and in the condition in which I received it, in the India House to senhor Antonio Soares or to his true assignees, without my being paid anything for this, since I was paid the freight thereof at the time of signing this, & to certify the truth thereof I have signed one of which being fulfilled renders the others null and void, & for the performance whereof I pledge my person and goods, both present & future. Witnesses who were present those who signed below are:

A. Goelo da Costa.

The document is endorsed on the back, Conspicuo N. 1625. Conspicuo de Benalvo. A. Goelo da Costa. (Anotations signatures:)

Both present & future witnesses who were present those who signed below in Goa the 15 of Febrary of 1625, A. Goelo da Costa.

The document is a bill of lading, though the Portuguese word Conspicuo, by which the original itself is entitled, may be rendered into English by "acknowledgment," "bill," "bond," or "receipt."
different state of affairs from that which prevails today, when a shipowner is so elaborately safeguarded by the comprehensive exception clause of his bill of lading, that he is, practically speaking, liable for nothing at all.

It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the origin and development of the bill of lading, but a few words may perhaps be devoted to similar Portuguese documents of the same period, which have come to light in recent years. A few other exceptions have been preserved in Japan from the time when the Portuguese of Macao drove a flourishing trade with Nagasaki in the first quarter of the XVIIth century. These exceptions, and the important exception of seaworthiness, for an interesting discussion of these Luso-Japanese Respondecia Bonds and facsimile reproductions, see the following articles by the present writer:—Notes on the Portuguese Trade in Japan during the XVIIth Century, pp. 7-27; and Notes on the Portuguese Trade in Japan during the XVIIIth Century, pp. 65-75, wherein will be found a facsimile of the 1K8 bond reproduced above. For a discussion of these Luso-Japanese Respondecia Bonds and facsimile reproductions of some of the most interesting, see the two following articles by the present writer:—"Observations on Portuguese Bonds and facsimile reproductions of some of the most interesting," written in Japanese with copious extracts from contemporary Portuguese and Japanese Documents," in Japanese Economic History, Vol. X, No. 1 and 2, edited "Observations on Portuguese Bonds and facsimile reproductions of some of the most interesting," written in Japanese with copious extracts from contemporary Portuguese and Japanese Documents," in Japanese Economic History, Vol. X, No. 1 and 2, edited by G. T. Shiba (Kozaburo) (Kojima, Tokyo, 1923), pp. 7-27; and Notes on the Portuguese Trade in Japan during the XVIIIth Century, pp. 65-75, wherein will be found a facsimile of the bill of lading reproduced above. For a discussion of these Luso-Japanese Respondecia Bonds and facsimile reproductions of some of the most interesting, see the two following articles by the present writer:—"Observations on Portuguese Bonds and facsimile reproductions of some of the most interesting," written in Japanese with copious extracts from contemporary Portuguese and Japanese Documents."
I, Pero Fernandez de Carvalho, Factor of the City of Macau, hereby declare that I have borrowed four thousand taels of bar silver from Suyetsugu Socotu (=Sotoku), merchant of Hakata, at twenty-five per cent, on behalf of the said City of Macau.

And the said Suyetsugu Socotu declared that this sum of four thousand taels is to go from here to Macau divided in equal amounts on board the two ships Nossa Senhora da Conceição, which is the flagship, and Nossa Senhora do Rozario e São João. From Macau to this city (next year) the amount is to be returned (in goods) equally divided amongst the ships of the voyage which sail first; and in case only one is sent, it will take only one third of the whole; in the event of the voyage being cancelled, another 10% must be paid. This silver bullion with the profits earned thereon will be repaid by the Factor who succeeds me, for and on behalf of the City of Macau. Nangassanle (Nagasaki), sixth of October of sixteen hundred and thirty-eight.

(Signed) Pero Fernandez de Carvalho.

This document is endorsed on the back in Japanese for forty thousand dollars of bar silver, and the Portuguese word Conhecimento is used in its Japanese form of 会議, written in the native syllabic script—another striking instance of Portuguese commercial influence in the Far East at the time. Although this document is not to be found in the works of Yule, Burnell, Dalgado and other Indo-European lexicographers, its use was widespread in the Far East as may be seen from the following extract from Hagcnaer's voyage in Japan in 1637, printed in Vol. II of the Begin ende Voortgangh (Antwerpian 1640), under the date of i. x. 1637: "... is den Opper Coopman Van Sanen... naer Macao gesonden, om aldaer 200 kisten silvers yder van 1000 teyl ofte 2700 guilde, op deposito, tot 2-%; onder heerlijcke hantschrift, (hier cognossementen genaempt) te lichten &c. "Cognossement" is of course the Portuguese commercial influence in the Far East at the time. Although this document is endorsed on the back in Japanese for forty thousand dollars of bar silver, and the Portuguese word Conhecimento is used in its Japanese form of 会議, written in the native syllabic script—another striking instance of Portuguese commercial influence in the Far East at the time.
above, a Respondencia Bond, that is to say, a receipt for money borrowed upon the security of a vessel's cargo.

A Respondencia Bond, that is to say, a receipt for money borrowed upon the security of a vessel's cargo, or even on the vessel itself, rather than a Bill of Lading in the modern sense of the term, yet the Portuguese used the same word Conhecimento for both kinds of receipt. It seems probable that at this period there was no very hard and fast distinction between the two, but in the case of the 1638 Respondencia Bond, the Japanese shipper is afforded more protection against certain risks, than in the case of the 1625 Bill of Lading. Another point of difference is that the latter document is a printed one and signed by several witnesses, whereas the surviving Luso-Japanese Respondencia Bonds, though drawn up in the same phraseology, are all in manuscript, and the majority have the signature of the borrower or ship-owner only.

It would be interesting to know whether the forms were printed in Lisbon or Goa. The latter, then, we have

The 1625 Conhecimento is a printed form, it seems clear that there must have been thousands of them in common use at the time. Nevertheless, in the course of fairly extensive researches amongst the Portuguese Archives for details of the Indo-Portuguese maritime trade, I have never come across another such one. Even archives for details of the Indo-Portuguese maritime trade, I have never come across another such one. Even through this Bill of Lading can scarcely be named, the number of such forms that have survived the vicissitudes of time is very small. An additional interest is lent to the remarkable document by the romantic circumstances in which were involved the goods and

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House officials, or some of the ship's officers.

The two witnesses, delay identification, at any rate, for the nonce. In all probability, they were merely customs perquisites were at that time—and for a long time after—the privilege of all the ships officers in varying degrees. Such is known that Pento Gonçalves was enabled to take with him the desk and oratory of António Sanches. Such perquisites were at that time—and for a long time after—the privilege of all the ships' officers in varying degrees. Such was obviously under the tons of full of goods (other than those declared contraband), freight and duty free. It was however unrecorded in his capacity of sală-pilote of the Voxsa Sombra da Conceição, to bring home from India two slaves and a chest of such of them as can be identified.

Before resuming the thread of this tale, a few words may be devoted to the personages named in the Bill of Lading. The carrick mentioned therein, as will be seen from the story of the tale of the carrack Voxsa Sombra da Conceição.

About the sală-pilote, or second pilot, Pento Gonçalves, almost nothing has beenascertained hitherto. The name Gonçales is a very common one in Portuguese, and numerous seafarers with the same patronymic, can be traced in contemporary documents. My friend, Sir Frazão de Vasconcelos, has however unearthed an interesting reference to Bento Gonçalves in the archives of the Torre do Tombo at Lisbon. This is contained in an alvará, or royal decree, dated the 13th March 1623, granting him permission to bring home from India two slaves and a chest full of goods (other than those declared contraband), freight and duty free. It was obviously under the terms of this Alvará that Pento Gonçalves wa,s enabled to take with him the desk and oratory of António Sanches. Such perquisites were at that time—and for a long time after—the privilege of all the ships’ officers in varying degrees. Such was obviously under the tons of full of goods (other than those declared contraband), freight and duty free. It was however unrecorded in his capacity of sală-pilote of the Voxsa Sombra da Conceição, to bring home from India two slaves and a chest of such of them as can be identified.

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With the remaining personages, we are on firmer ground. Bartolomeu Sanches Correa, the shipper of the goods, was a wealthy Christao JlloZJo, or converted Je", who was a prominent trader in Goa. In later years, during the Viceroyalty of the Conde de Linhares (1630-1636), who was a noted protector of this class, he was farmer of the Customs at Goa, in which his enemies accused him of introducing illicit practices to the detriment of the Royal Exchequer. It was likewise alleged that he was concerned with the Viceroy in shipping forbidden goods to Pegu; but these and other stories are probably mainly inspired by the malicious Jew-baiting which was one of the chief occupations of both secular and ecclesiastical dignitaries at the time. The persons to whom the goods were consigned are easily identifiable. The Call/adm' or desk (writing bureau?) was destined as a present for the Conde de Olivares, the famous Minister and favourite of King Phillip IV of Spain; whilst the oratory (or praying-stool ?) was sent to the Royal Confessor, the Dominican Frey Antonio de Soutomayor. Obviously the watched Israelite—who, like most others of his class, was doubtless a Christian only from the teeth out—felt it politic to keep in with the King. This was the more necessary since about this time there were repeated orders issued from Madrid and the years 1632-1636, are preserved in the British Museum (Egerton MS. 2046), a large number of documents signed by him, and dealing with the appointments of various ecclesiastical dignitaries in office, of which was kindly lent me by Professor Prestage. It is an anonymous, and for the most part highly scurrilous, production. A copy of which was kindly lent me by Professor Prestage. It is an anonymous, and for the most part highly scurrilous, production. 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Lisbon, that no persons of Hebrew extraction were to be appointed to any positions of authority in the Portuguese
Indies—though these orders, like most Iberian Royal decrees, remained a dead letter in so far as the authorities at
Goa were concerned.'

Antonio Sanches and Jeronimo Fernandez Aires, to whom the goods were to be delivered at the India House in
Lisbon for transmission to Madrid, were presumably relatives or friends of Jeronimo Fernandez Aires—the first-named
being perhaps his brother, and probably identical with the cartographer, Antonio Sanches, who flourished at Lisbon
around 1621-1641.

The story of the homeward voyage of the Indian-bounded Dutch Indiaman *Hollantina* bore in sight of the anchorage on the 14th
March a leak in the hull of the *Conceição* and her consorts, which in their turn left the crew of the *Conceição* in an
dreadful state of mind. There was no possibility of repairs being undertaken, and all efforts to render her seaworthy by
throwing overboard part of the cargo proved unavailing. It was resolved to beach her at Saint Helena by
Lisbon, where she sprang a leak as a result of the buffeting she received, and all efforts to render her seaworthy
encountered. The *Conceição*, therefore, was warred close inshore of Chapel valley on the north-west side of the island,
where she was resolved to beach her at Saint Helena.

Here the carrack was warped close to the shore by the crew of the *Conceição* and her consorts, who unloaded and
distributed amongst her consorts. These in their turn left the crew of the *Conceição* on a dangerous and eventful
voyage, though a romantic one, is not germane to the subject of this essay and must be summarised in a few lines.

The story of the homeward voyage of the Indian-bounded Dutch Indiaman *Hollantina* began on the 14th
March, and had an eventful voyage as far as the Cape where bad weather was

who removed to Lisbon on the 14th

For an excellent account of the attitude of the secular and ecclesiastical authorities towards the depressed and
hated Christofo Voss, see Dr. A. de Silva Carvalho's study *Guerra de Ouro*, Coimbra, 1934, especially pp. 71-72 and 151-156.

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hated Christofo Voss, see Dr. A. de Silva Carvalho's study *Guerra de Ouro*, Coimbra, 1934, especially pp. 71-72 and 151-156.
June, and promptly attempted to capture the half-stranded carrack. The Portuguese however succeeded in beating off the Hollendra's attack after a brisk cannonade in which both sides suffered some loss, but the Conceição was so badly hulled in the action that she was finally rendered unserviceable for good and all. The remainder of her guns of the Hollendra's attack after a brisk cannonade in which both sides suffered some loss, but the Conceição was so badly hulled in the action that she was finally rendered unserviceable for good and all. The remainder of her guns and cargo were therefore taken out, and the carrack scuttled in the shallow water. The guns and cargoes were therefore taken out, and the carrack scuttled in the shallow water.
Whether the desk and oratorio mentioned in the concelho of the Sota-Pinto, Bento Correia, were amongst the goods which reached the persons to whom they were addressed, we shall never know, but it is permissible to hope so. This particular concelho was presumably not on board the Conceição, but in one of her consorts, which had reached Lisbon in October, 1625, just missing a combined Anglo-Dutch fleet of over one hundred sail, under Wymondham and Haultain, which was on the Portuguese coast on its way to attack Cadiz. Incidentally, it is possible that the goods which reached the persons to whom they were addressed, were not nearly such a romantic history attaching to them, and can be dismissed in a few lines. They are not nearly such a romantic history attaching to them, and can be dismissed in a few lines. They are of the same type as the 1625 bill of lading, with only minor variations in wording, and both relate to Brazil. The earliest of the two dates from 1669, and was signed in Recife (Pernambuco) on the 22nd August of that year by one Pedro Francisco, Master of the ship Vossa Senhora da Erzenha. When the great traveller Peter Munday visited St. Helena eight years later, he noted in his Journal that besides the ruins of forty or fifty dwellings erected by the castaways of the Conceição, "many of the ribs of the Carrack were yet to be seen and abundance of iron, worke all over the Strand." (Travels of Peter Munday) Hak. Soc. Ed. Vol. II, 1625. The Editor wrongly dates the wreck of the carrack to before 1625, while it must be seen from the wording of the form that six copies were made out! evidently one for each of the six vessels in the squadron.
Conhecimento or Bill of Lading from the Portuguese ship Messer Senhora da Encarnação

Recife de Pernambuco 1664.
This form is slightly longer than the 1625 version as regards the printed portion and reads as follows (hatched portions are in red, in the original):

"I, Pedro Francisco, native of Peniche, Master that I am of the ship N. S. da Eucarna/lo, which God preserve, nameu. (blank) which is at present anchored in the port of Recife de Pernambuco in order when opportunity offers to prosecute my voyage to the port of the City of Lisboa, where I am bound to discharge, state that I have received and laden within the said ship, below deck, five chests and two cases of white sugar, which is valued at two hundred and fifty-two arrobas (12) A Portuguese weight of about 32 lbs. a d. p.

(12) A Portuguese weight of about 32 lbs. a d. p.

(13) I. e. Queen Catherine of Braganza who had married Charles II in 1662 with a dowry of Bombay, Tangier, and a million cruzados (ducats) most of the money being paid in jewels, sugars, and other merchandises. It will be recalled that King Charles' Portuguese bride formed the ostensible reason for the Bakunin's refusal to admit the Return when she attempted to reopen English trade with Japan at Nagasaki in 1673.

I Pedro Francisco, native of Peniche, Master that I am of the ship N. S. da Eucarna/lo, which God preserve, nameu. (blank) which is at present anchored in the port of Recife de Pernambuco in order when opportunity offers to prosecute my voyage to the port of the City of Lisboa, where I am bound to discharge, state that I have received and laden within the said ship, below deck, five chests and two cases of white sugar, which is valued at two hundred and fifty-two arrobas (12) A Portuguese weight of about 32 lbs. a d. p.

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The third Bill of Lading which we have under consideration, likewise hails from Pernambuco, and was signed by Joseph Gonçalves Rocha, Captain of the pink Nossa Senhora da Piedade e São Roque. It is dated 30th May 1708, and in form and wording is practically identical with the earlier Brazil one just transcribed. Virtually the only difference is that it has an official stamp of the Portuguese Royal Arms on the top left-hand corner and is headed with the words: Com Privilegio de S. Majestade, para go segundo despesa Confitenciosa, as such privilege of His Majesty, for the exclusive use of these Bills. In size it is a little larger than the other specimens, and the printing is rather better done, but otherwise it approximates to the former examples so closely that it is not worth transcribing here.

Finally, it may be mentioned that a Bill of Lading dated 1776 in the present writer's collection is worded in exactly similar terms to the last-mentioned example, thus proving that the forms of these conexaoes remained unchanged throughout the XVIII century. These forms in their turn closely approximate to the early XVII century example from Goa, and given this unbroken continuity of nearly two hundred years, it seems probable that in what is known as the conexao, or collhecollo, the Portuguese were the pioneers. At any rate it would be interesting to examine some early English, Dutch or French bills of lading for purposes of comparison, and if this article serves to bring such things to light it will not have been written in vain.