2. *The first directors, their parents, and grandparents*

For De Nederlandsche Bank to be successful in its early years, it was essential that its directors be established members of Amsterdam's financial elite.[122] It is understandable, therefore, that prominent merchant bankers and members of regent families obtained key roles at the bank. The reputations of its directors upheld that of the institution. The fact that Willem Röell (d. 1828-1829) was "a Röell", for example, ensured access to the political elite; his father, Willem Frederik Röell (1767-1835), was a confidant of King William I and a member of the Senate. Because much of the elite at the time had slavery-related investments, many of DNB's founding directors owned capital that had been accrued during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through plantation ownership and colonial administration.

Until the presidency of Willem Cornelis Mees (p. 1863-1884), all the directors came from the same close-knit Amsterdam circles. Many of their surnames spoke of past glories: these were scions of prominent families able to boast still of their contribution to the "Golden Age" of the Dutch Republic. Joan Huydecooper van Maarsseveen (d. 1817-1836) is perhaps the most telling example. He inherited not only the family name but also his first name from forefathers who had been mayors of Amsterdam on several occasions, had led diplomatic missions, had been leading city merchants, and had always carefully safeguarded their capital and social status.[123] Being part of Amsterdam's financial elite almost automatically meant being part of the Dutch history of enslavement. The first Joan Huydecooper van Maarsseveen (1625-1704), for instance, worked for the firm Coymans, a holder of the Spanish *Asiento de Negros* (a licence to trade in slaves).[124]

The previous chapter referred briefly to the slave-trading activities of the father of DNB director and later president Jacques Teysset. This family was relatively new to Amsterdam's financial elite; father Jacques David Teysset (1729-1803) had been born in Rotterdam.[125] He engaged in various businesses, but one of the principal ones was his collaboration with George Clifford in the firm Clifford & Teysset. Its activities extended along the European coast, as well as the Baltic Sea area and the Mediterranean, but also included colonial trade. For example, it owned the *Jacobus*, which sailed between Amsterdam, St Eustatius, and Surinam, with colonial goods and soldiers under the command of Captain Eldert Kraaij.[126] The Cliffords were a prominent Amsterdam banking family, several of whom were named George and who could trace their line back to the first of their forefathers who had settled in Amsterdam as immigrants from England between 1634 and 1640. George Clifford II was involved in financing plantations in the eighteenth century and was a member of the board of the Society of Surinam.[127] In 1781, Clifford & Teysset corresponded with Benjamin Franklin, amongst others, about how the prestige of the young American Republic would be dented if the firm had to protest (refuse to pay) bills of exchange backed by the United States government.[128] Franklin wrote back in haste to say that this was not the intention, then arranged for someone else to advance the money.[129]

In addition to the transatlantic movement of American money and commerce in international goods, the firm was also involved in the slave trade. The vessel *L'Aimable Sophie*, owned by Teysset senior, transported hundreds of people enslaved in West Africa to Léogâne in Saint-Domingue – modern Haiti. The ship's records show 387 enslaved Africans embarking on its first voyage, 352 of whom survived the crossing. *L'Aimable Sophie* made the journey from the West-African coast to Haiti four more times. The total number of people transported on this ship alone stood at 2,285, of whom 2,095 survived.[130] Those who survived were sold for a total of almost 2.3 million *livres*.[131] How much these transactions yielded for Teysset himself remains somewhat unclear, but the proceeds of a sale at Léogâne in 1770 were pledged as collateral for a loan of *f* 8,000 that Teysset sr. arranged with Berthon & Co in Lisbon.[132] Moreover, the Atlantic enslavement system led to the creation of innovative new forms of credit. Financiers of slave voyages often found themselves entangled in a labyrinth of loans, as well as having to accept payments in the form of traded goods such as sugar. In this way, one slavery-related activity in the portfolios of eighteenth-century entrepeneurs and bankers often gave rise to many other forms of involvement.

In the Dutch colonial empire, financing of the slave trade was from its inception arranged by the chartered West India Company (West-Indische Compagnie, WIC). As a result, plantation owners collectively ended up with many millions of guilders in outstanding debts to that firm. They could only pay when the goods produced by their enslaved workforce generated sufficient income, which brought about endless arrears. As the WIC gradually withdrew from the trade in people in the 1730s, allowing private companies to take it over, a shortage of credit arose; the private companies were in no position to wait for payment for the human cargoes they delivered. This situation was only exacerbated once it had been discovered that coffee could be grown successfully in the Caribbean, especially in Surinam. Under the leadership of prominent banker Willem Deutz and with the help of the governor-general of Surinam, Joan Jacob Mauricius, new means of financing plantations were devised. By setting up a negotiatie, a fund that took on the debts of multiple estates, investors gained an easy way to invest in the expansion of plantation agriculture. This was especially the case for coffee production. This led to a boom in plantation loans and a concomitant increase in the importation of enslaved labour and plantation agriculture. Between 1753 and 1775, a total of *f* 62,799,675 was invested in plantations in both Dutch and non-Dutch colonies.[133] Joost Jonker calls this new system of plantation mortgage funds a brilliant innovation from a banking point of view.[134] Some of the plantation holdings of prominent DNB officials, and also Johanna Borski, were a result of this wave of investment. Although many of the funds were not particularly successful, they remained the preferred means for the wealthy class in the Netherlands to invest in the colonial economy, with holdings in them via inheritance often staying in the same family over several generations.

Because of the importance of family status and the inheritance of stakes in plantations, we summarise the slavery-related activities of the forefathers of DNB's founding directors in this chapter. The grandmother of the bank's first president, Paul Iwan Hogguer (p. 1814-1816), was Sara Chevallier, who was born in Paramaribo and descended from a community of colonists of French origin who had settled in Surinam in the final decades of the seventeenth century, some as managers of slave estates. The plantation assets acquired during this period remained in the family, even when the family returned to Europe. Chevallier's son Daniel, Baron Hogguer (1722-1793), thus acquired a role in the administration of *Accaribo* and the more than cynically named estate *La Liberté*.[135] Although his mother left for Europe, married, and had children there, the plantations remained part of the family's business activities.[136] Daniel Hogguer, for example, was responsible for appointing their European personnel. In 1761, he instructed George Chifelli, manager of *La Liberté*, to go to *Accaribo* to "make an inventory of the condition of the sugar and other grounds, as well as the buildings and with regard to the slaves."[137] Furthermore, if Chifelli found any "misconduct by employees or servants" he was to dismiss them, remove them from the plantation and appoint replacements.[138] These "servants" were the so-called *blankofficieren*, i.e., the white overseers, notorious figures, often former sailors or soldiers, who were expected to control the enslaved workforce with a heavy hand. In case of a threat of slave resistance, the blankofficieren could be easily replaced, leaving the plantation manager and owner with clean hands. Chifelli was further instructed to buy enslaved workers "to the greatest possible benefit and advantage" of the business.[139] As a result of his inspection, the following year Hogguer dismissed the administrator of *Accaribo* and not long afterwards appointed the son of a friend, Pierre Jean Calis, as his replacement. Closer to the day-to-day operations were the supervisors he sent to his plantations.[140] Their task consisted mainly of checking on the enslaved labourers and, at the end of the day, reporting on the work they had done. Despite living in the Netherlands, Hogguer senior was thus directly involved with the estates owned by the Chevallier-Hogguer family in Surinam.

After 1770, Daniel Hogguer changed his investment strategy. In June that year, he sold the plantations for *f* 460,000 and switched to government bonds.[141] A few months later, for example, he negotiated an issue worth *f* 1 million with the Swedish king, Adolf Frederick, at 5 per cent interest.[142] And in 1772, he traded 2 million French *livres* in annuities.[143] The Hogguer family seems thus to have turned its back on direct earnings from slavery. Nevertheless, in both 1755 and 1835, *La Liberté* was listed as enslaving 132 people.[144] These enslaved workers earned money for Daniel Hogguer. Likewise, *Accaribo* employed 132 enslaved people in 1835.[145] This suggests that the sale price of *f* 460,000 for the two plantations included about 250 human beings, and it was with that money that Hogguer was able to move into Swedish government bonds. Hogguer's subsequent investments were thus built upon the capital that his family's slavery-based activities had generated.

Jan Hodshon, like Huydecoper, was a director who shared his given names with his forebears. In this case with his father, Joan Hodshon (1717-1793), who was the archetype of an early modern Dutch merchant with a broad portfolio of colonial investments – a so-called portfolio capitalist. Hodshon senior was a free agent unhindered by the boundaries of colonial empires drawn on the map.[146] He invested in plantations in the Dutch colonies of Surinam, Demerara and Berbice, on British-held Tobago and on Danish St Croix and St Vincent, shipped goods between French colonial islands and ports in France, had debtors on St Eustatius and lent money to Hope & Co with shares in the English East India Company as collateral.[147] He also intervened in the management and administration of the plantation *Het Huys te Coevorden* in Demerara, appointing a surgeon to work there in 1778.[148] The other plantations with which Joan Hodshon had links included *Liverpool* and *Friendship* in the British colonies and *Glynn*, *Mount Pleasant*, and *Bon Esperance* on the Danish island St Croix.[149]

Jan Hodshon.

Source: [29697], *RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History.*

In the case of the plantations in the British colonies, the chronologically closest available data shows that they respectively enslaved 95, 98, and 81 people. As for the Danish estate *Glynn*, it is only possible to establish that 89 people were working there in 1865.[150] From the Danish burial registers and police reports, however, we can say with certainty that it used enslaved labour prior to abolition. In 1828, for instance, one Patrick was arrested and subsequently confessed to having run away from *Glynn* three weeks earlier.[151] In other words, when Joan Hodshon sold this plantation "with all its buildings, slaves and appurtenances" to Lever & De Bruijne in 1768 for *f* 80,268 and sixteen stivers, he also sold dozens of people.[152] It is quite possible that one of them was Samuel, born into enslavement, who died of leprosy on *Glynn* at the age of 74 on 21 July, 1842.[153] The status and reputation of the Hodshon family thus also stemmed in part from slavery; Joan invested in – and sold – hundreds of human beings in all.

Jan Hodshon's father-in-law, Pieter van den Broek, was also implicated in slavery.[154] On behalf of two firms, Abraham ter Borch & Sons and Gabriël Bourcourd & Zn & Co, he acted as a non-executive director of plantation mortgage funds for the Danish islands of St Croix, St Thomas, and St John. In total, these were worth *f* 7,623,214.[155]

The Fock family was well represented on the board of DNB from the outset, starting with founding director Jacob Fock I (d. 1814-1828; p. 1828-1835). His father, Abraham Fock senior (1732-1796), was a partner in the firm Weduwe Jacob de Clercq. In the 1777 deed of distribution of the estate of Jacob de Clercq, his investments and securities were not itemised on an individual basis and so it is impossible to determine whether they included plantation loans. The total value of the estate, *f* 140,000, was divided neatly into four parts, giving Abraham Fock senior and his wife, Cornelia de Clercq, *f* 35,000. The ships it included were specified by name and captain, but none of these can be found in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. From the names of some of them (such as *Rigasche Post*) and from the firm's contracts of affreightment, it is clear that its money was earned mainly from the Baltic trade in goods such as tar. Jacob Fock I married Cornelia Johanna Bondt in 1792; she was a daughter of Nicolaas Bondt and the sister of Jan Bondt, the legal consultant to DNB and a partner at Determeyer Weslingh & Son. As for the other members of the Fock family with ties to the bank – Abraham (d. 1837-1844, p. 1844-1858) and Jacob II (d. 1865-1890) – no evidence has been found that they were involved with slavery.

Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman's father, Henric Muilman (1748-1812), was a typical Amsterdam merchant-regent whose family had accumulated some wealth and then acquired an aristocratic title through marriage. For merchants such a title brought extra cachet and prestige, and also opened doors, whilst for noble families a marriage with a wealthy Amsterdam inhabitant was a way to secure the family's future.[156] The marital union of 1776 between Henric Muilman and Susanna Cornelia Mogge van Haemsteede gave him Haemsteede Castle near Zierikzee and elevated him to the junior nobility as a banneret ("baanderheer"). For both it was their second marriage: Henric was a widower and Susanna Cornelia had also outlived her first spouse, Ferdinand van Collen, a director of the WIC and the son of a director of the Society of Surinam.[157]

Henric Muilman's brother Pieter married Anna Maria van de Poll and they, amongst others, had a daughter, Magdalena Antonia Muilman, who wed Willem Ferdinand in 1810. Their daughter went on to marry Archibald Jan van de Poll, whose father, Jacobus Salomon van de Poll, was a brother of Anna Maria. In other words, Archibald Jan's grandfather was also his wife's great-grandfather.[158] At DNB, then, Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman (d. 1814-1835, p. 1835-1844), sat on the board alongside his mother-in-law's brother, Jan van de Poll (d. 1814-1822). In other words, Willem Ferdinand Mogge Muilman also brought the prestige of the Van de Poll family name to the bank through his own wife/cousin.

Henric Muilman traded on his account through the firm Muilman & Sons. Although the firm left few traces in the archives, the historian Johan Elias described it as "very prominent".[159] What is certain is that it was wealthy, since the firm Muilman & Sons arranged insurance policies in conjunction with, amongst others, Clifford & Sons (see also Teysset).[160] Furthermore, its name appears alongside that of slavery financiers including Hope & Co and Jan & Theodor van Marselis in a 1798 petition concerning trade on the Wild Coast (Essequibo and Demerara) – an indication that it traded there and was thus directly involved in slavery-related economic activities.[161]

The Van de Polls have probably the most complicated family tree in our entire study. Not only did they bear numerous children, they also had a tradition of using the same forenames down the generations. Moreover, they regularly married into the same few families or even intermarried with their own cousins. The Jan van de Poll who served on the founding board of DNB (d. 1814-1822) was the son of another Jan (1721-1801) and Anna Maria

Dedel (1729-1779). Jan senior is listed in 1769 as non-executive director of a mortgage fund with a value of *f* 2 million covering nine plantations in Surinam: *Munnikendam*, *Potribo*, *Beerenrust*, *Nieuw Roeland*, *Boxel*, *Rouxgift*, *Badenstein*, *Johanna's Hoop*, and *Bethlehem*.[162] There is no inventory for any of these for that year, but the closest available figures give us a total of at least 1,174 enslaved people who served as collateral for the fund's loans.[163]

Jan senior's brother Harman (1728-1751) founded the trading house Harman van de Poll & Co, in which his son, another Harman (1750-1807), was also active. Jan senior also represented that firm's interests for some time. When Clifford & Sons was declared bankrupt in 1773, he took on joint responsibility for liquidating its remaining assets along with Jacques Teysset and others. Amongst these were a plantation mortgage fund operated by Harman van de Poll & Co. The loans totalling *f* 2.4 million on 21 plantations in Surinam, which were collectively worth more than *f* 4 million, yielded *f* 100,285 in 1774 in the form of products such as coffee, cotton, sugar, and cocoa. The *Montauban* and *Montpellier* plantations, amongst others, were overvalued in the mortgage because runaway slaves from maroon communities had plundered and partly destroyed them.[164]

Through his marriage in 1784 to Anna Catharina Valckenier (1766-1842), Jan junior also added her patrician family to the Van de Poll network and reputation. The Valckeniers were Amsterdam regents who had held positions of power and influence since the middle of the seventeenth century, not only in Amsterdam's city government, but also as directors of the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie, VOC) and as governor-general of the Dutch East Indies. As such, they had built up a solid reputation.[165] In 1792, the name Valckenier was so prestigious that Jan junior included it in the name of his son, Jan Jacobus Valckenier van de Poll (d. 1827-1837).

The Van Lennep family, too, played a prominent role in the government and economy of the Netherlands and had close associations with similar dynasties. The sister of Willem Röell (d. 1828-1829) married the writer Jacob van Lennep (1802-1868), while the mother-in-law of Ferdinand Rendorp (d. 1845-1865) was Elisabeth van Lennep (1753-1810). The very extensive Van de Poll family also established more than one relationship with a Van Lennep.[166] Cornelus Sylvius (s. 1814-1821) was the son of Cornelis van Lennep (1751-1813) and Cornelia Henrietta van de Poll (1753-1827).[167] Cornelus Sylvius' brother David Jacob (1774-1853) had a son, Jacob, with banker's daughter Cornelia Christina van Orsoy (1778-1816) and after her death he married a Van de Poll: Anna Catharina (1791-1860). Cornelus Sylvius himself married Sophia Elisabeth Backer (1776-1826), daughter of the Amsterdam regent and VOC director Willem Cornelis Backer. The Van Lenneps were landowners and Cornelus Sylvius' generation was no longer engaged in trade; his brother was a professor of Latin and Greek, whilst other relatives made their name primarily as politicians. Some links between Cornelus Sylvius and slavery might have existed via his grandfather, Jacobus van de Poll (1724-1807), but no evidence has been found that he inherited any shares in plantations through this line. The Van Lenneps were at least as important in the political and economic development of the Netherlands as the other families from which the DNB drew its directors. However, Cornelus Sylvius – along with Jacob Fock I – was an exception among the founding board members appointed in 1814 as those with a family history of involvement with slavery were in a sizeable majority. When the president, directors and secretary would have a meeting, only secretary Van Lennep and director Fock had nothing to do with slavery. It is not hard to imagine, then, that the group also discussed West Indian matters aside from their formal business on behalf of DNB.

The Amsterdam economic lobby

In the nineteenth century, the Dutch financial and trading elite faced a major paradox. Even as the first steps towards abolition were being taken, the economic significance of those sectors reliant upon enslaved labour was growing. Public opinion was turning against slavery, but consumption of the goods it produced – cotton, indigo, sugar, coffee and so on – was increasing. During this period, the Netherlands was one of the smaller slaveholding nations in the world. When the British abolished slavery in their empire in 1834, some 800,000 people were manumitted. In the United States, almost four million people were freed during the American Civil War (1861-1865). In the Dutch colonial empire, by contrast, the numbers were approximately 5,000 in Asia (1860) and about 45,000 in Surinam and West Indies (1863) – although it should be noted that the figure for Asia refers to slavery as per the definition used at the time. Places including Bali continued the practice of slavery much longer. The last place where slavery was abolished in the Dutch Kingdom was probably the island of Samosir in 1914. The number of people exploited under threat of violence in the East Indies in fact ran into the hundreds of thousands. The relatively small scale of enslavement by the Dutch was a result of the Republic's inability to expand plantation agriculture during the late eighteenth century, as the British and French had done. The differences which arose between the various European empires in the eighteenth century left their mark on the nineteenth.

Overall, the Dutch slave colonies and slavery-related industries recovered quickly from the interruptions they had suffered during the revolutionary years and the Napoleonic wars. This was not the case for all branches of the plantation economy, though; sugar production and refining performed considerably better than cotton and coffee. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, sugar refining was the first industry to grow rapidly and thus became a forerunner of the more widespread industrialisation of the Netherlands. Sugar production in Surinam grew considerably during this period, but cotton output collapsed after making a late start. The southern Netherlands, part of the Kingdom under William I from 1815 until the Belgian secession in 1830, had a cotton processing industry which had to source its raw cotton from outside the Dutch empire. Unlike in Surinam, coffee production grew substantially in the Dutch East Indies thanks to the so-called cultivation system (*cultuurstelsel*). This gave the Netherlands a formidable position in the global coffee market – one based upon unfree labour, but not upon enslavement in the strict sense. For other products from Asia, however, such as nutmeg and pepper, slavery did remain an important source of labour.

Yet, the status of the Netherlands as one of the smaller slaveholding powers says little about the economic importance the slaveholding plantages represented and the activities of Dutch entrepeneurs in slave economies of non-Dutch colonies or in slavery-related trade outside the Dutch empire. The modernisation of production processes increased profit margins for the plantation owners. For example, the arrival of steam engines enabled the more efficient grinding of sugar cane and increased output on ever larger plantations. Cotton transformed the world, bringing comfort and prosperity as well as an unprecedented growth in unfree labour. The abolition of slavery in the mid-nineteenth century, despite its growing returns, has been called "econocide" by the historian Seymore Drescher: the sacrifice of the economy to an idealistic belief.[168] Even its most principled opponents could not deny that forced labour generated huge yields thanks to technical innovations. Despite his aversion to slavery, the economist Adam Smith had to admit that the sugar producers of the West Indies were remarkably rich. During the modernisation of the Dutch colonial empire under William I, the slave trade was banned but slavery itself was retained. As his reign progressed, however, slavery in the Dutch East Indies slowly gave way to other forms of labour mobilisation such as the cultivation system. In the background, one underlying factor was the realisation that abolition would free up capital to invest in emerging industries.

The introduction of steam engines required larger plantations in order to be able to use the new technology efficiently. Buying and installing the new equipment was an expensive business. The purchase and installation of a 10-horsepower machine would cost *f* 25,000 in 1830.[169] Although the costs involved were high, Surinam was nonetheless one of most innovative sugar colonies in the Caribbean. In 1815 the first steam mills were installed and two thirds of the sugar plantations had such machinery by the time of abolition in 1863.[170] So despite the end of the slave trade, the need for capital on the modern plantations remained high.

The Dutch colonies with few or no slave plantations also needed financial services. The absence of a local bank undermined Curacao's position as a transit port, and the government too needed an institution that could arrange payment transactions.[171] DNB, however, refused to open overseas branches in Surinam and Curaçao. In 1827, William I sent Johannes van den Bosch to the Dutch West Indies to address a number of administrative issues, including the lack of payment methods and banking institutions. After his advise, De Curaçaose Bank started operating in 1828.[172] Modelled on DNB, it became the central banking institution of Curaçao as well as its two dependent islands, Aruba and Bonaire. With 40 per cent of the total population being enslaved, this institution was was clearly connected to slavery with slavery. Commercial activity on Curaçao depended directly on local slavery, with enslaved people supplying ships with fresh water and labour in the port. Slave labour on the other Dutch Caribbean islands, St Eustatius, Saba, and St Maarten, was used to some extent in their small-scale sugar production, but mainly for the extraction of salt. Sugar output on St Eustatius was far more modest than for example in Surinam, declining from 500 tonnes in 1816 to less than half that amount throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. Salt and sugar production using slave labour without steam engines required little investment, especially after the end of the slave trade. The islands were relevant for the trade in goods, but hardly ever appear in the portfolios of Amsterdam investors.

Expansion of the credit system and restoring international trade, particularly at sea, were key pillars in William I's policy of modernisation, but his government also looked for more tax revenue to increase its income.[173] From 1816 onwards, taxation failed to cover the nation's annual budget expenditure of some ƒ80 million. On the king's orders, therefore, and despite opposition from the Amsterdam trading houses affiliated with DNB, various tax reforms and fiscal innovations were initiated. In 1816, for example, the government introduced the entrepôt system – an ideal instrument to stimulate the transit trade. Imported goods destined for re-export could be kept in bonded warehouses, where they were exempt from excise duties. The port of Rotterdam would particularly benefit from this system, as its favourable location allowed construction of a dedicated dock and facilities. However, the entrepôts threatened the position of the established trading houses as brokers. The tradinghouses lost the income from storage fees and the role in financial transactions that had been linked to this trade.

In February 1816, a group of Amsterdam merchants submitted a petition to the king opposing the entrepôt system. A flowering of national commerce, this petition declared, was:

> impossible and not to be expected unless this kingdom once again becomes the general market and depot between all the trading nations; and that general market and depot is not imaginable other than under enjoyment of that freedom of trade, with the dismissal of all those objections to trade our neighbours have already seen to be unjust and pernicious, which they profess to provide in a liberal manner.[174]

This plea for a restoration of the staple market without constraining levies was signed by, amongst others, DNB founding director Hodshon (d. 1814-1816; p. 1816-1827), Bondt's firm Determeyer Weslingh & Son and several serving or future non-executive directors: Severijn & Haesebrouck (n. 1814-1817), D. Couderc & M. P. Brants (n. 1814-1830), Goll & Co (n. 1815-1821), and Insinger & Co (n. 1817-1823). DNB itself is not mentioned in the petition, but it is an important document in that it shows that the

Amsterdam merchants – including DNB officials – knew how to find their way to the king when they realised new legislation might harm their commercial interests. Their objections to the entrepôt system did not make William I change his mind, though.

The king also ordered a shake-up of import, export, and excise duties. In 1819, again much to the chagrin of the Amsterdam merchants, the government tabled plans to increase the duty on coffee and sugar. Sugar manufacturer and later DNB director Hendrik Croockewit (s. 1828-1849; d. 1849-1854; p. 1854-1863) protested against this bill in a series of letters to member of parliament Joan Melchior Kemper.[175] This correspondence provides a good insight into the kind of pressure exerted by the Amsterdam merchants when faced with measures likely to affect their trade in colonial goods. The coffee business, especially, was an important source of income for many merchants in Amsterdam and other cities, as also shown by the volume of this commodity pledged to DNB as collateral for loans.[176] But when reading these letters, we also need to bear in mind that at this time the possible abolition of slavery was not a political issue in The Hague.

On 19 December, 1818, Croockewit wrote to Kemper to say several persons of distinction had already tried to stop minister Jean Henry Appelius and William I from tabling the bill in the House of Representatives. For, he said, it was better to "smother that project at its birth than to have to do this by petitions to the Houses."[177] Croockewit wrote this letter because parliament was meeting in Brussels at the time. "Had the Assembly of the States [parliament] now been in The Hague," he continued, "I should gallop away from all my concerns to elucidate matters by word of mouth."[178] Instead, though, he was forced to entrust his request to Kemper to paper. He urged:

> your intervention, be it with the King himself or in those places you consider most fitting, in order to avert, if possible, the danger to a branch of industry so highly regarded by all forms of government. Why, if coffee and sugar must be taxed, not beforehand solicit the thoughts of the chambers of commerce and some of the manufacturers? Perhaps the interests of both would have been reconcilable, such that a project could have been devised which would not only have been less burdensome for both, but even useful for one side.[179]

This letter makes it clear that, in 1819, the Amsterdam merchants would rather not use a petition as their preferred instrument to make their objections known to the government. Instead, they sought to block an unwelcome bill before it was submitted to the House of Representatives. But it would be even better if the government were to design the legislation in consultation with interested parties.

Appelius eventually did table his excise bill in the House. Croockewit predicted to Kemper that it would "rain petitions", causing the government to forfeit "all the good will that the mercantile public harbours for it."[180] Early in May, the House did indeed receive a petition from Amsterdam bearing no fewer than 920 signatures. This requested that parliament reject the excise duties on coffee and sugar, and guarantee free trade. In the run-up to the debate on the bill, the Amsterdam merchants also lobbied individual MPs in an effort to influence their vote. "Wickevoort Crommelin has been worked upon," Croockewit wrote to Kemper, "but without much confidence of success. Van der Pol declares roundly that, in his position, he cannot vote to the detriment of the government. Boetzelaar, as mayor of Amsterdam, will have to oppose the law."[181] After receiving these letters, Kemper argued at length against the duties in the House. Petitions and direct lobbying were common ways of trying to influence a parliamentary vote in the nineteenth century.

Despite all their efforts, however, the Amsterdam merchants suffered a painful defeat. The new duties on both coffee and sugar were adopted, to great public indignation. One Amsterdam bookseller and printer published the results of the parliamentary vote on the coffee duty for traders to see which MPs had failed to uphold their interests. The capital's merchants also turned their attention to Holland's provincial assembly. This was the place where the merchants could strengthen their representation in The Hague since the Provincial Estates elected MPs. It proved a successful tactic: at the next parliamentary election, the "faction of the Amsterdam merchants" trounced its opponents – an outcome the government considered "extremely vexatious."[182]

Colonial banking and the West Indies Company

De Nederlandsche Bank refused to accept the role it was envisioned to play in the reformed credit system and the restoration of international maritime trade under William I's policy of modernisation. In 1826, the bank invoked the terms of its charter to prevent opening branches in Surinam and Curaçao. On behalf of the board, legal consultant Bondt drafted a letter to the Minister of the Colonies, Cornelis Theodorus Elout, stating that the charter "ruled out any notion of a power to undertake monetary operations overseas."[183] The king, however, subsequently issued a royal decree making DNB's coins and banknotes legal tender in Surinam with effect from 1827. Then, in 1828, the government decided to set up the separate Curaçaose Bank and Particuliere West-Indische Bank (Private West-Indies Bank). Once again, DNB was asked for support; first to finance the *f* 3 million needed to set up the West-Indische Bank in Surinam and then a request to act as an agency for that institution. In its response to Elout, the board reiterated its charter prohibited DNB from granting credit other than by discounting bills of exchange or against collateral in the form of securities, goods, wares, and merchandise. Moreover, it could not act as an agency because the bank's terms of credit did not allow the circulation of paper – with a signature – that could only be exchanged for specie with some delay; according to the Minister of Finance, the West-Indische Bank would be allowed to issue long-dated bills of exchange. During a personal conversation with the minister, Arnold Willem Nicolaas van Tets van Goudriaan, failed to bring the government any solace. In fact, the board took the opportunity to put forward yet another, more substantive, objection unrelated to the charter. DNB, they asserted, saw no possibility "to give good advice of any form to the Surinamese institution in respect of its operations, which would require much more local knowledge than the members of the board can claim to possess."[184] The fact that any activities in the colony were bound to be closely linked to slavery was not used as an argument by any of the members of the board, at the time president Jacob Fock I and directors Mogge Muilman, Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, Carp, and Valckenier van de Poll.

In its early years, DNB thus refused repeated requests from the government to expand its activities into the overseas territories. Formally, it relied constantly upon the restrictive provisions of its charter to parry those approaches, and in 1829 the directors backed up that defence by citing their poor knowledge of the local situation in Surinam. Their attitude can be explained in part by the fact that DNB consistently sought to limit government influence over its activities until well into the 1830s. Nevertheless, it was willing to maintain the account the West-Indische Bank held with the Ministry of the Colonies.[185] But setting up or supporting a business in the West Indies, where the board felt itself unable to properly assess the risks involved, was not part of the strategy. Having evaded that possibility, the bank displayed a sense of relief in its annual report for 1827-1828: its reputation with the Dutch public "as a helpless instrument for mysterious machinations has been largely erased".[186]

Despite this, the establishment and activities of a new West Indies Company (West-Indische Maatschappij, WIM; not to be confused with the chartered West-Indische Compagnie dissolved in 1792), also founded in 1828, reveal a continuing involvement with slavery on the part of some prominent DNB officials. As mentioned earlier, William I was keen to revive Curaçao's eighteenth-century position as a centre of regional trade.[187] To that end he founded the WIM and personally designed its basic outline. In his capacity as a state councillor extraordinary Jan Bondt helped the king implement this plan. William had wanted to call his project the Curaçao Company (Curaçaose Maatschappij), because his aim was to position that island as a central gathering point "in the Mexican Gulf" for merchandise suitable for the American markets, but Bondt managed to convince him West-Indische Maatschappij was a better name. Whilst the king's proposal did encapsulate the primary focus of the new company, a wider scope would increase the appeal for the Amsterdam merchants Bondt pointed out.[188]

Although most historians of Dutch slavery concentrate on the large plantation enterprises in colonies on the mainland of South America, it should not be forgotten that large-scale slavery also existed in the Dutch Caribbean. The island of Curaçao had a population of 14,724 in 1827, some 40 per cent of whom lived in slavery. They were put to work primarily in local food production, in salt extraction or at the port in the capital, Willemstad. Curaçao never developed as a centre of plantation agriculture. Instead, it had traditionally focused on trade by taking full advantage of Willemstad's excellent natural harbour. In the nineteenth century, the island was primarily a bridgehead for commerce with Latin America. William I founded the West Indies Company because he saw it as an important hub close to the new nation of Gran Colombia, led by Simon Bolivar.[189]

Amongst the non-executive directors of the WIM were three later members of the DNB board: Claude Daniël Crommelin (1838-1849), Jacobus Hermanus Insinger (1844-1871), and Ananias Willink (1835-1845).

Another was Daniël Borski, son of Johanna, was also non-executive director of WIM.[190] A sister company of the Netherlands Trading Society (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, NHM), its primary focus was not slavery-related activities but trade between Amsterdam, South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Most of the Latin American countries had already abolished slavery and their diplomats urged others to follow suit. Curaçao was intended by the WIM to become the principal hub in regional trade, bolstered by its opening up as a free-trade zone. Slave labour remained part of the island's economy, though, through activities such as processing tobacco and manufacturing goods destined for the United States. Governor Reinier Frederik van Raders was made frantic efforts to develop various forms of agriculture on the island, using government-owned enslaved people. Personally, however, Van Raders believed it would be better to replace this enslaved workforce with the more flexible wage labour.[191]

Table 2. *DNB-affiliated investors in the West Indies Company, 1828.*

Name	Investment in the West Indies Company, in guilders
J. Borski	1,000
W. Borski	500
M. Broen Mzn	1,000
J. Carp	500
Determeyer Weslingh & Son	500
Van Eeghen & Co	1,000
J. Fock	500
A. Fock	200
J. Huydecoper van Maarsseveen	2,000
W.F. Mogge Muilman	1,000
W. Röell	1,000
J. Teysset	1,200
H. Croockewit	600
G.L. Walkart	400

Although Bondt undertook advisory work for the WIM formally in his official role as a state councillor extraordinary, he remained DNB's legal consultant as well. Several of the new company's non-executive directors also had ties with the bank. And as an institution, too, DNB had a relationship with the WIM because it handled the placement of the first shares in the company. A review of the 267 receipts covering the first payment of 10 per cent on these stocks, shows that Bondt had persuaded a substantial number of Amsterdam merchants to invest.[192] Another investor was Rudolf Adriaan Mees of Rotterdam, father of later DNB president Willem Cornelis. Rumour had it that the subscribers were people who "for two or three shares want to buy or keep the favour of His Majesty."[193]

The West Indies Company failed in its aim to make Curaçao an indispensable link in trade on the American continent. Up until 1834, the shareholders received a fixed annual dividend of 4 per cent of their investment. The Royal Household Archives in The Hague contain several letters from Jan Bondt to King William II notifying him of payments on his shares or explaining their amount, or stating why no dividend was being paid.[194] We cannot rule out the WIM trading in goods manufactured using slave labour; its annual accounts include, for example, produce from the Brazilian province of Bahia, the centre of that country's sugar industry (in 1850 to the value of *f* 2,067.70, plus goods from Rio de Janeiro worth *f* 15,965.26).[195] Other financial reports mention cotton.[196] These records also reveal that the company had a current account at De Nederlandsche Bank, the balance of which varied greatly. In 1841 it contained *f* 18,037.37, but in 1850 had dropped to *f* 2,671.99 and in 1861 was just *f* 1,884.23. In 1863 – the year the WIM was liquidated – its closing balance was *f* 46,884.23. The shareholders received a letter on 30 April, 1863 from Daniël Borski, chairman of the board of the West Indies Company, informing them about the payment of dividends on their cancelled shares.[197]

The fate of the WIM illustrates the unequal balance of government income and expenditure with regard to the colonies in the nineteenth century. The Dutch possessions in Asia were profitable, whereas those in the Americas mainly cost money. The *f* 93 million in direct revenue the government received from Asia between 1831 and 1840 is in sharp contrast with, for example, a number of royal decrees exempting Surinam from certain payment obligations. Between 1837 and 1842, government outlays on Surinam exceeded the returns, meaning that in practice the colony was being subsidised from The Hague. In 1844, Surinam received a subvention originally set at *f* 150,000, but in the end that amount was exceeded by almost a quarter.[198] The deficit in “the West” was effectively being paid off using the surplus from Asia. The islands, meanwhile, remained consistently in the red due to the slow recovery of international trade through Curaçao. William I’s plan to establish intensive trading relations with Gran Colombia (present-day Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela) faded into the background during the Belgian secession crisis and Curaçao even lost its shipping link with the Netherlands. To illustrate: between 1836 and 1839, not a single Dutch ship called at the island.[199]

Business involvement with slavery

Involvement of DNB officials with slavery, colonialism, and Dutch imperial ambitions was not confined solely to investments in the WIM or a family legacy. By the 1820s, a share in a plantation was usually inherited and not traded. The low market value and the chance a dividend payment might still be made in a year or so, meant most shareholders in the nineteenth century kept the certificates in a drawer and on set dates checked a newspaper like the *Algemeen Handelsblad* to see if any dividends had been announced. Once it became increasingly clear financial compensation for slave owners was on the way, their inclination to sell must have decreased further. Those DNB directors who received compensation in 1834 and 1863 are discussed separately later.

Following in his father’s Joan’s footsteps, Jan Hodshon (d. 1814-1816, p. 1816-1827) continued to participate in the slavery-based economy. On 1 July, 1782, he joined the trading house Hodshon & Son, owned by his father, for an annual stipend of *f* 1,500.[200] Initially this was primarily to learn the business, but from 1790 he gained a greater say in the company. He was not yet allowed to negotiate transactions without Joan’s knowledge, though.[201] In 1793, his father died and Jan took charge of the firm.

During his time as a partner, the firm Hodshon & Son administered several loans for a fund with mortgages on *Mount Pleasant* and *Bon Esperance* on the island of St Croix.[202] Most of the deeds in the Amsterdam notarial archives dealing with plantation loans contain very little or no information about the collateral, but in this case, because the financial product involved was more complicated, details of the enslaved are included.

Copied from an underlying English-language mortgage, the list consists of 28 “negroe men”, 23 women and five boys and girls, worth between £20 for “Jasper” and £600 for “King’s Ale”. Collectively, they are valued at £16,990.[203] Following the death of his father, Jan Hodshon became director of this fund. Between 1784 and 1788, moreover, a mortgage on the *Friendship* plantation on Tobago was repaid.[204] And in 1789, Hodshon & Son granted a loan of *f* 28,613.65 to Richard Downing Jennings on the island of St Eustatius. As collateral, Jennings pledged two mortgages in Essequibo, one on the account of Eduard Bischop and one on the plantation *Insh Hall*.[205]

When Joan Hodshon died in 1793, his estate was divided equally between his children and Jan received one sixth of *f* 137,730. This included shares – now worthless – in the slave-trading Dutch West India Company and English South Sea Company,[206] plus stakes in the *Friendship*, *Mount Pleasant*, and *Bon Esperance* plantations mentioned above, as well as *Schoonoord* and *Welgelegen* in Surinam.[207] The latter was mortgaged through the Luden & Speciaal fund, administered by the grandfather and father of Johannes Luden (d. 1836-1864). Finally, in 1825 Jan Hodshon held a three-eighths stake in the sugar plantation *Rac à Rac* in Surinam.[208] No details are available of those enslaved there in that year, but in 1834 – after Hodshon’s death and under new ownership – they numbered 98 men, women, and children.[209] In that same year, the figures are 131 for *Schoonoord* and 134 for *Welgelegen*.[210]

All in all, it is clear that Jan Hodshon, by virtue of his position at Hodshon & Son, extended credit using enslaved people as collateral. He not only knew their value, but was even familiar with some of their names. His company also owned shares in businesses that had in the past procured enslaved people on the West African coast and shipped them across the Atlantic Ocean, and in various plantations in Surinam, Tobago, and St Croix.

Another DNB director who joined his father’s business was Johannes Carp (d. 1822-1837), born in 1761 to Georg Johann Wilhelm Carp and Johanna Catharina Jacoba Coox. From at least 1785, Jan Willem Carp & Son was active as a buyer of slave goods, such as six barrels of Demerara coffee from Pieter Willem van den Heuvel.[211] Moreover, the firm did business with Marcellus Broen & Son and thus became involved with a plantation loan; along with two others, Johannes Carp acted as non-executive director of a mortgage worth *f* 300,000, with *Livonia* in Surinam as collateral.[212]

This was a coffee plantation at which 195 enslaved people were counted in 1834.[213]

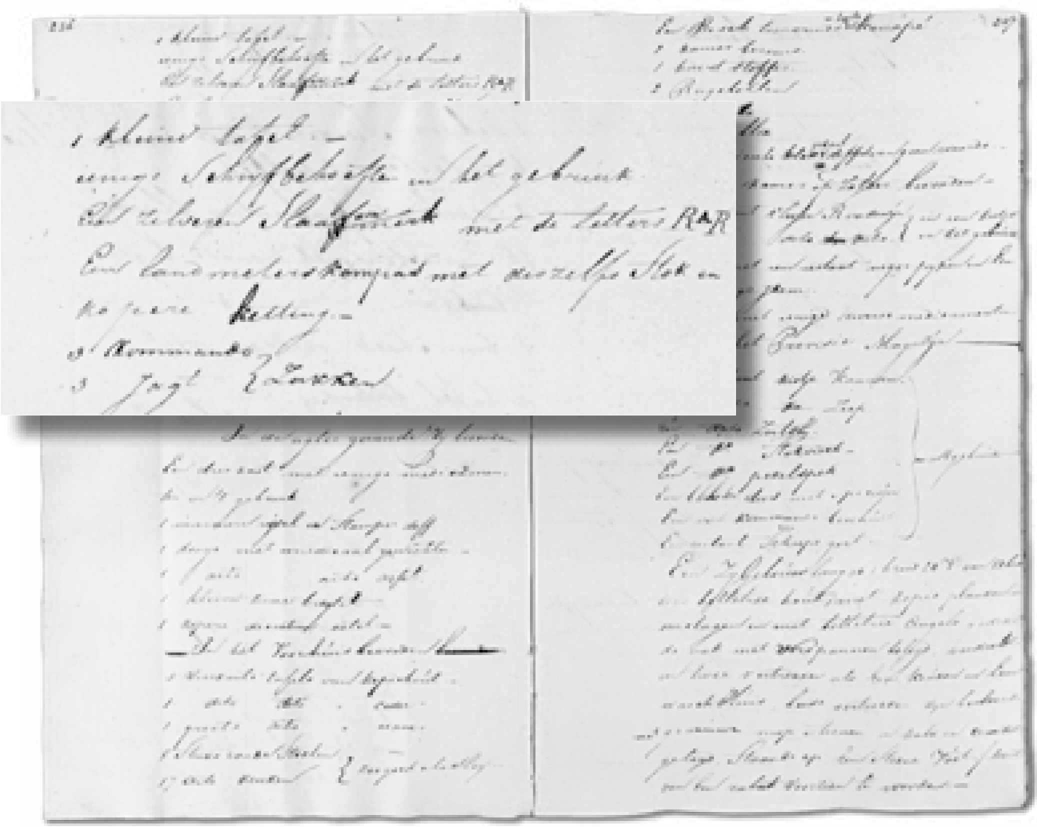
Many of the directors of DNB who took office after 1814 came from distinguished families. Jan van Eeghen (d. 1829-1838) and Claude Daniël Crommelin (d. 1838-1849) are good examples. Catharina Fock, wife of Christiaan van Eeghen, gave birth to Jan van Eeghen in 1789. During much of his term as a director of the bank (d. 1829-1838), his uncle Jacob Fock I (p. 1828-1835) – a brother of his mother – was president of DNB. His father, Christiaan, died at a fairly early age in 1798, leaving his mother as heir to assets including a sugar refinery called De Blauwe Engel (The Blue Angel) on the Rozenstraat in Amsterdam, three coupons from the W.G. Deutz fund, a share in the Dutch East India Company, and shares in a piece of land in America.[214] When the Dutch government compensated shareholders in the Deutz fund for the abolition of slavery in 1863, Jan van Eeghen's son, Jan junior, acted as commissioner.[215]

The Van Eeghens could trace their family line in Amsterdam back to the seventeenth century, when their ancestor Jacob founded the trading house which Jan would join in the early 1800s. When his uncle Pieter van Eeghen retired from the firm P. & C. van Eeghen & Co, Jan and two of his brothers took over the business and changed the name to Van Eeghen & Co. After the death of their brother Abraham in 1818, Jan and Pieter van Eeghen were left in joint charge of the firm.

Its financial records show that Jan van Eeghen received a couple of hundred guilders per month for his household and expenses. Of the firm's slavery-related activities, perhaps the most striking is the second mortgage granted to Daniel Changuion for *La Bonne Intention* in Demerara in 1819.[216] Two years earlier, 313 enslaved people had been recorded on this cotton estate. In 1826, the figure was 281. Furthermore, the firm traded actively in slavery-related goods and kept a "loan book" in which it noted what goods it had used as collateral for third parties with DNB.[217] Coffee was by far the most common. Van Eeghen & Co also acted as insurer of several ships, for premiums totalling several tens of thousands of guilders each year. These were not solely vessels used to carry slavery-related cargoes, but they did include several from Curaçao.[218]

The Crommelin family could trace its ancestry back to at least 1651, when forefather Daniel Crommelin emigrated to New Amsterdam (modern New York). His grandson returned to Amsterdam in the early eighteenth century and founded the firm Daniel Crommelin and Sons. Both Claude

Daniel (1795-1859) and his half-brother Gulian Cornelis became partners in this business. At the end of the eighteenth century, it traded on St Eustatius – at the time an important hub in the slave trade to various European colonies – and played an important role in financing the export of slavery-related goods to Europe.[219]



Description of a branding iron in the office of the plantation Rac à Rac, three-eighths owned by Jan Hodshon. Property belonging to the estate was branded with the letters RaR.
The branding of the enslaved was regulated by law and performed when children reached the age of 12. In this estate inventory, we see that the branding iron was kept in the office of the plantation house.
Source: NL-HaNA, 1.05.11.15, Surinaamse Notarissen (Surinam Notaries), 1827-1846, inv. No. 108, scan 120.

ACTE VAN AANDEEL,

Voor *Een Driehonderd Twee-en-zestigste Part* in den Eigendom van de Plantagie LIVONIA, gelegen in de Colonie Suriname, aan de Kleine Marappica Creecq, aan de Linkerhand in 't Opvaaren, tusschen de Plantagiën *Adrichem* en *Bendts-Lust*.

Art. 1.

De Houder van ieder Acte van Aandeel word erkend Eigenaar te zijn, van *Een Driehonderd Twee en Zestigste Part* in de bovengemelde Plantagie.

2.

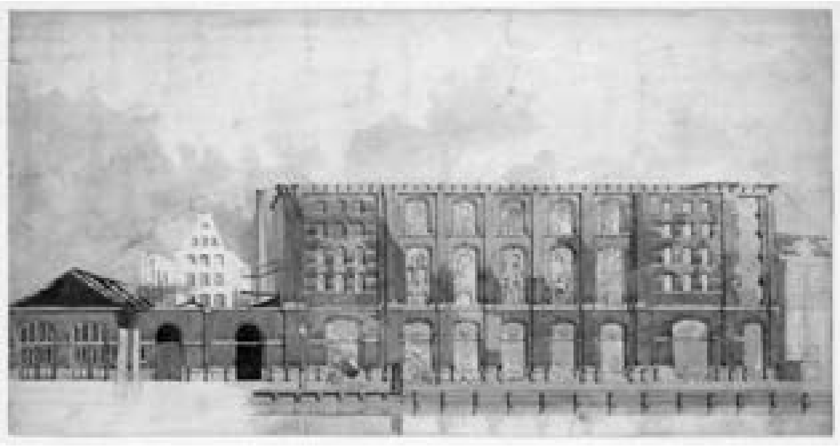
6

Share in the Livonia plantation, for which Johannes Carp was non-executive director.

Source: Securities and Lotteries Collection, ARCH03766, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

In 1836, Claude Daniël married Alida Maria Wolterbeek (1802-1862). She was the sister of Robert Daniël Wolterbeek (d. 1858-1865), who was also a partner in the firm Daniel Crommelin and Soonen.[220] As far as we can ascertain, Robert was involved in slavery-related activities only as part of that business. It is clear, though, that the firm was still active in the trade of goods made using enslaved labour in the nineteenth century.[221]

Following the death of Claude Daniël Crommelin in 1859, his personal financial assets were valued at *f* 528,187. The only item related to a plantation is a 1/230th share in *Marienburg*, Surinam, which at that time was worth nothing and generated no income. Other holdings that can be linked to slavery are *f* 800 in bonds from the city of Mobile, Alabama, *f* 10,750 from the state of Virginia, and three different US government bonds totalling *f* 12,390. Amongst his debtors, some colonial connections are apparent: Isaac Newton on St Croix had owed *f* 4,254.72 since 1796, W. Parkinson and G. Greene in Demerara *f* 438.65 since the same year, and J. Charnocx in Surinam *f* 10 since 1828. This latter debt was less than that owed by fellow banker Croockewit, who was still in hock to Crommelin's estate for *f* 12.50.[222]



The Beuker & Hulshoff sugar refinery.
Source: [010094001675], Amsterdam City Archives.

For someone who spent a considerable part of his professional career working at DNB (s. 1828-1849, d. 1849-1854, p. 1854-1863), Hendrik Croockewit has left surprisingly little archive material. He described himself on his marriage certificate as a "sugar refiner". Together with his brother Zacharias he took over their father's sugar refining and brokerage business under the name Croockewit & Co and later became a partner in Beuker & Hulshoff, also a sugar refinery.[223] In the previous chapter we saw how Croockewit fought against the proposed excise duty on sugar. Given his close association with this commodity, he is strongly implicated in slavery-related economic activities. However, he had no direct links with the plantation economy.

Herman Hendrik Beels (d. 1864-1889) was born in 1827 to Marten Adriaan Beels (1790-1859) and Charlotte Christina Gildemeester (1793-1839). His father was a son of Leonard Beels (1756-1793) and a grandson of Marten Adriaan Beels (1728-1789). The latter had been a member of Amsterdam's city government and in 1780 became a non-executive director of the W.G. Deutz fund.[224] Herman Hendrik's father was a wealthy man with a varied portfolio of investments, ranging from Russian, Austrian, Dutch, American, and Danish government bonds to loans for the construction of a house of prayer for the Jewish community in Haarlem and 100 guilders lent to a baker in the same city. He also invested personally in a number of plantation loans and in 1839 inherited several assorted shares in sometimes overlapping plantation funds from his aunt Maria Beels, widow of Everard de Burlett. In the case of the Th. Chr. Van Nes and Nicolaas Brant funds, the estates concerned are unspecified. Others are named, however: *Hoop*, *Nieuw Amsterdam*, and *Eendragt Maakt Magt* in Surinam and *Windberg* and *L'Esperance* on St John. The latter were administered by Insinger & Co. In his accounts, Marten Beels noted that these investments had yielded him a total of *f* 5,329 since 1814. That included the full redemption of *Eendragt Maakt Magt* in 1824, generating *f* 1,122. When Beels drew up a balance sheet of his portfolio on 1 March 1840, the plantation funds accounted for *f* 1,312.50 out of a total worth of just over *f* 445,885 – about 0.3 per cent.[225]

Herman Hendrik Beels probably inherited some of his father's plantation shares, but he himself was involved mainly in the colonial trade in the Dutch East Indies. In his personal records we find a letter to the inspector of taxes, dated 1915, in which he outlines his income and, in part, his expenses. He was non-executive board member in several firms with the Javasche Cultuur Maatschappij (Java Cultivation Company) having the most obvious colonial connection. His account usually held between *f* 30,000 and *f* 50,000 and his fundholding activities were, as he put it, "ruinous". All his funds were foreign and came from Mexico, Missouri, and Associated Merchants. In April 1908, he had stepped down "in the most honourable fashion" from his position as non-executive director of the Amsterdam branch of De Javasche Bank. Beels' business records, which date back to 1864, show no connection with the slavery-related economy.[226]

Table 3. *The directors of DNB and how they were involved in slavery.*

Name	**Involvement in slavery**
Hogguer, Paul Iwan (p. 1814-1816)	No, only indirectly: his father had already switched from plantation financing to government bonds with Hope & Co, Grand and Fizeaux.
Hodshon, Jan (p. 1816-1827) (d. 1814-1816)	Yes: provided various plantation loans through the trading house Hodshon & Son; inherited shares in the former slave-trading WIC and South Sea Company.
Teysset, Jacques (p. 1827-1828) (d. 1814-1827)	Yes: through the firm of Clifford & Teysset; his father earned income from trading and the transatlantic transportation of enslaved Africans.
Fock, Jacob I (p. 1828-1835) (d. 1814-1828)	No: was probably a shareholder in plantation mortgage funds through his father's inheritance.
Mogge Muilman, Willem Ferdinand (p. 1835-1844) (d. 1814-1835)	No: was probably a shareholder in plantation mortgage funds through the firm Muilman & Sons.
Fock, Abraham (p. 1844-1858) (d. 1837-1844)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Croockewit, Hendrik (p. 1854-1863) (d. 1849-1854) (s. 1828-1849)	Yes: traded in slave goods and was active in sugar refining, personally and with Beuker & Hulshoff.

Mees, Willem Cornelis (p. 1863-1884) (s. 1849-1863)	No: outspoken opponent of slavery.
Pierson, Nicolaas Gerard (p. 1885-1891) (d. 1868-1885)	Yes: traded in slave goods (cotton) and supported slavery in the southern United States.
Poll, Jan van de (d. 1814-1822)	Yes: through Harman van de Poll & Co.
Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, Joan (d. 1817-1836)	Yes: actively intervened in plantation-related policymaking and received British compensation after abolition in the 1830s.
Carp, Johannes (d. 1822-1837)	Yes: through Marcellus Broen & Son; was trustee of a plantation loan and traded in slave goods.
Valckenier van de Poll, Jan Jacobus (d. 1827-1837)	No: it is unclear whether he inherited anything from his father.
Röell, Willem (d. 1828-1829) (s. 1821-1828)	No: possibly held some shares; a Röell (surname only) is listed as owning ten shares in the Dedel plantation mortgage fund.
Eeghen, Jan van (d. 1829-1838)	Yes: both personally and through the W.G. Deutz fund and the firm Van Eeghen & Co; also a sugar refiner.
Willink, Ananias (d. 1835-1845)	Yes: was involved in the West Indies Company.
Luden, Johannes (d. 1836-1864)	Yes: received British compensation after abolition in the 1830s.
Crommelin, Claude Daniël (d. 1838-1849)	Yes: personal debtors in colonies, and through the firm Daniel Crommelin & Soonen.
Melvil, John (d. 1838-1851)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Insinger, Jacobus Hermanus (d. 1844-1871)	Yes: involved through Insinger & Co in almost all possible ways; received compensation in 1863.

Rendorp, Ferdinand (d. 1845-1865)	Yes: through various funds; received compensation in 1863.
Heukelom, Jan van (d. 1851-1879)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Wolterbeek, Robert Daniël (d. 1858-1865)	Yes: through Daniel Crommelin & Sons.
Beels, Herman Hendrik (d. 1864-1889)	No: may have inherited plantation shares.
Fock, Jacob II (d. 1865-1890)	No: no evidence of involvement found.
Lennep, Cornelus Sylvius van (s. 1814-1821)	No: more a politician than a merchant.
Molkenboer, Johannes Hermanus (s. 1863-1871)	Yes: received compensation through his wife in 1863.
Gleichman, Johan George (s. 1871-1877)	No: more a politician than a merchant.

Other

Borski, Johanna	Yes: through the firm Wed. W. Borski and in other ways.

These cases of DNB directors who were involved with slavery in some way or another would seem to suggest all were implicated to a greater or lesser extent. That is (probably) not the case. Though of course there is always a chance that certain individuals with no links revealed by our research may in later studies be found to have some after all. Two examples of DNB leadership with no ties to slavery are Melvil and Gleichman.

John Melvil (d. 1838-1851), the son of Robert Melvil and Elizabeth Skurray, was baptised at the English Presbyterian Church in Amsterdam in 1804.[227] His father was an agent for the firm Hope & Co in Russia[228] and John himself was married to Maria Arnoldina Willink (1812-1875). When he died in 1893, his cousin, the senator Robert Melvil, baron of Lynden, placed a death notice in the press on behalf of the family.[229] Apart from his father's involvement with Hope & Co, there is no known link between Melvil and slavery.

The family of Johan George Gleichman (s. 1871-1877) was relatively new to the Dutch mercantile community. Originally from Germany, the first Gleichmans settled in Rotterdam in about 1760 and established themselves as merchants. By the generation of Thomas Theodore Gleichman (1805-1865), however, the family was focused more upon public administration than trade. Himself the son of a city councillor in Rotterdam, Johan George (1834-1909) stepped down from DNB in 1877 to become Minister of Finance in the government led by Jan Kappeyne van de Coppello. He then continued his political career as member of parliament and later Speaker of the House of Representatives.[230] His brother Jan Jacob (1838-1905) was a coffee broker, but given the year of his birth would have had little opportunity to trade in the produce of slave labour.[231] In 1859, Johan George Gleichman married Johanna Justina van Hall (1837-1884), a niece of Floris Adriaan van Hall, the son-in-law of Jan Bondt. After her death, Gleichman married again in 1893. His second wife was Adriana Wilhelmina Petronella Cort van der Linden, the sister of Pieter Cort van der Linden, who became Prime Minister in 1913. Like his own career, both marriages placed him firmly in political rather than merchant banking circles.