

SAMUEL SCHEER / SCHERSLIEFER (Schär?)- Basle. 1666 Cadet, 1667.05.28- 1668 Junior surgeon. "Samuel Schersliefer of Basle having arrived here as soldier and since employed for about a year in the surgery, is appointed junior surgeon on the strength of good evidence of his knowledge." / ¹ MR.CA 1666-68; ² Böeseken: *Resolusies 1651-69*, p.355.

HANS CONRAD VOEGELI (Vögeli - Gächlingen SH?) - SH. 1666-68 So. / MR CA 1666-68.

AURELIUS PROBENIUS (Probst - SO?) - Basle. 1666-71 Cadet serving at outposts (1668 Diep River, 1670 Saldanha Bay),¹ became a member of the church community and returned to Switzerland.² While serving at Saldanha Bay, Probenius would have been stationed at the fort built less than four years previously in Kraal Bay. It could only accommodate a handful of men. Presumably they were sent out for six months at a time, and besides military duties sowed wheat, traded with the Khoi, stored ammunition and tended the canon placed on Konstabelkop to defend the bay.³

Aurelius may have been a member of the small garrison when, in 1670, French warships entered Saldanha Bay and temporarily occupied the fort. The Dutch prudently retired before the overwhelming force and only returned after the French had left.

/ ¹ MR CA 1666-71; ² VC 603 p.62; ³ Wierenka: *The Fort in Saldanha Bay*.

MOSES CHUBLI (Kübli - Berner Oberland?) - Berne. 1666 Cadet, +1667. Has the dubious distinction of being the first Swiss recorded to have died at the Cape. / ¹ MR CA 1666; ² VC 39 List of Deaths at Fort.

JEAN JACQ / HANS JACOB GRIVAT (Grivat / Grivaz VD?)- Berne. 1667 Free labourer working in forest, 1668 So. / MR CA 1666-68.

OUGERT OUGERTSZ (Augiz - VD / Augier GE / Oggier VS?) - Switzerland, arr. sick 1668.04.17 on *Voorzichtigheid*, left behind and died 1668.05.04 in hospital. / VC 5 Journal.

(HANS) JACOB BASLER - Basle, arr.1669.09.19 on *Polanen*, one of five experienced miners sent from Europe to search for minerals. For several years they were busy making excavations in Table Valley, Paarl

Mountain, Riebeek Kasteel and other locations, often hopeful of success but always disappointed. Basler was an assayer and it was his duty to smelt and test the ores in an oven erected near Kloof Nek. / ¹ VC 5 Journal 1669.09.19-1670.01.22; ² MR CA 1670-71; ³ Böeseken: *Resol.* 1651-59 p.395; ⁴ Theal: *History of South Africa* Vol.III p.177-178.

A SWISS WHO HAD MANY BRUSHES WITH THE LAW

ALEXANDER BLANCK of Schaffhausen was quite a character whose enterprise landed him in and out of court all his life. As a young hopeful seeking both livelihood and adventure, he left his hometown and tramped down the Rhine Valley to the Netherlands and there took service with the VOC. In 1670 we find him, 20 years old, working as tar-burner on the beach in Table Bay. His task was to produce the tar used for waterproofing ships, by the continuous heating of wood. He soon improved his position: at the end of the same year he was on guard-duty at Kyckuyt, a small fort built on the limits of the settlement to protect the cattle of the Company and the free burghers from raiding Khoi. He used this vantage point to make a quick buck by illegally bartering sheep with the Khoi but was caught. Court case No.1.¹

Blanck continued to serve as soldier until his contract terminated in 1674 when he opted to become a settler.² The VOC, concerned about the shortage of marriageable women at the Cape, allowed free passage to maids accompanying senior officials' families to the East in the hope that they would be married during the brief sojourn at the Cape. Blanck was quick to charm one such girl, obtained free burgher status, joined the church community and married his Annatje.³ How did they make their living? Perhaps by providing lodgings to travellers off passing ships who were glad to spend the short stay here on land.

In 1676 he bought a slave from Governor Bax for 95 rixdalers to help with the work. Twenty years later Blanck rewarded this slave for his faithful service by giving him his freedom and registered him as a freeman.⁴

In 1680 Blanck and another were accused of cutting wood in a forbidden area (a restriction introduced to protect the indigenous forest). Blanck pleaded not guilty and was discharged but his friend Hendrik Koster was fined 25 guilders. Court case No.2.⁵