

hourse or else wheare, or in Kent in Gillingham, by Rochester ».

» Probably through the agency of their Factors recently settled at Bantam, two copies of the letter were transmitted to the « Worshipfull Fellowship of the Merchants of London trading into the East Indies »; and in the sequel it will be perceived the communication led to the opening of commercial intercourse between England and Japon ¹. »

Cette première lettre débute :

« Hauing so good occasion, by hearing that certaine English marchants lye in the island of Iaua, although by name vnknowen, I have ymboldened my selfe to wryte these few lines, desiring the Worshipfull Companie being unknowen to me, to pardon my stowness. My reason that I doe wryte, is first as conscience doth binde me with loue to my countrymen, and country. Your Worships, to whom this present wryting shall come, is to geve you to vnderstand that I am a Kentish man, borne in a towne called Gillingam, two English miles from Rochester, one mile from Chattam, where the Kings ships doe lye : and that from the age of twelue yeares olde, I was brought vp in Limehouse neere London, being Apprentice twelue yeares to Master Nicholas Diggins; and my selfe haue serued for Master and Pilott in her Maiesties ships; and about eleuen or twelue yeares haue serued the Worshipfull Companie of the Barbarie Marchants, vntill the Indish traffick from Holland [began], in which Indish traffick I was desirous to make a littel experience of the small knowledg which God had geuen me. So, in the yeare of our Lord 1598, I was hired for Pilot Maior of a fleete of five sayle, which was made readie by the Indish Companie : Peeter Vander Hay and Hance Vander Veek. The Generall of this fleet, was a marchant called Iaques Maihore, in which ship, being Admirall, I was Pillott ². »

... « Therefore I do pray and intreate you in the name of Jesus-Christ to doe so much as to make my being here

1. RUNDALL, Introduction, p. 17.

2. RUNDALL, p. 18.