

1505 Portuguese adventurer, landed at Colombo, on the west coast, he found the island divided into seven little kingdoms, exactly as our England was before Egbert, King of Wessex. This was just 400 years ago.

The Portuguese arrive.

The Portuguese were very polite at first; they had to feel their way. Twelve years after Almeida's first visit they got permission from the King of the district adjoining Colombo (you will see Colombo directly you look at the map, just on the west coast where the Portuguese would be sure to arrive) to erect a small trading post, a sort of shop-warehouse in fact.

What they did

Now the fun began, not for the Cingalese (the people of Ceylon), but for the Portuguese. The big shop was surrounded by palisades for protection at night. Stone walls quickly took the place of wooden palisades, the trading post became a fort, cannon were brought from the ships, and mounted so as to command the approaches by land and sea. Alarmed by this, the Cingalese attempted to expel their new friends, but they were already too late. The Portuguese had fire-arms and they had not, and the newcomers were soon in secure possession of the whole west coast.

Enter the Dutch

They behaved with the most remorseless cruelty to the unhappy Cingalese over a long series of years. About seventy years later appeared the Dutch on the opposite side of the island, the east coast. They sought an alliance with the King of Kandy, right in the interior. The King of Kandy said, "Oh, yes, if you help us to drive out the Portuguese."

1602

Exit the Portuguese.

Nothing come of this then. Forty years later the Dutch attacked and destroyed all the Portuguese forts on the east coast where the latter had now penetrated. A few years after they established themselves at Negombo, a place on the west coast, in convenient proximity to the Portuguese at Colombo. Then they attacked and captured Colombo, and soon drove the Portuguese and their wretched methods out of the island.

1664

Amelioration and deterioration

The nature of the Dutch tenure of Ceylon is not easy to define. It was founded on wisdom and humanity. They rendered the commerce between the island and Holland very

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