



# Keying Dutch 19th Century ships' logbooks in CDMP

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The successful project CLIWOC was limited to the years 1750-1850 and, due to lack of time, did not succeed in digitizing all available logbooks. Still a lot of ship logbooks sit in various archives spread around the world and the content is anxiously waiting to be keyed.

## 1. Introduction

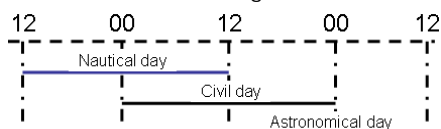
After CLIWOC there still remain nearly 200 logbooks in the archives of KNMI that need to be processed quickly because the state of these logbooks is deteriorating fast.

These logbooks contain worldwide meteorological data from about 325 ships covering the period 1826-1892.

In total 17,565 images were made and sent to CDMP (Climate Database Modernization Program) in the USA. The next task will be to digitize all these images and convert them into manageable information in a database.

## 2. Systems of time keeping

Usually all ships kept their logbooks in ship time. Nevertheless, in the early days not all logbooks were kept according to the same agreement. Some ships (mostly merchant marine) kept the so-called nautical time (noon - noon), while others (usually the Navy) were using civil time (midnight - midnight). To make it even more confusing there is also



the Astronomical day, that is 24 hours later than the Nautical day! In some logbooks the days are divided into three parts (first,

DAGEN DER MAAND	RIJCKTE VAN GREENWICH	GEMOEN WAARHEMINGEN.						BUITENGEWOEN WAARHEMINGEN.						WINDRIJTING (RIJDTW. KOMPAAS) EN KRACHT.	AANMERKINGEN.
		NOORD- NOORD- OOST.	OOST- OOST- ZUID.	ZUID- ZUID- WEST.	WEST- WEST- NOORD.	NOORD- NOORD- WEST.	WEST- WEST- ZUID.	NOORD- NOORD- WEST.	OOST- OOST- ZUID.	ZUID- ZUID- WEST.	WEST- WEST- NOORD.				

Figure B. An example of the Dutch column heading

middle and latter), others are divided into 6 watches.

## 3. Logbook layout

The number of different logbook layouts is around 35. Although the language used in the logbooks is generally Dutch, sometimes the American Abstract logbook is used. Often either a fixed layout (in Dutch)

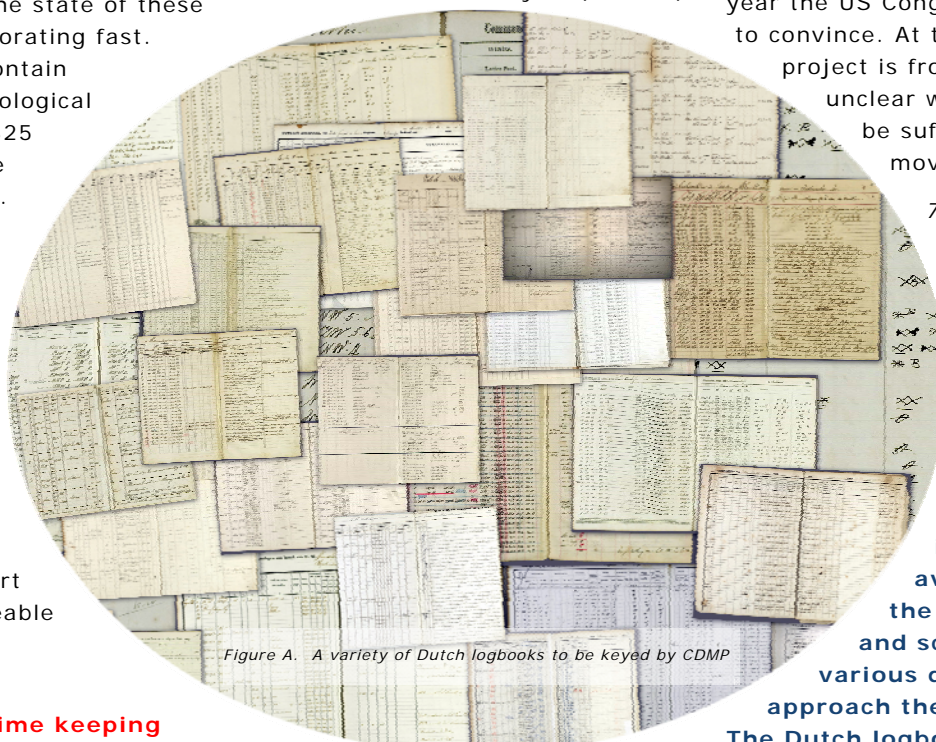


Figure A. A variety of Dutch logbooks to be keyed by CDMP

or a self-defined layout is used. Figure A shows a collection of different layouts that can be found in the KNMI logbook set.

## 4. Translation

The column headings, used in many logbooks, are in Dutch (see Figure B). In order to be able to key the data into the CDMP database, translations into English terms that are used in the database have to be made.

## 5. Strange symbols

Many Dutch logbooks were extracted from the original ship logbooks. Having to copy the same information over and over again, the copiers now and then used a self-invented 'stenography'.

Symbols that denoted present or past weather and the state of the sea were often used in the logbooks (see Figure C).

## 6. Danger

Currently the US-CDMP program is under serious threat. This internationally important program is always generously funded by the US Government. However, this year the US Congress is very hard to convince. At this moment the project is frozen and it is unclear whether there will be sufficient funding to move on.

## 7. Conclusion

The need for CDMP to continue is vital for marine climatology and other fields of study. Countless images are available online in the EDADS library and scientists from various disciplines could approach them for research.

The Dutch logbooks are waiting to be digitized and assistance to understand and translate the logbook data is kindly offered by KNMI.

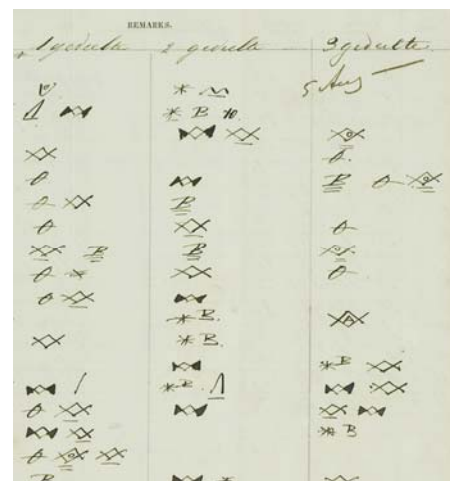


Figure C. Strange symbols appearing in Dutch logbooks