A successful Anglo-Dutch merchant firm in the mid-eighteenth century London had established Dutch merchant houses as their partners in the Netherlands, and some were themselves British branches of successful Dutch houses. Their Dutch connections made the base of their business activities in Britain. However, the case then shows that the Anglo-Dutch merchants in Britain needed more than well-established Dutch ties to secure their success in Britain: they had to build appropriate British connections to complement their useful Dutch backgrounds. Henry Muilman was defeated in 1743 even if he could offer lower fees than Gore and had close familial connections with the prominent Muilmans in Amsterdam. For the bid, Muilman worked with a wealthy British merchant but the partnership was not enough to clinch the contract.

The Muilmans in London later did acquire contracts with the British government. They were one of the main underwriters for British government’s loans in 1759 – 1760, as well as the van Necks, another Dutch merchant house in London. However, while it took some time for the Muilmans to establish themselves in Britain and assimilate into the British society, a few other Anglo-Dutch merchants advanced in a shorter period even if their original families in the Netherlands were less prominent than the Muilmans. Two of these were the van Necks and van Nottens. The van Necks, van Nottens and Muilmans all became successful brokers and gradually assimilated into Britain in three generations. However, their paths and speed towards success were more or less different, depending on how and with whom they built their connections in Britain. To show the importance of their connections within Britain, this chapter will focus on the three notable Anglo-Dutch merchants’ relations in London in the mid-eighteenth century, before exploring their businesses in the next chapter.

Comparing the van Necks, van Nottens and the Muilmans, this chapter will first investigate the success of the van Necks and van Nottens and move on to the Muilmans to highlight the key to success for the Anglo-Dutch merchants in mid-eighteenth century Britain. In fact, newly arrived merchants in London had to build useful social networks in Britain, even though they had ample Dutch connections. Thus they joined the Dutch church, interacted with other prominent Dutch, Huguenot, and British merchants and elites, forged unions with them through marriage, made charitable donations and confessed their loyalty to the crown and the public credit.