

# **The Coursens of Sussex County New Jersey** **(An offprint from "The Woodruffs of New Jersey.")**

**Woodruff, Francis**

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THE COURSENS  
OF SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



## THE COURSENS OF SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

ELIZABETH SOPHIA COURSEN, wife of Dr. E. B. Woodruff, Gen. XI, 16, App. B and Note, was a daughter of (6) Abraham Coursen.

THERE is a widespread tradition among both the Sussex "Coursens" and the Staten Island "Corsons" that their respective ancestors were refugees from France,<sup>1</sup> coming, presumably, like most such refugees, by way of Holland. Toward this origin the writer, with aid, has traced the lineage of our Sussex family from the already known John Coursen (died 1770) upward three more generations. In the course of his researches he has found indications (similarity of recurring given names in the early generations of the above two families, etc., etc.)—but they may be mere coincidences—that we "Coursens," like the "Corsons," are descended from the "Vrooms"<sup>2</sup> of Holland. As "Vroom," or "Vroome," or "de Vroome," or "der Fromme" (meaning, in Dutch, "Pious," "the Pious") is apparently a nickname Hollanders have attached to an adult, it may have taken the place of the rightful surname, perhaps Coursen, of a French refugee. More than two years' correspondence with genealogists of standing in Holland, however, has made it evident that to test the truth of these (and other) possibilities of our lineage some enthusiastic Coursen descendant, "charged with knowledge" of the history of the American families, must make search in person in Holland.<sup>3</sup> This is not practicable for the writer, and at his age it would not be right to longer hold back the publication of this book for the chance of result from the work of others.

Our family owes Mr. A. J. F. van Laer, Archivist of the New York State Library, a debt of gratitude for much very kind and very efficient aid. Among many other things, he has carried us up from John Coursen (1649-1703) to his father.

1. CHRISTIAEN JANS (Christian, son of JAN ———;

WHAT IS THE SURNAME?), of Recife, Brazil, S. A. (Recife then being in the possession of Holland). Christiaen and Janneken (Jane) Christiaens, his wife, are recorded on Aug. 1, 1649, as parents, at the baptism of Johannes,<sup>4</sup> known to be our ancestor.

2. JOHN COURSEN, I,<sup>5</sup> thus baptized<sup>6</sup> Johannes at Recife,<sup>4</sup> on Aug. 1, 1649, on Oct. 25, 1673, as Ian Corszen, of Recife, was married<sup>7</sup> in New Amsterdam, to Metje (Mathilde) Theunis (*i. e.*, daughter of Theunis equals Anthonis, Anthony) Cräy.<sup>8</sup> In 1674, being then twenty-five years of age, he was acting as steward for the Burgomaster in issuing the garrison's provisions,<sup>9</sup> and is mentioned in lawsuits and otherwise. At that time his home was in the part of Beaver Street between William and Broad, once called Smith Street Lane.<sup>10</sup>

On July 15th of that year their first child, Margrietie, was baptized,<sup>11</sup> a witness being Theunis Craey,<sup>8</sup> and on May 10, 1676, a son Kors (Christian or Cornelius), witnesses Jan de Vries and Trijn (Catharine) van Campen, wife of Theunis Craey. There followed, on Jan. 9, 1678, a Tryntie, witnesses Hendrick Jilliszen and Marritie (Mary) van Hoboken; and on Aug. 12, 1682, Geertruyd, a witness being Grietie Hendrix. Then, until 1690, no baptisms have been found on record.

In 1686, Metje Theunis, wife of Jan Corsen, was recorded as a member of the R. D. Church, residing on the west side of Broad Street.<sup>12</sup> On Dec. 13th of that year John bought,<sup>13</sup> for "a valuable sum of money," a property on the west side of the "Sheep Pasture," south of Wall Street. In the deed he is described as a "marriner"; considering the "valuable sum of money," presumably "master mariner."

On April 6, 1690, JACOBUS was baptized; parents, Jan Corszen and Metje Cräy; witnesses, Theunis de Key and Catherina der Val; and on Sept. 2, 1692, Benjamin; witnesses, Gov. Benjamin Fletcher and wife. April 3, 1695, John Corsen, "marriner," and Metje, his wife, sold<sup>14</sup> their home beside the "Sheep Pasture"; of their further residences no record has been found. On July 14th of the same year came the last of the baptisms, Elisabeth; witnesses, Johannes Hardenbroeck and Margarete Meynders, wife of Colonel Ludowyc. On Feb. 29, 1696, and May 22, 1698, the wife, Metje Cray, as witness at baptisms, again appears without her husband; but on Oct. 20, 1701, they were together, when, as Jan and Mettine (clerical error?) Corsen, they indentured<sup>15</sup> their son Jacob to William Bogaert, Turner, of their city.

Because of intervals, as shown above, when our mariner, of whom we know so little, was apparently away from home, it is uncertain whether the absence of his name from the N. A. Census of 1703<sup>16</sup> means that he was on a voyage or that he had died. No later mention of him or of his wife has been found; and of his children, other than our ancestor Jacob, while there are names in the records that suggest possibilities, nothing is certainly known.

3. JACOB COURSEN, I,<sup>17</sup> was baptized (Jacobus) on April 6, 1690, in the Reformed Dutch Church of New York City. On Oct. 20, 1701, when he was some eleven years old, his parents, Jan and Mettine (Metje) Corsen, indentured him for six years, with provision for his education, to William Bogaert, Turner, of the same city; and on April 20, 1702, he acknowledged and approved.<sup>15</sup>

When, on April 3, 1717, Jacob and his wife, Adriaentje Koevert,<sup>18</sup> had their first-born child, the founder of our family in Sussex County, baptized John (Johannes), they were members<sup>19</sup> of the Church of the River and Lawrence Brook, a branch of the Raritan (Somerville) Church, at Six Mile Run,<sup>20</sup> near New Brunswick; and were living at or near Neshanic,<sup>21</sup> in the now Hillsborough township of Somerset County. There followed baptisms at Six Mile Run of Jannike (Jane), March 27, 1820; Metje (Mathilde), March 11, 1722; Margrietje, December 20, 1724; Teunis (Anthony), July 23, 1727.

After the latter date Jacob removed his family just across the county line into Readington township, Hunterdon County; the Readington church records<sup>22</sup> showing the baptism there of their daughter Geertrug (Gertrude) on May 11, 1732. Here he probably owned, and lived near by, the mill on the South Branch of the Raritan River, beside the road (then crossing the Branch a little lower downstream than now), between Flemington and the hamlet of Barley Sheaf.<sup>23</sup> The surrounding country was very pleasing to the eye, and there were friendly neighbors: Gov. John Reading,<sup>24</sup> Abraham Zutphen, John Aller, witnesses to his will; his son-in-law, Benjamin Cole; Martin Ryerson, and other well-known names. On Holland's Brook, near Readington village, were Douwe and Benjamin Corsen, from Staten Island.<sup>25</sup>

Of his immediate family, John had struck out for himself and gone into Morris County; Jane, after becoming Mrs. David McKenney, had died, leaving a daughter Ida; Mette (Matte) was unmarried; Margaret was Mrs. James Smock; Teunis (Tunis) had a wife Hannah and twins, Mally and Metje; Gertrude was Mrs. Ben-

jamin Cole. His pleasant surroundings could not be enjoyed forever. On March 12, 1756, "being sick and weak in body," he made his will,<sup>26</sup> and before the third day of July following he died, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

4. JOHN COURSEN, II, son of Jacob and Arryante Corson, was baptized Johannes, on April 3, 1717 (Somerville-Raritan records, 1717-27). His parents were then living in Somerset Co., N. J., but before 1732 were residents of Readington to., Hunterdon Co., where, on Aug. 14, 1743,<sup>27</sup> Jan Korsen and his wife, Geertje,<sup>28</sup> had a son Jacob baptized, and on June 23, 1745, a son Isaac.<sup>29</sup> No further record has been found of him until, among the papers filed with his father Jacob's original will,<sup>26</sup> his administrator's bond shows that on Aug. 20, 1756, he was of Roxbury to., Morris Co., N. J.<sup>30</sup>

He next appears in Sussex Co., N. J., where, on May 14, 1763,<sup>31</sup> he bought from Joseph Hull, of New London, Connecticut, a tract of about 850 acres,<sup>32</sup> and another of 806 acres,<sup>33</sup> in Hardwicke (now Stillwater) to., at Coursen's Corners (now Fredon), some four miles south of west from Newton, the county seat. On the same day he executed a mortgage to Mr. Hull on 750 of the acres,<sup>34</sup> pledging the payment money on or before Aug. 1, 1764. Two days later Mr. Hull, at New London, gave a power of attorney<sup>35</sup> for all his remaining New Jersey lands to his "Trusty and well-beloved friend Mr. John Corson of Hardwick," etc., etc. On July 12, 1764, just before the above payment money would fall due, John Corson sold to John Roy, Esquire, of Bernard's Town,<sup>36</sup> Somerset Co., 220 acres, being part of the 806 acres tract.<sup>33</sup>

The wife who joined him in executing this conveyance was named Charity; so the wife of his youth, Gertrude van Tuyle,<sup>28</sup> had died.<sup>37</sup> As shown by his will,<sup>38</sup> made when "very sick and weak in body," John Corson<sup>39</sup> himself died in January-February, 1770. While from the extensive real estate transactions, and from the wording of Mr. Hull's power of attorney, he was evidently a man of means and of standing, from his death, at the early age of fifty-three, and from the need of the gallant and successful struggle of the son who followed him as the head of the household, it is possible that he suffered from the then common fault of buying too much land for his strength. The two elder sons having apparently set up for themselves, and Benjamin, who sold part of his inherited lands, perhaps not being helpful, the care of the bereaved mother and younger children fell on the next in order of age,

5. JOHN, III. Born Sept. 7, 1753, he was thus but a strip-



ling of hardly seventeen, yet gradually bought all the lands sold by Benjamin; served in the Revolution as Sergeant, then Ensign in the Second Regt. Sussex Militia (Stryker); June 5, 1793 (as known to us through the courtesy of Adjutant-General, Trenton), was commissioned Major, Sussex Militia; March 10, 1798, Lt.-Colonel 4th Sussex Militia; and in 1805 replaced the first log-house with the very attractive homestead still standing in its garden on the knoll. He was an ancestor to be proud of! He d. Jan. 12, 1815, and is bur. in the old Hardwicke (now called "Yellow-frame," *i. e.*, yellow-painted frame church) graveyard,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of south from the homestead, as are many of his descendants. In 1779 he had m. Phoebe Goble (Sept. 21, 1760—March 22, 1819). Their children were:

6. ENOS, Oct. 19, 1780—Oct. 17, 1819; m. Mary Green (1785-1863); lived at the homestead. ABRAHAM, July 10, 1784—Jan. 17, 1843; m. Sept. 23, 1813, Mehitabel (Hetty) Marsh, q. v.; of Washington Square, N. Y. C.; merchant. ANN, Dec. 22, 1787—April 28, 1872; m. Abram BUNTING (d. 1851). ISAAC VANTILE, July 10, 1794—Aug. 4, 1855; m. Phebe Hurd (Aug. 4, 1800—April 23, 1885); lived at homestead. GERSHOM, June 5, 1795—May 19, 1821. SARAH, May 25, 1797-1852; m. 1821, Richard STILLWELL (d. 1861).

7. Among the children of Enos were AARON, 1808—Aug. 29, 1828; bur. Hardwicke graveyard. GERSHOM HAMPTON, 1810—Jan. 22, 1886; m. (1) Susan Paul; (2) 1845, Caroline Higbie (1822—May 10, 1883); of New York City. Of Abraham: ELIZABETH SOPHIA, m. Dr. E. B. WOODRUFF (App. B and Note). WILLIAM A., Nov. 21, 1819—Sept. 16, 1895; m. (1) Sophia C. Raphael (1821-43); (2) Henrietta M. Oakley (1820-49); (3) Jane Chester. He was a graduate of the University of the City of New York, and a lawyer in that city. It was written of him: "He stood high among his associates in the law"; "as the Mayor of Elizabeth he made an enviable record"; "he was twice elected . . . each time by heavy majorities"; "his terms of office have often been cited as models"; "he was one of the most respected citizens of the State." SARAH ANNA, Feb. 23, 1822—Aug. 15, 1868; unmarried. ISAAC OLIVER, M.D., Feb. 9, 1829—March 31, 1873; m. Virginia Calhoun; d. Aug. 20, 1906. Isaac Vantile's children: JOHN ABRAHAM, June 27, 1819—July 8, 1837. JOSEPH H., b. June 4, 1821 (deceased). GERSHOM A. S. WHITEFIELD. L. OSCAR, living at homestead. HAMPTON A., mer-

chant, N. Y. C., living at East Orange, N. J.; m. Sarah E. Stillwell (1832-1901). LOUISA E., b. Nov. 22, 1829 (deceased). Hon. WILLIAM P., mem. N. J. Legislature, 1894-96; living at home-  
stead; m. Emma C. Coursen (July 19, 1837—June 1, 1877). S. AMANDA, m. ——— MANNING. ADDIE N., b. Feb. 13, 1835 (deceased). EDGAR A., b. June 8, 1837 (deceased). ISAAC VANTILE, b. Aug. 26, 1839 (deceased). Col. HENRY A., of Scranton, Pa.; Sec. Lieut. Oct. 3, 1861, First Lieut. Sept. 5, 1862, 7th N. J. Inf.; Capt. March 22, 1863, 23d N. J. Inf. The children of Sarah Stillwell: WILLIAM E., 1822-80. JOHN OSCAR, 1826-58. RICHARD H. SARAH E., 1832-1901; m. Hampton A. COURSEN.

8. The children of Gershom Hampton and Susan Paul: PAULINE, m. Henry S. OSBORN; of G. H. and Caroline Higbie, GEORGE HAMPTON, m. Charlotte Potter Higginson (d. Oct., 1891). CHARLES, d. in infancy. CHARLOTTE HIGBIE. MARY, d. 1865. ROBERT LEWIS. For the children of Elizabeth Sophia Woodruff, see Note to App. B. Of William A. and Sophia Raphael, ANNA RAPHAEL, June 25, 1840—March 4, 1877. Of William and Henrietta Oakley, HENRY DEE, Sept. 1, 1845—Oct. 17, 1866. WILLIAM A., JR., d. aged 6 mos. 2 days. HENRIETTA OAKLEY, m. Herbert B. ROBESON (Oct. 20, 1847—Nov. 23, 1906). Of William and Jane Chester, FRANCES BELL. ALFRED CHESTER, m. Sophia Johns. EDITH C., m. Edward P. THOMPSON. WILLIAM A., m. Harriet Van Wyck Bennett. JANE C., m. Howard C. LEVIS. Of Isaac Oliver, FLORENCE LESLIE; Nov. 12, 1858—Oct. 11, 1862. VIRGINIA, m. Noble C. WILLIAMS; d. June 5, 1906. LUCY (deceased), m. Col. James T. WRIGHT. BERTHA L., m. Col. James T. WRIGHT. Of Hampton A., ELLA S. FRANK E., m. Jessie E. Vilas. Of Hon. William P., MARIETTA; d. March 12, 1875, aged 5 mos. 19 days. FRED W., m. Ella M. Johnson. NELLIE L., m. Hampton ROY; three children.

The best authority on the Sussex Coursens is Mr. Jacob Allen Coursen, of Branchville, N. J. His own lineage is: Jacob, son of John II; July 30, 1743—Jan. 5, 1815; m. Mary Nixon (Aug. 9, 1742—April 12, 1828). Allen, Dec. 3, 1772—July 12, 1816; m. Nov. 4, 1807, Charity Cummins (d. May 30, 1817). William Nixon, b. July 12, 1811. Jacob A., who, it is hoped, will publish the results of his successful labors.

*Authorities:* Miss Charlotte H., Miss Ella S., Messrs. Jacob A.,

William P. and Henry A. Coursen. Bergen's King's County, N. Y. (Vroom), and Hist. Bergen Family (p. 128). Weiss, Hist. French Huguenots. Fernow's N. A. Family Names and their Origin; Half-moon Series, Vol. II, No. 6 (pp. 213-16). Aliases of Males, Ref. Dutch Ch., 1636-1756, in Holland Society Year Book, 1896 (pp. 190-98). Clute, S. I. Morris, S. I. Hist. City of N. Y., Mrs. Martha J. Lamb. N. J. Archives, Vol. XXI, First Series. County Hists. Descendants Benjamin Corson, etc., etc., etc.

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*NOTE.*—Generation 7, pp. 101-2. Hampton Aaron Coursen, born July 12, 1827, died at East Orange, N. J., on Dec. 19, 1908.

## NOTES ON THE COURSENS

### *Abbreviations*


*A. N. F.*; Algemeen Nederlandsch Famlieblad (periodical; bound volumes at N. Y. H. S. and Astor Library, N. Y. C.). *G and B.*; New York Genealogical and Biographical Record. *H. S. Y. B.*; Holland Society Year Book. *N. A.*; New Amsterdam. *N. J. A.*, New Jersey Archives. *N. Y. H. S.*; New York Historical Society. *N. Y. S. O.*; New York Surrogate's Office. *R. D.*; Reformed Dutch. *S.*; Sussex County, N. J. *T.*; Trenton, N. J.

### *Genealogical Data*

CORSON (Staten Island, etc.); *Notes* 1, 2, 25, 30. COURSEN (Sussex Co.); 1, 4, 23, 30, 37, 38. SPELLING OF DITTO; 1, 17, 21, 39. CRAEY, de CROY; 8. KOEVERT; 18. LAKERMAN; 28. READING; 24. VAN TUYLE; 28, 30. VROOM; 2, 4, 30.

1. FRENCH COURSENS. In her delightful "Romance of a Coursen Quest" (not yet published) Miss Charlotte H. Coursen (Generation VIII) has told us that the Coursens had their origin in France, in which country was the place that gave the place-name (also written Courson, Courçon, Curson, Curzon, etc.); the belief is widespread among us. For the similar tradition among the Corsons, see "The Corson Family, A History of the Descendants of Benjamin Corson, Son of Cornelius Corssen of Staten Island, N. Y." By Hiram Corson, M.D., of Plymouth Meeting, Pa. Printed for private distribution, Philadelphia. Henry Lawrence Everett, publisher, 227 South Sixth Street. (No date.)

2. VROOM. The earliest record of Vrooms in Holland known to the writer is of the Haarlem family (see the periodical, "Oud Holland," 1900, copy at N. Y. State Library, Albany). Its founder, Hendrick, a sculptor, was the father of, among others, Cornelius, a sculptor; who was the father of, among others, Hendrick, a marine painter of note, who was born at Haarlem in 1566, and was buried there in 1640. While further search may reveal even earlier dates there, or elsewhere, yet the Vrooms might have been refugees from France, religious persecution having begun in that country still earlier, and there having been, for example, early Vrooms at Leiden, a favored resort of such refugees.

The first known Vroom in New Amsterdam, Cornelius Pietertse Vroom (as written by the historian Bergen), living when everybody there knowing everybody else, surnames were superfluous, was recorded only as "Cors Pietersz" (Cors, son of Peter); but in signatures his mark  distinguished him from a contemporary "Cors Pietersz," a seaman, still living in 1661, after the former had died. That the omitted surname was "Vroom," we know from the fact that in the more sophisticated following generation his sons were so recorded.

His initial record, in 1638, referred to an inheritance by his wife, Tryntje (Catherine) Hendricks (Cal'r of Dutch MS., pp. 5, 62; N. Y. Coll. MS., Vol. I, p. 72), and showed that he was born about 1611-1612, and was from Langeraker, a hamlet northeast of Leiden; but search has failed to find any trace of him there, or in the neighborhood, or at Langerak of Schoonoven, presumably from the inadequacy of their records of that early time. He died before 1657, in which year his widow, Tryntje, when marrying Frederick Lubbersen, requested guardians for the three infant sons of "Cors Pietertse," viz., Cornelius, Pieter, and Hendrick. (Orphan Masters of N. A., pp. 37, 40; N. Y. R. D. Church Baptisms, pp. 19, 29, 36; Bkn. R. D. Church baptisms, pp. 35, 39.)

The descendants of the son Cornelius Corssen (son of Cors) Vroom, 1645-93, dropping the "Vroom" (perhaps remembering an earlier surname), became the "Corsons" of Staten Island, New Jersey (chiefly from Hunterdon County southward) and Pennsylvania. Pieter Corssen, 1651-96, or later, is supposed (Bergen's "King's County") to have had a son, Jacob Corson, who, or whose son Jacob, in 1770 left a widow, Hester, dau. of Jabez Heaton, of Mount Olive, then in Roxbury to., Morris Co., N. J. (Trenton Wills, K-256), who

may have borne him children, but no trace of their descendants has been found. The third son of Cors Pietertse, Hendrick Corsen Vroom (1653—"to a good old age"), was the ancestor of the New Jersey Vrooms. There is material in the records for more detailed narratives of their lives.

3. THE HOLLAND CORRESPONDENCE began on March 31, 1906, and still continues. With a solitary disappointment (Mr. A. A. Vorsterman van Oijen) there has been very courteous willingness to aid, notably shown in the wise and friendly advice of Maj. J. G. Gysberti Hodenpijl van Hodenpijl, a retired officer of the Dutch Army, who has done much good genealogical work. To him, and to the other gentlemen who, unprofessionally or professionally, have done so much, even though unavailingly, the writer's sincere thanks are due, and are here cordially tendered.

The object of the correspondence is to connect our Coursen line with Holland (on the way to France) by finding in the records the JAN ———? (see text) who was the father of CHRISTIAEN JANS (son of Jan), of Recife. As a beginning, attempt is being made to ascertain whether (as seems possible) this "Jan" was a "Jan Vroom." Should this fail, there would needs be a wider search for any "Jan" of any surname who so suited in dates and circumstances as evidently to have been the sought-for father. In either case, if one "Jan" is found not to suit, it is only to try another, until the records have been exhausted, and we have found or failed. As the father of a Christian who had a son baptized in 1649 would have been born in the generation before, say, 1630, and as Holland's records for such early days are but scanty, the task is by no means an impossible one. In the case of Christian's son John, it has been accomplished here where the old archives are more extensive. Moreover, experience has shown that while following the many wrong clues, one steeped in the subject may stumble across the right one.

At long range, however, the task requires too much time to be practicable. Besides the delays inevitable when letters have to cross the ocean, even eminent professional genealogists, who have not been able to make a special study of the subject, when searching the records may not see an earmark in an item that would be significant to a searcher who, although only an amateur, was charged with the particular knowledge. For example, in one long list of records supplied there was an item of the appointment, May 19, 1617, of a guardian for a child, JAN DE VROOME (and his brother and sisters). Had this Jan been born not later than, say, 1608, he might

have had a son Christian born in 1628, who had our ancestor baptized in 1649; so his record had to be looked into. But after inquiry had brought out the fact that he was not born until 1610, this obviously became too improbable, so it was only to seek for another "Jan Vroom." Yet, although the age was known, and could have been stated in the item first sent, it took the writer more than three months to ascertain it; the all-importance first of the "Jan," and then of the "1610" being so late as to make further search for his history useless, not having been realized through lack of familiarity with the annals of the American Coursens.

When an enthusiastic Coursen, charged with special knowledge, can sit at the elbow of the eminent genealogist, it should be speedily determined whether or not we can trace our lineage in the records of Holland. Unhappily, wars and catastrophes have played sad havoc with the early archives of that gallant State.

4. RECIFE VROOMS (?). Recife (The Reef), Pernambuco, Brazil, S. A., from A. D. 1630 to 1654 was in the possession of Holland (see any history of Brazil). After careful search through its baptismal records (A. N. F., Vols. V, 1888, VI, 1889), Mr. A. J. F. van Laer (see text) found that the only Jan or Johannes in them, whose father's given name could possibly have caused our ancestor to be known as Ian Corszen (son of Cor—Christian or Cornelius), of Recife, is this son of Christiaen Janss.

Among the suggestions that this Christian's father, Jan, may have been a Jan Vroom are the following: There was at least one Vroom at Recife, a Hendrick (like Jan, a recurring Vroom name), who was parent at a baptism in 1639, and a witness in 1650, 1651 and 1652. In the baptismal list on the same date, and immediately following our Christian, a Frederick Janss, apparently a brother, and his wife Grietien (Margaret) had a son Jan (and a dau.) baptized. The given name, "Frederick," is an early Vroom name in Holland, while "Christian" is found in the early generations of the N. A. Vroom-Corsens; and there is further similarity of recurring names in that and our Coursen families.

5. JOHN'S SURNAME was variously spelled in the records as Corszen, Corssen, Korssen, Corsen, Coerson (H. S. Y. B., 1896, p. 174), Coursen (N. Y. Reg. Office; Deeds, 13-234).

6. A. N. F., Vols. V, 1888, VI, 1889, Recife Baptismal Records.

7. G. and B., 1902, p. 122.

8. CRAEY, Craie, Cray, Kray. The wife, Metje Theunis

(G. and B., 1902, p. 122; hereafter in this note, where not otherwise specified, the G. and B. is the authority), daughter of Teunis (Anthonis) Cray, was baptized in the R. D. Church, N. A., on June 12, 1650. While in the marriage record she was "Metje Theunis" (Metje, daughter of Theunis ———), the wife of this same John Coursen was elsewhere more often recorded "Metje Cray." That the "Metje" was "Mathilde," not as often "Margaret," seems probable, because her son Jacob (q. v.), in 1722, named one daughter Metje, perhaps after his mother, and in 1724 named the next daughter Margrietje, perhaps after an aunt (Note 4).

In his "Hist. of the Huguenots in America" (Vol. I, pp. 149, 167, 175, 352, 354) Baird tells us that—besides other French refugees from as early as 1546—immediately after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, on Aug. 24, 1572, large numbers fled to Holland from the Walloon country, on the borders of France and Belgium. At Leiden, on April 12, 1613, and again on March 28, 1621, Jean de Croy had a child baptized in the Walloon church. In 1622 he joined with others of the Leiden refugees in a petition, later granted, to be permitted to emigrate to America; and, with a wife and five children, was one of those who had arrived in New Amsterdam as early as 1626.

Baird adds that of these were some "whose names may be recognized more or less readily in spite of the Batavian disguises in which they appear beyond the gap of fifteen or twenty years in the records of New Amsterdam. Such are the names of (many others and) de Croy."

Apparently, then, it was a de Croy who, as Theunis Cray, skipper, witnessed a baptism in 1640. The records of the time also show a presumably other de Croy in a Theunis Craey, wife Tryntje van Campen, whose multifarious activities ashore preclude the idea of a seafaring life in addition. Innes ("N. A. and Its People") writes of his busy and troubled career. He was first on record in 1639. Between 1642 and 1648 he had four children baptized, viz., Janneke, Grietie, Lysbeth, and Gerrit. The authorities having called in question his sale of a house to a Jew in 1655 (the first arrival of Jews was in 1654), on March 14, 1656, he told the Council that he was then about to sail for the Fatherland. In April, 1657, Theunis Craey, wife and four children, arrived at New Amsterdam from Venlo in Upper Gelderland. Both husband and wife had died before 1682.

The Anthonis (Teunis) Cray who had our Metje baptized in

1650, while none but this baptismal record has been found regarding him, is apparently not the same de Croy, because there were still but four children on the return from Venlo. There seems to have been still another de Croy in the Teunis Geurtzen Craey who, on March 16, 1653, had a daughter Lysbeth baptized, and in 1654 leased Long Island lands (H. S. Y. B., 1900, pp. 176, 177) from Teunis Craey. It should be noted that the baptismal dates of the children above named all fall within the brief interval between 1642 and 1653. In addition, there are other Craeys of the time on record with given names different from those already mentioned. From the number of these separate individuals apparently related other than as father and son it seems possible that more than one of the five de Croy children of 1626 left issue; but because of the gap in the records we have no means to trace from which of them we came. The most that can be hazarded as to the lineage of Mathilde, wife of John Coursen, is that she was a descendant of the Huguenot Jean de Croy.

9. N. Y. Docy. Hist., II, 722.

10. H. S. Y. B., 1896, 174.

11. For record of this and following baptisms see G and B Indexes, R. D. Church of N. A.; List of Baptisms.

The witness Theunis Craey is mentioned in (8). Of the other witnesses, Bergen's "King's County" tells us that Gerret Jansen van CAMPEN bought a house and lot in Flatbush on Dec. 27, 1678. Benjamin FLETCHER was Governor of New York from Aug. 28, 1692, to 1698-99. He was a man of note, about whom much, both for and against, may be found in the histories. Johannes HARDENBROECK, wife and four children, were immigrants Jan. 20, 1664 (H. S. Y. B., 1902-27). Jan HENDRICKS was one of the first settlers in Bushwick, and a magistrate in 1663. Marritie van HOBOKEN married Jan Gillis. Hendrick JILLISZEN was a son of Gillis de Mandeville. Theunis de KEY, born in New York, married Helena van Brugge in May, 1680. Charles LUDOWICK was first captain, then colonel, of militia, and is prominently mentioned in the histories. Jan Jacob de VRIES was a resident of Brooklyn in 1667.

12. Mem. Hist. N. Y., I, 449.

13. N. Y. Reg'r O.; Deeds; 13-234.

14. Albany; Deeds; 9-648.

15. N. Y. H. S. Coll., Vol. XVIII. App., April 28, 1702. Original record in office of City Clerk, N. Y. C. As the few facts



known indicate that the parents were in good circumstances, the apprenticing is not likely to have been caused by pecuniary need. While there may have been special reasons, such as the father's intended absence on a long voyage, or failing health, it is more probable that it was simply because the times were different. Even much later budding physicians, for example, were similarly indentured: and Jacob apparently preferred "turner" to "yeoman" when presumably qualified for the latter. (See Note 23.)

16. O'Callaghan's Documentary Hist. of New York; Vol. I, p. 395.

17. G. and B., 1880, p. 140. His surname was variously written Corssen, Korssen, Corsen, Corson, Corse, Korse, Corser.

18. KOEVERT, Koevers, Coevers, Kuvers; Adriaentje (also written Arryante, etc.) was a daughter of Jan and Jane (Boka, Bragon) Koevers of Millstone, Somerset Co., N. J. (N. J. A., Vol. XXIII, p. 277.) This Jan Koevers, yeoman, who died between 1719 and 1723, was on record in Brooklyn, 1677-87, and in New Jersey as early as 1705. He was a son of Teunis Janse Koevers (or Coevers), of Brooklyn (and his wife Barbara Lucas); immigrant in 1651 from Heemstede in North Holland (Bergen's "King's County").

19. Steele's Hist. Discourse, App., pp. 178, 209; Messler's Notes, p. 208.

20. From 1872, "Franklin Park," on the joint boundary of Somerset and Middlesex Counties.

21. Snell's Hist. of Somerset Co., pp. 785, 788. The earlier Coursens, near Neshanic, spelled their name "Coerson." (See Note 5.)

22. Original Baptismal Record of the Readington R. D. Church; once the "North Branch" division of the Raritan (Somerville) Church.

23. The first clue to the previously unknown, but now proven by the records, parentage of John Coursen II, 1717-1770, was found among papers (with Col. H. A. Coursen, of Scranton, Pa.) left by him as administrator of his father Jacob's estate, in a deed of Dec. 21, 1755, in which John Reading, yeoman, of Amwell to., Hun. Co., conveyed to Jacob Corsen, turner, of Reading to., Hun. Co.,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  acres of "3d dividend" land in the latter township, having as its northwesterly boundary the "King's Road." The "3d dividend," "Reading to.," and "King's Road," taken together, limit the locality to the southerly side of the road leading from Flemington to Barley

Sheaf, easterly of the South Branch of the Raritan, which that road then crossed a little lower downstream than now. Diligent search has made it seem probable that the lot has become a part of a tract of 17 85-100 acres that has been traced upward from John Voorhees (and later owners) to a conveyance, of Feb. 13, 1798, from David and Deborah Barton, or Bartron, to John Huffman (see "Assignment of Dower" to widow Rebecca Huffman; copy kindly supplied by heirs), where the records fail. This tract is near the present mill on the Branch where the Flemington road crosses it, a predecessor of which was long known as the highest upstream of John Reading's three mills, but later as Mettlar's, Stover's, and many others.

Jacob having been a resident of Reading to. since 1732, was not likely to have needed the little lot for himself; but as the elder of his two sons, John, had gone to Morris Co., might have wished it, when nearing his death, to keep his younger son, Teunis, and wife Hannah, still close to him after their first-born (twins), baptized on Aug. 10th, only a few months before, had made a separate residence for them desirable. Moreover, Jacob was a turner. His son John had an interest in the mill adjoining his Sussex property. John's son Jacob owned the mill. This Jacob's sons were able, widely known machinists and wheelwrights, building many mills. Taking it all in all, therefore, it has seemed reasonable to assume in the text that the Jacob of 1690-1756 owned, and had his homestead near by, the mill on the Branch, beside the King's Road.

24. JOHN READING was a son of John and Elizabeth Reading, of England, who, prior to 1685, settled in Gloucester, N. J., where the son was born on June 6, 1686. He was educated in England, and married Mary, daughter of Col. P. Ryerson. Beginning as a surveyor at Gloucester, he removed to the part of Amwell now Raritan to. Here he became owner of an extensive tract of land, and built himself a mansion, still standing, on a hill westward of and overlooking the Branch, near the present Chamberlin mill, a mile or so downstream from the Barley Sheaf road. He became one of the prominent men of the State: was a member of the Colonial Council from 1728, and vice-president for ten or twelve years. Upon the death of Gov. Hamilton in 1747 the government devolved upon him until the arrival of Gov. Belcher. Again, on the death of the latter official, in 1757, he became the chief magistrate of the colony until the coming of Gov. Bernard in 1758. He died Nov. 7, 1761.

25. Jacob Corssen, son of Captain Cornelis Corssen (Vroom),

both of Staten Island (Bergen's "King's County," etc., etc.), in his will (N. Y. S. O., 21-51), signed 1742, bequeathed lands in Hunterdon Co., in or near "Reding" to., that he had purchased from John Bud, to his sons Douwe and Benjamin, both of whom appear as fathers in the Readington Church records from 1740 on. In a deed of June 1, 1721 (Burlington, D-18; N. J. A., Vol. XXI), John Budd, of Philadelphia, conveyed to Jacob Corsen, of Staten Island, 525 acres in Hunterdon Co., "near a branch of Raritan river, called Hollan's Brook." Holland's Brook rises a few miles west of the village of Readington, and perhaps a mile southeast of it leaves Hunterdon Co.

26. In his will (T. 8-399; orig'l in Hunterdon files, 1753-60) he left the use for life, of both real and personal estate, to his "Loving wife Ariantz," the personal estate, after her death, to be equally divided among the heirs. To John, in addition to the share of the personal estate "in full demand of his Birthright or Primogeniture," he devised only three shillings, the amount presumably denoting that John had already received the equivalent of his share of the real estate. This was left to Teunis, on condition of a prescribed money payment to his sisters. In default, it was similarly to go to John; but if he also did not comply with the conditions, the property was to be sold and the "nett produce" equally divided among the heirs. Sons-in-law James (Jacobus) Smock and Benjamin Cole were named executors, but in view of these conditions not unnaturally declined; so John was appointed administrator.

27. Readington Church records.

28. Geertruyd van TUYLE (as spelled for a son thus named in her husband's original will) was baptized (G. and B., 1905-1906) at Port Richmond, Staten Island, on April 6, 1724; the date of her death is not known.<sup>37</sup> Her parents were Isaac and Sara (Lakerman) van Tuyl.

As stated in the Introduction (p. 11) to the "History of the Bergen Family," the van Tuyles (van Tuyl, van Tuil, van Thull, etc., etc.) of Holland are recorded among the armor-bearers in the "Genealogical Chart of the Netherlands Race"; and their coat-of-arms is displayed in that and similar authorities. Our immigrant ancestor is believed to have been Jan Otto van Tuyle, who, with wife and two children, came to New Amsterdam on April 16, 1663. At Port Richmond, S. I., there were the following baptisms: Oct. 2, 1705, (parent) Abraham van Tuil, (dau.) Geertruyt, who married Gerrit Croesen, (a witness being) Isaac F. van Tuil; Sept. 20, 1709,

(parent) Isaac van Tuil, (dau.) Catharyntie, (witnesses) Abraham van Tuil and Maria Lakerman; May 1, 1720, (parents) Isaac and Sara van Tuyl, the parents of our Geertruyd, (dau.) Catharina, (witnesses) Abraham Lakerman and Antje van Tuyl; Jan. 2, 1734, (parent) Abraham, son of Isaac van Tuil, (son) Jan. Evidently the "Abraham" and "Isaac" came to the Coursens from the van Tuyles, and to the van Tuyles they perhaps came from

LAKERMAN (Lake, Leek, Leuck; Bergen's "King's County," p. 179). Jan Lakerman, wife Ann Spicer, was at Gravesend by or before 1656, and on its Assessment Rolls as late as 1683. Gravesend having been settled as early as 1640, by immigrants chiefly from Massachusetts (Thompson's "Long Island," II, 168, 177), Lady Moody coming in 1643 (Leslie's "Greater New York," I, 36, etc.), Jan may have been a John Lake, of English descent. Daniel Lakerman, of Gravesend, wife Elizabeth Sutvin, had removed to Staten Island before Dec. 1, 1696. ABRAHAM Lakerman, son of this Daniel, was on record at Gravesend in 1691, and from the Port Richmond baptismal list, doubtless accompanied his father to Staten Island.

29. Accidentally omitted from "A Branch of the Woodruff Stock," Part III, Appendix D.

30. In 1756 "Roxbury township" included the Chester, Washington and Mount Olive townships, and parts of the Roxbury, Mendham and Randolph townships of to-day. There are indications that John Coursen's Roxbury home was in the neighborhood of the present village of Mount Olive. First, while it may be a mere coincidence of similar surnames, there was another Corssen of that period settled there. As this Jacob Corssen (died about 1770) had a daughter "Hester" baptized on Staten Island in 1701, he may be taken as the corresponding Jacob, son or grandson of Pieter, son of Cors Pietertse Vroom of N. A.,<sup>2</sup> and as the husband of Hester Heaton Corsen, who was granted letters of administration (T. Wills, K-256) for his estate. Now the father-in-law named therein, Jabez Heaton, lived close to the village. Second, Abraham van Tuyle, from the given name presumably a relative of John's wife,<sup>28</sup> in 1790 bought (Mor. Co. Deeds, L-2, 270) lands in Roxbury, and the Van Tuyle house is still (1906) standing, two or three miles northwesterly from the village, at the place where the road from Budd's Lake to Drakeville (Ledgeewood) crosses that from Flanders to Stanhope.

Whether or not John Coursen, in 1756, was living in ~~this~~ neighborhood could probably be decided by reference to the early ~~records~~

of the Mount Olive Church, founded in 1753, and it was hoped that some of them had passed with other papers to Mr. John M. D. Barnes, of Dover, N. J., as nephew of the executor of Deacon Cozad of that church; but Mr. Barnes has been unable to find in his collection anything of dates 1753-1800 that relates to Mount Olive or its church.

31. Sussex Deeds, B-275, Abraham Coursen and wife, grantors.

32. Proprietors' Grants, Burlington, M-107.

33. Proprietors' grants to Mary (Jobson) Lowell and Catherine Jobson, from whom to Joseph Hull. Burlington, B-109; EF-259. The number of acres varies in the successive surveys.

34. T. Mort.; W-371. This mortgage of May 14, 1763, in which no wife joins, describes him as of Hardwicke, so he may have been living there prior to that date.

35. Original, now with Col. H. A. Coursen, of Scranton, Pa. There are other papers left by John II with him and with his brother, Hon. W. P. Coursen, of Fredon.

36. T., AK-455. The wording of this conveyance of July 12, 1764, in which a wife joins, indicates that the Bernardsville of today, known in Revolutionary times as Vealtown, was then called Bernard's Town.

37. As no wife joined John in executing the mortgage of May 14, 1763,<sup>34</sup> apparently Gertrude had died prior to, and Charity was married later than, that date; but the latter had become the second (so far as known) wife before July 12, 1764, when she joined in the conveyance.<sup>30</sup> While a wife or wives unknown to us may, of course, have intervened between the two, Gertrude was probably the mother of his children born down to 1763. Benjamin being mentioned first in the father's will,<sup>35</sup> was presumably older than John III, who, thus the fourth son, by our family records was born in 1753. The eighth of the nine sons, Vantuyle,<sup>38</sup> died Nov. 11, 1829, aged 64; that is, he was born in 1765-6; so he and Richard, the ninth son, and perhaps the seventh son, William, were borne by Charity.

38. T., 15-36, signed Jan. 7, prov. Feb. 27, 1870. Original in "Old Wills" at Newton, Sussex Co. Contemporary copy with Col. H. A. Coursen, Scranton, Pa. In his will John Coursen authorized the completion, after his death, of the sale (T., AK-459) made on June 21, 1772, of 168 8-10 acres (Hull purchase) to Casper Shaver. To his "Beloved wife" (Charity ———) he left the usufruct of his homestead and movable estate, the former, after her death, to be divided among the five younger children, Peter, Abraham, William, VanTuyle and Richard. To his eldest son Jacob, who had already

been set up for himself, he gave the forty acres "where his new house now is," that is, he was then occupying, adjoining the homestead lands (Sussex Deeds, D-309, 315). Isaac, who evidently had also had a portion, was bequeathed five shillings. Benjamin and John were ultimately to share the father's lands, excepting Jacob's 40 acres and the homestead, on payment of £5 each to the five younger brothers on their coming of age.

Of these five younger brothers much might be found in the Sussex and Warren Co. records, but for two only has attempt been made.

ABRAHAM, the sixth son, settled in Wantage to., Sussex Co., some time prior to 1800 (Snell, p. 290). He was already a resident when, in 1790, his wife Jemima joined him in a deed (S. B., 275) conveying some of his late father John's lands near Newton. His homestead (now, 1907, owned by Mr. Ford Margerum) was situated a couple of miles southerly from Deckertown (now "Sussex"), at the more modern "Perry's Mills," between the "Pond" schoolhouse and the "Two Bridges." He established a large and successful tannery (afterward owned by Thomas Teasdale); was ahead of his times in conveying water by aqueduct from a spring to his house; and is recorded in the books of the First Baptist Church of Wantage (commonly known as the Papakating Baptist Church), between his homestead and Deckertown, as a member in 1796, his wife's name appearing as present at meetings. In his will (S. A., 349, 1814) he named his wife Jemima, and, among his children, David, Sarah, George, William, Richard. Search through all neighboring graveyards has failed to discover his tombstone, and it is perhaps one of those fallen, with inscription underneath, in the Papakating (now Deckertown) cemetery, where the contemporary members of his church were buried.

VANTUYLE, the eighth son, arrived in Frankford to., Sussex Co., about 1800 (Snell, p. 392), and founded the hamlet of Coursenville (near another "Papakating," or "Pellettown"), where he resided during his lifetime. Not far away, in the graveyard of the deserted Beemer Church (Congregational), his tombstone shows that Vantile Coursen, a "Deacon of the Congregation," died Nov. 11, 1829, aged 64. Here, too, lie his wife Sally, died Jan. 16, 1847, aged 81; and his sons, Henry D., June 27, 1789—Oct. 3, 1866, and Samuel J., died Nov. 13, 1874, aged 71-3-17, with Hannah A., his wife, died May 14, 1893, aged 86-11-8. Samuel's son, Isaac Vantile Coursen, wife Mary, removed to Colesville, Wantage to., where his family still resides. Of JOHN and his descendants something is

told in the text. Of BENJAMIN it is only known that on Oct. 15th of the year of his father's death he conveyed (deed with Hon. W. P. Coursen) part of his inherited lands to William Scholey, and that by sheriff's deed this reached Casper Shaver's estate in 1774, and by his heirs was conveyed back to John Coursen III on Jan. 14, 1793 (T., AK-463); and that on June 20, 1778, Benjamin released to his brother John his share of 180 acres of other inherited lands (deed with Hon. W. P. Coursen). ISAAC is probably the Isaac Coursen of Sussex Co. (township not stated, perhaps Hardwick, now in Warren Co.) for whose estate letters of administration were granted, Feb. 5, 1810, to Mary Coursen, presumably his wife. JACOB, baptized at Readington on August 14, 1743, was the Jacob of the Mill of the County Histories. He was born July 30, 1743; married Mary Nixon (Aug. 9, 1742—April 12, 1828); and died June 5, 1815. These dates have been supplied by his descendant, Mr. Jacob Allen Coursen, of Branchville, N. J., who could give much information about the Sussex Coursens, especially his own branch. (See text.)

39. The spellings, "Coursen" and "Coerson," are found in the record of John I,<sup>5</sup> and the latter in the early days of Jacob Corson's home, Neshanic (Snell's "Somerset County," p. 785)<sup>21</sup>, while the "son," instead of "sen," was common among both the Staten Island and Sussex families. The present "Coursen" seems to have been revived just after Col. John's time. Like the Staten Island "Corson," it may be now regarded as the established form.

