

REMINISCENCES  
*of*  
OLD NEW UTRECHT  
*and* GOWANUS

*By*  
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Books of reference have been principally,  
Broadhead's; Colonial History of N. Y.;  
Fernow's; Bergen; Documents at Albany (1906);  
O'Callaghan; Johnson.

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Erasmus, Prof. Allan Doggett,  
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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

**I**N presenting "Reminiscences of Old New Utrecht," which has very naturally stretched into Gowanus districts, the writer has combined history, genealogy, biography—whatever relates to the old Township.

Starting the work some twenty years ago, as a post-script to the genealogical book "Our Ancestors," as well as to considerable newspaper work for various editors, data for this book was sought from many scattered points. Considerable was secured from the State Library at Albany, fortunately before the great conflagration there (1911). Much was obtained from local family treasure stores, in the shape of old documents of value (as relics go), while files and records have supplied data along other lines. There is doubtless much yet to be told of so historic a spot as New Utrecht. Many of the elderly narrators, whose facts and papers were carefully gathered by me years ago, have since passed from this world, but their histories are saved within these pages.

To the kind friends and helpers in this work of history, the author extends sincere and appreciative thanks. There have been so many of them it would be an impossible task to name them all.

To Mr. George B. Cortelyou, of Manhattan; Mr. Charles M. Higgins, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Col. Ezra De Forest, of Manhattan, are due thanks for lending financial aid in the time of need—toward preserving, in book form, these valuable records of a part of the history of Brooklyn.



## DEDICATION

**T**O my Editor-in-Chief, the late Mr. James F. Graham, of the New York *World*, whose discipline and training, at an early age, has been of inestimable benefit to me in preparation of the work—to memories of his useful, busy life, this book is very respectfully dedicated by the humble author. He allowed printing of tales of old New Utrecht and of Gowanus in his paper when history and old things were not fashionable; he had it told that at Gowanus existed a sacred battle ground.

I was just a pen scribe. He said, "Go ahead"—and I have gone, into the past to bring its wealth of memories into the present.

Brooklyn, N. Y.,  
December, 1911.

CHARLOTTE REBECCA BANGS,  
(Mrs. Bleeker Bangs).



# REMINISCENCES OF OLD NEW UTRECHT

## (AND GOWANUS)

**N**EW UTRECHT, named for Utrecht in Holland, was so wholly a settlement of Dutch pioneers that Holland is indeed the Mother country. The township formerly embraced the villages of New Utrecht, Bath, Narrows (Fort Hamilton) and Yellow Hook, (Bay Ridge). Its history is one of interest and of national importance. "Narrows" soon became the outer defence line for New Amsterdam, later New York, with Fort Hamilton a village of Governmental importance in more recent years. The Colonial, Revolutionary, Civil War and later date periods are each filled with varying shades of human life and data. The characteristics of the Dutch lent itself almost entirely to the Township of New Utrecht.

### THE ABORIGINES.

Records tell of the aborigines who were first occupants of the forested lands on Long Island. Research proves that the red man came from Asia via the Behring Sea. But whatever his origin, he was a distinct type of human being, whom the white man found here. Henry Hudson was the first to enter the Narrows, with his ship the "Half Moon" and its crew of 18 men, Sept. 3, 1609. Hudson came to "Three Great Rivers," meaning the Narrows, Staten Island and Rockaway Inlet. Long Island derives its name from the European settlers, however. During 1693 the name changed from Indian dialect to "Island of Nassau." The Island measures about 125 miles long and 20 wide. In earlier days Long Island had fine timber of white and red oak trees, walnut and chestnut. Its climate, being on the coast, was often described as "moist and foggy."

Regarding the Indians, there were originally thirteen tribes:

First.—Canansie (Canarsie)—Inhabiting the territory of present Kings County and a portion of Jamaica.

Second.—Rockaway—Located about Rockaway and the island nearby.

Third.—Matinecock—They dwelt on the north side, from Flushing to Fresh Pond, east of Huntington.

Fourth.—Nissequag—Neighborhood of Fresh Pond to Stony Brook.

Fifth.—Setauket—From Stony Brook to Wading River.

Sixth.—Corchang—Inhabited township of present Riverhead and South old district.

Seventh and Eighth.—Mericoke and Marsapeagne—They dwelt on the south side, from Rockaway into Suffolk County.

Ninth.—Secatagne—These were east of the last mentioned and extended into the eastern part of Islip.

Tenth.—Patchogue—This tribe was on toward the western part of Southampton.

Eleventh.—Shinnecock—These were about Canol Place and on southern line, near Easthampton.

Twelfth.—Montauk—Inhabited Peninsula of Montauk, on Gardiner's Bay and nearby parts.

Thirteenth.—Manhasset—On Shelter Island.

These various tribes were under one chief "Sachem of Paumanacke" or "Sewanhacka." The Montauks were the most powerful tribe. There is small doubt in the minds of those who have studied earlier documentary evidence of troubles with Indians, that a large part of the trouble was because the tribes warred between themselves. It must be related that in many cases the Indians were not justly treated by those in authority. The red man's tricks of deception and revenge were often the white man's fault. Indians had their ripe corn stolen, their pelts stolen, their lands also. Colonists received the brunt of that deep anger and resentment felt and shown by the red men. In 1643 it was recorded that Long Island was destitute of inhabitants and stock, owing to Indian outbreaks, while more seemed to threaten elsewhere. Fort Amsterdam was the only safe place then. De Vries was the only white man the Indians had respect for. His word alone was accepted by the Indians as voucher for truth and honest dealings. De Vries came from the Netherlands in 1638 and settled on Long Island. He was on friendly terms with the Indians, with whom he invariably dealt fairly. In 1644-45-53, peace was established. There were no wars of large proportion. It is certain that the white settlers on Long Island had less trouble with Indians than had Colonists in settlements elsewhere. One Dutch document distinctly recommends "that the policies of the Long Island settlers, in dealing with the Indians, be more advantageously followed by distant colonists." Of the Indians it is told they were devout worshippers of the Great Spirit. Hundreds of dead Indians are buried near Montauk Point, where existed the sacred cemetery for their departed hosts. The last of the Montauk tribe, Henry Green, was admitted to Sailors Snug Harbor, S. I., on December 13, 1907, and died there March 24, 1910. He was old, feeble and had no home. New York City, having no institution for aged Indians, was compelled to make a special exception in his case and so placed him with the old sailors on Staten Island.



Indian money, which was the kind necessary to use in those days, was called "Wampun peage," or "Sewant." Wampun was really beads that had been perforated. They were black or white, A shell fish called "Quahang" or Whelk supplied the black beads, the white ones being made from "Periwinkle." Wampun money was certainly not an attractive looking commercial basis. When the ugly Wampun was introduced to the New England Colonists, 1627 (whose rigid cleanliness was part of them), Isaac deRazieres was told "It is the Devil's work and money." They would not accept it. The Dutch, however, became more adaptable to Indian methods, which accounts for less friction between them as to trading. Manhattan Trading Posts became the centers of activity. Thus was a solid foundation laid for New Amsterdam, later New York. The Indians are charged with having sold lands over and over again, but it should be remembered the red man had excellent opportunity for observing that the white man often seized and held land not his. Much trouble arose between the West India Company and those who took patents for land, toward a patroon system of their own, directly opposing what the company demanded of their Colonists. The Indian was quick to imitate transfers and sales. This imitation should not be put down to his discredit. Court records at Albany, for Colonial period, prove grievous troubles over lands. Where Indians effected friendly relations with the white settlers, no trouble ensued. In fact, the Indian has been proved a true and loyal friend of the white man. Massacres of settlers occurred in districts apart from Long Island. New Utrecht has no record of any dire battle or massacre, much to the credit of its founder, Jacques Corteljou, and the Dutch settlers there. Jacques Corteljou was fair and just to the red man whom he found on Najack lands; they never troubled him. Elsewhere things are not so on record. As churches were a first consideration for the Colonist, so were church bells used for a general signal in case of distress. The Director General granted a bell for Fort Orange, Beverwyck, Hempstead and Midwout, per letter sent December 16, 1656, promising the bell the following spring. The Breucklen bell would be sent at once, per letter December 24, 1660. To have a church bell was both a privilege and comfort. These bells have been cherished, in many instances, and are today used on more modern edifices of the same established church.

Manhattan's first clergyman, Rev. Everardus Bogardus, as well as the first schoolmaster, Mr. Adriaen Brounken, came to New Netherlands from Holland, April 1614. Before that, the church ritual was read each Sunday by the Governor-General of the Colony.

## COLONIZATION OF MANHATANS.

In the spring of 1623 the first colonization of Manhatans occurred. The West India Company's ship "New Netherland," of 260 tons burden, entered the harbor, having on board 30 families. This expedition was in charge of Cornelis Jacobson May. The Colony was established under the same name "New Netherland." May served one year, being succeeded by Adriaen Joris, who in turn was succeeded by William Verholst, rated the second Director of New Netherland. He served only a year, then returned to Holland. The Colony numbered about 200 people. Next came Peter Minuit; in 1633 Wouter Van Twiller. In 1637-8 it was William Kieft; in May, 1647, Peter Stuyvesant became Director General. Then came English rule, under Governor Nicolls. Such is a brief recital of New Netherlands growth. Peter Stuyvesant, last of the Dutch Governors, died in New York, 1682, aged 80 years. Naturally, the central point of colonization at Manhatans had great bearing upon the Long Island Colonies, hence the reference. Establishment of a redoubt or fort, one of the earliest necessities, was upon lands at New Utrecht. This is dealt with under the caption of Forts.

One important feature of the colonies should not be overlooked, that of needed help for agricultural purposes. To this end, the West India Co. dealt in slave traffic, as so much merchandise or general utility goods.

## SLAVERY.

In Colonial times, ownership of slaves was a perfectly legitimate business. Permission was given for such slavery. The first slaves came from Africa, 1652. Virginia, like New Netherland, had slaves. Under letter September 20, 1660, the Directors in Holland wrote to Governor Stuyvesant telling of negro slaves on the ship "Eycksenboom" and which "are to be sold at public auction upon their arrival."

Cormeline, on the African Coast, was where many slaves came from. It must be recorded, alas, that the white owners of these unfortunate black men and women, were not always kind to them. Slaves were valuable properties. Lest these properties should escape, iron collars were made and sent to put on the neck of the slave, the collar often bearing the owner's name, or initials. Each night the slaves were chained fast, whether it be in the slave kitchen, cellar, or out house. Pieces of these chains have been found when some of the old time farmhouses were being demolished. In 1665 Negro slavery was flourishing, North and South. In 1711 the Negroes endeavored to strike for freedom but were not successful. Instead, they were

punished in various ways, often by torture. The Dutch had a successful slave trade on the coast of Guinea, but with plots to murder, secretly arranged by some of the Spanish Negroes and other Negroes intriguing underhandedly with the wily Indians, the Hollanders' instinctive mind realized that Negro slavery was not only too dangerous but it was also wrong. Their strict church catechism aided toward this decision. The Dutch were a religious people but never narrow in their creed. Their slavery was voluntarily abandoned, gradually but surely. During 1824 to 1826 traffic in Negroes ceased on Long Island and in New Utrecht. The slavery question between North and South (1861-1865) became a burning issue, which history relates in detail. It is not known how passage money to New Netherland was arranged for these blackmen, but it is believed the West India Company paid such expenses, not the purchasers. Of white Colonists who came bonded, a letter from the Directors at Amsterdam to Stuyvesant, December 22, 1657, reads: "Record must be kept of all people whom the company brings over at our expense, although they are not in our service and each person must be charged on his act, with 36 fl., Holland money, for passage, children under ten years half as much, infants nothing, and payment must be demanded when these persons desire to leave there. Strict attention must be paid to this, that the company does not suffer loss."

About the same time it was told that "a box of silkworm eggs were sent for distribution among the colonists, who understood the business, so results might be obtained."

There must have been great virtue in home made cure for ills, because on September 17, 1659, Governor Peter Stuyvesant requested the directors in Holland to send, immediately, some medicinal seed—to pack them in small linen bags, placed in larger bags to be hung in the cabin, or room on quarterdeck, or in the gunner's quarters, to be so preserved from spoiling.

An answer came December 22, 1659, stating "the seed would be ordered from the Academical Gardens at Leyden and would be sent herewith." The West India Company were doing everything to promote prosperity in the new colonies. Colonists were expected to be of a type to also help themselves. The matter of making America was a plain and serious question of business for the company. Profit and loss side of the ledger was a strict item. It must be said of the colonists that they came, in the majority of instances, to better their condition. Their hardships in the newly chosen homes at New Netherlands certainly were considerable at first. But pluck and determination triumphed. The catechism was a stern factor for every good Dutchman's heart and home. The home was supreme. One

old will relates of having eleven catechisms in one household. The family bible was an institution during those days of toil and peril. As regards the ship on which these early settlers embarked for America, no actual or complete list exists, as yet. Some of the ships were: St. Jean Baptiste, Bontek<sup>e</sup> or Spotted Cow, Unity, Concord, D. Endracht, Soutberck, Hope of Groeningen, Hope of Omlander, de Jager, Prins Willem, Amsterdam, Carval, St. Martyn, Hope, Wesel, Omwal, Falconer, and others. 303467

## NAJACK.

The first grant of "Najeck" land was to the knighted agent named May, who, however, really settled the Cape May locality, not "Najeck." It was Director General Kieft who granted the first official patent for "Najeck" lands, August, 1639, to Anthony Jansen, of Salee. It was "for 100 morgens on the day of the North River, opposite Cone Island." It stretched along the shore 253 rods, along a bluff 124 rods, 24 rods S., 54 rods to the Strand, S. W. x W., containing 87 morgens. Date, May 27, 1643, at Fort Amsterdam. The location of his dwelling was near the Unionville line of New Utrecht. An old map held by the Title Guarantee & Trust Co. bears out this fact. Anthony Jansen, of Salee, was the first settler in that locality. Some of his descendants are the Van Sicklens, Emmons, etc. "Anthony Jansen, from Salee, leases his bouwery near the Narrows to Edmund Adley, who hired it for four years, beginning last September, and ending September 2, 1650. Anthony Jansen is requested to have a house fit to live in and the lessee shall enclose it with posts and rails. Rental price was 200 guilders for the first year and 250 the next three years, with five pounds of butter. Increase of cattle divided half and half. Risks of keeping the cattle shared by lessee and lessor. If any die the loss made good from the increase. Inventory of goods:

- 1 Stallion 12 years old.
- 1 " 3 " "
- 1 Mare 4 " "
- 2 Cows, good condition.
- 2 new plows.
- 1 Wagon, 1 Harrow with iron teeth.
- 2 Spades, 2 scythes, 2 siths and hasps.
- 1 handsaw, 1 iron sled, 1 iron maul.
- 1 churn and fixtures, 1 axe, 1 cream pot.
- 2 pails, 1 hand mill, 1 fan, 1 pitchfork.
- 3 forks, 3 horse collars with one long rope.
- 1 carpenters adze, 1 ditto axe, 1 sickle.
- 1 hook, 1 auger, 1 long gun."

Anthony Jansen also promised to supply seed corn for planting. The document was signed September 6, 1646. Earlier patents for land bordering closely on New Utrecht limits, was in the district called Gowanus. On April 5, 1642, Governor Kieft granted at Fort Amsterdam, N. Y., a patent for land to Cornelius Lambertse Cool, "situated at Gowanus, from the wagon road through said land and Jan Pieterse's land along the river, to a copse where William Adriaensen's land is next. This land was formerly occupied by Jan Van Rotterdam and Thomas Bests and paths shall remain open with express stipulation and condition." (39 Fernow's.)

This path or wagon road was the first thoroughfare between Gowanus and the Narrows. *See New*

Owing to trouble over land grants the directors in Holland informed Governor Stuyvesant that a New Netherlands bureau would be established to check abuses in grants. Several conflicts had arisen, one between Baron Van der Capelle and Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, also with Cornelius Melyn, whom it was complained had, upon 8 leagues of county, only settled 5 or 6 living people. (This latter referred to Staten Island.) Baron Van der Capelle declared he had given orders to buy for his account, the land Nieuwesinck and Raritan, back of Staten Island, which the directors in Holland not knowing of had granted to Hon. Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, "who goes there with a goodly number of souls to take possession" (April 4, 1652). "The Company meet inconveniences, for Baron Capelle claimed to have been proprietor of those lands for a year or 18 months. We must say to it," writes the company, "we have had no knowledge of it and they must come to an agreement among themselves. These are the consequences of the attempt to establish a government within a government." (174, N. Y. Colonial History, Vol. 14) relates, "We alluded to the contest about to arise between Baron Hendrick Van der Capelle and Cornelius Van Woerckhoven concerning the territory of the Nieuwsinck and Raritans. This matter has gone so far already that they have entered written protests against each other. Hon. Mr. Woerckhoven has addressed himself to us and requested he should be supported in the privileges granted by us, which we shall find ourselves obliged to sustain as far as possible, that improper purchases of land from the savages may henceforth be prevented; the said Woerckhoven has already petitioned their highness for the above reasons and we expect to see now shortly, what rules shall be established in these matters. Undoubtedly much trouble will again arise out of this matter, and the evil minded will endeavor to throw the blame for all the disorder upon the directors, notwithstanding that we have, in this case, clear proof that some of the law makers

are the cause of it. Time must show what the result will be. Honorable, worshipful, etc.

David Van Baerle  
Jacob Pergens

The Directors of the W. I. Company  
Depart. of Amsterdam  
4th of April, 1652.

Van Woerckhoven intended becoming a patroon, as Fort Orange settlement was established. He abandoned the Jersey land and decided upon Najack alone. In accordance with rules of the West India Company he returned to Holland to secure his settlers. 100 were expected, only four years being allowed him in which to accomplish the work. Had he succeeded, New Utrecht would have resembled the tenured lands of the Van Rensselaers at Fort Orange, N. Y., now Albany. But according to Indian deeds for the settlement by the Narrows, called "Nayeck," the tract was sold to Augustin Heermans, land agent for Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, who emigrated from Woerckhoven, Holland 1652. The late Francis Hopkins, a life long resident of Fort Hamilton, owned the original patent. The late Hon. Henry C. Murphy, of Bay Ridge, also had papers telling of the earlier patent. It comprised about 180 acres and formed a part of what is now Fort Hamilton. Governor Kieft granted a patent dated November 7, 1651, but which had been made out September 10, 1645, the date of Augustin Heerman's transaction with the Indians. The deed to Van Woerckhoven reads:

"Today, the 22d of November, 1652, the Hon Cornelius Van Woerckhoven has made over in full and the Indians called Seisen and Mattano, Chiefs and owners have received for themselves and as delegates of their friends and all other claimants, their interpreter and attorney in this matter, the following merchandise, to wit: 6 shirts, 2 pairs of shoes, 2 scissors, 6 combs, in full and satisfactory payment for the land lying Eastward of the North River, at the Heads, as the same has been previously bought in behalf of the Hon-bl Company and for which payment was to be made yet: the said land stretching from behind Mr. Paulus' land called Gowanus, across the hills to Mechawanienc, lying on the South East side of Amersfort and thence past Gravesend to the sea, following the marks on the trees: including all the land, hills, woods, and forests, valleys, kills, rivers, and other waters, going Southward to the Bay and through the Bay into the sea: and the aforesaid Indians do not reserve to themselves, their fellow owners, their successors and descendants any, not even the least claim or right upon the said land and its dependencies, but solemnly renounce now and forever, in behalf of the said Mr. Woerckhoven, all rights, title, interest and ownership and cede the same

herewith, promising not to do, nor allow to be done, anything against this deed of sale, which has been executed and passed in good faith at New Amsterdam, Manhattans, in New Netherlands and was signed by the Indians and Claes Carstens, in the presence of myself. Dirck Van Schelluyne, a Notary Public admitted to practice by their Highness, the Lords States General residing at New Amsterdam, in New Netherlands, and of Yonker Van Hattem, Jan Vinge, Nicholas Gouwert as witness, who signed the original hereof deposited with me, together with the Indians and Claes Carstens,

D. V. SCHELLUYNE, Notary Public  
1652."

A land transaction prior to the deed of November 22, 1652, verifies the original paper owned by the late Mr. Francis Hopkins, which paper the writer inspected some years before his death. More, the Hopkins document satisfactorily explains the differences between Van Woerckhoven's first land matters and the 1652 final settlement. (190, Vol. 14, Colonial History relates) "To-day the 1st of December, 1652, the underwritten Indians, Mattano and Cossikan do consent for themselves and as attorneys for all other inhabitants and supposed owners of the lands now come into possession of Mr. Van Woerckhoven by the foregoing act and agree with the said Mr. Van Woerckhoven that they, the Indians, shall receive from his Honor six coats, 6 kettles, 6 axes, 6 hatchets, 6 small looking glasses, 12 knives, 12 combs, on condition that they, the Indians and their descendants remove immediately from the land now occupied by them, called Naieck, and never return to live in the limits of the district, as described in the foregoing, nor even make any claim upon it. Done at New Amsterdam, in New Netherland in the presence of the undersigned Notary Public and Jan Vinie, who has herein acted as interpreter for the Indians and of Thomas Roechtsen as witness. Signed the mark of the Indian Mattaño, the mark of the Indian Cossikan.

C. VAN WOERCKHOVEN, Jan Vinge,  
D. VAN SCHELLUYNE, Notary Public,  
1652.

## SECOND HOUSE AT NAJACK.

"Van Woerckhoven's house was the second one built at Najack. It was located where the John C. Bennett house stood. Gov. Peter Stuyvesant signed appointment papers of Mr. Van Woerckhoven as delegate to the High Council at New Amsterdam, November 24, 1653." (219, 223 Col. His. of N. Y.)



"November 25, 1653, there was a conference regarding sale of goods and prices for storekeepers at New Amsterdam. The council present included Director General, Mr. Nicasuis de Sille, also Mr. Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, who met at Fort Amsterdam.

Present Gov. P. Stuyvesant,  
Niciasus de Sille, C. Van Woerckhoven,  
La Montague, C. Van Tienhoven."

From Council Minutes. New Amsterdam, June 13, 1654.

The minutes of this meeting told of preparations for defence by the inhabitants. Plans of the English were told to the following Dutch subjects: Govert Loockermans, Pieter Wolfertson, Jacob van Couwenhoven and Jacques Corteljou, tutor to Mr. Van Woerckhoven's son, who reported that the English at the north "recruit soldiers, giving 25 to 30 guilders per month and that three large ships were to come into the Bay or Cape, to cut off retreat; also that soldiers in boats would land near Hellegat, to demand surrender of the fort and offer good conditions; that the country people on Long Island should remain in possession of their property without molestation"—all this the men before mentioned, reported to the Director General and council.

Plans were accordingly made for proper defences. (272, Colonial History, N. Y., No. 14.)

Upon a request of Burgomasters and Schepens to summon delegates from all the Dutch towns and villages, November 29, 1653, Ensign George Baxter and English delegates would not ask Mr. Van Woerckhoven as delegate. No reason was given for this. It may be accounted for, however, from the fact that Mr. Van Woerckhoven was delegated to stop all English robberies, pirates, etc. (page 199). Among those who contributed toward repairs for the defence of New Amsterdam March 13, 1653, was Cornelius Van Woerckhoven £200, Jacob Van Couvenhoven £150, Peter Buys £100, and P. Van Couvenhoven £100.

### MARRIAGE BANS.

It is related in a letter that marriage bans must be published three weeks in advance of the ceremony; so ordered by the Magistrates.

P. Stuyvesant,  
Nicasius de Sille,  
C. Van Woerckhoven,  
La Montagne.

Dated at New Amsterdam, February 10, 1654.



(Fernow's, 272) Mention is made of Mr. Jacques Corteljou, tutor to Mr. Van Woerckhoven's son, June 13, 1654 (page 280). It is told that Jacques Corteljou was appointed sheriff, July 21, 1654, considering his good reputation and knowledge of him, late tutor to son of Hon. Van Woerckhoven. N. B. It adds that as Corteljou finds himself aggrieved by instructions given him, the appointment is delayed until another person is found.

(Colonial History, 293) It is interesting to note that at a request for appointment of a "Schout," to complete the Court according to the Lords Directors, the Burgomasters and Schepens are declared right in stating that at the urgent request of Mr Van Woerckhoven, they intended to commission Jacques Corteljou for the place, who, however, felt aggrieved by instructions and so the matter was deferred. Dated September 16, 1654, at New Amsterdam. Two points are called to the attention of the reader, first, that Colonial records prove Jacques Corteljou to have been of good business reputation; second, that Van Woerckhoven himself recommended the appointment. These facts are interesting and important inasmuch as Corteljou has been accused of having, later on, confiscated Van Woerckhoven's estate, a charge without proper foundation or proof of guilt. On the other hand everything has been proved of credit to Corteljou. All stories of so called "graft" were no doubt founded upon a wrong conception of historical data, with great injustice to Corteljou. Mr. Van Woerckhoven returned to Holland, 1654, leaving Corteljou his agent, as well as guardian to his children.

### DEATH OF VAN WOERCKHOVEN, 1655.

Van Woerckhoven, however, never completed his patroon idea for the Najack settlement. He died in Holland, 1655. A document relates of Holland matters in America:

"Two separate ground briefs of land, apparently bought on Long Island by Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, who died last year, for which the guardians of his minor children have asked our consent and approval. We refused, partly because the ground briefs were executed privately before the Notary Schelluyne, contrary to the Company's orders, partly because we wished first to have your opinion about it and we await your report on the quantity and quality of the land; how much land they can keep in good order and cultivate and everything else relating to it. We expect to receive this information by the first opportunity, so that we can give a final decision. As the said guardians are now sending over their Attorney's to manage the affairs of the late Mr. Van Woerckhoven and have asked for letters

of recommendation for them, we could not well refuse their request and recommend that in everything just and fair you assist them, without, however, granting them more land or allowing them to enter upon more, than for which proper papers of conveyance have been presented before the Director and Council there, as usual pursuant to the company's rules."

The same letter mentions about Staten Island and Cornelius Melyn, who was then negotiating to sell it, not subject to the Company's jurisdiction. It was said "to arrest Melyn and send him, well treated, but secure, to this country (meaning Holland) if rumor of the Staten Island sale proves to be true."

From these business difficulties it is realized the West India Company had troubles to meet and conquer.

Jacques Corteljou, agent for Van Woerckhoven, at this time resided at Najack. It is so stated in an order, August 23, 1656, at Fort Amsterdam, wherein Mr. Corteljou was detailed to "survey the patents of Anthony Jansen and Robert Pennoyer, also the meadow land of Brendenbent." After doing this he was to "draw a line from the Kil, to the Easternmost point of Jansen's land, where it touches the Westernmost point of Pennoyer's." This was the boundary line of Gravesend. (365, Fernow's.)

*Jac Corteljou. 1657*

*(Signature of Jacques Corteljou.)*

The next heard of Mr. Corteljou is under date of January 16, 1657, when he petitioned, as agent of the heirs of Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, deceased, to plant a village on Long Island, on the bay of the North River. This petition was sent to the Director General and council of New Netherland, they receiving it under the decree "Fiat ut petitur," provided that a plan be submitted to the directors at the first opportunity. (Fernow's, 383.) Also that Corteljou make a map of New Amsterdam. This he did. (Brooklyn Hall of Records, Document of de Sille.) This was the first map ever made of New Amsterdam and so settles many arguments on this point.

## SETTLEMENT OF NEW UTRECHT.

The petition was granted by Governor Stuyvesant August 27, 1657, when a newly begun village is mentioned, land described on the east hook of the bay of the North River, opposite Coney Island, containing all the kils, creeks, swamps and marshes, drowned and sandy lands, 130 morgens bounded on the west by land of Anthony Jansen, of Salee, northeast by the kil, upon which stands the Mill of Gravesend, east, southeast and south by the same kil, southwest by the bay of the North River. Dated August 27, 1657.

This land was bounded north by Breucklen and Flatbush, east by Gravesend, west and south by Gravesend Bay and the Narrows. It was named "New Utrecht."

While the land between Gowanus, "Najack" and Gravesend was populated by about 35 persons, 1647 to 1650, in 1698 there were 259 persons, 48 being slaves.

The new village started by Jacques Corteljau, as agent for Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, deceased, was the natural work for Mr. Corteljau to undertake. Land on this patent was divided into 20 plots of 50 acres each, given to the following colonists:

Jacques Corteljau	Jans Jacobsen
Nicasius de Sille	Pieter Jansen
(Heer Councillor and Fiscaal)	Huybert Stooch
Peter Buys	William Willemsse (Van Engen)
Jacob Swarthout (or Hellakers)	Albert Albertse (Terhune)
Jacobus Corlair	Johan Zeelen
Teunis Joosten	Cornelius Beekman
Claes Claessen	Rutger Joosten (Van Brunt)
Jacob Peterse	Johann Tomasse (Van Dyke)
Jacobus Backer	Pieter Roelefsen

No. 20 was held for the poor.

Mr. Van Woerckhoven left some debts which, per suit instituted in 1658, were settled by Jacques Corteljau. Mr. Corteljau was in control of Van Woerckhoven's estate, not any guardian or Holland attorneys, as indicated in the directors' letter to Governor Stuyvesant, June 14, 1656. Either the Holland guardians did not come, as previously threatened, or adjustment was made of Van Woerckhoven's estate matters, leaving Corteljau in control. Among the first settlers on his New Utrecht patent was Jacob Hellakers, a carpenter, who built three houses during 1658, the Van Brunt, de Sille and Buys. The Van Brunt house still stands intact, the oldest in New Utrecht.

## NICASIUS DE SILLE.

Nicasius de Sille was a man of note. He emigrated to New Amsterdam, 1653, and was Councilor under Governor Stuyvesant. His New Utrecht home was the first one covered with red tiles brought from Holland. Its location was south east of the first Dutch Church in New Utrecht village. History makes the place famous because within its walls Gen. Nathaniel Woodhull, hero and martyr of 1776 war, being mortally wounded, was carried there to die. Much is related of Mr. de Sille's abilities as a scholar; he also wrote considerable history of the Najeck lands up to 1660.\*

During the settlement of New Utrecht Mr. de Sille had many opportunities for learning of the company's land troubles, one arising August 13, 1658, from Anthony Jansen, of Salee, who complained in a petition that the meadow granted to the new village of New Utrecht had been bought by him from the Indians and paid for September 26, 1651. He requested the part near his house be given him. The matter was to be placed in the hands of the people of Utrecht and if found the petitioner had no meadow for making hay, a part of the aforesaid land should be given to him, as to others.

Still another petition was sent the Director General of New Netherlands, by Jan Zeelen that "he should receive a patent for a parcel of land, No. 18, taken up by Peter Roeloffs but abandoned by and sold to Zeelen because Roeloffs and his family have moved to Amersfort." The reply was that if the request were true the petition would be granted, which was done January 16, 1660. About this time matters of education for Long Island were being undertaken.

A petition from Jan Lubberts to the directors, request their consent to open a school for instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic for Breucklen. It was answered August 13, 1658, "the request granted, providing he behaved as such a person ought to behave."

Another appointment during 1658 was by order of the council and Director General of New Netherland when Teunis Nysen and Peter Monfort were made "Schepens." March 26, 1658.

During the year 1659 the de Sille house, being so shortly built, was fortified for use of the settlers against attacks by the Indians. It was then that a sheriff and a sergeant were appointed, Mr. de Sille and Jan Tomasse respectively. During 1660 Jacobus Van Corlear and Jan Tomasse were made magistrates. There were then eleven houses in the settlement called New Utrecht.

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\* NOTE—This document is in the Hall of Records, B'klyn, a treasured relic. Mr. de Sille was of poetic talent and left verses as well. His history of New Utrecht, to 1660, transcribed in English, is here embodied and correct.

## NEW UTRECHT'S FIRST PATRIOTIC CELEBRATION.

The first flag raised for a festive occasion, was when Director General Pieter Stuyvesant, of New Amsterdam, visited the Colony, February 6, 1660. The flag of orange floated from the center of the settlement. He dined at Rutgert Joosten Van Brunt's home. This was the first celebration of any kind for the settlement. Soon after, Governor Stuyvesant ordered a new block house built and trees cut down, in order that no hiding places might exist for the Indians in case of sudden attacks. He also warned those residing outside the village to abandon their homes and seek more safe quarters in the block house, or village. A public pound was established and a mill considered, with a half dozen shackles and lock, for use in punishing misdemeanor. This is the first statement of any legal steps toward a jail. During 1660-1661, a court of justice was declared for the town. Adrian Hegeman, of Flatbush, was Schout, Rutgert Joosten, Jan Tomasse, and Jacob Hellakers (or Swartont) were Commissioners.

It will be realized from these events in the chronicles of New Utrecht that the West India Company had plenty of land troubles to manage. Mr. de Sille appeared to be a man of public enterprise and held responsible office. Under letter dated February 23, 1660, he was appointed councillor and fiscal of New Netherlands, in order to "quickly have the lately formed villages of Breucklen and New Utrecht surveyed, enclosed with pallisades and put in a good state of defence, as he shall think best for the public good, and the inhabitants especially." The Director General deemed this highly necessary.

A letter from de Sille followed soon after: "To the Noble, Very Worshipful, Honorable Director General and Council of New Netherlands.

Respectfully show the good inhabitants of the village of New Utrecht that there are some evil minded persons in their midst and some are absent, who will neither follow advice nor continue, like the well disposed, but who always oppose the well disposed, flocking together riotously, even refuse to obey the agent, Jan Tomassen, of which we informed Your Honors some time ago and have several times written complaining of the great damage and troubles caused by horses, cattle and hogs; also that they will not listen to either Jacob Van Corlear or Jan Tomassen concerning the cutting of the pallisades. We therefore humbly request that your Honors will please send over, as promised, some negroes and also favor us of the newly planted village of New Utrecht, by approving the enclosed Ordinance or by passing such laws as your Honors shall think we

require. Which doing, etc., in the name of the good inhabitants of the village of New Utrecht,

Your Honor's Servant,

*Nicasius de Sille*

*(Signature of Nicasius de Sille)*

This was not the only case of trouble. Jacques Corteljou, founder of New Utrecht, was having plenty.

In a letter to the Director General and council of New Netherland, which arrived per ship "Trouw," April 5, 1659, word was sent that Van Woerckhoven's children asked an accounting from Jacques Corteljou of their father's estate. The directors of the West India Company, Department of Amsterdam, wrote, under date December 22, 1659, the following about Corteljou. "The children and heirs of the late Cornelius Van Woerckhoven have represented to us in whose charge as agent their father, before leaving New Netherland left all his land, houses, cattle, furniture and merchandise, refuses now to give an accounting of his administration to their attorney and tries to delay it under various frivolous pretexts while he enjoys the profits of the estate, left to them by their father. They request us to write to you desiring your assistance in maintaining their right in having the business speedily closed up under all circumstances. We could not well refuse it and therefore urge you to take good notice of this case when it comes before you and to decide it as speedily as justice and equity admit." Dated December 22, 1659, at Amsterdam, Holland.

From this missive it is clear the attorneys and guardians did *not* visit America to manage the Van Woerckhoven estate, as a previous Director General letter indicated might happen.

Correspondence from the company's New Netherland office to the directors in Holland, follows:

"The last point in your Honor's letter requiring a reply is your repeated instruction concerning the heirs of Cornelius Van Woerckhoven. As yet we can only state what we have already said and written, that as soon as somebody appears who shall sue Jacques Corteljou in their behalf, we shall administer the law equitably and fairly, after having heard the parties." Fort Amsterdam, April 21, 1660. (472, Fernow's.)

From this missive it is evident that nobody appeared from Holland to sue Jacques Corteljou. On the contrary, the Director General and council of New Netherlands appointed and commissioned Mr. Corteljou, the surveyor, with Albert Corselissen and Jan Everetsen Bout, to make a personal inspection of the situation and quality of land in the village of Breucklen; how many plantations might be planted there and which was the best locality for farms. After such inspection they were to deliver the map made and report to the directors and council. Dated at Fort Amsterdam, May 3, 1660. A map of New Amsterdam, the first made, was by Corteljou. It was lost in the Albany fire, March, 1911.

On June 15, 1662, Mr. Corteljou was authorized to proceed to survey and divide the meadows pursuant to the partition made by the Board, to wit: for the village of Breucklen 100 Morgans, for the village of Middleborgh 80 morgans, for the bouweries at Mespath 80 morgans.

A letter of interest because it deals with earlier land matters is taken from a council minutes:

"To the Noble, Honorable Director General and Council of New Netherland: Respectively show Jan Tomassen, Jacob Swart and Rutger Joosten, commissaries of the village of New Utrecht; whereas Nicholas Stillwell has presumed to take to himself a greater share of meadowland than belongs to 12 morgans of arable land, under pretext that he owns 12 morgans of land between two meadows. Therefore the petitioners, in their aforesaid quality, turn to your Honor's with the humble request that first the 12 morgans of land, lying between the two villages, shall be surveyed and measured by the Surveyor, Jacques Corteljou, for the said Nicholas Stillwell at the expense of your petitioners and that he shall receive of the meadows, surrounding his 12 morgans, as much as was granted to him, provided that the balance be divided by the Surveyor in the proportion in which it was granted to the village of New Utrecht and Najeck. Also that your Honor's will charge and order said Stillwell, in the name of the Government to take away all obstructions and hindrances under a certain penalty and to respect the limits determined by the Surveyor and your Honor's orders.

Your Honor's Humble servants

JAN TOMASSEN

JACOB HOLLEKERS (SWART<sup>or</sup>ONT)

RUTGERT JOOSTEN

Thursday, August 24, 1662.

(Note—Jacob Hollekers was Jacob Swart<sup>or</sup>ont or Swart. He had an "alias," likewise a wife in Holland, according to records. His land was 24 morgans in New Utrecht, between the patents of Claes Claeson and those of Jacques Corteljou.



He was Magistrate of New Utrecht 1661 and 1864. In 1679 he was residing in New York. He is referred to by de Labidists, page 286, Vol 1, Memoirs of L. I. His. Soc.)

This letter was replied to by the directors at New Netherlands, ordering Corteljou to collect all information and report to the directors.

Matters of New Utrecht's settlement are better described in a document which Governor General Stuyvesant sent to the Director General at Amsterdam, Holland. He tells of the "hamlet on Long Island, as near the Narrows as the accommodations of the settlers would permit. First, the village of New Utrecht was formed and laid out on Long Island about one-quarter hour's travel from the Narrows. It was settled by about 22 to 24 families of the Dutch—Netherlands Nation. A hamlet, not yet named, was begun on Statan Island about two years ago," continues Stuyvesant, "and has 12 to 14 families of Dutch and French. It lies about half hour's walk from the Narrows" (this is Nieuw Dorp). "Both places are provided with commodious block houses or defence against attacks of the savages last summer. The block houses were built by putting beam upon beam and for better defence are provided with two or three light pieces of ordnance, of which one or two are 'pedereroes.' The hamlet on Statan Island being the weakest and too far to be relieved in time, is garrisoned with 10 soldiers for its greater safety." Dated April 26, 1664.

Between Indian troubles, which were less in the Najack lands than anywhere else, and Governor Stuyvesant's rule, the separate colonies at Hempstead, Genaco, Nieuwtown, Oysterbay, Gravesend, decided to manage their own affairs, employing Capt. John Scott as their leader. He immediately made more trouble by proclaiming Charles 2d to be their "Dread Sovereign." He and some 50 to 60 horsemen endeavored to demolish the Dutch towns, addressing rebellious citizens in English, which, of course, made matters still worse, that language not being understood by the colonists. Magistrates of New Utrecht refused to obey him. Naturally, great confusion resulted between the Dutch and English settlers. Then Colonel Nicolls and his squadron entered the great harbor and took possession in the name of the Duke of York. This act was declared piracy, not honorable war, because peace then existed between Holland and England. Aboard his ship "Guerney," close to the Narrows, Col. Richard Nicolls (later governor), addressed his first letter to Gov. Pieter Stuyvesant, demanding the surrender of New Netherlands. This was August 20, 1664. Brodhead's history tells that on September 3, 1664, Fort Amsterdam surrendered to Nicolls. The name of the



fort was changed to Fort James, New Amsterdam becoming New York, in honor of the Duke of York. Fort Orange was named Fort Albany, September 23d, and Colonel Nicolls became Governor of New York in behalf of the duke.

Fort Amsterdam and New York state were divided into "Shires." The towns of Kings, Staten Island, and Newtown were called "West Riding of Yorkshire." New Utrecht was compelled to furnish 300 palisades toward the proper defence and equipment of New York.

Labor was fixed at 2S. 6d. per day. Lodgings were 2d per night and board 5S per week. Butter was then priced at 6d per pound, and beef was 2d per pound. Such were conditions when the English assumed title and ruling.

### **DEEDS AND MORTGAGES RECORDED, 1664.**

An ordinance for recording deeds and mortgages in Breucklen, Flatbush, Flatlands and New Utrecht was made February 14, 1664 (page 542 F.). This was to facilitate land transactions in strictly business like method and end troubles. (558.) "Inhabitants of New Utrecht and Gravesend shall settle all land boundary disputes at a meeting held at Gravesend, October 2, 1664, by three indifferent persons on each part or side and there should be no more future cavills and contentions. Signed by Richard Nicolls, English rule."

More land troubles made the Governor of New York write to Mr. Jacques Corteljau as follows:

"Mr. Jacques—

There hath been with me this day some persons from New Towne and Breucklen about ye Division of the Meadows in dispute between them and at length I have brought them to an Agreement and would have you to come to see me on Munday Morning next when I shall give you instructions for the surveying and laying out thereof.

Your Loving friend

RICHARD NICOLLS."

Date between June and September, 1666.

When question of a new Sessions House (jail) came up for New York and Breucklen the settlement of New Utrecht was taxed £7 for its proportion of the expense, under date of February 19, 1667-8. (605, Fernow's.)

### **PATENT GRANTED.**

August 15, 1668, Governor Nicolls granted a formal patent for the Najack lands to Jacques Corteljau, Nicasius de Sille, Francis

Browne, Jacob Swartout, Robert Jacobson, the patentees. The land comprised about 280 acres, or 130 morgens. The name should be retained New Utrecht (pages 190-191, Thompson's L. I. His.). New Utrecht became authoritatively a village. But there were continued disturbances, judging from extracts of a council minutes under Gov. Francis Lovelace, year 1671-2. Nothing of this, however, relates to the Van Woerckhoven affair, being entirely between a few settlers and "Captain" Corteljau. The extracts are:

"Whereas there is a Mattr. in Difference between Capt. Jacques Courteljua and ye Inhabitants of the Towne of New Utrecht, touching his and their particular Interest to ye Land within the Lymitts of their General Patent: to ye end a faire Composure may be made between them and that I may have a right understanding of Busyness, I doe recommend the examinacon of ye Matter unto Mr. Johannes de Peyster, Mr. Christopher Hoogeland, Mr. ffrancis Rombont and Jacob Leysler, who are desired to endeavor a good Agreemt between them: And Cornelys Van Ruijven one of ye Aldermen of this City is likewise hereby desired to communicate unto the persons afore menconed what hath past heretofore, or is upon Record touching this Matter. Of all which They are to render mee an accot. for my approbacon of what They shall doe, or Determination of the Matter otherwise According to Law and good Conscience Given etc this 2d day of ffebry 1671-2."

NOTE—It is believed the "Capt. Jacques" here mentioned was a son of Jacques the founder of New Utrecht, who was a man advanced in years.

Then follows the agreement made upon the above recorded council minutes. February 2d, 1671-2.

"This day ye Governor having issued forth an Order to Mr. de Peyster etc to examine into and end a certain difference between Capt. Jacques Corteljau and ye Inhabitants of New Utrecht about some land within their Patent, they are come to an agreement there-upon, vizt Jan Van Cleve and Adrian Williamsen on behalfe of the Towne who had deputed them, doe engage to pay to Capt. Jacques Corteljau or his Assignes, ye sune of 1750 guilders to be paid at foure payments In Corne. That is to say, Wheate at 6 guilders ye skepple and other Corne at price currant. Every yeare a direct 4th. part, the first payment to be made the next Christmas after the date thereof, the other three payments the severell Chrismas times following, each one third part. In consideracon whereof, Capt. Jacques Corteljau doth and shall desist his pretentions to ye common Bush Land within the Patent of New Utrecht and resigns it to the Inhabitants there, Reserving only a double Lott to himselfe, as also that he

shall have Liberty to remove his fence at Najeck as farr as the Creuple Bush unto ye Land of Van Kirk, soe neare about to ye North East Hooke of a Small Island, Provided hee have a sufficient space for Outdrift of Cattle. To this Agreement the Commissionrs nominated by ye Governor and ye Partyes, as also Mr. Van Ruijven have sett to their Hands as Witness. 1671-2."

Then follows the Governor's approbation to this submitted document telling of legal settlement of all the land differences in New Utrecht.

"I doe very well approve of this agreemt made before the Commissionrs by mee appointed to examine into ye Difference between Capt. Jacques Corteljau on ye one part and Jan Van Cleave and Willemsen on behalf of the Towne of New Utrecht on the other part: The wch I doe hereby Order to be entered upon Record as a finall Determinacon of the Case.

Given under my hand this 3d day of ffebruary, 1671-2.

ffranc Lovelace."

Among appointments made by those in authority during this period were some of importance toward proper development and management of the New Netherlands colonies. Hendrick Smack was first constable, 1669; the first "overseer" was Luykes Mayerse, 1672. The New Utrecht disagreement over land rights, penetrating to Governor Lovelace, was settled by him, in fair manner, for all concerned.

The colonists of New Utrecht did not once refer to any Van Woerckhoven matters, lands or estate. Nor was Mr. Corteljau, father, or Capt. Jacques the son reproached in any manner whatsoever. The agreement of settlement on the contrary, appears to have been most solicitous that Corteljau should receive due reward for the disputed lands. Payment must be made to him. A double lot was also allowed him. His fence was only to be removed if he had sufficient outdrift for his cattle. It would not have been so arranged and so stated had he done anything wrong in land ownership, or been guilty of theft in the Van Woerckhoven estate matter. Mention is made of Capt. Jacques Corteljau, July, 1672, in aiding toward proper settlement of agreement between the settlements of Newtowne and Boswyck. Had he been in bad repute at the time no such aid would have been sought by those in authority.

This is related because a different aspect has frequently been given the Van Woerckhoven estate matter. Records prove that his town continued to respect and honor him and that the small land dispute, once settled, remained so. That dispute was in no way an estate matter for the Van Woerckhoven heirs. Had it been such, records would so prove.

During 1672 foreign war again arose, both England and France seeking the Netherlands as its prize. A Dutch squadron reaching New York July 30, 1673, compelled surrender, learning weakness of the palisades or fort and likewise secret encouragement of the Dutch inhabitants. Accordingly New York was taken by the Dutch, July 30, August 9, 1673, when former Gov. Peter Stuyvesant was avenged.

When the Holland commanders established themselves in New York the six nearest Long Island towns immediately surrendered to their authority—Midwout, Amersfort, Breucklen, New Utrecht, Bushwick, Gravesend, also Staten Island.

Jacob Stycker, of Breucklen, was appointed "Schout" and Francis de Bruyn, of New Utrecht, became Secretary of the District. The Dutch settlers were filled with joy but not so the English, who were not responsive to the capture of New York by the Holland commanders. On August 29, 1673, all the men of New Utrecht took the oath of allegiance to the House of Orange.

It was ordered at this time that the Reformed Dutch religion be maintained in the Colonies. But the Dutch had a very short reign. During February and March, 1674, the English again succeeded in taking the reins of government, per the Westminster Act.

Existing conditions soon made the Dutch colonists uncomfortable. It was not known who would govern them. Lovelace was practically unfit, while Nicolls had passed away into the great beyond. It appeared difficult to find a suitable man. Finally, the person selected was Edmond Andros, a major in the English army, disbanded after the Westminster Treaty. He was an English Episcopalian but not the least bigoted, which seemed most favorable a sign to the anxious Dutch settlers. He was also a good Dutch scholar. His private character was unblemished. What seemed better yet was the fact, made known, that the colonists of New Netherlands were to be treated with consideration. It had been thought possible Holland might purchase the Province but such proposition ended in nothing. The King gave assurance that all inhabitants of the colonies should enjoy their privileges exactly as they had done before the war, which declaration established a new effect over the articles of capitulation in 1664.

November 1, 1674, Governor-elect Andros arrived off Staten Island. According to the latest peace treaty he was ready to receive New York officially for England.

An entirely new patent was granted; a second grant, conveyed to the Duke of York, a land which the Holland government, after holding, "restored to His Majesty." Thus did King James reign over the American Province. Governor Andros, born 1637, married Mary daughter of Sir Thomas Craven, 1671.

The new Governor was instructed to choose a council, not exceeding ten men, from "the most prudent inhabitants," for consultation upon all matters of public occasions. They as well as all other officers, were to take the oath of allegiance to the King.

The Duke of York, by the King's permission, raised a military company, making Governor Andros the captain, Anthony Brockholls, lieutenant; Christopher Billop, second lieutenant, and Caesar Knapton, ensign. There was also a surgeon and a chaplain appointed but their names are not stated.

(Note—The Christopher Billop mentioned is the man whose record was that "he served the King." Later he was given a grant of land on Staten Island, close to the Jersey Shore, or where Tottenville now exists. The Billop mansion was, later on, under the direction of his son, Christopher, Jr., the important stronghold for Tories and Toryism during the Revolutionary war. The Billop house was made famous in New York and New Jersey history. Because Christopher Billop sailed around Staten Island in his sloop the "Bentley," and under wager settled the fact that Staten Island could be circled in one day, so securing the Island for New York, it was argued by a few residents of Tottenville during 1910-11 that "Bentley Manor" be given as name of the town where stood the Billop house. A storm of protest arose, however. The storm traveled to Washington, D. C., where the Postmaster General, having changed the name of Tottenville to Bentley Manor, finally changed it back again to Tottenville. The name of Totten was on Staten Island church records; it was an honored name in the Borough of Richmond and by a rousing petition the old time residents of Tottenville kept their name. Restored July 1, 1911, by the Postmaster General.)

During November, 1674, the "Mayor's Court" was convened. Its records were ordered "to thereafter be kept in English writing, except in the case of very poor people who could not afford translation expenses." Several years elapsed, however, before the system became effectual. In March, 1675, Governor Andros required "All such persons who doe intend to be under His Majesty's obedience and government," to take the oath of allegiance. Some of the Dutch inhabitants objected to this. It was feared there might be no freedom of religion, or that impressment in the military corps might follow such oath of allegiance. Some arrests and various court troubles followed. There was considerable trouble with colonists on Long Island.

### FIRST PUBLIC FAIR.

During the fall of 1675 it was arranged that an annual fair for grain, cattle and produce should be held at "Breucklen, neare the Ferry." This is the first account of any public fair or outdoor exhibit being mentioned for the Colonies. At this time it was also ordered that "because Staten Island was separated from the main Colonies

by water, a separate jurisdiction and no dependence on the Courts of Long Island should be established. John Palmer was thereupon appointed for such office." Another order was that "Those Towns not having sufficient to keep a minister should be doubly levied upon for church rates."

During the winter of 1678, Governor Andros was given permission to visit London. He there described New York as "having 24 towns, villages or parishes." There were not many slaves, so he stated—more were needed. The price of such a servant averaged 30 to £35. Anyone owning 500 to £1,000 was comfortably well off.

About 15 vessels traversed the ocean each year, between England and the new country. New York and Albany were the chief trading ports. The so-called militia then comprised about 2,000 men, which included 150 horsemen. At this time Fort James had taken the shape of a square, built of stone, with over 40 guns mounted and four bastions. For Albany there were 12 guns, to guard against the uncertain Indians whose attacks were likely at any time. English soldiers were stationed at both forts. Records of marriages, births and deaths for the Colonies were not kept because ministers were not plentiful and religion was divided into sections. An Episcopalian chaplain was therefore prominent. New York "had no beggars but the poore were cared for."

Governor Andros, returned to his New York charge, warmly indorsed the plans for a first Dutch Church, to be built a quarter larger than that within the fort (only 54 feet wide and too small for the growing congregation). He even advanced some money for the cause, his personal contribution. Thus was established on solid basis, the first Dutch Church in New Netherlands, June, 1680.

Andros's visit to England caused entanglements in management at New York; trouble ensued.

During October, 1681, the Court of Assizes rebuked disaffection of Colonists, especially on Long Island.

An order reading "rude and unlawful sports, to the dishonor of God and profanation of his holy day should be prevented," was issued. This referred to Negro and Indian servants during their meetings on Sunday. It may possibly also account for the description given by the Labadists, Dankers and Sluyter, who, during their journey on Long Island, 1679, described the inhabitants as "a Godless lot." The Magistrates of Long Island were ordered to prevent any disorderly meetings, to arrest and keep peace and quiet of government. As Governor Andros was knighted upon the occasion of his second visit to England, when Lady Andros joined him there, it became necessary to find a new and fitting Governor for the Duke of York's

city in New Netherlands. King James finally chose Col. Thomas Dongon, son of Sir John Dongon, an Irish baronet of note.

Dongon was a Roman Catholic. East and West New Jersey were not part of the new Governor's jurisdiction, as previously had been the case. Governor Dongon reached New York August 25, 1683, by way of Massachusetts, to find much disaffection among the inhabitants, principally on account of expired tax and other business contracts. Long Island was especially troublesome. One report of Governor Dongon reads, "Here bee not many of the Church of England, few Roman Catholics, a Dutch Calvinist sect, abundance of Quakers—in short all sorts of opinions and most part none at all. The Great church which serves both the English and the Dutch is within the Fort which is now found to bee very inconvenient. Therefore I desire there may be an order for their building another, ground being already layd out for that purpose and they not wanting money in store to build it. The most prevailing opinion is that of the Dutch Colonists. It is the endeavor of all those persons to bring up their children and servants in that opinion which themselves profess: but I observe that they take no care of the conversion of their slaves. Every Town and County are obliged to maintain their own poor, which makes them bee soe careful that noe vagabonds, beggars or idle persons are suffered to live here. But as for the King's natural born subjects that live on Long Island and other parts of the government, I find it a hard task to make them pay their ministers." Dated Fort James, 1687.

In April, 1688, the elders of the Dutch church begged Governor Dongon to establish them as a body ecclesiastic and corporate, under the name of the Reformed Dutch Church of New York. But it was a successor to Dongon who actually granted this petition—Governor Fletcher, in 1693. Such is the history of the Dutch church in North America. Long Island had its separate church troubles, with New Utrecht one of the settlements thereof.

The inhabitants of New Utrecht had no serious outbreaks toward government policies. Breucklen progressed and so did New Utrecht in its steady cultivation of field and home work.

### **DE SILLE'S DEATH (PRIOR TO 1674).**

Local records tell of the sale of Nicasius de Sille's house, March 29, 1674, to Rutgert Joosten Van Brunt, by order of Nicholas Bayard, trustee for Mr. de Sille and Catrina Croegers his wife. De Sille's death was prior to March, 1674. He had been a noted scholar, done much writing and had left a complete record of his town, to 1660.



Barent Wyckoff was last to occupy the house. During 1850 it was destroyed, for no apparent reason at the time.

In 1675 Jacques Corteljau lost his house by fire. The Governor of New York sent several skilled workmen with material to assist Mr. Corteljau in restoring his home. This was a special honor it would appear. The first house had been of logs; the second one, built of stone, was on the same site. Mr. Peter L. Cortelyou, doubly descended from Jacques, has been authority for data regarding Cortelyou home facts. In 1893 he gathered from his histories and papers that the first home of Jacques Corteljau the settler, was located near where Col. Loomis Langdon's battery then existed, "a few rods East of the present homestead" (meaning the Simon Cortelyou house, then standing). Jacques Corteljau's house of stone was torn down between 1693-1699, by the government when land thereabouts was purchased for garrison use. Some of the stones were used in building the fort itself; some went in the Simon Cortelyou house, erected about 1700.\*

The Jacques Corteljau house standing West of Simon Cortelyou's house has been depicted as the original stone dwelling of the settler Jacques. According to Mr. Peter L. Cortelyou's family records this was not so. His statement was proved correct. The Simon Cortelyou house was also demolished by the government, 1894-9. The Isaac Cortelyou homestead, built by Nicholas Vecht in 1699, was on the Gowanus road. In that locality the great and memorable battle of Long Island occurred August, 1776. This has been dealt with separately. Isaac, resident of the Gowanus house, had fishing and farming interests at the Narrows, with Jacques Corteljau.

Referring to Jacques, the ancestor, he was a member of the governor's council, 1675; also a justice of the peace. He was a surveyor of note, and made the first map of New York January 16, 1657. As founder of New Utrecht his name naturally occurs among old records relating to New Netherlands and Long Island.

In laying out the settlement of New Utrecht he had plantation No. 10, or 30 morgens, which he sold, January 6, 1665, to Hendrick Smack. Mr. Corteljau was also interested in a tract of land, 12,000 morgans, at "Aquackanoak," bought by himself and others, from the Indians. This land was back of "Raritans," or rather in New Jersey, where some records also tell of Mr. Corteljau's enterprises. He abandoned this large one, however, finding it burdensome.

The Van Duyn ancestor, who emigrated in 1649 (carpenter by trade) purchased land from his brother-in-law, Jacques Corteljau—

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\* Note—No photograph exists of the first Jacques Corteljau house; nor of the second. That often shown is the third. It was west of Simon Cortelyou's house. Near this latter homestead the British landed, August 22, 1776.



a parcel of woodland partly in New Utrecht, partly in Flatbush, on which he made a settlement. Later it was held as a farm by his descendants. Date of sale, 1684.

In May, 1679, Governor Andros established the office of "Towne Clerk." Joost de Baene is recorded as such in 1686, while Jan Hausen (Van Nostrand) and Myndert Koerten were the first "Assessors," 1687.

During May, 1686, Gov. Thomas Dongon granted a new patent to the freeholders named as follows, J. Corteljou, Ruth Jooster, John Vankerck, Hendrick Mathyse, John Kierson, John Vandyck, Guisbert Thyson, Carel Van Dyck, Jan Van Cleaf, Cryn Jansen, Meyendert Corten, John Hansen, Barent Joosten, Teunis Van Pelt, Hendrick Van Pelt, Lawrence Janse, Gerrit Cornelissen, Dirck Van Stutphen, Thomas Dirckson, Gerrit Stoeffelson, Peter Thyson, Anthony Van Pelt, Anthony Duchaine, Jan Vandeventer, Cornelis Wynhart. This patent was dated at Fort James, May 13, 1686.

During 1687 some 52 inhabitants took the oath of allegiance to England. They relinquished no allegiance to the House of Orange, but sought to lessen troubles arising from commercial intricacies existing between governing powers and various settlements. Freedom of religion was also retained.

New Utrecht's first representation in New York State Assembly was in the person of Myndert Korten, 1698. Korten was identified with Jacob Leisler and was at one time sentenced to death, owing to Leisler's unruly transactions. Korten was finally released. Leisler, condemned for his bold confiscation of properties and insubordination, was executed, which action, later on, was declared by the powers across the ocean, to have been unjust. These matters were among the disturbing elements of an otherwise peaceful people. The Dutch were prudent, thrifty and cared excessively for their homes. Domestic matters on record tend to show careful thought applied to home and family.

Take for instance the case of the poor dancing master, Mr. Francis Stepney, who, forced to leave Boston because of rigid scruples as to his art in that puritanical stronghold of religion, journeyed to New York. There he was ordered not to teach any dancing in New York and furthermore he should at once give some security that he could otherwise support himself, or else he should leave the Province. Greatly offended, the polite and earnest dancing master appealed his case in person to the King. This was January 3, 1687. There is no record of the King's reply. But the Dutch settlers would have no neighbor who could not work.

In closing the 1600 period for New Utrecht, it is in keeping to add that while New York objected to dancing lessons as an art too frivolous for active, sturdy people, there is ample proof that the Dutch colonists of New Netherlands had music in their homes, however humble that home may have been. The Dutch lullaby was almost a national song those days, sung in households all the way from Fort Orange down to the Narrows.

Here is the Dutch version:

“Trip a trop a troujes  
De varkens in the boonjes.  
De koejes in de Klaver  
De paarden in the haver  
De denjes in de waterplars  
So groot myn kleine—was.”

This was usually sung when a child was in arms and at the last word, the child was suddenly tossed from melody rocking motion, high up in the air. The last word was thus rendered a rollicking end to the whole.

The verse relates how the cows are in the corn, the pigs in the clover, etc., etc., and then suddenly the singer tosses the child aloft at the last stanza. Thus the Dutch carried music into their hearts and home. In Virginia the music was of the cavalier sort, filled with love and passion, British war songs, etc.

New England had only psalmody, the simpler the better.

Under a separate chapter the musical side of the early American colonists is better depicted.

A tax, caused by “Public defence against the English,” including damage claims to buildings, was made at New Amsterdam, 1675. The wealth of the city at that time can best be judged by noting on the list 134 estates taxed and valued in aggregate, £90 or \$226,000. Among the names appear some that are familiar to New Utrecht interests; Anthony Jansen, of Salee, Cornelis Dirckson, from West-  
een, Dirck Van Cleef, Hendrick Van Dyck, Jan Vigne, Jacob Kip and about 50 other residents of the New Amsterdam circle. (In February, 1896, this list was in possession of Mr. Manderville Mower, 673 Lexington Avenue, New York City. Mr. Mower had been an interested gleaner of historic matters and told of this data.)

## JASPER DANKERS AND PETER SLUYTER.

(Their trip on L. I. described. New Utrecht in 1679.)

NOTE—The late Hon. Henry C. Murphy, citizen and writer of history, left a valuable transcription, "Voyage of the Labadists." Extracts are here given.

In 1679 and 1680 record of the voyage to New York and a tour in American colonies was undertaken by Jaspar Dankers and Peter Sluyter, disciples of de Labadie, whom history tells of. They recorded Long Island to be 144 miles in length and 22 to 28 miles wide. They started out to meet Jan Teunissen, their fellow passenger, "who had promised them much good." Jan, however, was not up to his word. When his friends found him, he acted coldly, and so they journeyed on to the village of Bruecklen, returning by ferry to Manhattan. (The Gerritt referred to in the following is Gerrit Cornelis Van Duyn, a friend of both travelers. Gerrit died, 1706).

"Having passed through the first village, called Breucklen, which had a small and ugly little church in the middle of the road, we struck off to the right in order to come to Gouwanes (Gowanus). We went upon several plantations. Gerrit was acquainted with most all the people, who made us very welcome, sharing with us bountifully whatever they had. It is impossible to tell how many peach trees we passed, all laden with fruit to breaking down. We came to a place surrounded with such trees, from which so many peaches had fallen off the ground could not be discerned, and you could not put your foot down without trampling them. The hogs and other animals fed upon them. This place belongs to the oldest European woman in the country. We went immediately to her house, where she lived with her children. We found her sitting by the fire, smoking tobacco incessantly. We inquired her age, which the children told us was one hundred years. She was from Luyck (Liege), and spoke French. She had been about fifty years in the country and had about seventy children and grandchildren. Her mother was 111 or 112 years old when she died.

"We left that home and proceeded on to Gowanes, a place so called, where we arrived at one of the best friends of Gerrit, named Symon. He was very glad to see us and so was his wife. We found a good fire, half way up the chimney, of charcoal and hickory, of which they made not the least scruples of burning profusely. We let it penetrate us thoroughly."

(This was Simon Aertson d'Hart, who immigrated in 1664, and settled at Gowanus.)

"Saturday, September 30th. Early this morning, we left after breakfast. We went through a woods and found new made land, and

saw along the shore to the west end of the island, Najeck." (Fort Hamilton surrounded by a great marsh, was presumably called an island by these two men). "Continuing from there we came to the plantation of the Najeck Indians, which was planted with maize or wheat. We found an old woman beating beans out of the pod. We went from there to her habitation, where we found the whole tribe together, consisting of seven or eight families and twenty or twenty-two persons. The house was low and long, about sixty feet long and fourteen or fifteen feet wide. The bottom was earth. The sides and roof were made of reed and bark of chestnut trees. The top or roof was open half a foot wide to let the smoke out. They built their fires in the middle of the floor, according to the number of families which lived in it. They lie upon mats with their feet toward the fire. They do not sit upon anything raised up, but sit on the ground or squat on their ankles."

(The two travelers are careful to note much of the Indian life as shown by this Najeck tribe then residing in that locality. They go on to tell, in their own language, more about these Indians.)

"The Indians live on the land of Jacques, brother-in-law of Gerrit, who bought the land from them, in the first instance, and then let them have a small corner for which they pay him twenty bushels of maize yearly. Jacques "Corteljau" at first bought the whole of Najeck from these Indians, who were the lords thereof and lived upon the land, which is a large place, and afterwards bought it again in parcels. He was unwilling to drive the Indians from the land, and had therefore left them a corner of it, keeping the best of it himself."

"We arrived then upon this land, which is all good and yields large crops of wheat and other grain. It is of a blackish color, but not clayey, and almost like the garden mould I have seen in Holland. At length we reached the house, where we found Monsieur La Grange, who had come there in search of us concerning his departure, and to take us to his house. We spoke to him in regard to this and other matters, as was proper, and shortly afterwards he left. Jacques is a man advanced in years. He was born in Utrecht, but of French parents, as we could readily discover from all his actions, looks and language. He had studied philosophy in his youth and spoke Latin and good French. He was a mathematician and sworn land surveyor. He had formerly learned several sciences and had some knowledge of medicine. The worst of it was he was a good Cartesian, and not a good Christian, regulating himself and all externals by reason and justice only. Nevertheless, he regulated all things better by these

principles than most people in these parts do who bear the name of Christians or pious persons."

"His brother-in-law and ourselves were welcomed by him and his wife. He treated us with every civility, although two of his sons being sick and he very much confined in attending upon them, he was much interrupted in attending to us, since they, more than we, affected his head and that of his wife. We went looking around the country and towards evening came to the village of New Utrecht, so named by him. This village was burned down, some time ago, with everything about it, including the home of this man, which was almost a half hour from it. Many persons were impoverished by the fire. It was now almost rebuilt and many good stone houses were erected, of which Jacques' was one, where we returned by another route to spend the night. After supper we went to sleep in the barn upon some straw spread with sheepskins and in the midst of continual grunting of hogs, bleating and coughing of sheep, barking of dogs, and crowing of cock, and especially a goodly quantity of fleas and vermin, and all with an open barn door through which a fresh northwest wind was blowing. Though we could not sleep we could not complain, inasmuch as we had the same quarters and kind of bed that their own son had, who had now upon our arrival crept in on the straw behind us." (The sickness referred to by the travelers, was that of a scourge of smallpox, which accounts for the fact that they were put in the barn to sleep, as well as Jacques' son. Precautions were taken to prevent any spread of the disease.)

"Sunday, October 1st. We went this morning on a tour of observation of the country and of the neighbors, some of whom were better situated than others. All of them had more or less children sick of the smallpox, which next to the fever and ague, is the most prevalent disease in these parts, of which many have died. We went into one house where there were two children lying dead and unburied and three others sick, and where one had died the week before. The disease was more fatal this year. We spoke to those afflicted what was suitable and they could bear."

"Monday, 2nd. Having slept the night again at Najack, we four went after breakfast to the Bay (the Bay signifies Flatlands), where we arrived about ten o'clock. We did not find Jan Theuinessen at home, as he had driven to the City to bring his goods; but his father and mother made us welcome and took us around their orchards. My comrade spoke of Godly things, but he seemed to be a little disposed to play the part of a religious and wise man, and he defended himself in the evil as much as he could, going to work somewhat

coldly with us. We took the time, however, to go around and see everything thoroughly, and found the land in general not so good as that at Najack. There is towards the sea a large piece of low flat land which is overflowed at every tide like the 'Schorr' (marsh) with us. All the land from the Bay to Vlaché Boss is low and level without the least elevation. On our return from this ramble, we found Jan Theuinessen had come back with his company. He welcomed us, but somewhat coldly, and so demeaned himself all the time we were there as to astonish my comrade at the change, but not me, for I had observed this falling off while we were yet at sea and were approaching the land."

On Tuesday, the 3rd, the travelers tell of rain and how they were kept indoors. They also tell of a number of visitors in whom they are interested, but they declare them to be "a Godless lot." It is very evident that these travelers, who were also something of journalists by reason of keeping this accurate journal of their travels, not only read but also gave away a publication entitled "The Christian Principles," in low Dutch language. This was a publication of the Labadists. The founder of this organization was Jean d'Labadie, born near Bordeaux, France, 1610. It is interesting and gratifying to have so clear a sketch made of Jacques Corteljou, the founder of New Utrecht. He died about 1693. His house was demolished. No picture exists of it. There has been a Jacques in every branch of every generation of the Corteljou family.

Following the Labadists journey, as here related, there is recorded interesting exchanges of land properties between settlers in the Colonies, New Utrecht not excepted. It was a common happening for a settler to vacate his first land grant and remove to another, often to another village. It would require several columns to chronicle all these moves and land dealings, to say nothing of family and church records. Development in the Colonies was steady once Indian troubles ceased and the government maintained.

During 1698 a Militia company was organized in New Utrecht, with John Van Dyke captain; Joost Van Brunt, lieutenant; Matys Smacks, ensign. (Stiles, 262.) It would appear to have been a local organization.

## 1700 PERIOD.

Events crowded into this eventful period cover so much in the history of America that only a fragment of the whole can be placed in New Utrecht's chapter of happenings. Nevertheless the township was prominent in many ways. Its colony was thriving; its inhabitants followed their vocations in peaceful thrift. Being located by waters commanding the harbor of New Amsterdam, later New York, the shore frontage of New Utrecht became famed in that the British first set foot there upon American land, during the 1776 struggle. The community was a farming district; homes were scattered along the various openings of forest land. Those farms by the water combined a fishery as part occupation.

On January 19, 1708, it was related by an interested community that Jacobus Wouterson and Joris Green had walked on the ice from Staten Island to Long Island. (Some years later Col. James C. Church did the same. In 1752 a team passed over the ice, which was recorded as a remarkable happening.)

On April 14, 1709, a land transaction occurred between Gysbert Lane, of New Utrecht, and John Van Dyck, of the same place. It comprised 50 acres, bounded southwest by land of John Van Dyck, southeast by Gravesend, north by land of Jacob Fardon, northwest by highway to Flatbush. Also another tract of land in New Utrecht of 30 acres, bounded east by highway to Flatbush, northwest on land of Roelof Van Kerck, and southwest by the common woods of New Utrecht. Also a lot belonging to Anthony Holsaert. Signed, Gysbert Lane (his mark) X; Jannetje Lane (her mark)

Witnesses,

JOOST VAN BRUNT,

RUTGERT VAN BRUNT, Jr.

During 1716, the first judge of the Court of Common Pleas was Cornelis Van Brunt. The first assistant judge was Pieter Corteljau, 1702. This was doubtless the Corteljau who in 1749 was mentioned as "having a large number of shad caught in the seines by his home at the Narrows, April 2, 1749."

The first Highway Commissioners for the town were Aert Van Pelt and Andries Emans, 1721.

## 1706-(1720).

Hendrick Hendrickson, yoeman, of New Utrecht, and Helena his wife, sold land to Jacques Tunise, of New Utrecht, yoeman, for 900 L. It was "all that certain dwelling house and land at a place

called Nyack, then in possession of Hendrick Hendrickson bounded south by the land of Jacques Corteljau and Peter Corteljau, east by the woods of New Utrecht, north by the land of William Burkalo and Mary his wife, west by the Salt Water River, as it was laid out by said Peter Corteljau and surveyed by said Peter Corteljau date of August, 1706." There was also a woodlot in New Utrecht known as No. 33 and No. 25.

Signed by HENDRICK HENDRICKSON and  
HELENA HENDRICKSON,  
(their marks)

October 10, 1720.

(NOTE—Copied from an old document; lower half of page readable; upper half torn away. Carpenter papers).

1706. "and so along the south side of Woughters Orchard and so along the South side of his house, between his House and Barn to the Bank by the River Side and so along the said Bank to the house of Sharon Van Dyke and to continue over one common highway to begin from the Gate in New Utrecht town, opposite to the turners Hendrick Jansen's house and that goes to the House of Capt. Jacques Cortelyou and so from the Gate between the land of Rutt Jooste and——"

(Balance of the opposite page, lower half reads:)

"is formerly used by Janse Van Metern till it comes to the Island of Capt. Joost Van Brunt which formerly was possessed by Janse Van Matern.

"One common highway beginning from William Bennett's land to the swinging gate of Simon DeHart and so strait along over the land of said Simon DeHart, East by the swamp of the said Simon DeHart and so along over the land of Wouter Van Pelt and so along over the lands of Claes Van Dyke, John Pieterse, Hendrick Van Dyke, Tink Van Dyke, Bernardus Johannes——"

April 4th, 1708. Helena Hendrickson writes a paper in which she states that her son Jacques Denyse and her son-in-law, Hendrick Van Louwres, shall take the administration of her personal estate which properly belonged to her, pursuant to the agreement made between her and her then husband, Hendrick Hendrickson. She decrees that all her children shall have equal portion, also her son Nicholas Van Brunt, deceased, whose heirs shall have one equal share of her personal estate. Signed the 27th day of October, 1726.

By HELENA HENDRICKSON, her mark H.

(This is Helena, daughter of Jacques Corteljau, who married first, Nicholas Van Brunt; second, Denyse Denyse; third, Hendrick Hendrickson.)



June 10, 1715. From an old document it is gathered that a land transaction occurred between Rutgert Van Brunt and Johannis Swart (or Swartout), both yeoman of New Utrecht, for the sum of 143 pounds, current money of New York, paid by Rutgert Van Brunt to said Johannis Swart. The following land became the property of Van Brunt: "All that Tract of land lying and being in the Lemmits & Bounds of New Utrecht, containing 28 acres, more or less, now in the possession of said Johannis Swart, bounded Northwest by the Rode, Northeast by the land of Rutgert Van Brunt aforeto, South west by Johannis Swart aforeto, Southeast by the bounds of Gravesend, Northwoods. Also another Tract or Spot of land and swamp, containing 2 acres, now in fence, lying in the bounds of Gravesend, bounded Southeast by the land of Cornelius Van—eef, deceased, Northwest by Johannis Swart, Southwest it leads to the swamp as far as lot No. I.

Rebecka Swart, wife of the said Johannis Swart, doth by these presents freely give up and surrender all her Rights of Dowry and Power of thirds, unto the above Demised premises, to him the said Rutgert Van Brunt, his heirs etc. JOHANNIS SWART his mark.  
Signed in presence of a REBECKA SWART her mark  
JAN VAN DYCK (his mark)

December, 1720. A land matter between Anthony Holsaert and Rutgert Van Brunt, December 14, 1720.

Both are of the township of "New uytrecht in Kings county on the Island of Nassau and province of New Yorke—yoemen. That Anthony Holsaert, for consideration of the sum of 353 pounds, current money, paid by said Rutgert Van Brunt, doth hereby acknowledge himself fully satisfied and contented and doth acquit and confirm unto said Rutgert Van Brunt, all that Tract of land lying and being in the bounds of New uytrecht aforesaid, containing 34 acres, bounded North west by the Rode, Northeast by land of Michael Van der Veer, southeast partly by said Michael, partly by land of Jan Van Dyck, Southwest by said Van Dyck. Also that certain wood lot in the township of New uytrecht in the first division No. 16, containing 30 acres & one quarter, now in possession of Anthony Holsaert, bounded Southeast by land of Joost Van Brunt, Southwest by the lot of Rutgert Van Pelt, Northwest by the second division, Northeast by the lot of Aurt Van Pelt. Also one meadow lot lying at Canarsie and is No. 8, with one whole right or share in all the undivided meadow of New uytrecht at Canarsie—together with all manner of housings, fencings, feedings, pastures, etc."

Signed by ANTHONY HOLSAERT.

Witnesses: — SPERLING.  
— VAN BRUNT.

1721. An Indenture made the 14th day of August, 1721, relates that Anthony Holsaert, of Breucklen, in Kings County, yeoman, and Rutgert Van Brunt, of New Utrecht, yeoman, agreed about a parcel of land. For the sum of 82 pounds, paid by Rutgert Van Brunt to Anthony Holsaert, the following land became Van Brunt's: "All that tract or woodland situate in the town of New Utrecht, which is the Southeastermost end of lot No. 4 in the second Division, containing ten acres & one quarter, bounded Northeast of lot No. 3 belonging to Marya Koerten, Southeast by land of Jan Van Dyck, Southwest by lot No. 5, belonging to Roelof Ver Kerck, Northwest by the remaining 6 acres &  $\frac{1}{2}$  of said lot No. 4, now in possession of Michiel Van der Veer, together with all the woods, timber thereon lying or growing, waters, springs, etc." Signed by ANTHONY HOLSAERT.

Witnesses:

JAN VAN DYCK (his mark).

HENDRICK SUYDAME.

1726. September 14, 1726, there was a land and house agreement between John Van Dyck and Rutgert Van Brunt, of New Utrecht. The land mentioned was bounded Northwest by the road leading from New Utrecht by the land of Rutgert Van Brunt and Michael Van der Veer, Southeast by the bounds of Gravesend, being lot No. II, or 12 acres. The document was signed by John Van Dyck; witnesses were Daniel Hendrick, H. M. Sperling and Gerret—(name not decipherable).

1727. An interesting document, yellow and worn yet quite readable is that telling how Hendrick Hendrickson makes Jacques Denys his lawful attorney. Hendrick could not write English. The paper is signed by mark. Witnesses to the paper were able to write English, as testified by their signatures. In this careful document Hendrick Hendrickson chose said Jacques Denyse to be his lawful attorney in various matters and to act as such. Dated April 28, 1727.

Witnesses: Signed by HENDRICK HENDRICKSON (his mark).

S. GERRITSEN,

PIETER CORTELYOU.

1729. Indenture, July 15, 1729. John Pieterse, of Yellow Hook, Township of New Utrecht and wife, Georhug, and Abraham Depeyster, of New York. Said John Pieterse and wife, for consideration of 166 pounds, sold unto Depeyster "all that certain dwelling house and orchard, situate on Yellow Hook, now in possession of John Pieterse—also that parcel of ground adjoining, containing 30 acres—Northwest to the River, Southwest by the land late of Rutgert Van Brunt, containing 120 acres and dwelling house,—also  $\frac{3}{4}$  right of privilege in the common woodland of New Utrecht, with all the

houses, barns, gardens, fences, trees, fields, marshes, Fishing, Fowling—which said last mentioned dwelling house was sold to John Pieterse by Jacob Zudkin and Antie, his wife, per their deed, January 2, 1718,—reserving out of this parcel 75 acres, which John Pieterse hath lately sold to Thomas Stilwell of Kings County.

Signed JOHN PIETERSE and wife GEORHUG.

(NOTE—Mortgage for above deed was transferred to Denyse Denyse by Abraham Depeyster, July 15, 1731. Jan Pieterse's wife was Geertje; she died bet. 1729 and 1731. He was thereupon released from the debt, Denyse Denyse assumed the mortgage. The house and land were at Yellow Hook, bounded Southwest by land of Thomas Stilwell, Southeast by woodlands of New Utrecht, Northeast by Highway land bet. Thomas Van Dyck, Northwest by Bank or River.—Also 9 acres, part of Lot No. 4.)

During 1738 it was recorded that New Utrecht's population was about 282 persons.

February 8, 1749. Land transaction between Johannis Willemse Wyckof, of Flatlands, in Kings Co., and Denyse Denyse of Newuytreght, same Co., and Collony—that Wyckof, for sum of 28 lbs., bargained and sold to Denyse Denyse, all that meadow situate in Flatlands, containing 2 acres &  $\frac{1}{2}$ , bounded Easterly by Johannis Wyckof's, Westerly by John Vanderbilt's.

Witnesses:

Signed by JOHANNIS WILLEMSE WYCKOF.

JOHANNES LOTT,

JAN AMERMAN.

During 1760 it is recorded that Joost Van Brunt built the watch house at Gravesend, it being considered a responsible work.

New Utrecht had no disastrous scourge of smallpox previous to the 1776 war. About November 14, 1763, Dr. George Muirson, known for skill and care in curing smallpox, established two hospitals on Shelter Island for inoculation. There were some cases in New Utrecht, but no epidemic.

### **“BUSINESS TROUBLES OF JACQUES DENYSE, JR.”**

Jacques Denise, Jr., son of Denyse Denyse of New Utrecht, received as loan from Nicholas Cowenhoven, son of John, the sum of £124. Signed June 25, 1771. Witnesses, Garret Vandine and Adam Boldoridg.

On Oct. 1, 1772, he received from Garret Van Duyn £43. Document signed by Jaques Denyse, Jr. Witnesses, Nicholas Cowenhoven and Janetie Cowenhoven.

Also on Oct. 1, 1772, Jaques De Nise was indebted to Rutgert Van Brunt, Esq., for £40.

Another sum loaned Jaques, was £120 by May 20, 1774. Witnesses were Peter and John Lefferts.

On May 20, 1775, Cornelius Cornel gave a receipt to Denyse Denyse for £75 due Cornel on a bond of Jaques Denyse, son of Denyse Denyse.

Next loan mentioned, is Aug. 14, 1775, when Jaques Denyse, son of Denyse Denyse, was indebted to Nicholas Cowenhoven for £50. Witnesses Antie Van Horn and N. Cowenhoven. Signed, Jaques Denyse, Jr.

NOTE—A loan to Jaques Denyse, yeoman of New Utrecht, from Denyse Denyse, for 70 pounds. (This paper, signed by Jaques, was witnessed by Hendrick Johnson and Petries Van Pelt).

Why Jaques should have had occasion to borrow money so often has not been made clear by any documents yet found. Rev. Hugh Smith Carpenter said, (1895), that Jaques, son of Denyse Denyse, was "considerably of a good spender." He also had a large family to raise. It was for this reason, declared Dr. Carpenter, that Denyse Denyse had intrusted the care of his property to his daughters and also his papers. Records found fully verify this statement. The other Jaques Denyse in the Township at the time, was a brother of Denyse Denyse and so uncle to Jaques, spender and father of many children. In the book "Our Ancestors," it has been stated that 1776 war service found, would apparently belong to the uncle. Descendants must prove this soldier service for themselves.

September 3, 1762. A document bearing the above date relates much of Rutgert Van Brunt, of New Utrecht. On July 17, 1752, he made his last will and testament, devising to his four daughters and their heirs, the piece of land he then owned. These daughters were stated to be: Altje, wife of Nicholas Stillwell, of Gravesend; Maria, widow of Joris Lott, deceased, of New Utrecht; Tryntje, wife of John Rapalje, of the Township of Breucklen; Teuntje, wife of Denyse Denyse, of New Utrecht. Under this last will he appointed his four daughters to be executrix of his estate. (His only son was drowned.)

Under date of September 3, 1762, it is told in document form that the four daughters quit claim unto Teuntje, the wife of Denyse Denyse, one certain parcel of land in New Utrecht, for a competent sum of money in hand, paid by Teuntje. The land was bounded by garden of Maria Lott, thence south to Indian Pond, to land of Altie Stilwell, to land of Gerrit Cowenhoven, 113 acres. Also a piece of woodland, part of Lot No. 1, by woodland of Joost Van Brunt, to woods of Tryntie, wife of John Rapalje, to woods of Hendrick Johnson, deceased. Also a parcel called No. 4, woods bounded by land of Joris Lott, deceased, 17 acres. Also a parcel of land by Altie Rapalje to woods of Rutgert Van Brunt, containing  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres. Also a piece of woodland, part of No. 14, to woods of Casper Crapser, to Altie Stilwell, containing 8 1-3 acres. Also a piece of land in Flatlands, called Vrisen Hook, by meadow of William Kouwenhoven. Also a piece of meadow in Flatlands, bounded by land of Andries

Emans, deceased. Signed by Nicholas Stilwell and Altie Stilwell. Witnesses, Johannis Lott, Engelbert Lott. September 23, 1762.

Casper Crepser and Denyse Denyse. June 27, 1766. An indenture made between Casper Crepser, of New Utrecht, yeoman, and Denyse Denyse, yeoman, of the Narrows,—that said Casper Crepsen for consideration of 4 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  acres of land, granted from said Denyse Denyse to said Casper Crepser, instead for the land which Casper Crepser has now transferred by these presents to said Denyse Denyse, the receipt whereof Casper Crepser doth acknowledge himself to be satisfied with, have granted to Denyse Denyse a piece of woodland situate in Township of New Utrecht, bounded by woodland and fence of Isaac Cortelyou, to woods of Casper Crepser, to woods of Denyse Denyse, thence by woods of Albert Van Brunt, containing  $3\frac{1}{4}$  acres, being a part of woodlot known as No. 15. Signed by Casper Crepser (his mark). Witnesses, John Lefferts, Engelbert Lott. June 27, 1766.

Denyse Denyse and Isaac Cortelyou. 1768. A document telling of dispute and final settlement between Denyse Denyse and Isaac Cortelyou regarding land boundaries is thus told.

“John Lefferts, Engelbart Lott and Simon Boerum, Esq., all of Kings County on Nassau Island, send greeting, whereas great Strife, debate, Controversy hath heretofore been and Stirred between Denyse Denyse and Isaac Cortelyou of New Utrecht in Kings County in the province of Newyork for and concerning the Partition Line between the said Denyse Denyse and said Isaak Cortelyou, as far as the land of Denyse Denyse and Isaak Cortelyou join each other, for the appeasing and Ending whereof either of said parties by their mutual consent and agreement have submitted and bound themselves either to the other by their several Writings, bearing date the 15th day of June, 1768, in the Sum of 500 pounds, current money of New York to stand, obey, abide, perform, fulfill and keep the award, order final End and Determination of us, the said John Lefferts, Engelbart Lott and Simon Boerum, Arbitrators indifferently elected and chosen between the said parties to arbitrate, award, order for the premises—now know ye, that we, the said Arbitrators having taken upon ourselves the Business and charge of the award and willing to let the said Parties at Pease and Concord by making a final End and Determination concerning the premises in manner and form following, which for certain Reason we Judge, Order, Determine and award that the partition Line between the land of Denyse Denyse and the land of Isaak Cortelyou shall run the same course as the line runs between the land of Peter Cortelyou, Esq., and the land of said Denyse Denyse—that is to say, the said lines begins by a sasafrae mark stake stand-

ing at the Northeastermost End of a certain Krupelbush or swamp on the partition line between the land of said Peter Cortelyou and the land of said Denyse Denyse, running from the sasafras mark stake between their lands, North 29 degrees and 30 minutes East, as far as the land of said Peter Cortelyou extends, and so on with the said course of North 29 degrees and 30 minutes East between the land of Denyse Denyse and the land of said Isaak Cortelyou, as far as the land of Denyse Denyse joins the land of Isaak Cortelyou so as the said line is now marked and staked out—in witness whereof we, the said Arbitrators have put our hands and seals the 15th day of July, 1768.”

Signed by John Lefferts, Engelbert Lott, S. Boerum, Esq. Witnesses, Johannes Lott, Philip Nagel. July 15, 1768.

June 2, 1770. “Know all men by these presents, that we, Jaques Denyse and Denyse Denyse, the father of said Jaques Denyse, both of the Township of New Utrecht, am held and firmly bound unto Nicholas Cowenhoven of the County and Township aforesaid, a son of John Cowehoven, in the sum of 350 lbs. The condition of above obligation is that if Jaques Denyse or Denyse Denyse cause to be paid the sum of 175 lbs., before next May, the obligation is void. Signed by Jaques Denyse, Jun., and Denyse Denyse. Witnesses Jaques Denyse and Hendrick Johnson. June 2, 1770. (This alone proves the existence of two Jaques Denyses, uncle and nephew. Below is given a military title to the uncle.\*)

June 25, 1771. “This Indenture, made the 25th day of June, 1771, between Jaques Denise, Jr., son of Denise Denise of the Township of New Utrecht and Ann, his wife, of the one part, and Nicholas Cowenhoven of the Township aforesaid, of the other part, witnesseth that said Jaques Denise by and with the advice, consent and good liking of his said wife Ann, for and consideration of the sum of 60 pounds, to them paid, the receipt they hereby acknowledge and themselves to be satisfied, have sold all that parcel of land, given by deed of Denise Denise to his son Jaques, of 19 acres, bounded by land of Roelof Van Brunt deceased, Northerly by land of \*Capt. Jaques Denise, Easterly by woods of Isaac Cortelyou and of Zacharia Voorhees, Southerly by Adrian Hegeman, unto the said Nicholas Cowenhoven, to whom shall be paid the sum of 60 lbs. with interest at 6% from June 25, 1771. Then the above Indenture shall be void. Signed by Jaques Denyse, Jr., and Anne Denyse.

May 29, 1775. Jaques Denyse, Jr., also promised to pay to his father, Mr. Denyse Denyse, or his order, the sum of 486 lbs., 18.shill., for sundry sums advanced and paid by him from time to time to sundry persons, for my use and benefit, list as annexed hereunto ;

To John Degras, Jaques Van Brunt, George Folliott, John Van Kirk, Adrian Hagaman, Rutger Van Brunt, Adrian Van Brunt, Cornelis Connell, Nicholas Cowenhoven, Tacol Lefferts; total of 486 lbs., 18 shill.

August 15, 1775. An indenture made by Jaques Denyse, Jr., son of Denyse Denyse, of New Utrecht, in favor of Nicholas Cowenhoven. It would appear that Jaques, being unable to repay all the cash loans, made him satisfy the creditor, Nicholas Cowenhoven by assigning to him some household goods, also chattels, as follows: "One Negro female slave named 'Dine,' two beds and two bedsteads and the furniture to the same belonging, one gray mare and her colt, one brown mare, four milch cows and one lookingglass, to have and to hold all and singular the said goods and chattels above, by these presents granted, bargained, etc." April following he was to pay to Nicholas Cowenhoven the sum of 60*l*. Signed by Jaques Denyse, Jr. Witnesses, Nicholas Cowenhoven, Antie Van Dorn. August 15, 1775.

A written postscript to this document is entered in the writing of Nicholas Cowenhoven wherein he states, "Know all men by these presents that for the sum of twenty-five pounds to me in hand paid by Uncle Denice Denice, I do therefor sell and sign over all my Right and title to within Mortgage and the Bond thereto."

Deed registered in the Clerk's office of Kings County by John Rapalje.

1775.

## THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

WHILE New Utrecht bears the distinction of being chosen by the British for their landing on American ground August, 1776, there were no desperate battle scenes close to the several villages comprising the township. Echoes of the British were, of course, on every side but no fierce fights occurred. The English confiscated and ruined much during their occupancy of the farm-houses and buildings in every section thereabouts. Residents were compelled to take the oath of allegiance, hated by the great majority, yet necessary if home and family were to be saved. Property was confiscated right and left, the women of the various households being



*The Pieter Cortelyou house. Built about 1700. Stones used in it were from the Jacques Corteljaau house, 1693 date. Pieter died 1757. His son Jacques died 1757, whose son Simon Cortelyou was next occupant (grandson of Pieter). Then came Simon, Jr. It was called "The Simon Cortelyou house." Previously it had been pictured as the Jacques Cortelyou house. Property sold to William Post, 1836. Government acquired deed 1892. House demolished 1894, amid profound sorrow by Government officials, the structure being a splendid example of Colonial type. The sum of \$1,000 would have saved the house.*

usually at home alone with their children, those too young to join the militia, who were off fighting for American Independence.

Those New Utrecht citizens who did not wear the "red rag," as the British signet was contemptuously called, were in danger of life as well as loss of worldly goods. The settlers wisely accepted enforced conditions. The men of their families were "in the ranks." As records of the town were kept in the English language by that time it has not been difficult to ascertain many interesting facts



relating to that period. History tells of the memorable landing of the British, as it does of the Battle of Long Island. Many stories have been printed (inaccurately) regarding the *exact* spot where the British landed August 22, 1775. It was between the Simon Cortelyou house and Bath where British soldiers first set foot on American soil for the great 1776 struggle. The original Jacques Cortelyou house had become part of the fort and of Simon Cortelyou's house. The later date Jacques house (between Gelston's home and Simon's) was later sold, and still later went into the fort as good stone.

Tradition and fact in the Cortelyou family have it that Nancy Corteljau, seeing the soldiers landing, impulsively rushed out on the high ground near her home and enthusiastically waved to them, using



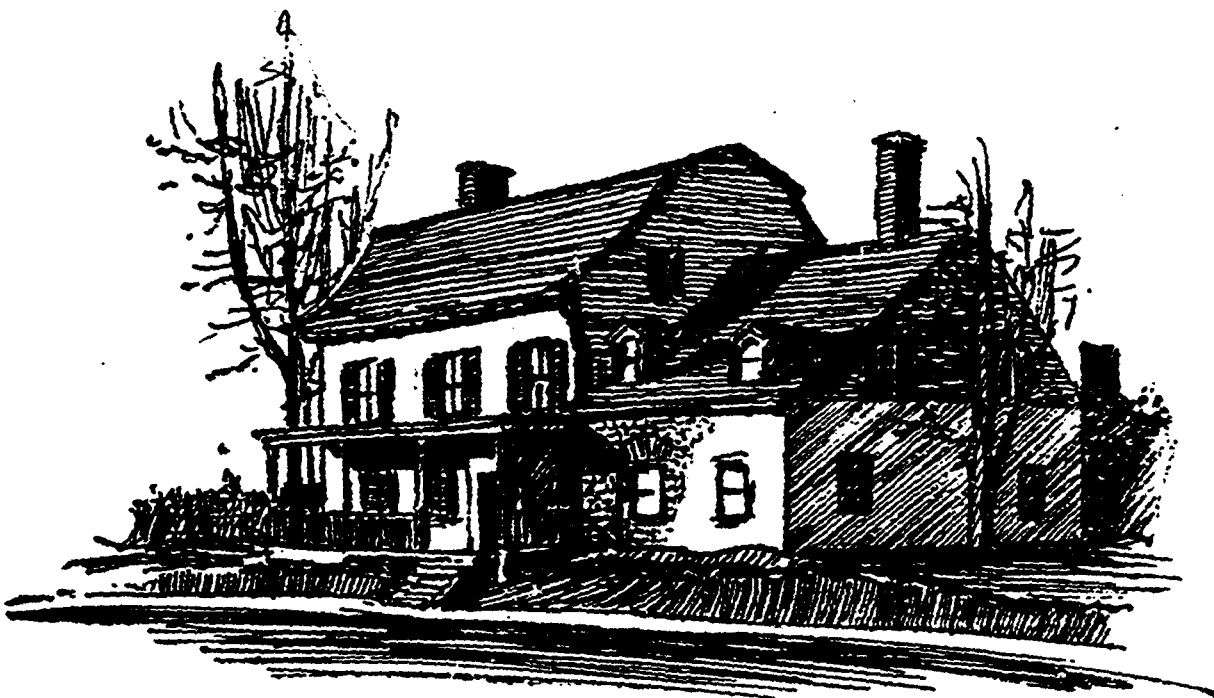
*The Jacques, later Timothy T., Cortelyou house. Stood West of Simon Cortelyou house, near Denyse Denyse estate. Timothy T. sold his place to John Delaplaine, 1800 period. Became Government property. House demolished Civil War period.*

her red petticoat for a flag. Red was the British color. It appeared like a welcome to them. They responded. At any rate, Nancy's warm greeting has been handed down as a matter of history, being part cause of Cortelyou descendants understanding their ancestors were Tories. Nancy was not a young girl, but a grown woman. The authority for such statement is Mr. Peter L. Cortelyou, historian for his family.

The 16,000 British landed on the morning of August 22, 1776, and

immediately took possession of the surrounding neighborhood, preparatory to progressing toward Breucklen. Col. William J. Cropsey in his reminiscences, declared it true that the British soldiers entered his grandmother's home on Kings Highway and there devoured all the freshly baked food she had spent that morning preparing for her own family. The Englishmen went down in the cellar and took all they could find there.

Her husband was not at home; she had to submit to the depredation. Milk was taken, cattle disturbed and her otherwise peaceful house upset by the onslaught of the British. This good Dutch housewife, grandmother of Colonel Cropsey, was Femmetje or Phebe Bergen, wife of Andries Emans or Emmons. Dr. Frederick De Mund and his wife afterward resided on the property. John Emmons was the last occupant, when the new De Mund home was established at Bensonhurst. It is believed the house was moved back on another street when 84th Street went through. The J. Lott Nostrand homestead was close by, the stone portion of it being the original "de Barrie house."



*The J. Lott Nostrand House, Main Street, New Utrecht Village  
(Originally the "de Barrie" house)*

From all accounts, the British visitors took the best of everything and at once domiciled themselves in the homes of the helpless New Utrecht residents, who dared not rebel. It was under such intolerable situation that matters went along until the morning of August 27th, when the memorable Battle of Long Island was fought.

While not actually in the Township itself, the results were so

quickly known and felt as to make the happening appear to have been there, as well as in the Gowanus section.

The Hessians, commanded by General Heister were the main body of the intruders. The English were under General Grant at the left, the other corps under General Clinton, Lords Percy and Cornwallis.

The American or Long Island troops were commanded by Major General Greene, who had been in such perfect touch with the situation and was so thoroughly efficient an officer that General Washington did not think it even necessary to aid him and so kept away. But General Greene fell ill, was unable to command his troops at the last moment and in reluctant despair allowed General Sullivan to take his place, also General Putnam, in command of the Brooklyn left wing of the Army at Wallabout Bay and the right at Gowanus Cove. General Sullivan was not less capable an officer but he had not had time to study the situation ere he was plunged into battle. General Greene, rallying from illness also plunged into the battle desperately, but was unable to remedy Sullivan's oversight. Too late General Washington realized his mistake and hurriedly strived to correct it, but to no purpose. History tells how the brave Americans were driven back, yet further back, fighting valiantly but hopelessly. The English had surprised them by a roundabout "*coup*" that left no chance of recovery. Nearly a whole regiment of brave Maryland troops were sacrificed at Gowanus in that battle against odds.

The total loss to the American side was estimated to be in the neighborhood of 3,000 men killed, wounded and prisoners. The British lost only about 400 men.

Aided by a dense fog, which seemed to be a Providential happening for the American troops, they managed to retreat across the waters of the harbor under General Washington's personal direction. It is related that following the Battle of Long Island and until his troops were safely moved in retreat, General Washington did not sleep, the strain being so severe. He did not attach any blame to General Sullivan, whose sudden and totally unexpected assumption to leadership has been given as a cause for the defeat of the American army at so an important a crisis.

The British, once in power made their power felt.

History of the prison ships can never be fully told. They left their imprint upon the Nation's history, especially that of Long Island. It is needless to recount all those horrors here. The memory of those prison ship martyrs has been fittingly perpetuated by the

tall shaft of granite erected at Fort Greene Park several years ago. The grandfather of Mrs. S. V. White (Mr. Chandler), had been a prisoner on board the "Jersey." She had heard him tell of those dreadful times. It inspired her to seriously take up the matter of a monument for those neglected and only half buried heroes of the 1776 war. She performed her work so well that the monument at Fort Greene Park was raised, though she died just previous to its formal dedication and unveiling.

New Utrecht had its share of the Prison Ship horrors for many of the native soldiers on the American side were confined aboard the old hulks anchored in the Wallabout Bay. All sort of troubles arose during the British occupancy of the Township of New Utrecht. It is told how Captain Hyler, of war fame, took several small vessels and exacted contributions from fishermen on the banks of the water. He was often on Long Island. His soldiers were once encamped near the home of Michael Bergen, by the Gowanus district, and from the Bergen home he took a Hessian officer late one night.

As for Captain Marriner, mentioned frequently in history, it is known that he visited Simon Cortelyou of New Utrecht and took him to New Brunswick, Marriner's repayment for uncivil conduct to some American prisoners. The trip to Jersey, while planned as a trip of "payment" nevertheless resulted in Simon Corteljau being relieved of his tankard and other articles of value, which Captain Marriner forgot to return.

Dr. Lawrence B. Cortelyou, of 690 10th Street, Brooklyn, was authority (1893) for statements regarding his family, he having made a special study of historic matters relating to the Cortelyous. He declared his good ancestors to have been "Neutrals" not Tories. There was a difference, so he stated. Regarding the story of Marriner and Simon Cortelyou it was related by Dr. Cortelyou that his father was dining at a Staten Island inn, previous to 1893, when his eyes became fastened upon some of the table silver. It was Corteljau silver. He recognized it instantly. Of course he demanded an explanation of its presence in the inn but could not recover it, much to his disappointment. He did not then understand how the silver could have been on Staten Island, but the story of Marriner would lend color to the silver getting to Jersey and so back to Staten Island.

During the Revolutionary days a raid upon the Jacques Cortelyou house was made by some marauders who were after gold. The thrifty housewife hid the family gold pieces under some linen in the big linen press. When the bottom drawer was finally pulled out by the invaders, the smart wife drew near, scattering the gold coin all

about the room. Then, before the thieving marauders realized what was taking place she had swiftly gathered the coin together in a pile on the floor and seated herself upon the pile. The sharp trick so amused the thieves they did not harm her but instead retreated from the house. The old linen press was in the home of Mrs. Mary L. Van Brunt some years ago. The story was told by Mrs. Charles F. Seaman, nee Van Brunt, who descends from a great-great-grandmother Corteljau and so knows this tale to be true.

Regarding what has sometimes been related as a first elopement in the town and been more or less twisted in the telling, is the story of Jane, a fair young daughter of the house of Corteljau. Jane did not elope; she was secretly married to a young Hessian officer, whom she had met and loved at sight. His name was Conrad. He was a fine fellow, of unblemished character, and of note in his army service. Dr. Cortelyou related how the Simon Cortelyou family was deeply angered. Jane was denied sight or sound of her lover and husband. In vain the officer showed the marriage papers; in vain he pleaded; in vain Jane added her pleadings—the Corteljau father remained obdurate and refused to allow Jane out of the house. Finally, after that last bitter interview, with its unsuccessful termination to the love story, the young officer, leaving a curse for Simon Cortelyou, walked from the house to the bluff overlooking the Narrows and there shot himself. The effect upon Jane was saddening. Her child was known as Hannah Conrad. This love story and tragedy have been made to appear in various ways but here is the true one, gleaned from documents. (Mrs. Rushmore, 477 Washington Ave., Brooklyn.)

Simon Cortelyou could not forgive Jane for marrying a Hessian. That was the hard part for the proud Corteljau father. It has been told that Jane was kept in her room, locked there, so that she could not meet her young lover, which part of the pathetic story was true. At any rate Jane died broken hearted, her husband's tragic death blighting her young life. Thus the Simon Corteljau homestead by the Narrows had a tale apart from any British intruders, or later date events.

Denys's Ferry was also the scene of stirring times during the war of 1776. Records tell that "in July, 1776, a British vessel, the 'Asia,' was fired on by a small Long Island Battery, established by American patriots near the homes of Denys Denys and Abraham Bennet. A return volley badly damaged both houses." (Page 263, Stiles His. of Bklyn.)

Beside this sort of excitement there must have been the constant crossing over the ferry between the settlement called Narrows and the Staten Island shore. In fact much that happened on Staten Island

has some bearing on New Utrecht history, the British being in both places and frequently establishing connection. This accounts for various land transactions of New Utrecht colonists on Staten Island and even in New Jersey. There are no records discovered thus far that tell of Lord Howe's trips across Denys's ferry, but he must have gone by that route. Lord Howe was at Gowanus, at the Narrows and he was also on Staten Island. He was in both Cortelyou homes, they being Loyalists. The British Spy, Frank James, of the ship "Asia," lured American vessels and then robbed them. Christopher Duyinck, of New York, lay in the reeds of Narrows locality many days, to capture James.

Mr. Tunis G. Bergen, of Brooklyn, has much data regarding his ancestral home at Gowanus, especially during troublous war days. The British were in full possession there. It happened that a real true ghost story was attached to the Bergen homestead there. The thrilling tale has been handed down and believed through many generations of the Bergen family. While the British and General Howe occupied allotted portions of the homestead some of the officers saw fit to hang three paintings on the wall in the main hall. These were of William IV; a court lady; a battle scene. Lord Howe was deeply interested in the three paintings. After the American victory and final departure of the Britishers from American shores, the Bergen family once more resumed their quiet life in their home. The paintings were allowed to remain; no one would take them down. Until the house was demolished about 1898-99, they remained exactly as the officer hung them. The strange part lay in the fact that regularly, on the exact anniversary of the Battle of Long Island and exactly at midnight, strange sounds were heard back of the three pictures. Then heavy footsteps would be heard coming slowly down the stairs, the clanking of sword and clatter of spurs being plainly heard. These slow, firm steps always paused in front of the paintings, then passed on to the rear hall door, when, with a loud rattle of chain and bolt the door would be unfastened and the sound of the steps would pass out. Tradition has it that it was Lord Howe's ghost. The event was looked for annually. Once there were guests in the house and no mention made of the ghost story. Later in the night the guests heard the tramping along the hall and opening their bedroom door called out "Who's there?" but no answer. Their calls brought the family to the scene when each discovered that the other had heard the same sounds. Of a sudden the anniversary date was recalled. All was accounted for and quiet restored.

Another interesting fact vouched for by Mr. Bergen was that of the Colonel Grant sword being found at Delaware Water Gap about

1897-98, it having been captured by a Mr. Broadhead from a British officer during the Battle of Long Island, 1776. Sally Bergen had loved and married a Colonel John Grant of the 46th English Highland Regiment, who after the American victory was given a tract of land at Nova Scotia, where he and the fair and faithful Sally removed. The sword was a Scottish affair, covered with quaint carving and inscription. Of course Mr. Tunis G. Bergen at once recognized it. The father of his host, Broadhead, had captured it and the junior Broadhead would not relinquish the relic. Mr. Bergen had several of the cannon balls that hit the Bergen house during the Battle of Long Island, but in the Fulton & Flatbush Storage Co.'s fire he lost them as well as other relics.

In telling of Bergen happenings at Gowanus Cove it is realized that Lord Howe was in New Utrecht and so crossed the ferry by the Narrows. There is no mention of Denyse Denyse having control of the ferry at this period. Denyse has been accounted for on the side of the American cause. As the British were in entire possession of the township, homes, cattle and general supplies, it would be natural to understand that they were also in control of the ferry to Staten Island.

One historic event was the bringing of General Woodhull from the prison ship, first to the Dutch Church in New Utrecht and then to the de Sille home, where the General died September 20, 1776, aged 54 years. His wife was with him at the last, the British in charge of the hospital-church not wishing to have his death charged upon them as a case of neglect. It was in brave resignation the General passed away, instructing his wife, who had been summoned, to distribute the food she had brought with her among the starving American troops. This she did as ordered by him. The Woodhulls had only one child, a daughter, who married first Henry Nicoll, and married second, Gen. John Smith. Much controversy arose over the case of General Woodhull's treatment and death, all of which made the de Sille house a historic landmark for years after and until it was demolished. The mistake of demolition of so historic a house has since been realized.

As for the Dutch church, services were sadly interrupted there during all these trying times in the township. The British used it as arsenal and then as hospital but church services were afterward renewed and the church revered all the more for the struggle it had passed through.

The present church on Eighteenth Avenue, covered with trailing vines of old English ivy, was built from stones used in the first Dutch church. It has been pointed out as the old first Dutch church of New Utrecht, which, of course, is not the case.



Further along on Eighteenth Avenue is the Cowenhoven house and lands, dating back to a period before 1700.

Records tell of a letter written by Nicholas Cowenhoven August 23d, 1778, to Governor Clinton, offering him, or rather the State, a sum of money to give away to prisoners of State. It was remarked by Governor Clinton that "as Cowenhoven was said to be a Loyalist the generous offer appeared to be doubtful of acceptance." Whether or no the money was finally accepted is not related in the old records.

In a paper headed, "Indictment of Tories" the name of Nicholas Cowenhoven does not appear. Following is this indictment: "At an examination of Henry Swartout, Lieut. of 1st Regiment, N. Y., before the Grand Jury of Albany County, he stated he had seen Jaques Denice, (Capt.) of Gravesend, August 15th, 1778; Cornelius Van Duyn, John Van Duyn, Peter Vanderbilt, yeoman, of New Utrecht, May 25th, 1778. And on Dec. 1st, 1778, he had seen Isaac, Simon and Jacques Cortelyou, yeomen, of New Utrecht." (Onderdonk's, page 40.)

There was a Jaques Denice who was cornetist in Captain Waldron's Troop of Dragoons, Monmouth County, N. J., during 1776. Later he was lieutenant, then captain and also signed American cause documentary papers at Freehold, 1778.

Denyse Denyse, of the Narrows, was a patriot for the American cause, being chosen a delegate or deputy to the Provincial Congress at New York, to resist British oppression, April, 1775.

There has been a story told among descendants of the Denyse family that Rymeicka Denyse, a young resident of New Utrecht, saved the American Army from quick reverse action and defeat, by sounding the alarm that the British were preparing to attack the American forces. Rymeicka was a daughter of Gerrit Denyse. She later married John Walker and removed to Providence, R. I.\*

Revolutionary and other war services are mentioned in various records, some of which are included, but not all. In book 15 of the Colonial History Archives, the following 1776 patriots are noted:

Alexander Cropsey, Ensign (page 302).

Aaron Cortelyou, Colonel of 4th Regiment (page 14).

One order reads: "Ordered, that Col. Clinton, Col. McDougal, Mr. Brasher, Col. Woodhull, Col. Tuston, Col. Cortlandt, Col. Rens-

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\*Note—It is believed she was daughter of the Gerrit, who died July, 1801, who was son of Jacques Denyse of the Narrows. Whatever the line of descent, Rymiecka Denys was a very brave girl and thought nothing of her own great danger at the time. There are no existing documents to prove this tale of 1776 coolness and energy but it must be true else tradition would not so firmly express itself in different family branches.



selaer, Col. Blackwel, Capt. Platt, Mr. Christopher Yates, Col. Cortelyou, Mr. Vander Bilt and Major Williams be a Committee to form and determine the rank of Captains and inferior officers in each Regiment and of the Captains in the several Regiments." Dated June 30th, 1775.

From a calendar of historical manuscripts, Revolutionary papers by official publication, 1868, O'Callaghan, the following names are noted: On muster roll, George Cortelyou, private in Col. Lasher's Regiment, November 5, 1776 (page 500). (Col. Lasher commanded a New York Regiment.)

Aaron Cortelyou on the list of Deputies selected for the Colonies of New York to the Provincial Congress, May 26, 1775 (page 86).

On pages 18-28-29 are mentioned the names of Henry Cropsy, Adam Cropsie, Alexander Cropsie, Andrew Cropsie, Isaac Cropsie.

Auert Van Pelt was also a 1776 patriot.

The Van Brunt family were represented on the American side. The pretty story of Adrian Van Brunt's daughter, Altje, is one best told in the personal reminiscence of Mrs. John Franklin Berry, of Brooklyn, whose ancestors were among those earlier soldiers of the Colony of New Utrecht. The story of Altje Van Brunt must be thus read. Not even the British could make Altje forget her pink sunbonnet, nor could their unwelcome presence in the Van Brunt home cause fear. The father, Adrian Van Brunt, was absent with his regiment. This story of Altje goes down as a bit of delightful history.

### FIRST LIBERTY POLE.

Following the events of the Revolutionary war, when the British were finally vanquished and the victorious American armies made American Independence assured, the first Liberty Pole was erected in New Utrecht, during 1783, to celebrate British evacuation and restoration of Dutch rule in the Colonies. It was an occasion for great rejoicing and also festivity of an unusual character. There was feasting, also games on the meadow. Everybody then joined hands and danced around the big Liberty Pole, erected and dedicated to the cause of Liberty. Echoes of that grand celebration in the township of New Utrecht are heard among the present day descendants of those first Dutch settlers. The same eagle and weather vane placed on that first pole have been placed on the Liberty Pole standing to day in front of the Reformed Dutch Church on Eighteenth Avenue. The vane has the word "Liberty" on it which can be plainly read when the vane points at proper angle for the reading of that

previous wood. The new pole cost \$500, being merely a needed replacing of the previous pole, which was in bad condition through lapse of time. It has been planned that the expense of keeping the pole as a permanent feature where it now stands, will devolve upon members of the Liberty Pole Association, which any American citizen can join at very small annual dues.

It is hoped to keep alive the spirit of patriotism, as exemplified in the erection of the first Liberty Pole in 1783.

From the records of the Dutch at their records, there is not much allusion to a Liberty Pole in that New Utrecht must have had the honor of erecting the first in America. From those Albany sources of history, the following can be quoted as follows: "The idea of Liberty Poles was first started in the Hellenic cap. In other words, it goes back to the time of the Romans and the Greeks. The Dutch erected poles of this kind at the beginning of the war with Spain, but the poles were not erected permanently. There was no occasion to erect Liberty Poles in America except possibly in 1648, in celebrating with the Dutch the end of the 80 years war with Spain. May poles were erected on festive occasions and the idea of happily dancing about a May pole may readily have suggested doing the same thing about a Liberty Pole."

From this it can be understood how truly joyous the Dutch people of New Utrecht must have been when they erected their first Liberty Pole in the little village that now is part of the big city of New York. In the same true spirit, that Pole has been kept as it was in the long ago days, with every patriotic event finding the Stars and Stripes floating to the breeze from the Pole made so historic. The personal reminiscences of Mrs. Townsend C. Van Pelt tell much of the Pole.

The closing period of the Revolutionary war was one of anxious time for all concerned in American Independence. When the armies of General Washington marched along Pearl Street, New York, in all the glory of their hard earned victory, the people gave warm welcome indeed. As the Dutch are known to be good fighters so were they also known to have been good rejoicers.

It was not long after the close of the 1776 war that the desirability of land along the water edge became apparent to those who had been further inland. One of the events of the latter part of the 1700 period was establishment of the "Bath House" at the village of Bath, which place immediately became a favorite resort, especially for convalescents and those seeking the invigorating air by the Narrows. The Bath House was erected in 1794. While not being altogether a sani-

tarium it was under the supervision of Dr. Bailey, Dr. Rogers, Dr. Tillary, Dr. Bard and others, whose interest in the enterprise and medical prominence at that time contributed a certainty of repose and complete rest for those seeking that very thing. The building was destroyed by fire in 1802 and never rebuilt.

It was the Hamilton House at Fort Hamilton that later became famed as a resort, as did the fashionable hotel at Coney Island, established by James Cropsey and Cornelius Woglum. This was during the 1800 period, the Bath House being the first hotel in the township during 1700.

During the latter part of 1700, citizens of the township had plenty to occupy their time in restoring their properties to former condition. Deaths and marriages made changes, also various land transactions, some of which are recorded in this book from original and time-worn documents, others have been destroyed or lost and so are not available for clearing up some family and land intricacies. Those here printed are of value in telling of many of the old time residents of the township, of their homes and families. Denyse Denyse being one of the largest land owners of the locality naturally figures largely in nearly all documents found, so do the Cortelyous, the Van Brunts, the Cowenhovens, the Van Pelts and other of the old families.

There are various ways of spelling the names, according to the then existing conditions between English and Dutch languages. Those unable to sign names in English either made their mark to documents or wrote in such dreadful English that it is difficult to decipher the name. The drawing up of legal papers were, of course, done by those competent to write good English. It is due to the various ways of recording the old Dutch names of the settlers and their family members that so many different ways of spelling those names exist at the present time. Descendants had wide choice of a surname. Many kept to the original spelling of it. The change from Dutch language to English must have been a most difficult and trying time to the older people of the township. That is doubtless why, in several of the personal reminiscences, it is stated that parents clung to their Dutch language but insisted their children should learn only the English. A copy of a Colonial Primer tells the story of those early struggles for education and how much the church figured in the week day schooling, the catechism being considered especially important.

### **GENERAL WOODHULL.**

Much sentiment is attached to the old de Silles house in connection with Gen. Nathaniel Woodhull. This man who began life as a

farmer, rose to a most foremost place in the annals of Long Island history and that of New Utrecht. Nathaniel Woodhull was born at Mastic, L. I., during 1722. He became Colonel of the Third Regiment, N. Y., and was at Montreal and Canada's reduction in 1760. Later he was made Brigadier General of Military companies for Suffolk and Queens counties and was shot and injured, near Jamaica, L. I., for refusing to obey the English officer's command to repeat "God Save the King." Twice was the command given, but General Woodhull replied each time, "God Save all Honest Men." There has been widespread discussion, even argument, as to whether Capt. Oliver Delancey was the officer who shot and later ill-treated General Woodhull or whether General Woodhull was otherwise wounded when Captain, later Colonel, DeLancey sought to shield, not hurt him.

For this dispute the historians have brought forth many proofs. However the case may be settled as to the shooting of the General, it has been proved that he was confined on board the ships "Pacific" and "Mentor," for one week, during which time he suffered great agony and was given a mattress for more comfort than was allowed other prisoners. He was finally released and conveyed to New Utrecht, where he was placed in the British hospital, then in the Reformed Dutch Church on Kings Highway. Seeing his grave condition and realizing the end to be not very distant, the General was taken to the de Sille house. His wife was notified. She was able to reach him before he expired. This was September 20, or 23, 1776. It has been claimed the British were harsh even to the end, but inasmuch as they allowed their distinguished prisoner to be removed to a private homestead, with Mrs. Woodhull present, it can scarcely be believed that General Woodhull died of cruel neglect and lack of care at the last. His wife was Ruth, daughter of Nicoll Floyd. At her husband's summons she reached New Utrecht and also brought with her a wagon filled with food and various necessities for distribution among the American patriots who needed such. General Woodhull's fine mind and soldierly instinct had bade her do this and she obeyed. His last words were, "Care for my soldiers." His death created a profound sensation in New Utrecht at the time. Stories of ill treatment from the Britishers were uppermost. Capt. Oliver De Lancey was declared villainous. The De Lancey family of New York have since endeavored to correct their ancestral villainy in this respect, hence the argument among historians as to the General's treatment at De Lancey's hands.

General Woodhull was buried at Mastic, L. I. He left one child, a daughter. She married, first, Henry Nicoll; married second, Gen. John Smith.

February 5-23, 1781. Daniel Jones of the town of New Utrecht, having bought a farm or plantation at a place commonly called Yellow Hook, as appeared by a certain release from Denyse Denyse and wife Teuntje, said lease bearing date 23d day of February, and the release the 24th day of February, 1781. It gives Denyse Denyse and his heirs the "Shoar and water privilege from the Westmost corner of the land of Jaques Barkeloo, four chains from said corner, by the River, before the land of said Daniel Jones, for the time of ten months yearly and every year, from the 16th day of May, to the 14th day of March. Privilege for fishing with fishing nets or Seting of Hoops. Said Daniel Jones or his heirs shall make no Mollestation or do any Damage to said Denyse Denyse or his heirs on the said four chains from the land of Jaques Barkeloo."

Signed by DANIEL JONES.

Witnesses:

ABRAHAM DURYEE and

JOHANNIS E. LOTT.

#### 1782—DENYSE DENYSE AND JOHN RAPALJE.

On September 12, 1782, a land transaction recorded between Denyse Denyse, Teuntje his wife and John Rapalje of Brooklyn. They sold to Rapalje all those parcels of land situated in New Utrecht. One parcel—Northeast corner of the garden of Maria Lott, deceased, widow of Joris Lott, deceased, by the road from Flatbush to New Utrecht. Thence to the Indian Pond and east to the land late of Altje Stilwell, deceased, of Nicholas Stilwell, north and east by Garret Kouwenhoven's land, thence south.

Another of said tracts in New Utrecht, bounded by southwest corner woodland lot of Tryntie, wife of John Rapalje, running thence north and west to dividing line of Rutgart Van Brunt's woodland. Another tract beginning by woodland of Joris Lott, deceased, and southwestern corner of woodland of Hendrick Johnson and by the land of Jan Ver Kerk, deceased.

Another tract, part of a lot called No. 14, in New Utrecht, bounded by woodland of Altje Stilwell, deceased, and a certain sassafras marked stake standing at southeastern corner of said woodland, thence to woodland of Casper Crapser, thence south, containing 8 1-3 acres and there was also a parcel of salt meadow at Flatlands, at a place called Urisen Hook. Also a piece of marshland in New Utrecht meadow of Flatlands township, bounded westerly by the meadow of Evert Suydam, southerly by a certain ditch on the land of Peter Wyckof, easterly by the meadow of Jacques Denyse and northerly by

a ditch on the woodland of Jan Ditmars, deceased. Signed by Denyse Denyse and Teuntje Denyse, September 12, 1782.

### 1782—FIRST NEWSPAPER.

A first newspaper was published in Brooklyn, June 8, 1782, and called *Brooklyn Hall Super Extra Gazette*. It told that "Baron deWalzogen, Commander of Hessian and Brunswicke troops, now at Brooklyn Camp, had received an address from the inhabitants of New Utrecht, thanking him for the vigilant care, good order and discipline prevailing among the officers and soldiers under his command at the Narrows." (Copy of document at Naval Lyceum, U. S. Navy, Bklyn., page 99, Stiles His.)

September 13, 1782. A very important, elaborate looking document, written in three large pages of beautiful script, duly sealed and fastened with pale blue ribbon to signify care and nicety, is an old document relating to an indenture made between Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, on one part and John Rapalje, Jr., of Brooklyn, on the second part. It must have taken much time and extreme care to write this old paper, now cracked and yellow with age but clearly decipherable because of the beautiful penmanship.

This document tells that "in consideration of the sum of ten shillings paid by said John Rapalje, Jr., Denyse Denyse and wife Teuntje sold and conveyed all those certain parcels of land situated in the Township of New Utrecht, bounded by land late of Maria Lott, thence to the Indian Pond, thence North and East by division line of the Town of Gravesend and by land late of James Hubbard so as the fence now stands to rear of land of Gerrit Kouwenhoven, thence North, etc., etc., containing 113 acres of land."

Another parcel of land was described "beginning at the division line of Southwesternmost corner of the woodland of Tryntje, wife of John Rapalje, running thence North 58 degrees, West 37 chains, by said woodland to division line between and the woodland of Rutgert Van Brunt, South 40 degrees, West 2 chains, etc., etc., containing  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres of land."

Another parcel: "Bounded by woodland late of Joris Lott, deceased, at Southwestern corner of woodland late of Hendrick Johnson, deceased, running thence North to woodland of late Jan Van Kerk, deceased, containing 17 acres and one-half."

Another parcel: "Being part of Lot No. 14, bounded as beginning at woodland of the late Altje Stilwell, deceased, by a certain sassafras marked stake standing at Southeasternmost corner of said woodland, running thence North 60 degrees, West 24 chains, to division line, thence South 42 degrees, West 3 chains by said division line to woodland of Casper Crapser, thence South 58 degrees, etc., etc., containing  $8\frac{1}{3}$  acres of land."

Also some salt meadow land "lying in the Town of Flatlands at a place called Urisen Hoek, bounded Westerly by meadow of William Kouwenhoven, Southerly by a creek, Easterly by a creek or Ditch between Verkens Hoek and Urisen Hoek" and another piece of salt meadow "by Evert Suydam, Southerly by a Ditch or land

of Peter Wyckoff, Easterly by land of Jaques Denyse and Northerly by a certain Ditch or woodland of Jan Ditmars, deceased,"—also a parcel of salt meadow ground "in the Town of Flatlands, bounded Westerly by meadow of the late Andries Emans, deceased, Southwesterly by the Bay, thence Southerly and Easterly by a certain Creek, etc., etc."—all said tracts and parcels assigned to said John Rapalje, Jr., of Brooklyn. There appears to be a long detailed order that the  $\frac{1}{3}$  of said premises shall be for the use of Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, or for either of them who shall survive the other, or at the death of both to then go to the mentioned Rutgert Denyse, son of Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, and to his heirs, subject to the trust mentioned; for the children of Jacques Denyse, son of Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, one other full and equal third right of all the said premises; also one third full right to Rymeicka Stewart, daughter of the said Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, and to the heirs of said Rymeicka, subject to the trust herein mentioned, for raising portions for the children of the said Jacques Denyse; also the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  equal part to the use of Jane Denyse, daughter of said Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, and to her heirs, subject to the trust mentioned. Signed by Denyse Denyse and Teuntje.

The document elaborately states that John Rapalje should hold the premises in trust for the use of said Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, and so their children in case the parents should die first. It mentions the premises as being divided into three equal parts, yet mentions four children: Rutgert, Jacques children, Rymeicke and Jane. How four can each receive a third of the trust share is not quite clear to the copyist of this old document, yet that is exactly what is stated.

On another side of these pages is written: "Received on the 13 day of May, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and seven, of Mr. John Rapalje, the sum of \$800.75 in full satisfaction of the trust reposed in him for us, in the within special conveyance, in trust made to him, the said John Rapalje, by Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, late of the Narrows in the Township of New Utrecht and County of Kings, now deceased, and bearing date the 13th day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two.

Witness, Thomas D. Smith.

Signed by

DENYSE D. DENYSE,  
JOHN DENYSE,  
HENRY DENYSE,  
WILLIAM DENYSE,  
ISAAC DENYSE,  
TUNIS DENYSE,  
JANE BARRE.

Cary Ludlow was Master in Chancery for the Province of New York. On September 13, 1782, before him personally appeared Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, to bear witness to the deed of conveyance and trust to John Rapalje, Jr., of Brooklyn. This old deed is recorded in Kings County Clerk's office, Liber 191 of Conveyances, page 448, March 5, 1849, at 25 minutes past 10 A. M. Examined by John Hicks, Clerk.

The original deed is held by a descendant of the Denyse family, now residing on Eighteenth Avenue. It proves that Denyse Denyse died prior to May 13, 1807.

April 28, 1785, Messrs. Simon, Jacques and Isaac Cortelyou sent 600 prime shad as a donation to the New York Almshouse. Their united business was in their fisheries by the Narrows.

October 6, 1788, Charles Berry forged the name of Cortelyou. After being convicted of the crime, he escaped from jail at Kings County, being not captured.

April 16, 1791, a draft of Shad taken from the Narrows water were 14,000 fish and were valued at upwards of £200.

August 13, 1793. Isaac Cortelyou had a "house of four rooms to let, near to bathing and fronting the Bay, below Denys's."

May 2, 1799. Transaction of land matters between James Boyce, Sally, his wife, of Gravesend and Denice Denice of New Utrecht.

Document signed JAMES BOYCE (his mark X)

SALLY BOYCE,

Witnesses:

SAMUEL HUBBARD,

RICHARD STILWELL.





*Teunis G. Bergen*



*Paul A. Oliver*



## 1800 PERIOD.

YELLOW FEVER.

CIVIL WAR.

PROGRESS OF THE VILLAGES.

PRESENT DAY REMINISCENCES.

**W**ITH the close of the 1776 war a new century was at hand for the settlement of New Utrecht. The Seventeenth Century witnessed much for the old Dutch township, but the Eighteenth Century closed with a still more remarkable list of happenings. Scattered homesteads and villages became more united by reason of the march of progress. Many inhabitants of the 1700 period were left in the township. New ones came. There was a yellow fever epidemic; the building of the grim stone fort by the Narrows; the Civil war and its attending excitement; slavery question between North and South; wonderful inventions on land and on sea. During changes from olden time ways to new, it was the late Hon. Tunis G. Bergen, of Bay Ridge, who gathered township records of earlier days, moulding them into historic data. Except for him there would now be many missing links for those delving into the past of Brooklyn's Thirtieth Ward.

Hon. Henry C. Murphy, who established a home at Bay Ridge, 1845-50, was a writer and historian of note. When at Holland one season, he obtained and translated the valuable Dunker and Sluyter papers of 1679 data.

The township of New Utrecht grew rapidly after the close of the Civil war. Trolley, then steam cars and finally electricity naturally developed the former farmlands into city streets and avenues. Recital of all this follows in variously related reminiscences of a personal nature. Church and town records were better kept and less difficult of translation.

It will be necessary to gradually approach such period, turning backward to the documents that have to deal with the early 1800 period.

### SIMON CORTELYOU TO DENYSE DENYSE.

May, 1801. "This Indenture made between Simon Cortelyou of the Town of New Utrecht and Denyse Denyse of the same place, witnesseth that said Simon, in consideration of the sum of 5 pounds per acre, to him paid in hand by said Denyse Denyse, the receipt whereof he doth acknowledge himself to be content, hath bargained, sold and conveyed unto said Denyse Denyse, his heirs, all that parcel

of land lying in Middletown, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, being part of a farm bought from William Hobrow, deceased, containing 23 acres &  $\frac{1}{2}$ , now belonging to Timothy T. Cortelyou—on a corner, South 58 degrees, East from a Wight oak tree standing on Matawas Road, it being the Northwesterly corner of the plantation of William Hobrow, deceased, thence South, thence East to the land of William Cropsy, thence along said land South 25 degrees, to the land of Simon Cortelyou, thence along said land Northwest 18 chains to the land of Timothy T. Cortelyou, containing 23 acres &  $\frac{1}{2}$ , Strict Measure. And he, the said Simon Cortelyou hath full power to grant the same, as the same was grant to him by from Jedidian Swan and Jonathan W. Osbourn, with the Act of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, to Enable said Swan and Osbourn, Administrators of William Hobrow, deceased, to convey the same to said Simon Cortelyou.” Signed by Simon Cortelyou, who added a post-script to the document, thus

“And whereas I have Reserved a Road down to the Landing across the farm of William Cropsy for the purpose of carting wood and Laying it on the Landing to take off with boats to Long Island—I therefore give unto Denyse Denyse, his heirs, or assigns forever, the same right to cart wood from the above 23 Acres of Woodland, formerly of William Hobrow’s.”

This document was witnessed by  
PETER T. CORTELYOU,  
AURT VAN PELT.

Date May 1, 1801.

## LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF DENYSE DENYSE.

August 22, 1800—October 23, 1806.

In the Name of God, Amen. The twenty-second day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred I, Denyse Denyse of the Narrows in the Town of New Utricht in Kings County State of New York, Yeoman, being at present very well & in good health & perfect of mind memory & understanding, but considering the uncertainty of this transitory life, I Do make, publish and declare this my last Will & Testament in manner and form following that is to say, Firstly I recommend my Soul into the hands of God who gave it & my body I recommend it to the earth to be buried in a Christian like & decent manner at the discretion of my Executors herein after named, nothing doubting but at the general resurrection I shall receive the same again by the mighty power of God & as for such worldly estate wherewith it hath pleased God to bless me with in this life, I give devise & dispose of the same in manner & form following (Viz)

Firstly: It is my Will & order that all my just and lawful debts be paid, & my funeral charges be payed out of my personal estate, by my Executors herein after named, before any devision is made of my estate.

Secondly: It is my Will & order that my Executors herein after named shall pay unto my loving Wife Elizabeth, the sum of Fifty Pounds current money of the State of New York yearly & every year for and during the time she shall remain my widow to be paid to her the one equal part thereof at the end of every six months in two equal payments. It is also my Will & order that my said wife Elizabeth shall have the choice of one of the rooms in this my dwelling house to live in during the time she shall remain my Widow & as much furniture as to furnish the said room, including a Bed, bedstead & the furniture thereto belonging, & that my said Wife Elizabeth shall have the choice of one of my negro Wenches to wait on her & that my Executors see that my said Wife Elizabeth shall have her fire wood brought and cut, by the door, as much as she shall have need for during the time aforesaid & that my said Wife shall be at liberty to go in the garden or Orchard & take of the fruit thereof, as she did in my life time, it being in lieu & stead of her dower in my estate.

Thirdly: I give devise & bequeath unto my two daughters, Ryme & Jane and to my grandchildren Namely, Denyse Denyse, Gerrit Denyse, John Denyse, William Denyse, Jane the Wife of Daniel Barre, Hendrick Denyse & Tunis Denyse, children of my late son Jaques Denyse deceased, all my real and personal estate of what sort or denomination the same be in manner & form following: that is to say, the one third to my daughter Jane, & the one third to my said daughter Ryme, and the one third to the above named children of my said son Jaques Denyse deceased & to each of their heirs & assigns forever, the respective legacies to be retained in the hands of my Executors until the legatees arrive at the age of twenty-one years.

Fourthly: It is my Will & order if any of the above named children or grandchildren should happen to die before they have recd their share or portion of my estate the share or portion of any so dying shall fall on the survivors or survivor of them or to their heirs & assigns.

Lastly: I do hereby nominate & appoint my said two daughters Ryme & Jane, Executrix and my two grandsons namely Denyse Denyse & Gerrit Denyse, Executors of this my last Will & Testament, giving & granting unto them or the major part of them or the Survivors or Survivor of them full power to see that the same be duly & truly performed according to the true intent & meaning hereof & do hereby revoke & disannul all former & other Wills & bequests. In Witness whereof I the said Denyse Denyse have hereunto set my hand & seal the day & year first above written.

DENYSE DENYSE. [L. S.]

Oct. 23, 1806, personally appeared before me, William Livingston, Surrogate, George A. Duryee & John Rapalje jun., of the Narrows in the Town of New Utricht, and being duly sworn on their Oaths declared they did see Denyse Denyse sign & seal the preceding Instrument purporting to be the last Will of the said Denyse Denyse.

I Do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy from the original Will of Denyse Denyse dec'd & of the certificate of the proof thereof recorded in my office.

Proved, Oct. 23d, 1806.

WM. LIVINGSTON,  
Surrogate, Kings Co.

## HEIRS OF DENYSE DENYSE (SETTLEMENT OF LAND MATTERS).

Dec. 1806. Two certain parcels of land were conveyed by Rymie Stewart and Jane Smith to the heirs of Jaques Denyse (surveyed by Jeremiah Lott, Nov. 20th, 1806. This land was "by that of Altie Stilwell, deceased, Jacob Moors, Isaac Cortelyou, Jaques Cortelyou, to the Bay, with all Barnes, buildings and Improvements, etc., situated at the Yellow Hook in the Township of New Utrecht, containing 33 acres."

(Two parcels of land conveyed by Rime Stewart and the heirs of Jaques Denyse to Jane Smith.)

Dec. 31, 1806. This land was by Albert Van Brunt's to the Bay, containing 60 acres exclusive of a Road, 2 rods wide, which Road is intended to be laid along the Northwesterly side of the land to be conveyed to the heirs of Jaques Denyse—also another parcel of land at Yellow Hook, by the land of Isaac Denyse, to land of heirs of late Andrew Cropsy, to land of Jaques Van Brunt, containing 48 acres.

A deed drawn between Jane Smith & others to Rime Stewart, Dec. 31, 1806, relates to final settlement of estate matters bet. Jane Smith, widow, and heirs of Jaques Denyse, deceased. Land claims were renounced by the heirs of Jaques, the land described as being by that of John Bennet, by land of Harmonus Barkaloo, deceased, to land of Albert Van Brunt, containing 58 acres. The second deed, bet. Rime Stewart & others to Jane Smith, date Dec. 31, 1806 states that "whereas Denyse Denyse of New Utrecht had considerable real estate in lifetime and at the time of his death did descend to Rime Stewart, the children of Jaques Denyse, deceased, and to Jane Smith, said Rime Stewart & Jane Smith conveyed some of their land to the children of Jaques, have released parties, etc., etc." All the heirs of Jaques signed the release document, (monstrous & elaborate pages of script). Thus Rime Stewart became sole owner. This accounts for the fact that the children of Jaques Denyse had no further voice in land matters connected with their Grandfather's estate. Following are the children's names, as signed to the document:

- 1—Denyse D. Denyse—Polly, his wife.
- 2—John Denyse—Sarah, his wife.
- 3—William Denyse—Maria, his wife.
- 4—Isaac Denyse—Magdalene, his wife.
- 5—Henry Denyse—Elizabeth, his wife.
- 6—Tunis Denyse—Sarah, his wife.
- 7—Jane Denyse—Daniel Barre, her husband.

All children of Jaques Denyse, deceased, of the Narrows.

Witnesses to this document were: Simon Cortelyou, John Rapalje. Dec. 31, 1806.

1807. Indenture June 10, 1807, between Jane Smith and Thomas Denyse Smith, of New Utrecht, "as well for the natural love and affection which she beareth to her son and for consideration of the sum of 5 shillings, said Jane Smith doth bargain & grant to said Thomas Denyse Smith that parcel of land in New Utrecht, by lot of Joris Lott, deceased, by woods of Hendrick Johnson, deceased, to woods late of Jan Vankerck, deceased, containing 17 acres." Witnesses, Elizabeth Denyse & John Rapalje.

## RIME STEWART (NEE RYMEICKA DENYSE).

1812-13. Business transactions of interest are those between Rime Stewart and Jane Smith, of New Utrecht, bonded to Ida Stilwell, of Gravesend for eleven hundred and fifty pounds. April 23, 1812.

Rime Stewart and Jane Smith bonded for sum of \$2,000 to Timothy Cortelyou, of New Utrecht, May 12, 1812. Witnesses, Elizabeth Denyse, John Rapalje.

(Timothy Cortelyou afterward sold this bond to Daniel Rapalje, for sum of \$1,070, May 11, 1825.)

Rime Stewart, widow of James Stewart, bonded for sum of \$3,200 to Daniel McCormick, of New York, October 12, 1813.

Rime Stewart of New Utrecht, signed for sum of \$6,000 from Nathan Rogers of New York, December 15, 1824. During 1830 the last interest payment was made by Mrs. Stewart. In 1834 Dr. John Carpenter paid it, proving Mrs. Stewart's death between those dates. As this good woman was a most interesting character in New Utrecht, as well as a large property owner, following her father's death, a brief sketch of her is given, with honors due.

Rime Denyse, wife of James Stewart, was born 1794; died January 25, 1832. No records tell of her girlhood, but that she was of gifted and Christian character has been proved by town records. Her courage and generosity were often taxed. Her father, Denyse Denyse, left great and pressing responsibilities upon her shoulders. He died September 25, 1806, after which date the name of Rime Stewart occurs frequently in various land and business matters in New Utrecht. It has been told of her when Simon Cortelyou refused to allow his daughter Jane to see her young husband (a Hessian officer, whom Simon Cortelyou scorned) and that lover and husband shot himself on the bluff overlooking the Narrows, it was Mrs. Stewart who had the Hessian officer buried with full military honors upon her own farmland near by. Jane Cortelyou, or in reality Jane Conrad, had a warm sympathizer in Rime Stewart. This fact, never before told in history must go down as data of two women's hearts. Mrs. Merwin Rushmore, of 477 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., has been the informant, she being a Cortelyou, possessing documents of this romance by the Narrows. While never having been recorded as a public character yet Mrs. Stewart's work in New Utrecht was always for the welfare of her village. Following her father's death she made a will, brief and to the point, as were her own deeds in life. "Considering the uncertainty of life, I do make my last will & testament. This gives to my sister Jane Smith, during her natural life, and at her death to her children by Hugh Smith, viz., Thomas D., Jane, Margaret,

Hugh and their heirs—all share in the farm, fishery and other appurtenances, situated and lying at the Narrows. Also the farm and fishery situated at the Yellow Hook, inherited from my father, Denyse Denyse, also the lot of ground in New York.” Signed, Rimerick Stewart. October 29, 1806. Witnesses, Diana Rapalje, John Rapalje, Wright Post.

Last will and testament of John Rapalje:

He was a resident of Kings County, then New York. His will was made in favor of his beloved niece, Catherine, wife of George Weltden, late of Upper Phillimore, P. I., London, England. The document leaves her all except the bonds, deeds, notes and deductments relating to the Trust fund of Denyse Denyse of New Utrecht and of Mrs. Rime Stewart, widow of James Stewart and Mrs. Jane Smith, widow of Hugh Smith, the daughters of Mr. Denyse Denyse and thereby cancelled all claims and demands had at the time of his death. Signed by John Rapalje, April 15, 1819 (will probated June 2, 1819).

1802-1820. Power of Attorney was asked by John Lawrence Lutwyche and his sister, Catherine, January 23, 1802, to obtain possession of New Utrecht land, the estate of their grandmother, Catherine Rapalje, formerly Catherine Van Brunt, deceased. Mr. John Rapalje was addressed, 1802, but in 1820 the matter was resumed. No settlement is mentioned. John Lutwyche and his sister were residents of Kensington, Middlesex County, England. They were sole children of Jane Lutwyche, deceased (Mrs. Edward Goldstone Lutwyche). She was called Jane Rapalje, being one of two children of Catherine, wife of John Rapalje, which said Catherine was formerly Catherine Van Brunt of New Utrecht. It is not stated how the suit ended.

Agreement between James D. Denyse, Jane Smith and Rime Stewart (no date). James D. Denyse was to take Rime Stewart's farm as it stood. “He shall also have exclusive rights to the Fishery in front of said farm and shall pay  $\frac{1}{2}$  proceeds to Rime Stewart & Jane Smith, who shall furnish  $\frac{1}{2}$  the flax for making twine and allow  $\frac{1}{2}$  the stakes to be cut in their woods, but all other expense be born by James D. Denyse. He shall leave all in good repair and faithfully and carefully gather and save all the seaweed that comes on the Beach and appropriate it. James D. Denyse shall also ride all the wood for Rime Stewart & Jane Smith; to take their grain to and fetch it from the Mill; to take them to church and at all reasonable and convenient times allow them a horse to go to Brooklyn.”

The same farm was mentioned as having been leased to Peter Duryea, who was to occupy it. (Documents torn, no date.)



## FOOD PRICES IN 1817.

1817. At this time it is worthy of note that flour sold for \$15 a barrel, being higher priced during 1819, owing to the fields on Long Island having suffered continued drought. In 1819 a bill rendered a customer by James C. Church, of the Narrows, tells the following prices: 2 lbs. candles at 3 Sh.; 4 lbs. butter at 6 Sh.; 7 lbs. rice at 3 Sh. 6 p.; 1 lb. Starch at 1 Sh. 6 p.

1821. It was recorded that on April 24, 1821, William Cropsey, of New Utrecht, was appointed Ensign of Light Infantry, 64th Regiment, commission signed by Gov. Dewitt Clinton. (He was son of William and Jane Denyse.)

1834. Description of a property made over to James C. Church tells of a parcel of land in New Utrecht—a partition map of the estate of Isaac Cortelyou, deceased, described in a conveyance from James Turnbull to James C. Church. March 1, 1834. Recorded Kings County Clerk's office, Liber 40, page 19, March 6, 1834 (conveyances).

1837. A mortgage transaction between Jacob S. Smith, of Fort Hamilton, and Jane his wife, mentions that Dr. John Carpenter be considered. Date October 17, 1837.

1840. A land conveyance between Hugh Smith, Eleanor, his wife, and Dr. John Carpenter, June 1, 1840, mentions two parcels known as Nos. 121 and 122 in New Utrecht, surveyed by Sidney Herbert, 1834. It was bounded by Smith Avenue leading from Stewart Avenue by A. Van Brunt's land, comprising 5 acres.

1845. An old document records an auction sale held at Peter Lott's, March 7, 1845. It was hoped the sale would be for cash, although some time allowance would be granted. Among the citizens attracted there were: John Bergen, Garret Stryker, S. N. Stillwell, Isaac Van Dyck, A. Elderts, Jeromus Suydam, Nicholas Stilwell, J. W. Cropsey, G. Ryder, L. Ryder, D. Duryea, A. VanSicklen.

## YELLOW HOOK BECOMES BAY RIDGE.

1845-55. There has never been any "Official" christening for Bay Ridge. It really has no legal name. Before the Revolutionary war the land between Gowanus and the Narrows district was a succession of hilly surfaces with the highest prominence at about the present 70th to 86th Streets. The locality south of Gowanus was known as "Yellow Hook," because of the color of its soil. It was a farming community along the shore fronts as well as further inland, with fishing industries a large part of the farmers' income. Many of the Narrows and New Utrecht settlers also owned land at Yellow

Hook, due to various transactions. Some of the settlers also owned land in New Jersey, which appeared to be an "investment." About 1850 a Syndicate was formed of some 50 artists (or those in art business), with a view to developing the beautiful tract of land then known as Yellow Hook, which lay along the waters of the Bay and had a fine forested slope—in fact an ideal locality for homes of people of means and artistic taste. Accordingly the Ovington Syndicate Company was formed. Mr. Otto Heinigke was President, or Chairman. The Ovington farmland was purchased, the district being about 3d to 7th Avenues, between 72d and Bay Ridge Avenue. Members became incorporated under the name of the "Ovington Village Association." Mr. Charles Parsons, Art director for Harper Bros.,



*Old Shore Roadway*

was the First President. A broad avenue was opened through the center of the plot of land and named Ovington Avenue. Mr. Joseph Perry was the first to build a home in the locality—between First and Second Avenues, on the south side of Bay Ridge Avenue (the house was torn down about 1900). With wealthy gentlemen from the city looking for sites to build homes the name of Yellow Hook sounded rather unsuitable and non-attractive. It was Mr. James Weir who happily suggested the name of "Bay Ridge" for the new district of artistic inhabitants and the suggestion was immediately

adopted by the Ovington Village Association. The public at large followed suit. There was never any legal grant to the name, however. Yellow Hook simply passed out of existence and Bay Ridge was on the map to remain. Plots on Ovington Avenue were 54 feet frontage; buildings were restricted to first class edifices. Among the new comers were Otto Heinigke, George Schlegel, S. V. Hunt, William Williams, Mr. Herring, Mr. A. Witt, Otto Laemel, Jeremiah Meyer, Jacob J. Moore, Mr. Pye, Edward Kent and a few others. Of these, Mr. Kent built himself a "Castle," a beautiful edifice of picturesque appearance, between 69th and 70th Streets, First and Third Avenues. It was torn down about 1900. His brother, Mr. Henry Kent, copied the style of architecture and had his own "Castle" built at 65th Street and Third Avenue. That house still remains. A third Kent house was built on 59th Street and Second Avenue for the daughter of Henry Kent, Miss Susan, who later married Henry Hopkins. The City Line was originally 58th to 59th Streets, declares Mr. Samuel W. Thomas, a resident of Bay Ridge. He is very positive on this point. The third Kent house was sold and converted into the Bay Ridge Hospital a few years ago. Mr. McElroy built a house on what is now 70th Street and Third Avenue. A beautiful park of trees shaded this house the finest series of immense beech trees in any part of the country, so experts have declared. This property became Mr. W. H. Thomas', 1862, he being known as "Commodore Thomas." The place had originally been a public park, with many objectionable features about it. Private ownership ended the picnic grounds as a resort. When Mr. Samuel W. Thomas sought a building site near his brother's home, there was not one to be had.

### HON. HENRY C. MURPHY.

Among the new and handsome estates, embracing a large park, was the home of Hon. Henry C. Murphy at what he was pleased to designate as "Owls Head" (65th Street), but which title was always disputed by the Van Brunt family of the Shore Road. They claimed, and records would seem to prove, that the true Owls Head was in reality by the Van Brunt house, located near 82d-83d Streets. Disregarding this dispute, the home of Mr. Murphy was one of prominence for many years, until his death, when the great library he had collected and the historic works were scattered. He was Minister to Holland, a man of scholarly mind and culture, a brilliant entertainer and was so highly respected and admired as to have been mentioned for the Vice-Presidency of the United States. He also served as Editor of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. It is doubly fitting

that his paper should present New Utrecht history. His beautiful home by the waters of New York Bay was the center for many delightful social events. Mr. Murphy was much beloved in Bay Ridge and admired for his brilliant intellect and capabilities. Upon his death the estate later became the property of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Bliss. It was located just below the present Third Avenue and 65th Street line, on a fine prominence overlooking New York Harbor. The Bliss family, like Mr. Murphy, maintained all the beauty and dignity of the estate as originally planned by its first owner. It continued to be a social center. Miss Eva Bliss was married to Mr. James Warren Lane from the home, June 19, 1890, the ceremony at little Christ Church being followed by a splendid out door fete on the lawn of "Owls Head," so called. The event passed into Bay Ridge annals as one to be remembered for many a day. Another and previous event of opposite recital, was the great anxiety that fell upon the entire community—the Yellow Fever epidemic, 1856. Of that period it is perhaps best to recount facts as told by those most prominently identified with the work at both Fort Hamilton and Bay Ridge. The village of New Utrecht was within the line of safety. Those villages by the water front were exposed to grave dangers from contagion and so suffered its consequences.

## **YELLOW FEVER.**

(1856.)

There have been such strange and even contradictory accounts of the yellow fever period in New Utrecht that accurate data has been sought from those *who actually were on the scene* at the time. Gen. Paul A. Oliver, formerly of Fort Hamilton, now a citizen of Oliver's Mills, Pennsylvania, and a distinguished veteran of the Civil War, has contributed his own impressions of those times in his former Township. Dr. A. N. Bell, a well known physician of Brooklyn and Surgeon of the U. S. Navy, also relates much of interest concerning that dread period at Fort Hamilton.

## **GENERAL OLIVER'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE YELLOW FEVER AT FORT HAMILTON AND BAY RIDGE.**

(As written by himself April, 1911.)

"I cannot give an account of the yellow fever episode without bringing myself into the narrative, which is rather objectionable to me, but is unavoidable. My recollections are here given to cull from them what may be of use or interest.

At the time of the outbreak the quarantine was located at Staten Island, several vessels which were badly affected with yellow fever were anchored (as all infected vessels were at that time) at the Quarantine. But the people of Staten Island were very indignant that these yellow fever ships were placed near their shores. Their strong protests prevailed in having these vessels placed on our side, in a bay opposite what was then known as Bath, situated between Coney Island and Fort Hamilton. It struck me at the time as a very dangerous proceeding, the wind blowing in a direct line from these vessels to us, and I wrote an article, published in the *Brooklyn Eagle*, calling attention to the danger likely to arise from these vessels being so placed, and the liability of spreading the disease along our shores. No attention was paid to the matter, and the bedding from these vessels floated along the Bay and gradually infected the whole shore. One of the first of our neighbors who became affected was Judge Rockwell, who died after a short illness. Next was General Stanton, who succumbed to the fever, then Mr. and Mrs. Cummings, and Mr. Chandler White, all living on the Bay.

I was with my friends Mr. and Mrs. Cummings in their illness, and it was very sad to hear them talk to each other, one in one room, the other in an adjoining room, both being hopeless cases, having the black vomit.

The residents of Fort Hamilton all fled. After the death of Mr. Chandler White, it occurred to me on walking along the shore, that there must be numbers of cases among the fishermen, who, though badly affected, had no one to care for them. I entered one house, where one member of the family was upstairs ill, and another below, and the sickening spectacle presented itself of the vomit of the persons in the upper room leaking down through the floor upon the bed of the person below.

That night I called upon my friend Mr. Sears, and brought together Frank Berrier, William Sears and his brother and one other whose name I now forget, and spoke to them of the necessity of making some provision for the care of the sick among those who could not get away. We then and there formed a "Relief Society," of which I was made President and Frank Berrier, Secretary. We had with us at Fort Hamilton a German physician named Dr. Rothe, who was very efficient. We called in the aid of Dr. Harris of the Quarantine on Staten Island, to furnish us with nurses, and he came over almost every day to aid us and see what was needed.

The members of the Society met every night and reported any sick people in their District, each member being given a certain part

of the village to visit and learn if there were any sick people there. We organized a Hospital and the people who were afflicted were brought to the Hospital, where Nurses and Medicine were on hand for their relief and comfort. In our efforts we were aided largely by Dr. A. N. Bell, of Brooklyn. Dr. Bell had been in the Navy and had treated yellow fever cases in his various cruises in regions where yellow fever prevailed, and was therefore more able to cope with the disease, because his large experience had thoroughly acquainted him with its various phases. It was on him we chiefly relied in the treatment of the disease. There was also another physician, Dr. Walser, who came to help us occasionally from quarantine on Staten Island.

During this period Dr. Bailey, Surgeon of the Fort, an officer over 60 years old, was taken with the fever and we were dreadfully afraid he would succumb to the disease on account of his age. With the aid of Dr. Bell and the physicians at hand we finally succeeded in our efforts to bring him through. I took upon myself the task of looking after him. Major Morris, Commander of the Fort, gave us every help he could and suspended the marching and beating of drums near Dr. Bailey's quarters while he was ill.

During this period we found a whole family in New Utrecht that was affected, father, mother, and three children. I brought them to the Hospital, but they had been too long without care, and they all died but one of the children. A woman who lived in the same house with them, refused to go to the Hospital, and she died where she was. The wife of a farmer in New Utrecht also died, and a whole family named Bergen, at Bay Ridge, was almost entirely wiped out. To our surprise there was a family in Brooklyn named Knapp which was affected. We responded to their call for help and sent them nurses; we found a mob had collected round the house, clamoring to remove the family from the City. They were guided by us and with care the family recovered. The chief difficulty at first was that no one knew what the disease was. At various points along the shore people had died, and Dr. Bailey having said that they died of yellow fever the people of the village were so indignant they threatened to mob the Doctor. But he was right in diagnosing it as yellow fever.

I think by taking the matter in hand at the time, we prevented the spread of the disease to Brooklyn. The nature of the fever was very severe, black vomit prevailing in every fatal case. The trouble lasted from July till November, when the first frost made it safe for people to return to their homes.

We were very grateful to Dr. Harris from Quarantine, for the assistance he rendered us so promptly and willingly, and I cannot speak *too highly* of Dr. A. N. Bell. His unremitting care and attention was to the sick, who were in such dire need.

In regard to the people at Fort Hamilton, Robt. E. Lee and Jackson were there in 1847, I think. The officers of the Fort were visitors at my mother's house. There was a large hotel then near the Fort, and people from New York came to spend the summer. The resorts along the Jersey shore were then unknown. An article appeared in a New York paper, I think the *Herald*, speaking of the Flying Artillery, and its great cost of maintenance, recommending its being abolished. Soon after an invitation was extended by the commander of the Fort, to witness a review of the Flying Artillery. At the appointed time, everything being ready, all the horses being in their stalls, at the command, the horses were harnessed and saddled, and all the men mounted and the horses attached to the guns and galloped on to the parade ground, placed in position, loaded and fired, the whole occupying, I think, two minutes. Jackson at that time was looked upon by the officers as very pious, and was not a very hearty eater, using soft foods for his meals, oatmeal and cereals.

Among the people I remember, were Dr. and Mrs. Prince, Remsen, Bennett, Rulef Van Brunt, Nicholas and Charles Van Brunt, Berriers, Sears, George S. Gelston (Gelston had two daughters and a son), Charles and Tom Church, Mrs. Chandler White; there were several Bennetts, and the Thomas McElroys. It is so long ago, that I have forgotten the names of a good many. Fort Hamilton was a favorite resort, the Hotel was well kept, and the ladies used to be rowed along the shore on moonlight nights, singing as they were rowed along by their young gallants. I have given you what I remember, you are very welcome if there is anything that interests you. I am over 80 and my memory is not very good.

PAUL A. OLIVER."

NOTE—While Mr. Oliver modestly refrains from telling of himself it is no harm for friends to say that after he left Fort Hamilton those friends knew he emerged from the Civil War with splendid record and "General" added to his name. In business he was equally successful—a Pennsylvania man whom old New Utrecht residents have recalled with much love and highest esteem. He had been their friend in time of need; they wanted him in New Utrecht history—and he is there.



## DR. A. N. BELL.

Well known as a practical sanitarian and for more than thirty years editor and publisher of *The Sanitarian* (which he discontinued, per se, and consolidated with *The Popular Science Monthly* in 1904), was the physician who did so much for the restriction and extermination of the yellow fever at Fort Hamilton and Bay Ridge, 1856. He demonstrated to the medical profession and the people that the disease was not personally contagious. Dr. Bell, an Ex-Surgeon, U. S. Navy, had but recently become a resident of Brooklyn. He had many experiences with yellow fever, acquired during naval service in the Mexican war and elsewhere. At the instance of Dr. Elisha Harris, physician of the Marine Hospital, S. I., Dr. Bell's service was requested. The Fort Hamilton Relief Association, with Paul A. Oliver, its President (in co-operation with the two others, Sears and Colonel Berrier), was in progress of organization. By the aid of Mr. George Gelston, a small building on the shore was converted into a hospital. Dr. C. G. Rothe, an accomplished young German physician, accepted the position of resident physician, for the sake of the promised experience. Drs. Crane and DuBois were New Utrecht practitioners and extremely active from the outset. Both contracted the disease and died of it, self-sacrificing soldiers, eminently worthy of their calling, Dr. Bell relates. But not so a local physician and protege of Robert H. Cuming (public spirited citizen, devoted to the welfare of the poor, on whose account he remained at home, notwithstanding the fever) to whose wife, then in extremis with the disease, this young physician was called. He had never seen a case of yellow fever. He contended against the opinion of Dr. Bailey, Army Surgeon of the Fort, who was familiar with it. Dr. Bell was called in. Ere Dr. Bell had said a word, after a minute's examination, and before he had spoken, the young doctor exclaimed, "Now, Dr. Bell, do you think it's yellow fever?" Dr. Bell's reply was to the point, "I know it's yellow fever." The patient died of it. It is very interesting to note Dr. Bell's vivid recollections of that time, with its attending pathos and humor combined. There is no one more earnest and serious minded when occasion demands it than Dr. Bell, nor anyone more appreciative of humor than he. Great depths of character are his attributes. His experiences in life have been many and varied. To-day he is about the only one left who can tell, technically and intimately, of the plague that devastated many homes in the Township of New Utrecht during 1856.

The first case of yellow fever on shore was July 29th. It was not in one of the poor homes, either. The total number of cases



was 175, with only ten cases of the disease known in Brooklyn, and 34 in New York. Dr. Bell believes the number of deaths in New Utrecht numbered somewhere about 30 to 35, which, considering the then scattered population, seemed a great many to the alarmed natives of the town. The Doctor recalls that Judge Rockwell was among the first to pass away. General Stanton soon followed, Mr. Cuming was ill with the fever when Dr. Bell was called in, but had kept up by force of will until Mrs. Cuming died, early the next morning. He then consented to be put to bed and died in about twelve hours. The Rev. Mr. Scofield, rector of St. John's P. E. Church at Fort Hamilton and a close friend of the Cuming's family entreated Dr. Bell to stay on duty the night of his first call and nurse his dear friends. Dr. Bell had declared he did not "think" the case to be yellow fever—he *knew* it to be. The attending physician vacated the premises and left town the next day. Although it had been Dr. Bell's custom to return to his Brooklyn home each night, paying two visits to the Fort every day, he satisfied Rev. Mr. Scofield by remaining that particular night with Mr. and Mrs. Cuming, telling the anxious clergyman, "I will not need to nurse them for very long." This proved to be true. Mrs. Cuming died but a few hours before her husband. Both died of yellow fever. They lived in what later became known as "the old Bailey house."

Another incident of the epidemic is recalled with deep feeling, even to this day—Dr. Bell's first introduction to George Hall, Mayor of Brooklyn. Mayor Hall is said to have been "a most useful and good man," as well as Mayor. It appears that one night when Dr. Bell was driving to Brooklyn, after hard duties at the Fort, a man's voice broke the stillness. "Oh, Doctor, I have been waiting for you to come along—come, see my poor wife." So Dr. Bell, following the man, entered one of the wretched little fisher homes on the shore road. There the wife lay, very ill, with a young babe. The house was built in the hillside, one door, and only a window in front, with a four-light window on one side at the corner. Nobody was there with wife and babe but the husband. To him, after needful attention to wife and babe, Dr. Bell gave directions to go to the hospital of the Relief Association, with a note to Dr. Rothe. A nurse was to come early as possible next morning, to nurse the woman and also clean up and whitewash, particularly the room upstairs.

#### MAYOR GEORGE HALL OF BROOKLYN.

The husband was told that he (Dr. Bell) would be along before ten o'clock next morning, and would take the woman upstairs. In-

structions were obeyed and promises kept. But on arriving at the house and entering, Dr. Bell, to his intense amazement found the room empty, clean and whitewashed. Then he was met by the nurse, whom he followed upstairs. There he found the woman and babe on a comfortable bed, in a well cleaned and whitewashed room. On a little table beside the bed was a sliced orange on ice. "Who helped you do all this?" asked the astonished Doctor. "The Mayor, Sir; he came along and stopped to see what I was doing and said, says he, 'I'll help ye,' and then he says, 'now come along and I'll help you take the woman upstairs.' I told him I was afraid to have him, because you was so particular; that you lifted all the sick people about yourself. Then he had me tell him how you wouldn't let their heads be raised; how you took 'em by their head and shoulders, and the nurse took 'em by the feet and kept 'em flat. 'Come along then,' he says, 'and I'll take the head.' And he did, just so sur. And then he hurried out, because he didn't want *you* to find him here. An' now he's gone again, after running in with this orange and ice, which I told him, when he ax'd me what you gave 'em to eat, you let 'em have." Poor things, both mother and babe died of the fever within a week. "And that," said old Dr. Bell, with deep and affectionate feeling, "was my first introduction to the then Mayor of Brooklyn,—George Hall. His name ought to go down—I am giving it to you for such purpose."

Of Dr. Crane and Dr. DuBois it was told that Dr. Bell was with them in their illness and later saw their bodies. They remained on duty until stricken. The whole town mourned their death, later erecting a monument to their memory in the village cemetery.

A vein of humor induced Doctor Bell to relate how he smuggled Dr. Bailey from Fort Hamilton to 14th Street, New York. The Sears brothers, Colonel Berrier and Paul A. Oliver helped him. Dr. Bailey had been extremely ill with the fever. He was weathering it with feeble convalescence, after three weeks illness, when about three o'clock one morning his nurse was alarmed by symptoms of collapse. Dr. Bell was hurriedly sent for. After more than an hour's anxious effort (noting meanwhile the unfavorable surroundings at the Fort) Dr. Bell recognized symptoms of survival. Bailey raised himself up.

The group of his ever faithful helpers, the Sears brothers, Mr. Berrier and Mr. Oliver, all of whom had been alarmed by Dr. Bailey's condition and gathered at his headquarters, asked Dr. Bell what they could do. "Can you procure a good easy wagon, with curtains, big enough to hold a bed?" "Yes," said the Sears brothers, "We can get an army wagon." "Then do it," said Dr. Bell. Mrs. Bailey, to be

fairly near her husband, was at this time, with a nursing babe, visiting her brother-in-law, on 14th Street, New York. The wagon was procured and furnished. The bed being first heated to the verge of scorching, and so too, Dr. Bailey's clothing and wrappings. "He was passive and mum as a baby," said Dr. Bell. Wagon curtains were dropped from the top, to admit air and exclude light. A careful driver was procured, to whom Dr. Bell gave explicit directions, saying at the last, "Drive on. Stop for no other business; answer no questions. I'll take a different route to the 14th Street house and be there before you." He was, and took Dr. Bailey in his arms upstairs, to the nursing care of his wife. It was enough for her, as it was for her husband, that Dr. Bell said there was no danger.

Dr. Bell himself had yellow fever during service in the Mexican war. He met Dr. Bailey there and Bailey pulled Bell safely through the illness. It was during a branch of the service at Vera Cruz. They met again at Fort Hamilton, under pressure of work caused by the yellow fever there. But that time Dr. Bailey fell ill. Dr. Bell fought to save him and he did. This is the true recital of that frequently told tale, distorted often by those who simply knew that one person had been allowed to pass the danger lines during the epidemic and that Dr. Bell was the physician who allowed it. Dr. Bailey died about twenty years ago, in Putnam County. His children and grandchildren have never forgotten Dr. Bell. Once, Dr. Bailey was heard to exclaim in laughing mood, "I wouldn't be here now except for Bell—if he had told them to pitch me into the East River I expect they'd have done it—but he did not and I'm here."

Some months after Dr. Bailey recovered and it had become known how Dr. Bell challenged health ordinances, one of the health commissioners of the city, took occasion to remark to Dr. Bell, "We ought to arrest you now." But from the twinkle in both men's eyes, as Dr. Bailey's rescue was mentioned, it was plain to the yellow fever expert that no warrant was out for his arrest, nor one even contemplated. This has been one of Dr. Bell's most cherished memories of the fever epidemic. He tells, in gleeful way, how he issued daily bulletins of Dr. Bailey's condition to those at Fort Hamilton and the Relief Association Bulletin, while the patient was really in New York. "We were mighty busy people those days—mighty busy," the doctor has said in speaking of the many duties that crowded each other. During his lifetime, Dr. Bell has written much for the medical profession, besides volumes of the *Sanitarian*, standing to his credit.

Eliciting Dr. Bell's opinion with regard to "how the disease was introduced," he is no less certain now than he was at that time. "It was by means of the abominable quarantine maintained, in conjunction with congenial conditions of the locality and the climate." Referring to his record, "On the 9th day of July, 1856, the plain of sand at Fort Hamilton and Bay Ridge was subjected to an unusually heavy rain (1.80 inches), which from the conformation of the surface could not run off. It became waterlogged and settled into pools. High temperature came. Recorded at 7.2 and 9 o'clock daily, was 82.958 F., ranging as high as 99°. On the 27th the temperature at 2 o'clock was 95°; 28th 97°, on the 29th 80°. The mean of the hygrometer for the same period was 75° 80'. For the nineteen days inclusive, from the 9th to the 28th, there had been but .01 inch of rain on the 15th. On the 29th it rained .30 inches. During this period the wind ranged from S. W. to N. W. From the 21st to the 29th from S. W. only."

During this drought and high temperature, the sandy plain of Bay Ridge and Fort Hamilton was several degrees hotter than the atmosphere, which increased the evaporation from the surface and loaded the atmosphere with moisture. Unfortunately these conditions were exposed to a line of yellow fever infected ships, anchored within a few hundred yards of the shore, directly in the way of the then prevailing wind. Conditions were ideal for propagation of the germs (with or without mediation of mosquitoes), brought by the vessels, then and there quarantined as described. Climate, local conditions, and presence of the disease germs were circumstances under which the disease was introduced.

Dr. Bell represents one of the older type of courtly gentlemen, keen of mind and forceful of words, with Christianity his stronghold and rock. He is a great reader and thinker even at the present time and enjoys many quiet hours in the rooms of the Long Island Historical Society, among his friendly books.

With recovery from its epidemic, New Utrecht straightway took courage. Families who had fled or moved further inland, returned to take up their accustomed duties and places as residents. So passed the horror of the Yellow Fever epidemic. It thus goes down in history.

With the advent of the Civil War the township became a military center as well as a political prison home. Two Forts, within the town limits, made war happenings of intense interest. New Utrecht sent its complement of soldiers to the front. It would be impossible to state each name but records include many of the old Dutch names.

There were, on the other hand, many who sided with the Confederacy and talked bitterly of President Lincoln, until prison bars of Fort Lafayette nearly closed their career. It would be impossible to designate all these persons. North and South had their respective adherents, although the North was in predominance, as muster rolls prove. Under heading "Forts Hamilton and Lafayette" an account of these two important posts is given. The United States Government has never compiled data of its forts commanding New York Harbor, strange to say, and until this book appeared, Washington, D. C., has had only scattered documentary evidence of its two defences by the Narrows.

One of the incidents connected with Civil War days at the Fort is that recalled by Mrs. Greenoway of New Utrecht, who lived, during the war, with a Mrs. Biel. The latter woman had two sons in the Army, one with Southern troops and one with Northern. Very anxiously this proud mother watched the progress of these beloved sons during Lincoln's struggle. Finally she received word that the Southern boy was at Fort Lafayette, a prisoner, charged with attempting to poison the reservoir of New York's water supply. The prisoner was under sentence of death. The mother gave no outward show of sympathy or feeling for her son, calmly sending word back to him "you must not hope to see your mother—now." During the war Fort Lafayette was used as a prison. Considerable of those times are told in the reminiscences of the Gelston and Church families, whose homes were close to both forts. Recollections of Gen. Robert E. Lee and of "Stonewall" Jackson are among other matters of interest. These two Southern gentlemen left a vivid impression behind them at Fort Hamilton, which impressions are mentioned on other pages of this book. With the close of the Civil War and the Union safe, peace and quiet once more reigned in old New Utrecht. But it was only a dormant state for the lands that lay so close to the city of Brooklyn. Brooklyn began soon to stretch outward in several directions and New Utrecht was one of them. When Mr. Samuel W. Thomas wanted to purchase an estate near his brothers, at Bay Ridge, the farmers there would not sell. They needed the land, was reported. But they realized, or their sons did, that farming days in New Utrecht were forever ended. Selling land became more profitable than selling crops. With removal of Mr. W. H. Thomas, his brother, Samuel W., became next owner of the estate. He still resides in the homestead. It now has a side entrance on 72d Street, with a row of city houses and stores directly in front of his porch. It once overlooked a beautiful grove of beech trees.

Soon the big house must give way to progress and be demolished. Mr. Thomas recently watched the last of the big trees on Third Avenue fall under the axe. In former years Third Avenue was shaded by fine trees. All have been cut down.

One of the well preserved types of handsome farmhouse is that owned and occupied by the David C. Bennett family, 79th Street, not far from the S. W. Thomas estate. Mr. Bennett descends from the Colonial ancestor of that name, with intermarriages into practically all the old families of the Township. The Bennetts of the Shore Road and the Bennetts of inland residence have never claimed close relationship, but it is positively established that both branches descend from Willemse Bennet of 1636-39 Gowanus settlement. They have, therefore, the distinction of remembering that their ancestor built the *first house in Breucklen*, Gowanus having that distinction.

Mr. David C. Bennett once expressed a desire to know how the late David Bennett Hill (Gov. of N. Y. State) received his name. The Bay Ridge man, however, never pressed the question. Mr. Bennett has always been regarded as a type of rugged Dutch farmer, averse to social or public notice, with home and family first. As a market gardener, in years past, he had no peer. It has been said of him that he slept with one ear and one eye open, to understand the slightest change in temperature over night, hence his great success in beating records for early crops intended for New York markets. He was born in the little farmhouse just above his present home—the Christopher Bennett home, also on 79th Street.

Further along the same street, on what was a "Lane," still stands the old Furman homestead, a relic of long ago days. It is in reality "the old Bogart house," being descended from the Bogart family of Colonial and Revolutionary fame. Lizzie Bogart married John C. Furman, for many years well known in Brooklyn, when Hugh McLoughlin was a political power. Mr. Furman was a great favorite at the City Hall. McLoughlin often visited the old Furman homestead and the big tree spreading out its branches by the front door, has shaded the "Boss" upon many an occasion. Miss Louise Furman married a Mr. French and occupies the home at present. New streets being cut through will cause the house to be demolished ere long.

Beyond Stewart Avenue is found the Denyse and Reynold houses, the latter showing age and quaintness. Mr. Peter Denyse, Sr. and Jr., occupy the lands descended from their ancestor on the Denyse branch and are the only descendants to have correctly retained the

original way of spelling their name (as Denyse Denyse spelled his). Mr. Denyse, Sr., has the distinction of having been a pupil at each of the three schools in the Town. He remembers them very well. Living in a central location it was difficult to decide which school was nearest to his home. Both Peter Denyse and Adrian B., to say nothing of Simon Denyse, have done much for their township. Adrian B. passed away during 1909, a prominent figure in the M. E. Church, where the Denyse family worshipped. His home was in the old Reynolds house, adjacent to the Peter Denyse house on 79th Street. This street, from the Shore Road to New Utrecht village limits, has been made into a broad city street. Gone are all the pretty wooded sections, the little pond, the "Lanes," etc. It was where Walter A. Johnson's father bought property and resided, about 1889, that later developed into "Dyker Heights." This became an area for homes of city people who wished a taste of country. New streets were put through former farmlands, with a result that many modern homes vie with the old ones in attractiveness. Not a few of the new styles of architecture revert to olden time lines. With Brooklyn's growth it became the natural thing to consider annexation to the city.

### **"GREATER NEW YORK."**

Under the signature of Gov. Levi P. Morton, the Township of New Utrecht was finally annexed to Brooklyn, May 3, 1894. "Greater New York" was thus realized. With all the consequent changes soon felt and seen by the residents of the old Dutch Town of New Utrecht it has been interesting to gather many of the records of past days. Soon there will be nothing left but records and a few Dutch landmarks.

### **FORT HAMILTON AND FORT LAFAYETTE.**

Not every old Dutch Township can boast two Forts all its own, nor every Township that has a great responsibility at its door—guarding the City of New York. From the earliest date of settlement New Netherland recognized its exposed position on the Harbor. The Narrows was considered the outer door of safety for the Colonies, even then. From old documents it is known that the first Fort was begun during 1626, at the Island of Manhatans. This was embraced in a tract of land comprising 22 acres, being purchased from the Indians for 60 guilders, or about \$24 present currency. "A large fort, with four angles and faced with solid stone was staked out by engineer Kryn Frederycke on the Southern part of the Island." Its commanding site was even then understood and planned for. The place was



named "Royal Fort." It overlooked Nutten Island, Hellgate and some low land, the middle being left as a hillock, to serve as a "Battery." While the fort was being completed, the name finally chosen was that of Fort Amsterdam, at Manhatans. Staten Island had a redout built by the Narrows, September 12, 1641, to warn Fort Amsterdam when a vessel arrived in the Lower Bay. The signal was arranged by hoisting a flag on the bluff on Staten Island, which could be plainly seen from the Battery of Fort Amsterdam. This was the first raising of a flag in the Colonies. During 1643, the settlers found themselves, through their own abuse of the Indians, involved in warfare with them. A Jesuit Priest at New Netherland tells the following: "This Fort, which is at the point of the Island, is called Fort Amsterdam. It has four bastions mounted with several pieces of artillery. Ramparts of earth had crumbled away—the fort could be entered from all sides. There were sixty soldiers to garrison the fort and another one which was built still further up, against incursions of the savages, their enemies. They were beginning to face the gates and bastions with stone." From this description it will be seen that Fort Amsterdam was a poor sort of defence. In 1645, peace was declared with the Indians. At this time the pay of a soldier was about \$50 annually."

November 15, 1651. What must be considered establishment of a fort at the Narrows is information conveyed in a letter written by Governor Stuyvesant to the Directors in Holland. (Fernow's, 145.) It states that work had been done on the Fort, also the other new fort, only to have it trampled down by cattle and hogs, mentioning the Company's servants going to the South River to build a new fort, for still better defence.

1653. Progress made and mention of those who contributed provisionally, "the following sums for repairs of the defences of this place." It was agreed, at a meeting of the "Schepens" at Fort Amsterdam, that Manhatans should be provided with palisades and breastworks and a Fort be placed in state for defence. That 4,000 or 5,000 guilders be paid into the treasury for the necessary work. This document was signed by

Mr. VAN WOERCKHOVEN, £200.

JACOB VAN COUWENHOVEN, £150.

PETER BUYS, £100.

P. VAN COUVENHOVEN, £100.

Under the Breda Treaty, July, 1667, England had possession. In 1673, Holland and England again warred, the Dutch compelling



Commander Governor Manning to surrender "James Forte." The name of New York became New Orange and Fort James became Fort William Henry. In 1674 the Fort had four batteries enclosed by a double row of Palisades. It had one gate, on the Beaverway (Broadway) side. During 1674 New Orange and its fort returned to English rule, resuming its former names of New York and Fort James, then Fort George, until its demolition at the close of the Revolutionary war.

1674. The Duke of York raised a Military Company under the King's permission and order. Governor Andros was made Captain, Anthony Brockholk, First Lieutenant; Christopher Billop, Second Lieutenant; Caesar Knapton, Ensign; there was a Chaplain and Surgeon, names not known. Date July, 1674.

It is interesting to state that Christopher Billop was an important man in the King's official government. This Military man is he who later received a grant of land and had a handsome stone mansion built for him, where Tottenville, S. I., now stands. The Billop mansion was an imposing structure those days, close by the water's edge and near to Jersey. Toryism made its 1776 record one not to be forgotten. Many noted soldiers have been within its walls; many British plots and actions were traceable to the Billop house. It still stands as a monument to past days.

1678. The fort was of stone, mounting 46 guns, having four bastions, and was commanded by English soldiers. (Brodhead's, 313.) It being difficult to establish Episcopatism in New York, so called "Chaplains" were appointed. Rev. Alexander Jones was to succeed Rev. Josiah Clarke as the "orthodox Chaplain of his garrison at Fort James," said the King. At this time the population of New York was about 18,000 souls. (Brodhead, 457.)

1687. Fort James under repair work at this date. Garrison and fort covered two acres. There were 4,000 soldiers afoot, 300 mounted, also a Company of Dragoons flourishing.

1691. When Governor Slaughter arrived at New York and took possession of Fort James March, 1691 (then held by Jacob Leisler, whom history tells of) he named the place "Fort William Henry," in honor of the new King. There is no special mention of the Narrows defence work during the early 1700 period. But in 1776 that locality went down in history as a famed spot—the British landed between the home of Simon Cortelyou and the village of Bath. As they took possession of the country thereabouts, before proceeding on to Brooklyn, the matter of needing proper fortifications at that end of the approach to New York, became more than evident. They had landed in overwhelming forces; there was no defence to keep them out. The Government was soon called upon to accomplish what had

been so long neglected. New Utrecht had an armed camp of its own. When another English invasion threatened in 1812, the people of New Utrecht worked on Brooklyn fortifications as well as their own. They had also a New Utrecht Company in the Long Island 64th Regiment. This was officered by Capt. William Denyse, Lieutenant Barcaloo, Lieutenant Van Hise and Ensign Suydam. Another Militia Company was formed under Capt. J. T. Bergen. New Utrecht did its full share of soldierly duty; the names of many of its citizens are upon the muster rolls for this period.

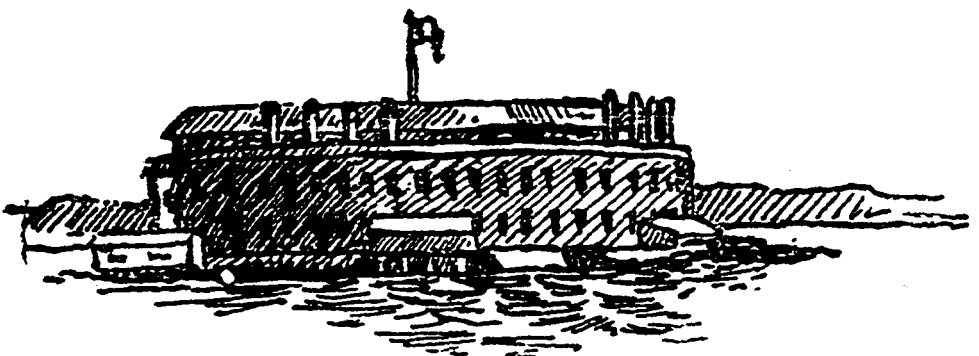
### **"NARROWS" BECOMES FORT HAMILTON.**

In 1808, the Governor of New York had obtained an appropriation of \$100,000 for the fortification of the city, and was therewith appointed to superintend and push the construction of these defenses. Land was ceded the Government by New York City in May, 1814, and a structure was erected soon after, and named Fort Hamilton, in honor of Alexander Hamilton. Thus the settlement of Narrows became known as Fort Hamilton.

During the war of 1812, a rock off Denys's Ferry and known as "Hendrick's Reef," was chosen as a site for another Fort. It was called Fort Diamond because of its shape. Its construction began 1812, with completion during 1822.

The War Department, Washington, D. C., has this to officially say of Fort Diamond, "The name was changed to Fort Lafayette, March 25, 1823, in commemoration of the highly distinguished services of Major General Lafayette in the War of American Independence."

The old Fort at the Narrows, named Fort Hamilton, was a very modest structure. Ground was broken for the present Fort, April 26, 1825, by Capt. Blaney, of the United States Engineering

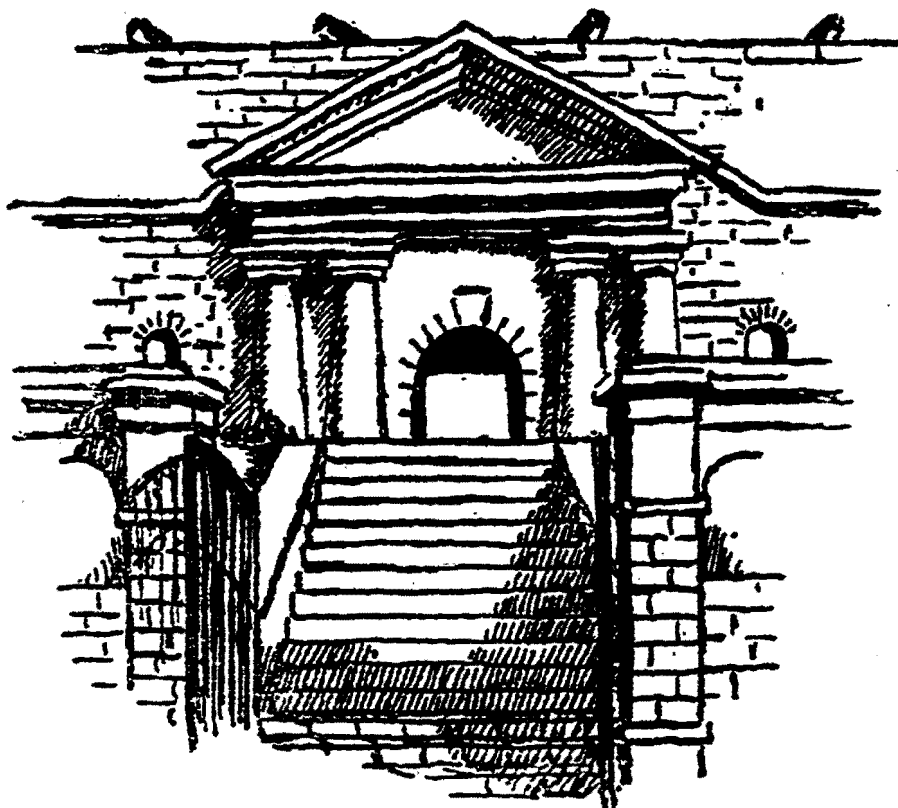


*Fort Lafayette—1860*

Corps, with Major Gaston A. DeRussey and Generals Mansfield and Talcott as additional constructing engineers. General Bernard, the French engineer, was also identified with the construction. The local superintendent of the work was Mr. James W. Cropsey, who to-day has many descendants in New Utrecht. Mr. Cornelius Woglum of Staten Island

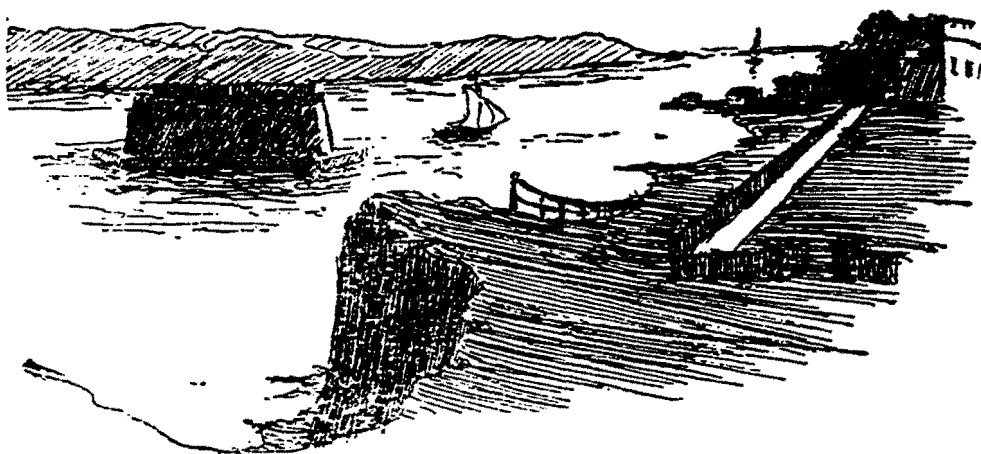
was Paymaster and Assistant and in honor of faithful service, Congress afterward exempted him from all land taxes and jury duty. The Fort was completed July, 1831, and ready for occupancy. The lands upon which the Fort stands were formally ceded to the United States, November 27, 1824. Changes were made from time to time and the original tract increased, until the Government owned about ninety-six acres of land in the town in 1891. The Fort is built of gray granite quadrangular in form, and possesses two facings, one for water defense and the other for land. Dry ditches surrounded it, and a redout 200 yards in advance of the land side was supposed to prevent the landing of the enemy on the beach between the Fort and Bath.

The old entrance to the Fort on the shore road was one of the handsome and massive features of the place. All now left of this entrance are two great posts peering out from the embankment. In place of the iron gates and massive stones a steep flight of wooden stairs descended to the roadway.



*Entrance to Fort, 1840*

In 1843, the Channel side of the Fort mounted fourteen casements and twenty-six barbettes, thirty-two pounders and thirty-two casement guns of large calibre. Col. Loomis L. Langdon, when stationed at Fort Hamilton, had with him Surgeon Ezra Woodruff,



*The Narrows and Forts—1850*

Assistant Surgeon Robert B. Benham, Major John Egan, Regimental and Post Adjutant Henry L. Harris, Regimental and Post Quartermaster Joseph S. Oyster, Capt. E. Van A. Andruss; Capt. John W. Dillenback,

Capt. Richard G. Shaw, First Lieut. William P. Van Ness, First Lieut. Clermont L. Best, Jr., First Lieut. John T. Honeycutt, First Lieut.

Frederick Marsh, First Lieut. David Price, Second Lieut. George W. Burr, Second Lieutenant Skerrett.

The War Department of the United States has no compiled list of commanding officers who have been stationed at Fort Hamilton. Those in command since Colonel Langdon's time were: Col. John R. Williams, Lieut. Col. W. H. Ludlow, Maj. Hermann Schumm, Capt. Albert Jenkins, Capt. F. W. Phisterer, Capt. Stephen H. Mould (since March 8, 1911).

### **COL. LOOMIS L. LANGDON, U. S. A.**

This officer, stationed at Fort Hamilton a considerable while, had much in connection with history, as part of his home and a personal sketch is therefore quite fitting. He was a very active man, in service and out of it. His home was a treasure land of relics. Loomis L. Langdon was born in New York. He was graduated from West Point, July, 1854. During the Civil War he was stationed at Fort Pickens, Fla., becoming Colonel of the First Regiment of U. S. Artillery, 1889. He had with him at Fort Hamilton Batteries A, G, I and K. His men always held him in highest esteem, but he was known as a strict disciplinarian. Great pride was taken in his relics, which had been gathered during his years of service in the army. In his Library was a flagstaff, carried through the war. Another, still more sacred keepsake was the thumb-greased, worn little Bible. The margins of its leaves were filled with fine penciled words, written by Langdon as record of battle field deaths, last words of the dying, burial incidents and dates, also names of the dead and dying, as the case might be. Entries were made in the Bible of yellow fever scourge incidents where he was stationed. Scores of burial services have been read by him. He never failed to keep an accurate account of name, date, location of grave, etc. These entries were often hurriedly made in the little pocket Bible he treasured with his very life. No money could ever have purchased the book from Colonel Langdon. Many an aching heart in far away lands has been relieved by hearing the loved one's last words, or learning the spot of burial, death, etc. Colonel Langdon frequently had requests for data from that little holy volume and he always obliged whenever possible. While Captain of the 25th Signal Corps, April 3, 1865, he cut off a tassel from the canopy over the chair of Alexander R. Stevens, President of Richmond Senate. An apparently ugly looking stone was in reality a piece of a Federal shell, fired during bombardment of Fort Barrancas, autumn of 1861, which shell nearly killed young Langdon. One book had a complete record of every shell and cannon fired under his own orders. He traced out every shell havoc.

Another old Shakespearian book contained a memorandum of the

Dunlap House, on the road between Richmond and Petersburg, where, April 14, 1865, it was abandoned as a headquarters by General Buauregard and his forces. On a large pasteboard are glued two small fragments of flags carried by the 45th and 50th Regiments in the battle of Waterloo. Victor Hugo says there was only one flag, but Colonel Langdon has asserted, positively, there were two.

A relic, framed and hanging in the parlor, was a piece of a chart found on the body of Explorer George W. DeLong, Lieut.-Com., U. S. N., who died October 30, 1881, in icy lands and a sufferer. It was found by the Melville expedition, March 25, 1882.

The Colonel had numbers of large certificates with very valuable signatures of Presidents, Vice-Presidents, cabinet officers and army and navy officers, back to Lincoln's days. Some handsome pictures of olden times adorned his walls. A curious one was that of Joseph II and his court, as printed in Mobile during the Rebellion. There was a Spanish brick from Fort Aronado, Santa Rosa Islands, and numberless other relics.

## RESIDENTS AT FORT HAMILTON AND VICINITY (1890).

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Blankley  
 " " " Henry E. Bowns  
 " " " John Dickinson  
 Capt. and Mrs. Shaw  
 Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Stillwell  
 Mrs. L. Van Cleef  
 Dr. and Mrs. Thorne  
 Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. White  
 " " " B. B. Baptiste  
 " " " Francis Baptiste  
 " " " Barry  
 " " " Frederick Beers  
 Capt. and Mrs. Benham  
 Mr. and Mrs. Chas. C. Bennett  
 " " " Clarence Bennett  
 " " " J. H. Bergen  
 Dr. and Mrs. George H. Berne  
 Mr. and Mrs. De Laguel Berrier  
 Mr. Francis Berrier  
 Mrs. Margaret Berrier  
 Mr. and Mrs. Alphonso Berry  
 Dr. and Mrs. James J. Blanchard  
 Mr. and Mrs. George Bligh  
 Miss M. Blakeley  
 Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Bell  
 " " " G. Beierlein  
 Gen. and Mrs. R. Ayres  
 Mr. and Mrs. George Austin  
 Carl Aukam  
 Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ahrberg  
 " " " Henry Adler  
 Otto Adams  
 Ph. Brady  
 Mr. and Mrs. George E. Bressette  
 " " " John Clarence

Miss M. Cooper  
 Wm. Clarke  
 Mr. and Mrs. A. DeGross  
 " " " M. Gates  
 Mrs. George S. Gelston  
 Mr. and Mrs. Enright  
 " " " Robt. Emmons  
 " " " L. S. Hardin  
 " " " John Graves  
 " " " A. A. Lake  
 " " " Jos. Lake  
 Mrs. Margaret Fryatt  
 Mr. and Mrs. James Furey  
 " " " Thomas Henry  
 " " " Thomas Lombard  
 " " " Henry Martin  
 " " " Wm. Malloy  
 " " " Love  
 " " " Geo. Hurst  
 " " " Watson Gifford  
 " " " Thos. Costigan  
 " " " John Hunt  
 Capt. and Mrs. E. J. Seiders  
 Henry Pengel  
 Mr. and Mrs. John Napier  
 " " " George Stillwell  
 " " " Adrian M. Stillwell  
 " " " John Robinson  
 " " " E. W. Roxby  
 " " " Savage  
 " " " Albert Ehret  
 " " " August Miller  
 " " " Walter Despard  
 " " " Henry Carson  
 " " " Wm. B. Brown

Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy  
 " " " Joseph Stadler  
 " " " Neil Poulson  
 Mrs. Loughman  
 Mrs. Jane Clark  
 Mr. and Mrs. I. H. DeGroff  
 " " " John Burns  
 " " " Wm. Bullock  
 " " " Simpson  
 Chauncey R. Slater  
 Richard Slater  
 Lieut. and Mrs. Crolius  
 Mr. and Mrs. August Damm  
 Mrs. Thomas Shannon  
 Mr. and Mrs. Robt. H. Clarke  
 Mrs. Walter Pengel  
 Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Noon  
 " " " M. S. Cook  
 " " " Folsom  
 " " " Jos. Taylor  
 Frank Stillwell  
 Mr. and Mrs. Henry Stillwell  
 " " " Isaac H. Stillwell  
 " " " E. J. Deraismier  
 " " " S. Holmes Van Brunt  
 " " " Cornelius Van Brunt  
 Mrs. Carl Neilson  
 Miss Elizabeth Rice  
 Rev. John Tansey  
 Mr. and Mrs. P. Costello  
 " " " August Johansson  
 " " " Katz  
 " " " David Lennox  
 " " " Bryan McSweeney  
 " " " Chas. A. Norton  
 " " " Henry Clair  
 Mrs. T. T. Church  
 Charles W. Church  
 Robert H. Clapp  
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Sykes  
 Walter F. Sykes  
 Francis Hopkins  
 Mrs. Juliette Hopkins  
 Sarah E. Hopkins  
 Thornton Hopkins  
 Mr. and Mrs. John Grummett  
 " " " R. D. Hegeman  
 Miss M. Goodwin  
 Mr. and Mrs. Constantine Tasso  
 " " " M. Walsh  
 Mrs. Richard Van Pelt  
 Mr. and Mrs. C. Van Pelt  
 " " " Joseph Marrew  
 Mrs. Dors Maxwell  
 Mr. and Mrs. E. Huott  
 Miss Ella Keegan  
 Mr. and Mrs. John F. Mayo  
 Miss Cora Mayo  
 Mr. and Mrs. Edward Donnolly  
 " " " John Otten  
 James Parker  
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter P. Moore  
 " " " Frank Mittnight  
 " " " H. B. Johnson

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lunzner  
 " " " Wm. Mitchell  
 " " " Wm. Moran  
 " " " Pape  
 " " " F. Schule  
 " " " Jacob Schule  
 " " " Walter Emmons  
 " " " Wm. Muller  
 " " " Julius Magnus  
 " " " P. Coyle  
 " " " Chas. Seaver  
 " " " James Dillon  
 " " " M. J. McKnight  
 Mrs. Ella Huskinson  
 Col. and Mrs. A. W. Johnson  
 " " " Owen McNally  
 " " " William Smith  
 " " " Thomas Drury  
 " " " Chas. Mehl  
 Mrs. Arthur Leclarcq  
 Mrs. Maghan  
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hartman  
 " " " Frederick Hastings  
 Charles Grazer  
 Edward Grazer  
 Mr. and Mrs. John McGlynn  
 " " " Domenico Fusara  
 Chas. J. Doyle  
 Miss M. A. McGlynn  
 Mr. and Mrs. Adam Kratzer  
 Charles Losee  
 James Harvey  
 Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Harvey  
 " " " Philip Huck  
 " " " Wm. Kunster  
 John Goff  
 Daniel Mitchell  
 William Gorden  
 Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Swan  
 " " " A. C. Thorning  
 Mrs. Laviania Van Cleaf  
 Mr. and Mrs. C. Watson  
 Lieut. and Mrs. Harris  
 Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Hegeman  
 Mrs. Mary McBride  
 Miss Annie Flynn  
 Mr. and Mrs. Otto Haas  
 " " " Robert Weber  
 " " " Tierney  
 " " " Robert F. Hatfield  
 " " " Wm. Keegan  
 James Keegan  
 Col. and Mrs. L. L. Langdon  
 Mr. and Mrs. M. Monahan  
 " " " P. N. Tofte  
 Lieut. and Mrs. Van Andrews  
 Mr. and Mrs. Westaway  
 Philip Brady  
 Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Carroll  
 " " " Conway  
 James B. White  
 Mr. and Mrs. Youngstrom  
 " " " Peter Byrnes  
 " " " A. Carthy

Mrs. Edward Cavell  
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter McNally  
 Charles Hassler  
 Mr. and Mrs. James Donnelly  
 James B. Wynne  
 Mr. and Mrs. R. C. White  
 " " " James Wigley  
 " " " Nathan Hines  
 " " " John Monahan  
 " " " T. J. Burton  
 W. H. Connolly  
 Mr. and Mrs. Meyers  
 " " " William Kenny  
 " " " John A. Kruse  
 M. L. Maxwell

Mr. and Mrs. Dempsey  
 " " " Katzenberger  
 " " " John Hook  
 " " " Philip Hunckel  
 " " " M. Feeney  
 " " " P. McNaughton  
 " " " Wilcox  
 " " " P. Burke  
 James P. Connell  
 Philip Connell  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jacob F. Whitteman  
 Mrs. Maria Kelly  
 Mr. and Mrs. Max Holzer  
 " " " Adam Kropf  
 Adrian Stilwell

## GOWANUS—NEW UTRECHT.

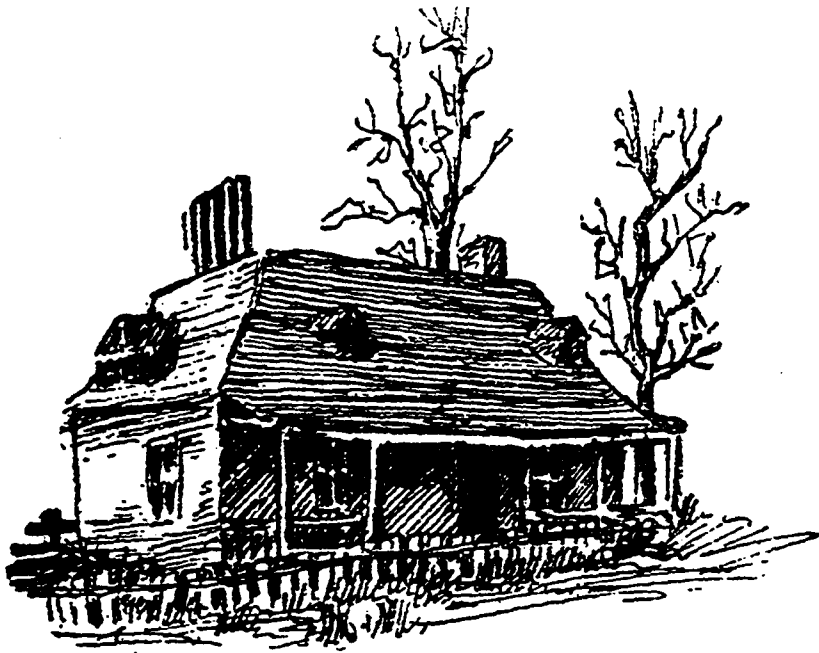
Although the settlement called "Gowanes;" "Gouwanes;" Gowanus (the latter spelling being used to-day), has no material effect upon New Utrecht as a settlement, yet the two villages were so identified with each other as to necessitate a brief but complete sketch of Gowanus. The families of the one were intermarried with the families of the other, to say nothing of New Utrecht descendants settling at Gowanus and vice versa. The two settlements or villages were entirely separate. The first house erected at Gowanus was the first house in Brooklyn. Wallabought had the second house built and a third house was erected midway between these two settlements. This third became the starting of Breucklen village, or Brooklyn as it was later named, for Breucklen in Holland. It signifies marsh, or brook-land, which the lands all around the settlements were at that time. Of Gowanus it is recorded that during 1636, William Adriance (Bennet) and Jaques Bentyn purchased from the Indians about 930 acres, located between the present 27th and 28th Streets. Settlers there chose low land, on the Cove. Dense woodlands rose to the rear, where the present Greenwood locality exists. William Adriance (Bennet) and Jaques Bentyn appear to have been joint owners and promoters of the Indian land transactions, but later on Bentyn signed release papers and Bennet became sole owner. A stone house was erected on the land soon after its purchase in 1636. This was the first house built in Brooklyn. Joris J. de Rapalje, who settled at the Wallabought, built himself a home there, 1637, it being the second house. Between these widely separated settlements a third house was built and the locality called Breucklen. It was from this midway or central point that the present city of Brooklyn first started, when the City Hall position was practically a country lane, extending beyond the Ferry to Manhatans.

Gowanus had a second settler in Thomas Bescher, who, November 28, 1639, acquired land next to Bennet's. Then came Frederick Lub-



bertsen, May 27, 1640, on the Northerly side of Gowanus Cove. A patent was granted to Cornelis Lambertse (Cool), April 5, 1642, for land between present 1st and 27th Streets. The stone house built by William Adriance (Bennet) was on present 3d Avenue, near 26th Street. It was burned during 1643 (Governor Kieft's administration and Indian

warfare), but the stones were used to build a second house on the same site. This second house became, later on, the Schermerhorn property and is where the prominent Mrs. William Astor was born, she being a Schermerhorn.



*William Adriance Bennet House (Later Schermerhorn) (1645) (Mrs. Wm. Astor was born here)*

The Wynant Bennet house (sometimes designated as the oldest house), was on present 3d Avenue and 27th Street, the next house being that of Simon and Peter Schermerhorn,

built by Bennet's before 1695 (Stiles His., Vol. I, Page 138).

The house of Stephen Hendrickson was near 30th Street. The next farm was on the West side of the old road, that of Garret Bergen, re-



*Garret Bergen Homestead (Gowanus), (Rear of house turned into a front, due to 3d Avenue improvements)*

built about 1800 after its then owner, Mr. Tunis G. Bergen, occupied it. He was father of Garret. It was Garret who was called "Squire." His sons were: Tunis G., Peter G., John G., Garret G., a daughter who



married Tunis S. Barkaloo. Of these children it was Tunis G. who became the "Honorable" of New Utrecht history and fame. It should be also remarked that in picturing the old Bergen homestead the present-day public never knew that its original frontage was on the old road, not 3d Avenue, and so the original back of the house became the front, 3d Avenue being so remodeled and fenced that nobody understood the difference. Only history does.

Following the line toward New Utrecht, the next house was that of John Cropsey, near the Easterly corner of Gowanus Road and Martense Lane (35th Street, between 3d and 4th Avenues). Next came Gysbert Bogart, then Abraham Bennet, deceased, his widow, Catherine, residing there. Near the house of Abraham was that of his brother, Anthony Bennet. The Simon Bergen homestead was next and near this was a small frame schoolhouse. There is so much to be related of the old "de Hart" house that a brief sketch of this very beautiful homestead of long ago is scarcely enough to do it justice.



*Garret Bergen Homestead (Front view—popularly believed to be the rear)*

Simon Aertson d'Hart emigrated 1664. He married Geertje Cornelissen and settled at Gowanus. Upon her death he married the widow of William Huycken of Gowanus, June, 1691. Their home was in the vicinity of 27th Street, toward the New Utrecht line. Two houses were on this tract of land; one known as the Schermerhorn and another which was west of the first meadow. This was from a portion of a tract of 930 acres bought by William Adriance (Bennet) and Jaques Bentyne from the Indians, 1636. The land later passed into Bergen ownership, Simon Bergen marrying deHart's daughter.

The homes of both d'Hart and Simon Bergen were on the westerly side of the road, Bergen's being on a hillside above deHart's. Some excellent prints are in existence of the houses. There was the Deleplaine house, noted for its finely equipped interior decorations which included marble halls, frescoes, carvings, etc. Gowanus had some splendid "show" places those long ago days. Following these homes came a small house on the Shore or Bay (near 43d St.) that of John S. Bergen, a brother of Simon. Next was the home of Wynant Van

Pelt, between 47th and 48th Streets, following which came the home of Henry Van Pelt as well as that of Tunis Van Pelt. Both these were by the Bay or present 47th Street. A house near 48th Street was that of Christopher Van Pelt. He was a son of Wynant Van Pelt. Their line of descent is naturally from the New Utrecht general ancestor. The home of Peter Bergen was near 50th Street, then came the home of Michael Bergen, on the Bay near 53d Street. The house following belonged to Theodorus Bergen, called "Dorus" and was near 51st Street. He was a son of Michael Bergen. Still another Bergen home was that of Tunis Bergen, near 58th Street and the Bay, this being the so called "City Line" for Brooklyn. Beyond that was Bay Ridge, or as earlier called, Yellow Hook. The old house last mentioned is still standing close by the water and visible from Third Avenue. It has been variously called an old Cropsey house, an unknown relic and other names, but in reality it is a Bergen homestead, overlooked in the rush of progress because of its location by the water's edge, as it were. Between this and the present 65th Street was the Casper Casperse or Cropsy homestead. He was grandson of the emigrant. Further along was the Harmonus Barckaloo or Barkaloo farm, now owned by Mr. John McKay. On this property still exists the old Barkaloo family burial plot, told about under separate heading. It will be understood the old Gowanus Road was, in fact, the gateway between the settlement of Breucklen and Gowanus, as well as New Utrecht, the Kings Highway of the Flatbush direction being inland and a direct means of travel from the Ferry to Narrows, in the Najack land, now called Fort Hamilton. The Gowanus Road was established about 1704, ran South toward the present Fifth Avenue, to near Sixth Street, then went Southwesterly toward present Third Avenue, by Middle Street, and thence merged into a road leading to Yellow Hook. The old Porte Road was above the Gowanus locality. Red Hook Lane, of which Brooklyn still has a tiny portion left, was a connection between the Road toward Gowanus. Scattered along the Gowanus Road were homesteads whose owners have passed into history of that locality. It must have been a very picturesque section, with its creeks, woods, valleys and hills, sloping from the wooded lands of the present Greenwood down to the waters of New York Bay. On this ground, moreover, was fought the Battle of Long Island, on the morning of August 27, 1776, when Lord Sterling and his brave Maryland troops made a record for themselves on the pages of history.

It would not do to omit reference to the old Nicholas Vecht house, built by that settler at Gowanus, 1699. Klaes Arentse (Vecht or Vechten) emigrated from Holland and settled at Gowanus, 1672,

building the stone house that later became known as "The Old Farm" and then as the Cortelyou house. It was on the Gowanus road, where present Third Street exists and was a very attractive and substantial dwelling house for that period. In 1846 Mr. Louis Grube painted a picture of the old house from which painting much of the vicinity is learned. Mr. Edward H. Litchfield and Mr. William R. Force, of Brooklyn, each have portrayals of the house. There are several other pictures of it in existence. Mr. Force remembers visiting in the house when a boy and drinking from the spring that ran along close by the edge of old Gowanus Road and near the Cortelyou house, formerly the Vecht house. The Bergen homestead was two blocks below (present day distance).



*"The Old Farm" (Gowanus)*

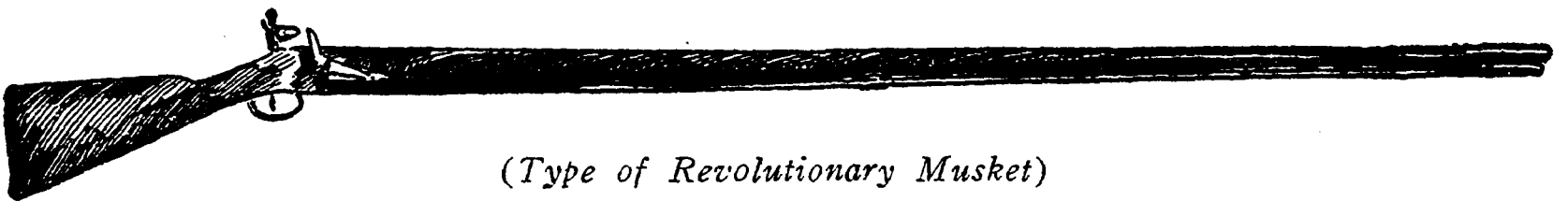
Nicholas Vecht, making his will, devised the entire lands to his grandson, Nicholas Cowenhoven, August 24, 1779. He signed his name "Klaes Aren Vecht."

The will was proved October 4, 1779 (N. Y. Liber 32, Wills, page 124). It will thus be seen that Vecht owned the old farm at the time of the Battle of Long Island, which started near his house, moving upwards to the heights above, then backward on the retreat, when Lord Sterling and 240-259 Marylanders fought determinedly on the ground between present Fifth and Third Avenues, near the Vecht house. It was, of course, unoccupied, and so became a redoubt for both Continental and British forces, during progress of the Battle. Historian Johnson, whose splendid book on the Battle of Long Island is an authority, has declared the heaviest fighting was on Prospect Heights, so called now. The "Sons of the Revolution," N. Y. State, erected a bronze tablet marking the site of the old Cortelyou house as well as where the Maryland troops fell, one on Fifth Avenue and

the retreat, with its sad loss, at Third Avenue. The "Sons" explained that the illustration of the Cortelyou house on the tablet was drawn merely to better give animation to the descriptive tribute of those fallen Marylanders. They fell some distance from the house itself.

NOTE—It was "Smallwood's Battalion of 680 men. They came from the *best families* in Md. Between illness and previous loss, the Marylanders entered battle with 450 men. Although without a Col. or Lieut.-Col., the Marylander's preserved order, & 5 times assaulted the British, of 20 times their strength. The Marylander's gave their lives to save the American Army, on the retreat. Gen. Washington, seeing them fall, exclaimed, "Good God! What brave fellows must I this day lose."

The place had been called the "Old Cortelyou" farm for so many years that its history story was never rightly told. It was always considered and called the Isaac Cortelyou farm, not the Jaques Cortelyou, because Isaac lived on it, although Jaques actually held title. Much discussion has been rife on this point. In 1779 Vecht willed the place to Nicholas Cowenhoven, a Loyalist during the 1776 war. On March 10, 1790, Cowenhoven conveyed the premises to Jaques Cortelyou of the Narrows, a grandson of Jaques, the founder



(Type of Revolutionary Musket)

of New Utrecht. But Isaac Cortelyou had been tenant of the old farm at Gowanus all this time. With him lived the youth Peter I. Cortelyou, whose father, Jaques, later on willed the property to Peter I.'s two sons, Jaques and Adrian. It must be recorded that while Jaques of the Narrows bought the property from Nicholas Cowenhoven in 1790 (who owned it during the latter part of the 1776 war, with Isaac Cortelyou his tenant), it was not occupied by a Jaques Cortelyou until 1840, when the grandson came into possession of the property. All three of the Cortelyou's were Tories during the progress of the Revolutionary war—Jaques, Simon, Isaac (per Albany N. Y. records). They were under indictment as Tories. Nicholas Cowenhoven was on the same list and in the same relation to American Independence, as exemplified by General Washington. As an example of Colonial architecture the old Vecht house at Gowanus was a fine one. That the great Battle of Long Island occurred all around it goes down in history and the ground there is sacred ground and should be preserved as a memorial for the city of Brooklyn. *The World* has printed much of the history of the locality, when historic

matters were not so favorably considered as at the present time and so called attention to the condition of that rubbish covered spot. Miss Georgia Fraser's two books have also done much to help. Her efforts should commend themselves to the public. Two years ago Mr. Charles M. Higgins undertook to interest the City. It looks as if a memorial Park would be realized for Mr. Higgins, like the 1776 patriots, is a good fighter. He means to have a Park on that sacred ground and a Park he will get. His work has been remarkable for beauty of purpose and determination. It should be stated that a condensed abstract title of the "old farm" is furnished by Mr. Edward H. Litchfield, present owner of the property on Fifth Avenue, Third to Fifth Streets.

August 24, 1779. Nicholas Veghte willed the farm to his grandson, Nicholas R. Cowenhoven.

March 10, 1790. Cowenhoven conveyed the property to Jaques Cortelyou.

May 15, 1813. Jaques Cortelyou willed this place to his two grandsons, Adrian V. and Jaques Cortelyou, children of his deceased son Peter I. Cortelyou, "who did live on said farm." (The grandsons were minors at this time.)

March 20, 1830. Jaques and Adrian Cortelyou partitioned the place; they made various sales and conveyances of the premises but recovered possession by foreclosures of mortgages. May 1, 1851, Jaques Cortelyou conveyed his half of the property to Sanford Coley. November 6, 1852, Sanford Coley conveyed the property to Edwin C. Litchfield. On December 23, 1852, Jaques Cortelyou quitclaimed his  $\frac{1}{2}$  said property to Edwin C. Litchfield. November 1, 1852, Adrian V. Cortelyou conveyed to Edwin C. Litchfield the other half of said property and on the same date he quitclaimed said  $\frac{1}{2}$  of said property to Edwin C. Litchfield, thus placing the title of the whole "old farm" in Edwin C. Litchfield.

Regarding the will of Jaques Cortelyou it is here quoted: "—to my beloved wife, Sarah, 1-3 of the farm where we do dwell at the Narrows—to the two grandsons, Adrian and Jacques, the farm whereon their father and my son, Peter I. Cortelyou deceased, did live, situated in Brooklyn—to be equally divided between them when Jaques shall arrive at the age of 21 years. A legacy to be paid to the two granddaughters, Maria and Phebe Cortelyou, of 500 pounds each, to be paid by my son, Timothy L.? Cortelyou." Date May 15, 1813. Witnesses, Simon Cortelyou, Peter S. Cortelyou and John Rapalje. The will was proved December 27, 1815.

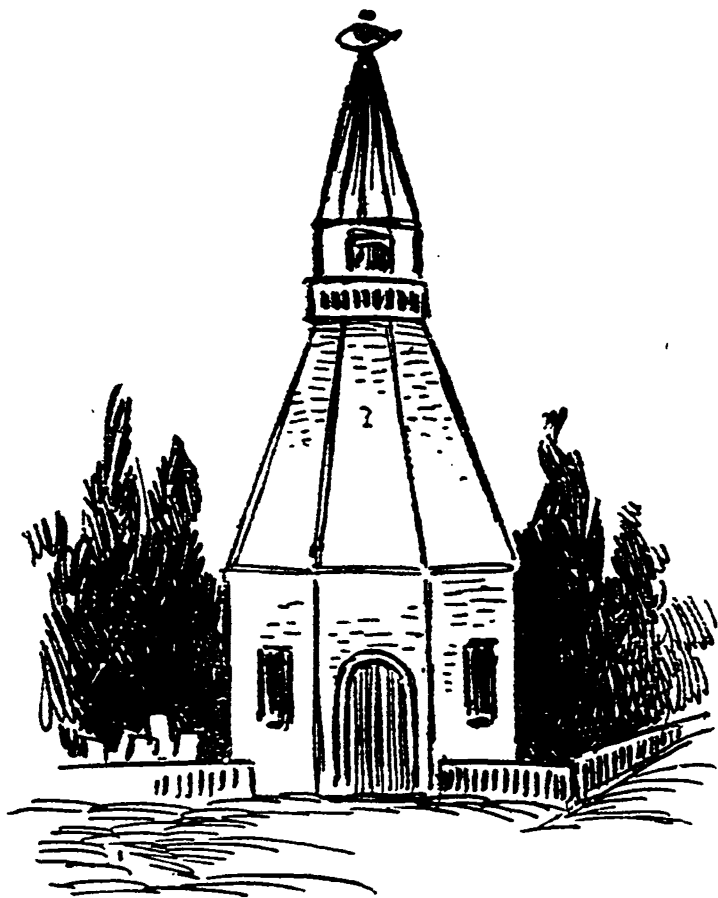
It will be noted that Timothy L.? Cortelyou was guardian for the minor heirs, Jaques and Adrian, to whom the Gowanus farm was willed by their Grandfather, Jaques Cortelyou, of the Narrows. He

never lived at Gowanus. It was most natural that after Isaac Cortelyou's occupancy of the Vecht farm with young Peter I., that the father of Peter should, later on, not only purchase the property but also bequeath it to his grandsons, the children of Peter I. Young Adrian was born at the Narrows, but his brother Jaques was born in the old house at Gowanus, from which line the family of Dr. Lawrence B. Cortelyou and his sister Mrs. Merwin Rushmore descend. It will be realized that while a Jaques Cortelyou did buy the property in 1790 it was not the home of a Jaques until the 1800 period. In 1880 the old stone house was fast disappearing until only the kitchen end was left to tell the tale of long ago days. Washington baseball field took the place of farmland. The trolley and elevated passed by what was formerly the Vecht garden. Old Gowanus Road was wiped out of existence and so was the old stone house of Nicholas Vecht, later the Cortelyou house. It gradually fell to pieces, with nobody apparently caring about its sad fate. Nothing was done to save it.

May Mr. Higgins' good work prosper!

## REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH OF NEW UTRECHT.

On Thursday, October 18, 1877, the church's two hundredth anniversary was observed by aged New Utrecht residents. Rev. David Sutphen officiated at the services and the late Teunis G. Bergen delivered an historical address on the church's foundation and history. The



*First Dutch Church*

church was founded in October of 1677, being included in the collegiate system called the "Dutch churches of Kings County." The minister of Kings County officiated at all services held in Brooklyn, Flatbush, Flatlands and New Utrecht. The first minister of Kings County was Rev. Theodorus Polhemus. In his time services were held in barns and woodsheds. The membership was twenty-seven persons. Drums were beaten to call the congregation together.

The second minister and organizer was Rev. Casparus Van Zuuren, who also appointed as first elders Jan Gysbertsz and

Myndert Korten. The first deacons were Arien Willemtsz (or Bennett) and Jan Van Hausen (or Van Nostrand). The first collection for the New Utrecht Church was made in Flatbush in 1677. It was 19 guilders, or \$6.40. The first in New Utrecht was 27 guilders and seven stuyvers. In 1707, 530 guilders (\$212) was paid for two communion cups, which are of quaint silver and in use today, though the first sacrament was administered as early as December 23, 1677. During Van Zuuren's ministry about forty new members were added, comprising twenty-eight families, of whose male descendants New Utrecht to-day boasts of the Van Pelts, Van Brunts, Nostrands and Van Cleafs. The list of the first twenty-seven members is a curious and interesting one, being as follows:

Jan Hausen and Marritje, his wife; Myndert Korten and Marie Praa, his wife; Daniel Vorveelen and Alida Schaatz, his wife; Jan Gysbertsz (died), Wellemtsz (removed to Bergen), Neeltje (supposedly a Denyse), Arian Wilbenitsy and Agnietje Van Dyck, his wife; Jan Pietersz, Van Deventer and Marie, his wife; Tryntje Van Dyck, Gysbert Tysz Van Pelt and Jannetje Adriaans, his wife; Adriasztje, Joost Du Wien and Magdalena Du Wien, his wife; Pieter Veritie, Jean Du Pre, Nicolaas Du Pre (removed to S. I.), Lourens Jansen and Aaltje Gillis (now De Mandeville) his wife, mother of Joost Du Wien, Annetje Boeguet, Magdalen Van Pelt.

The third minister was Rev. Henricus Selyns. Rev. Rudolphus Varick came from Holland in June, 1685, and served until the usurper Governor Leisler had him imprisoned. Dominie Varick opposed Leisler's usurpation of the New Netherland's Governorship. In those days Rev. Selyns proved the church's savior, preserving its liberty and continuing services. During a minister's absence, services were conducted by the "Voor Lezer." This important and honored office was generally bestowed upon the village schoolmaster. His duties were to keep the church clean and to act as choirmaster and burial clerk, etc. He read sermons from a book called "House Homilies."

Rev. Wilhemus Lupardus came from Holland in 1695, becoming a minister for Kings County. A Rev. James Clark is on the Brooklyn records as serving from 1685 to 1695, but New Utrecht possesses no such records on its church books. During Mr. Lupardus's time and in 1700 a church was erected for the first time since its organization. The cost is shown by an entry previously and afterwards made on the books. On October 19, 1699, the balance on hand was 10,163 guilders, while on January 27, 1701, the balance was only 2,744 guilders, the difference being expended on the new church. The bell cost 786



guilders, as per entry in January, 1701. This bell was placed on the present church at its erection. The first edifice was at the southeastern end of the present cemetery. It was built of stone, octagon in shape, and had a steep shingled roof, with belfry, surmounted by a gilded rooster.

The road passed round the building. Within a stone's throw stood the famous De Sille house, erected in 1658. There were no pews in this queer little structure, each worshipper providing a chair. On each side of the middle aisle, near the pulpit, places were provided for forty-five women's chairs, while nearer the door were forty-five chairs for men. The high dignitaries of the village and town, called "Justices," were assigned an honored place, a bench being placed on the right of the pulpit. A "free" bench was also provided. No fires were known, and in winter the women carried "warming pans" to church, placing them underfoot and at back.



*De Sille House and First Dutch Church*

The pulpit was extremely high and shaped like a goblet. The minister climbed to it by way of a winding staircase. An amusing anecdote is related at this point. The good parson was wont to be gesticulative and forgetful of his great height, in the ardor of his Christian teachings. On a particular Sabbath he leaned over far and fell headlong into the lap of an astonished deacon. He promptly responded:

"Dominie, I have long been expecting thee."

Newcomers were charged six guilders for their places in church; a funeral, including carrying of a bier, six shillings. An interior church burial was a great honor. These arrangements continued for many years.

About 1705 the Rev. Vincentius Antonides came from Europe and was received by a portion of the consistories. There was much religious strife at this time. Later in November of 1705 the Rev.



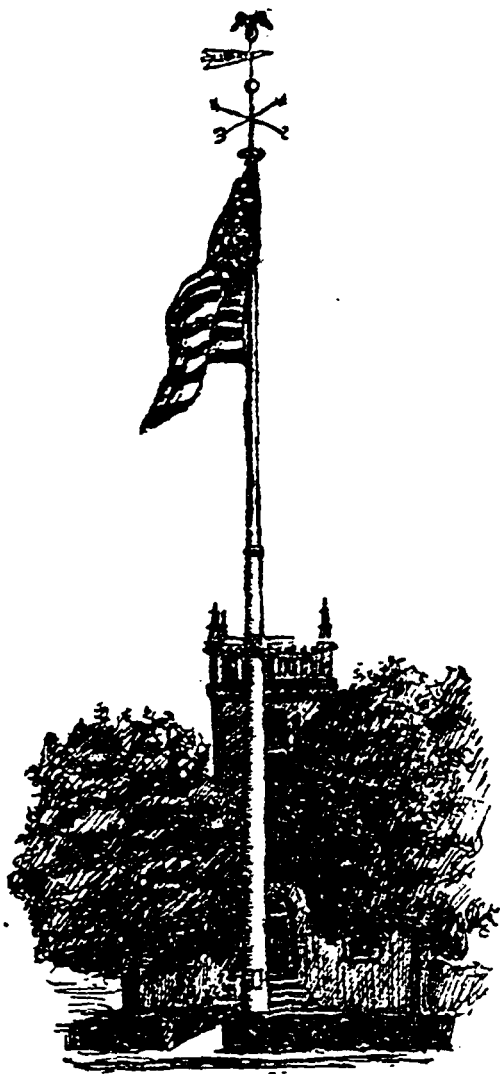
Mr. Freeman became pastor of Kings County Dutch churches. All sectional troubles were healed in 1714, and both Antonides and Freeman became pastors. Their salary was £107 per year. Mr. Freeman was succeeded by the Rev. Johannes Arondeus, who died on July 18, 1741. In 1746 the Rev. Ulpainus Van Sinderin came from Holland. After him came Rev. Anthonius Curtenius, a noted Dutch clergyman from Schraalenburg. He was well beloved and died October 19, 1756. In August, 1757, the Rev. Casparus Rubel was called, being the colleague of the Rev. Van Sinderin until 1784, and the close of the Revolution. He died October 1, 1803.

During 1774 pews were placed in the church. During the war of 1776 the church was taken possession of by the British for a hospital and arsenal. The interior fittings were removed and services sadly interrupted for a long time. In 1783 it was repaired at a cost of 529£ 11s. 11d., and thereafter devoted to church work. Revs. Martinus Schoonmaker and Petrus Lowe were called in 1784, and after a few years the former left for Rochester, N. Y. During his teachings the English language was adopted in the church as well as in schools. October 27, 1787, Rev. Petrus Lowe was installed. John Van Kirk Van Nuyse was made chorister. His successors up to date have been Messrs. Thos. Hegeman, Benjamin Larzelere, Mr. Ralph, Peter Bogart, and Andrew Hegeman, the latter since 1848. An established choir now renders the vocal music, with Mr. Van Sicklen as organist.

Among some of the old customs was placing an hourglass beside the good dominie, who, when the last sand ran through, closed his sermon. Sometimes, however, he would calmly turn the glass, thus affording a longer period for expounding the truth. Collections were taken in velvet bags attached to long poles. An alarm bell was so arranged inside as to ring every time a coin was dropped in. This method was adopted to shame those who contributed nothing. Of course, no bell rang when it passed them, and the congregation knew no coin had been given.

About 1808 separate pastors were assigned to each church. After Rev. Petrus Lowe's death, and in July of 1809, Rev. John Beattie was called to New Utrecht. In 1822, a Sabbath-school was organized by Dr. John Carpenter. He proposed a new church edifice. This caused great agitation.

The old church was sacred to all. Admission was reluctantly made to its unsafe condition. Old age had weakened its walls, and finally, after much hesitation and regretful sorrow, the building was torn down in 1828. The stones were carefully preserved and dedicated and placed



*Reformed Dutch Church—1829*

in the present edifice. In November, 1829, the new church was dedicated. Its constructors were John Van Deventer and James Cropsy. On March 8, 1834, Rev. Beattie resigned. He died in Lockport, N. Y., in 1864. In his time the membership had dwindled to sixty-eight members. Rev. Robert Currie succeeded him in 1835, remaining thirty-one years, and until he died in March, 1866. A branch chapel was erected in Fort Hamilton, while a gallery was added to his New Utrecht church.

Rev. David Sutphen came next, in June, 1867. He was the third pastor of the church since its separate existence. Another chapel was erected at Edgewood at a cost of \$6,000. The Young Men's Christian Association was formed, and in 1875 an organ was put in at a cost of \$4,700. It was rededicated, November 7, 1875. This old church has sent a number of ministers forth, among them Rev. Peter Van Pelt, Rev. Philip Dur-  
yee, Rev. Hugh Carpenter, D.D., Rev. Charles Pool, Rev. Charles Wright and Rev. George Barcalow.

In 1880 Rev. Alfred Hamilton Brush left Nassau, N. Y., and became pastor of the New Utrecht Dutch Church. Dr. Brush was born in Guilford, Ulster County, N. Y., in 1841, graduating from Rutgers College in 1862. His pastorate in New Utrecht was most happy. On June 1, 1905, the 25th anniversary of his coming was celebrated, nine clergymen being present at the ceremonies to extend congratulations. Mr. M. Stewart Hegeman of the Consistory, presided; Rev. Charles Scudder, of the Reformed Dutch Church at Bay Ridge, a branch church, offered a prayer; Rev. John S. Gardiner, of the Flatlands Dutch Church, made an address. A handsome loving cup was presented to Dr. Brush as a token of esteem from his parishioners.

For the past two years his health was not the best, whereupon he was made pastor emeritus, being succeeded by Rev. Orville E. Fisher, who had been Dr. Brush's assistant. Dr. Brush lived with his son, Dunbar C. Brush, of Morristown, N. J., at whose home he passed away on Sunday, April 30, 1911. Funeral services were held at the old New Utrecht church where he had served so many years and was a most impressive service, attended by the parish in general.

Referring to the historic features of the building, it should be told that by some strange fatality lightning frequently strikes the church each summer season. This is accounted for by tradition, which has it that long ago some of the Deacons and Elders were almost to a quarrel point. Soon after the church was struck. The good people declared it to be God's vengeance. August 12, 1891, it was struck while wedding guests were assembled. Among old relics kept is the gilt dove, given by Mr. John Lot, the Dutch Bible by Mr. Tunis G. Bergen, hour-glass by Mr. R. Benson, and a Hymn tablet. In 1857 a document tells of a church bell, cost, \$93.11, which amount was receipted for by Charles W. Church.

The Bay Ridge Reformed Dutch Church was an offspring from the New Utrecht church, as was also the little Chapel at Fort Hamilton.

### **THE OLD VILLAGE CEMETERY.**

Situated on 83rd Street and through to 84th Street, on what was long ago called Kings Highway, the direct route to Denys's Ferry and so the settlement of Narrows, later Fort Hamilton, stands the relic of the last resting place of many of the earlier settlers of New Utrecht. There were, of course, many interments made on private grounds, as in the case of Barkaloo's, Denyse's, Cropsey's, Corteljou's and others who lived on the various large farm lands of the Town. In this way only a few of the very old tombstones remain to be recorded at the present time. Some of the names and dates here mentioned (gathered from the stones some 20 years ago by the writer), are no longer decipherable and so of no use for historic purpose to any who now attempt the interpretation. While this book is not intended to be a genealogical volume in any sense whatever, it is interesting to state what those long ago stones tell of the persons resting in the old New Utrecht Cemetery. Some years ago the little plot covering a city square was not well kept, but all that has been altered by the present-day descendants of those ancestors in God's acre who now see that the cemetery is kept orderly and a credit to the present Reformed Dutch Church, whose descendant it is from the first church that existed close by the North Eastern corner of the Cemetery, or near the then standing de Sille homestead.

A Lutheran Church has recently been built adjoining the Cemetery property on this famed site. Residents feel the atmosphere will at least be of a proper kind, not irreverent. All around are new style houses, the poor relics of long ago days on the opposite side of 84th Street looking very forlorn in their damaged condition, due to street cutting and grading. It is most likely the Cemetery plot will always so remain

a relic of the past and be more cherished as time passes and the locality builds up into a part of Brooklyn.

One thing that pleased present-day people of the Town, those who know the history of the first Dutch church, is that two real Hollanders are buried there and that during recent years. It seemed a pretty piece of sentiment and no objection was made at the time of interment.

Following is the inscription on these two graves, the spot being marked by a tall wooden slab, painted and bearing an enclosed cluster of flowers of some hard metal or wax:

Resting Place  
of  
Everard van Maanen  
Born in Holland, July 11, 1892  
Died, Dec. 4th, 1907

and

Tryntje Klein  
Born in Holland, July 26, 1819  
Died, Nov. 3rd, 1906

One of the old stones of interest is that of  
Jaques Denyse, son of Denyse Denyse  
Died, Dec. 21st, 1791, aged 48 years

William Van Brunt  
Died, Jan. 25th, 1790, aged 65 years

Adrian Hegeman  
Died, Oct. 2nd, 1809, aged 75 years

Jane Johnson, his wife  
Died, July 22nd, 1808, aged 68 years

Jaques Van Brunt  
Died, August, 1811, aged 65 years

Denys Denys,  
Born, April 5, 1726  
Died, Sept. 21, 1806

His first wife is identified by a flat stone found in the ruins of the Hamilton House fire, where the Denyse homestead existed. This stone reads "Denyse Denyse and Teuntje—1751." (Supposedly a door plate inscription.) Teuntje was living in 1781, when she and Denyse signed a deed of conveyance to John Rapalje.

The second wife of Denyse Denyse is identified by her tombstone in the village cemetery which reads:

“Elizabeth, wife of  
Denys Denys,  
Died Feb. 12th, 1854  
in her 90th year.”

The truth of this stone was told the writer by Rev. Hugh Smith Carpenter during 1896, when the stone was decipherable. The fact of Denys having two wives has been disputed by descendants, hence these statements. (His will proves the fact too.)

Not far from where the Denyse stones exist are those of interest to the Fort Hamilton Church family. One stone reads,

“James C. Church,  
Born June 8th, 1796  
Died March 10—1866.”

and

“Maria Turnbull, his wife,  
born April 1801, died April, 1894.”

Over in the 84th Street corner of the Cemetery stands a tall gray stone monument that perpetuates the memory of Doctor James E. Dubois and Doctor John L. Crane, both men of New Utrecht who fell victims of stern duty. They have been declared to be “worthy of their calling” by those physicians who best knew them in actual duty, while the grateful Townpeople erected the monument and had it inscribed thus:

“James E. Dubois, M.D.  
John L. Crane, M.D.  
Ornaments to their Profession,  
who died in performance of their duty,  
Sept. 13th, & Sept. 16th, 1856.”

This was the year of the yellow fever epidemic.

The South-eastern corner of the old cemetery is the oldest and there were found most of the stones that told of earlier days. Some have been lost by breakage, through age and weather conditions, while others have simply crumbled away. One tiny stone inscribed “To Maria Ysabel,” was inscribed in the Dutch language.

One stone told of “Jacques Denyse, born 1736, or 35.”

Belinda Antonides, wife of Thomas Hegeman, born 1697, died 1770.

Charity Van Pelt, wife of Hendrick Suydam, died 1769.

Isaac Cortelyou died 1811. This is the Cortelyou who lived where the Fourth Street Cortelyou house stood (Washington Park Ball Field on Fifth Ave.). The wife of Isaac, who was Altje Rapalje, died in 1814. She was a descendant of Sarah de Rapalje of the Wallabout.

Among other stones were noted "Aurt Van Pelt (a 1776 patriot), Teunis Suydam, Barant Wyckoff, Henry Cropsy, Daniel Van Cleef, Christopher Stillwell, Winant Bennett (whose grandfather built the first house at Gowanus and so in Breucklen). Many of these names represent the active workers and founders of the Reformed Dutch Church in New Utrecht, the second erected on Long Island, the first being at Flatbush. This first membership was 27 persons. It was in 1700 the first church was erected where the present Cemetery exists, on the 84th Street side. That is why the little spot now seems hallowed ground to the many descendants of those earlier settlers in New Utrecht. Except these stones were searched some years ago, the story would not now be there.

### **METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (OF NEW UTRECHT AND UNIONVILLE).**

The founding of Methodism in the Dutch Township of New Utrecht must be accounted for as it was in other Dutch communities. The wave of spiritual enthusiasm and revival that followed the teachings of John Wesley appealed to many residents of the old Township, as elsewhere. The organization of a Methodist Church naturally followed. The first M. E. Church was organized in 1830 and a building erected on Conovers Lane, near the present Sixth Avenue. Land for the purpose was donated by Mr. John Bennett. The following items are gathered from old records of the church by Rev. B. F. Kidder, present rector (1911):

So far as it is known, the first Methodists to locate in the town of New Utrecht were Adrian Bogart and his wife Phoebe Bailey, who came here about the year 1794. (Their granddaughter, Mrs. Lavinia Van Clief, 93 years of age, lives at the corner of Fourth Avenue and 99th Street, and is a member of the church.) About the year 1822 regular preaching services began to be held at the home of the Bogart's, corner Ninth Avenue and 59th Street, and continued for a number of years, when a regular Society was organized. Mrs. Van Clief tells that the year of the organization of the Society was 1830. On March 24, 1831, the Sunday School was organized, under the pastorate of the Rev. J. Luckey, Adrian Bogart being President of the meeting and Chris. C. Bennett, Secretary. John D. Benum was

elected Superintendent. The first preachers to supply the Charge were Revs. Lefevre, Raymond, Noah Levings and J. Luckey. For a number of years the pulpit was supplied by Local Preachers, among those who rendered the most efficient service being the Revs. Jas. Sweeney and Joseph Weyland, the Hon. C. C. Leigh, the Hon. Mr. Tiernan, and Mayor of the City of New York, W. W. Henshaw, and Timothy Young, who afterward became a member of the Conference. Then followed:

Rev. Nauscoyne, 1843	Lorenzo D. Nickerson, 1868-69
Lorenzo D. Nickerson, 1844-5	Nicholas Orchard, 1870-72
Edward O. Bates, 1846-7	Samuel A. Seaman, 1873-75
James D. Bouton, 1848-9	Alexander McAllister, 1876-78
James McBride, 1850	Henry C. Glover, 1879-81
Benjamin Redford, 1851-2	Wm. H. Russell, 1882-83
Edward K. Fanning, 1853-4	Leroy S. Stowe, 1884-85
John F. Booth, 1855-6	Wm. Jeffries, 1886-88
Richard Wake, 1857-8	John Pilkington, 1889-93
Ezra A. Miner, 1859-60	Charles W. Lyon, 1894-97
Robert Roberts, 1861-63	Wm. L. Davison, 1898-03
Henry C. Glover, 1864-65	George Adams, 1904-08
Wm. H. Russell, 1866-67	B. F. Kidder, 1909

The first church edifice was erected in 1830, on the corner of Sixth Avenue and 67th Street. It was built on land donated by John Benham, Esq., a prominent layman of the church and one of the first trustees. The building was of wood, 25 feet front and 40 feet deep. One main aisle ran through the center of the church; and, as you entered, the women sat on the right and the men on the left. A large wood stove was placed midway of the room, on the women's side. At first the church was lighted by candles, and later by lamps filled with whale oil. The building was destroyed by fire on June 6, 1848. Three boys from Brooklyn, wandering about, broke into the church and set fire to it. Two of them served terms in the State's prison for the offence.

The second church edifice was situated on Stewart Avenue, at the intersection of Sixth Avenue and 76th Street. It was built of wood, 30 by 45 feet deep. The land was donated by Simon Denyse, Esq., and the regular services of the church were held at the home of Mr. De Nyse, 78th Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, during the erection of the building. It was ready for occupancy and was duly dedicated before the close of 1849.

The third church building was erected in 1875, under the pastor-

ate of the Rev. Samuel A. Seaman. Land was purchased from Mr. Parsons, or the Ovington Co. The building was of wood, 32 by 50 feet deep. Its value was about \$8,000. The edifice was called "Grace M. E. Church." A pretty homestead on Ovington was the parsonage. The church was corner of Fourth and Ovington Avenues. Later the building was removed to the west side of the lot, to make room for the beautiful stone structure, the present home of the Society, which was built during the pastorate of the Rev. Wm. L. Davison and dedicated June 10, 1900.

The Society is in a very prosperous condition, having grown from small beginnings to a membership of between 500 and 600 and a Sunday School numbering between 800 and 900.

The little Methodist Church at "Unionville," which was a separate building yet under the jurisdiction of the Bay Ridge church, had the same Ministers. This edifice was built in 1844 and was called "Fisherman's Church," being located where the land was low. A fine beach made fishing one of the sources of income for many of the residents of that part of New Utrecht, just as the Narrows had fishing for its profit and business. Many small cottages of the fishermen were on or near the beach. And so the name of the little church at Unionville. It was dedicated by Rev. Henry Chace. The Trustees, in 1844-5, were: Garret Wyckoff, Stephen Maus, Oscar D. Way, Cornelis Cozine, Edmund Morris.

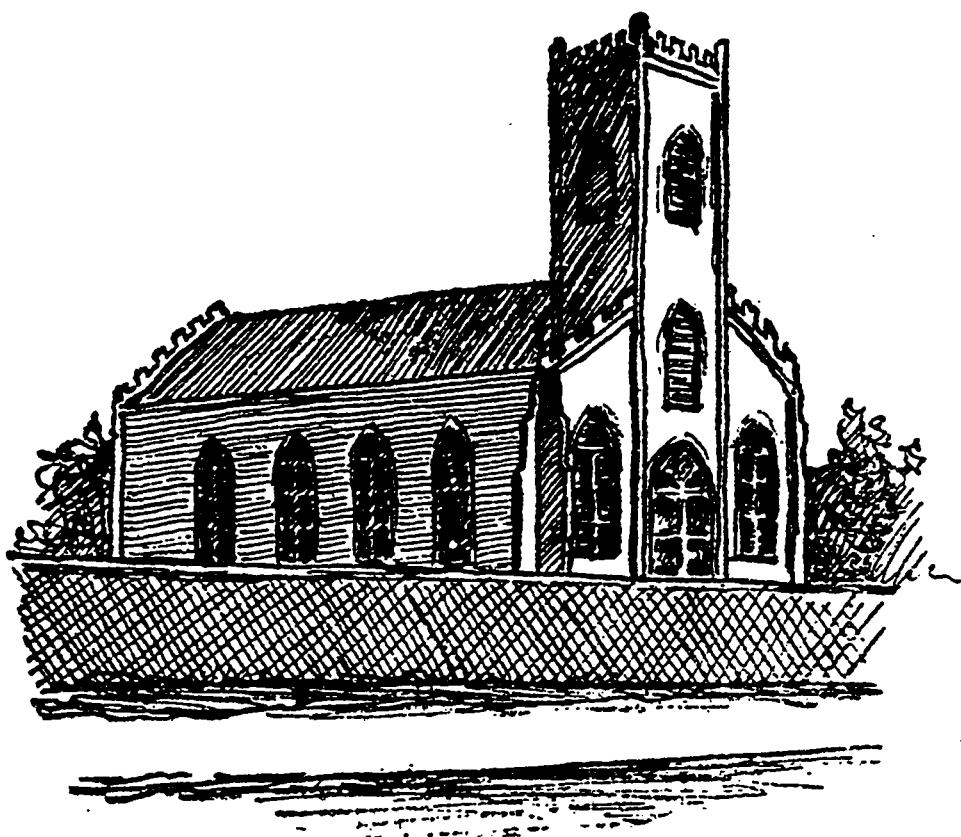
The Trustees for the Bay Ridge M. E. Church were: Jacob J. Moore, Henry Duryea, Adrian B. Denyse, at this time. Rev. H. C. Glover was then in the pulpit.

The Methodist Church of the Township grew with the progress of the locality all around it. Many of its earlier workers, the Moore's, Denyse's, Duryea's, Bennett's and others lending strong hands and heart to the church cause with a result that steady increase in membership and sound foundation has marked the Methodists of New Utrecht. A fourth church building was erected, 1900 period.

### **ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, FORT HAMILTON.**

This is the little Protestant Episcopal Church whose history tells of military life within its sacred walls. Memories cling around it in a different way from that of the old Dutch churches of the various Long Island settlements. When this church was built there were only two others in all Kings County—St. John's and St. Ann's of Brooklyn. Fort Hamilton had the third Episcopal Church. The corner stone was laid March 24, 1835, and the building was completed July 16, of the same year.





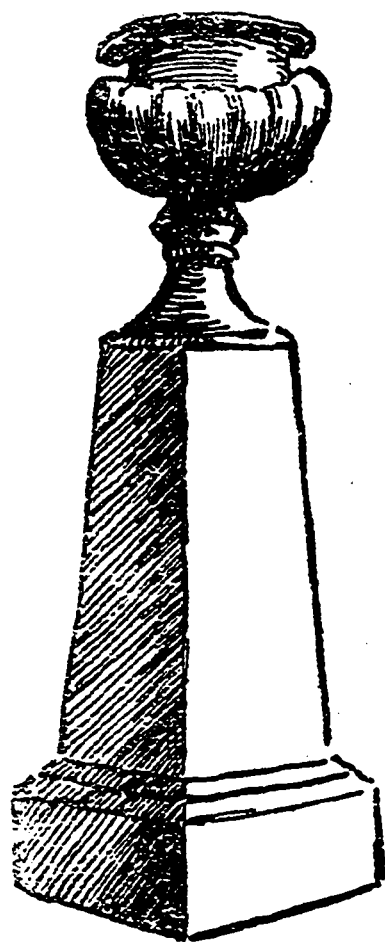
*St. John's Church, Fort Hamilton, N. Y.—1835*

with it came Major Thomas J. Jackson. He was then barely 30 years old and had not yet won the title of "Stonewall," which title was fittingly bestowed on a brave soldier. It appears that Major Jackson was of a very serious, religious mind and never allowed any pleasure or even duty to interfere with his attendance at the house of God. He was baptized at St. John's Church on Sunday, April 29, 1849, by Rev. M. Scofield the rector. The sponsors were Colonel Dimick and Colonel Taylor, both of the United States army. The baptismal font was of Italian marble with a pedestal of sandstone. It always occupied a place of honor in the church building, because of its association with Major Jackson's christening. Record has it that an error was made in putting "Jefferson" on the church book, because Major Jackson was christened Thomas Jonathan Jackson, not Jefferson as the registry would show it to have been. His widow, who visited Fort Hamilton, declared Jonathan to be correct, and Mr. Francis Hopkins, a life long resident of the Fort, explained it the same way to the writer.

Major Jackson was always considered a very brilliant but eccentric man. He left many recollections of an unusual character, so that when it

St. John's first rector was Rev. J. D. Carder, then came Rev. Sylvanus Nash, 1845; Rev. Michael Scofield, 1847; Rev. Joseph Ransom, 1861; Rev. W. H. D. Granis, 1867; Rev. Henry E. Hovey, 1869; Rev. Robt. Snowden, 1874; Rev. F. D. Hoskins.

Following the Mexican War the First Artillery was assigned to Fort Hamilton in 1848, and

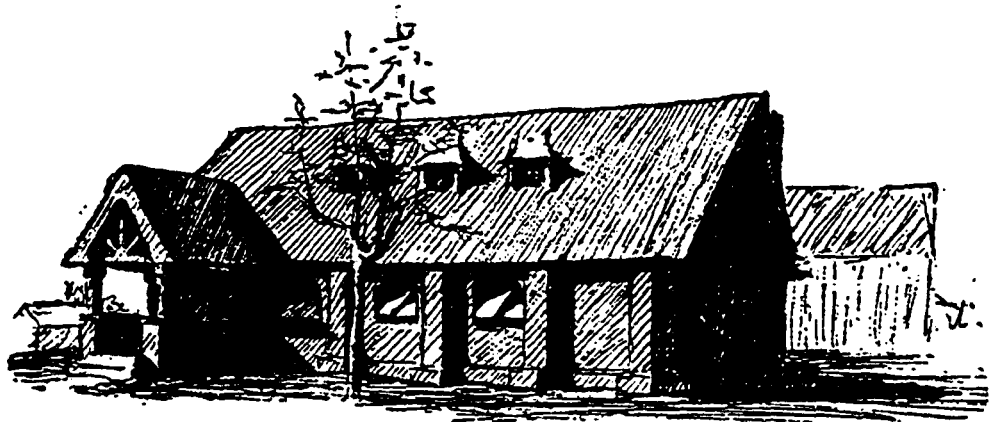


*Baptismal Font, Where  
Stonewall Jackson  
Was Christened*

was later told how he never entered battle without first a prayer, that statement was both understood and believed.

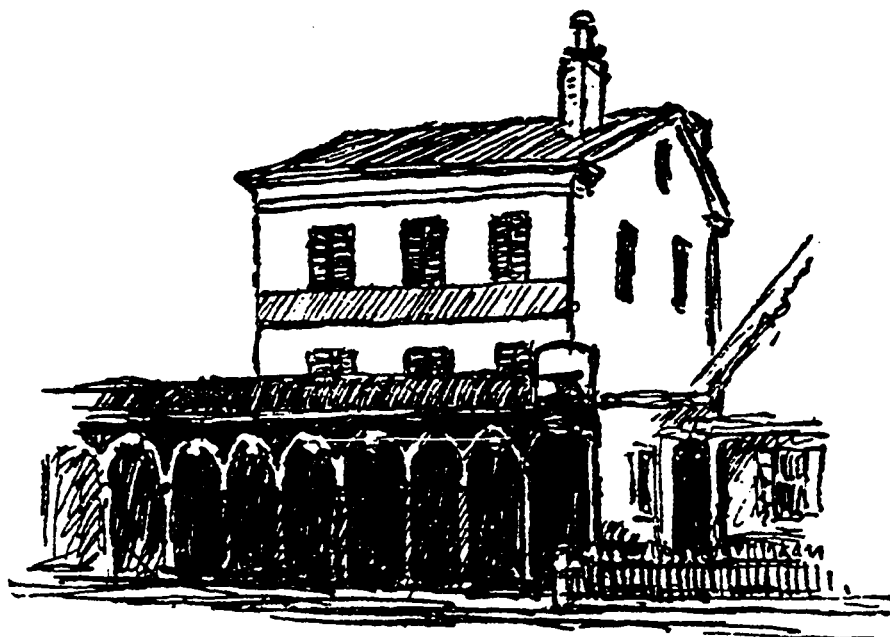
At Fort Hamilton he was an earnest churchman. He was also known to be a great pedestrian, and each day might be seen walking along the streets of the village brandishing a big cane as he did in sword drill. Friends gave him safe margin in space at such times. He was known to be particular of his food and once, at a splendid military reception at Governor's Island, Major Jackson carried over his own refreshments. Despite these eccentricities he was greatly beloved by all who knew him.

Another illustrious soldier who attended little St. John's Church and who served as vestryman, was Capt. Robert E. Lee, of Virginia. He was about 36 years old at the time and sta-



*St. John's Church—1900*

tioned at Fort Hamilton with his troop. The Sears family were next door neighbors to the Lee family, the latter residing in a frame house



*Capt. Robert E. Lee Home (Fort Hamilton)  
(Altered, 1890, into garden front)*

on Fourth Avenue, originally but two stories high, but now made a story higher and used as a summer garden. In 1847 Captain Lee was ordered to another post and with his family bade farewell to Fort Hamilton. His departure was deeply regretted, for he had quite won the hearts of the townspeople by his uniform courtesy and lovable disposition, "a true gentleman and sol-

dier," is the Fort Hamilton verdict of its memories of Capt. Robert E. Lee. During the Civil War, when his son Wm. Fitzhugh Lee was confined a prisoner in Fort Lafayette, friends did all in their power to extend courtesies and comforts to the prisoner of war. During

the South's great tribute to its departed hero, Stonewall Jackson, during 1891, when his bronze statue at Lexington, Va., was unveiled, and during its loving memory of the Robert E. Lee whom all mourned as his life statue was placed in the Museum at Richmond, Va., it was to a little frame church at Fort Hamilton, New York Harbor, that many thoughts went instinctively. Both illustrious soldiers had left their imprint also there.

St. John's Church property, located on Clark Street and Fort Hamilton Avenue, was part of the original Denyse estate and can never be used for other than church edifice purposes. Following is a copy of the deed:

"This Indenture, made the twenty second day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand and eight hundred and thirty five Between Hugh Smith of the city of New York Minister of the gospel and Eleanor L. his wife, John Carpenter of the County of Kings Physician, and Margaret his wife, James P. F. Clarke of the County of Orange Minister of the Gospel and Jane his wife, and Jane Ann Smith of the city of New York single woman of the first part, and the Rector, church warden and vestry men of St. John's church, Fort Hamilton Long Island of the second part Witnesseth, that the said parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar lawful money of the United States of America to them in hand paid by the said parties of the second part, at or before the ensealing and delivery of these presents the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted, bargained, sold, aliened, remised, released, conveyed, and confirmed and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell, alien, remise, release, convey, and confirm unto the said parties of the second part and to their successors forever, All that certain Lot of ground, situate, in the town of New Utrecht, County of Kings and state of New York and is known and described on a Map Made by Sidney C. Herbert dated in October, 1834, and filed in the corner of Clarke Street and Smith Avenue and extending in front on said Clarke Street one hundred and twenty-five feet, and on Smith Avenue one hundred feet as the same is located and described on the said Map being the Map of the Property of the Heirs of Jane Smith deceased,—situated at the place aforesaid. Together with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments, and appertenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining and the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, rents, issues, and profits thereof. And also all the estate, right title, interest, dowers and rights of

dower, property possessions, claim and demand whatsoever as well in law as in Equity of the said parties of the first part of, in, or to the above described premises and every part and parcel thereof with the appertenances: To Have and To Hold the above granted and described with the appertenances unto the said parties of the second part and their Successors to their own use and behoof for ever;— for the uses and purposes of a Protestant Episcopal Church and for the support and Maintenance of a Protestant Episcopal Ministry in said church: and if the said parties of the second part or their Successors shall cease to use, occupy, and possess said premises for the uses and purposes aforesaid, then the said premises shall rest in the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New York and his successors forever in trust that the same shall be held for the uses and purposes of a Protestant Episcopal Church and for the support and Maintenance of a Protestant Episcopal Ministry for ever.

And the said parties of the first part for themselves, their heirs Executors and administrators do hereby covenant, promise, and agree to and with the said parties of the second part and their successors, the above mentioned and described premises in the quiet and peaceable possession of the said parties of the second part and their successors against the said parties of the first part and their heirs and against all and every person and persons whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same will Warrant and by these presents for ever Defend.

In Witness whereof the said parties of the first have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

HUGH SMITH.  
ELEANOR L. SMITH.  
JANE ANN SMITH.  
JOHN CARPENTER.  
MARGARET CARPENTER.  
JAMES P. F. CLARKE.  
JANE CLARKE.

Sealed and Delivered in presence of  
HUGH SMITH Jr.

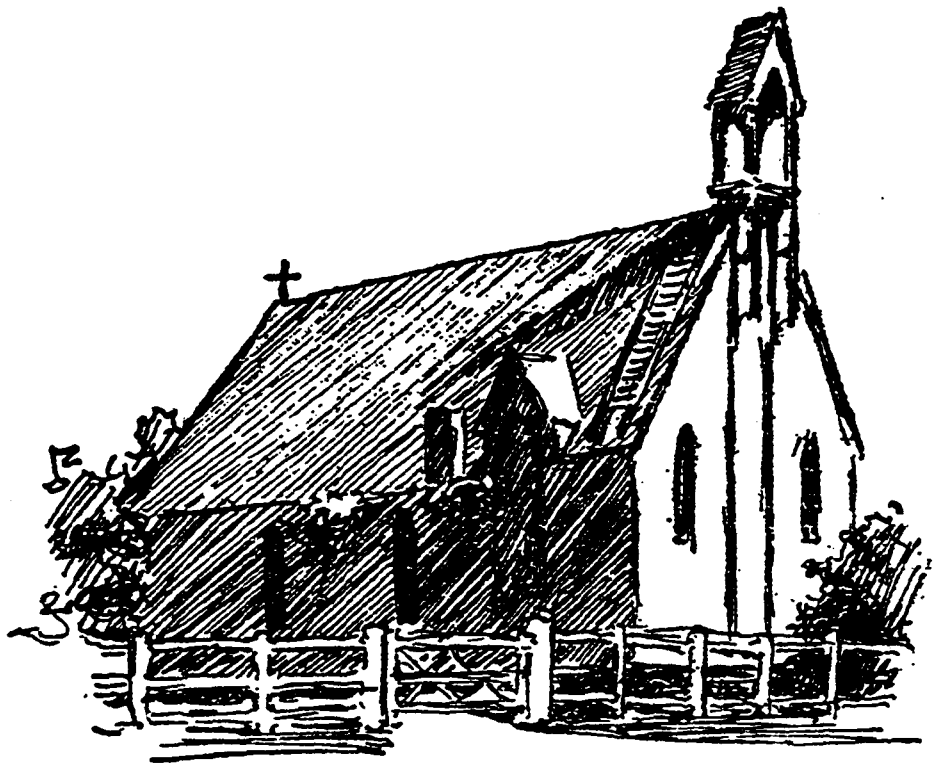
Deed of Conveyance witnessed by  
TUNIS G. BERGEN.  
HENRY C. MURPHY.

March 22d, 1835.

## CHRIST CHURCH (BAY RIDGE).

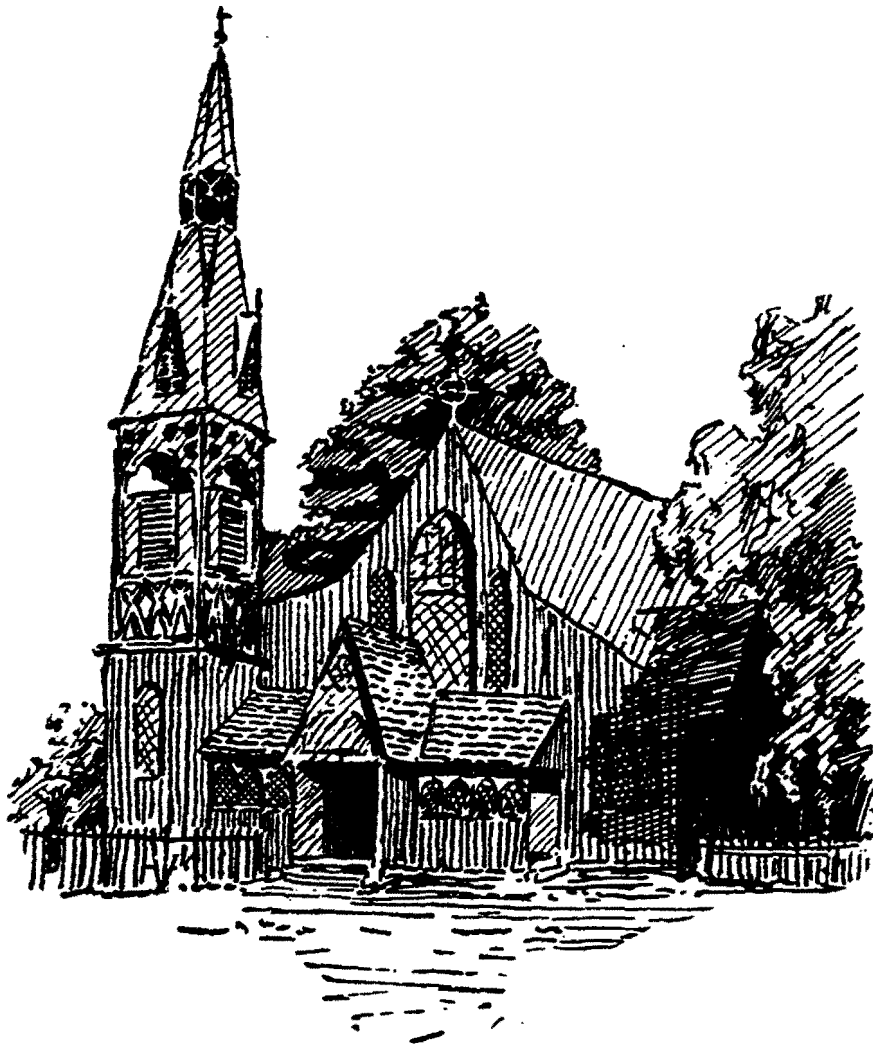
With the scattered farmlands of Yellow Hook giving way to development, as brought about by the Ovington Co., and fine homes being erected along the Shore Road as well as inland, the Bay Ridge district naturally decided upon having a church of its own. The Dutch Reformed creed did not appeal to the new comers, many of whom were Episcopalians. About 1852 a meeting of citizens was held, when it was decided to build a church. It was declared a branch of the Fort Hamilton church, erected in 1835. The Methodists were established during 1831-2.

Christ Church was accordingly built, the first service being held May 22d, 1853, Rev. Henry Bartow officiating. On June 3d, 1853, a meeting was held in the new building for the purpose of incorporating and electing a Vestry. This election resulted as follows: Wardens—Joseph A. Perry and John B. Kitching. The Vestrymen were: Theodore Sedgwick, Daniel Richards, Benjamin C.



*Christ Church, Bay Ridge—1853*

Townsend, David C. Winslow, William C. Langley, Joseph Dunderdale, George Fletcher, James Weir. Nearly every Vestryman served continuously or until his death or removal from the Parish. Mr. Perry died August 26, 1881, and was mourned by many friends. A tablet erected to his memory was later placed in the second church building. Mr. Weir died in 1891. During 1868 the church was enlarged to almost double its original size and likewise much improved in appearance. Its location was on the present Third Avenue, near "City Line" or 65th Street—in reality at the present 68th Street. In 1877 a Sunday School building was erected adjacent to the church. The Rectory was burned July 5, 1873, but was rebuilt. The lawns surrounding this property was much admired, great trees lending shade and picturesqueness to the scene.



*Christ Church—1890*

The pretty church building was the central point for several gay and important weddings. On Thursday, June 19, 1890, the marriage of Miss Eva Bliss, daughter of Mr. E. W. Bliss to Mr. James Warren Lane, of New York, took place, bringing a notable assemblage within the walls of the church edifice. Nearly three thousand invitations were issued for the event, but only a few hundred were admitted to the ceremony, at which Right Rev. Bishop Potter officiated. The Bliss family resided at the home owned by its former occupant, Hon.

Henry C. Murphy, at what he called "Owls Head."

Two years later another wedding occurred in the same little frame church building, when Miss Jeanie Pratt Andruss, daughter of Captain and Mrs. E. VanArsdale Andruss, of the Garrison at Fort Hamilton, was married to Lieut. Oscar Straub, U. S. A., of Fort Monroe, Va. This was June 9, 1892. It was a Military wedding in all that the word implies. Never before had Christ Church held such a brilliant and gold laced throng. The First Artillery had had no wedding in its ranks for many years and the occasion was made a record breaker. John Lind, the happy Bandmaster, decided a church organ too ordinary for a Garrison bride, so he and his full Regimental Band took possession of the organ loft and rendered the wedding music. The Quartermasters and other Departments had arranged the decorations, which were very beautiful and interspersed with American flags. About all the Generals, Colonels, Captains and Lieutenants in the Army, stationed near New York, were present as guests. Rev. Bishop Faulkner officiated. Noting pictures of the pretty little building one would scarcely imagine how much of its history related to important wedding parties. Not of the olden days and Dutch life but of the days when Bay Ridge was

the center of beautiful homes and a social life that has all been swallowed up in city development.

About 1904 it became evident that the church could not longer remain in the original locality, due to elevated road encroachments and trolley tracks. A third and entirely new building and locality was decided upon. A plot of land was purchased on Second Avenue, from 73d to 74th Streets, where the present church was built, designed by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, the architects. The corner stone was laid on All Saints Day, 1908, and on Trinity Sunday, 1909, which was also the 56th anniversary of the founding of the parish, the Holy Communion was celebrated in the unfinished building. September, 1909, the church was opened for divine service, Right Rev. Bishop Frederick Burgess then officiating.

It was a fortunate happening that the old church building was sold and not destroyed, the Lutheran Congregation of the Church of the Good Shepherd purchasing it and removing the whole edifice to new quarters on the corner of Fourth Avenue and 75th Street. This congregation repaired and renovated the former Episcopal edifice and have accomplished excellent results with it. It was likewise a matter of general pleasure that the former Episcopal Church was not destroyed.

The Rectors of Christ Church have been:

Rev. H. S. Bartow, 1853-54; Rev. Theodore Irving, 1855-57; Rev. H. B. Hubbard, 1857-59; Rev. Uriah B. Tracy, 1859-64; Rev. John A. Aspinwall, 1864-85; Rev. J. H. Ranger, 1886-88; Rev. W. Hamilton Morgan, 1888-1891; Rev. Bishop Faulkner, 1891—(still incumbent, 1911).

### **CORTELJAU—CORTELYOU.**

There has not been much variation in recording this name. Little confusion has resulted. There were three Jacques's in New Utrecht at one period, resulting in many wrongly conceived press articles, book items, histories, etc. This has been satisfactorily probed and settled. Documents prove every statement made. The story of the life and work of Jacques Corteljau, emigrant and "Promoter," would fill a volume by itself. It is only possible to confine that story to a brief Chapter.

Jaques Corteljau emigrated from Utrecht, Holland, about 1652. He was a noted Surveyor, of French education and name. Being conversant with the French, Spanish, Dutch and English languages, as well as of scientific ability and profession, his post in the New Netherlands was an important one. Mr. Cornelius Van Woerckhoven, with whom he was in close personal and business relation (being



also tutor to Van Woerckhoven's son) had means and influence at his command. Mr. Corteljau, without means, but with splendid educational advantages, became Agent and assistant to Van Woerckhoven in planning the Colony of New Utrecht. Van Woerckhoven's name was used as negotiating with the Indians for their Najack lands, as it was with the West India Company business matters. The two men, emigrating from Utrecht, worked together for one purpose. Van Woerckhoven's unexpected death (soon after he returned to Holland to secure his Colonists for Najack lands) resulted in halting plans. Corteljau had no choice but to continue the work, which he very naturally did. He applied to the proper Authorities of Holland and New Netherlands for permission, also land grants, to establish what Van Woerckhoven had contemplated. The Authorities had highest respect for Mr. Corteljau and his abilities, giving full permission to go ahead—upon one condition. That condition, was a map of New Amsterdam. Mr. Corteljau agreed, and soon completed the desired map, January 16, 1657. It was the first made. He thus received the Najack lands, also encouragement to establish his proposed colony, which he did. In honor of his birth-place and Van Woerckhoven's, he named the settlement New Utrecht.

He married Neeltje Van Duyn (sister of Gerrit, whom the Labadists mention, 1679). Jaques first resided at New Amsterdam, but with Van Woerckhoven's death announced and the Narrows property needing attention, he removed to the Narrows, building a log house there. It stood close to where Colonel Langdon's battery was located (1893), or *East* of the so-called Simon Cortelyou house. The log house being burned, was replaced by a good stone building, on the same site. After Jacques death, about 1693, the stone house was demolished. Some of its stone went into the Fort, some into the Pieter Cortelyou house, built about 1700, known later as the Simon Cortelyou house. Jacques Corteljau was represented at the Hemstead Assembly, 1665, also Balthazar Vosch, Jr. Jacques owned and occupied the Najack or Nyack tract of land, receiving a Patent from Governor Stuyvesant, August 27, 1657; from Governor Nicolls, August, 1668; from Governor Dongon, May 13, 1686, which later was made out for the Town of New Utrecht.

As an expert Surveyor, Corteljau was called upon for various important duties. A map of Schaenectede (Schenectady) was his work, done by special appointment. 1685 he was Justice of the Peace. His land transactions were on a larger scale, with a colonization plan for Raritan lands (New Jersey) but which he finally abandoned as too remote. His energies were thus devoted to New Utrecht alone. In the Labadists journey to his home, 1679, much is related about him,



all most complimentary. That he was unable to entertain his guests in his house, but put them to sleep overnight in the barn, was due to his two sons being ill with small pox, then prevalent. With knowledge of medicine, Jacques practically established a quarantine, while yet treating his visitors with utmost civility and care. His own son also slept in the barn—the other two lay critically ill. He and his wife were distracted, but hospitable as possible under the circumstances. About 1693 Jacques Corteljau died, leaving children as follows:

Jaques, born 1662?, Pieter, born 1664, Cornelis, born —, Helena, born —, Maria, born —, Willem, born —. These Cortelyou histories are very important to New Utrecht. Matters have been sadly mixed in accounting for various happenings, houses, etc., by the Narrows. It is, therefore, wise to give the various family lines of descent from above named children of Jacques Cortelyou, founder of New Utrecht.

Jaques (son of 1652 settler), born 1662?; died May 3, 1731. Married October 4, 1685, Marratie Hendricks Smack, who died 1705. Married 2nd, Aeltje Boerum, who died 1732. He owned part of his father's land in New Utrecht, where he took oath of allegiance 1687. He was Captain of a Militia Company, 1693. Made a will dated March 4, 1726. Issue:

Altje, Geertje, Helena, Jaques (born Sept. 26, 1697, died young).

\*Jaques, born Sept. 25, 1707.

Neeltje, Marya.

Hendrick, born 1711, Mar. Antie Voorhis, Mar. 2nd, Catherine. Lived in N. J.

Jaques (born 1707, died 1765). Mar. Marretje Hendrick of N. J. Built house and resided where Jaques Cropsey later owned (later William Cropsey). Issue:

Jacques, born 1730; died 1747.

Altie, born 1733, Mar. Rutgert Van Brunt, a "Colonel" in Militia.

Isaac, born 1736; died 1811.

Antie, born —; died —. Mar. R. Stilwell.

Isaac Cortelyou (born 1736; died 1811). Mar. Altie Rapalje, wid. John Lott. Issue:

Jacques, born 1768; died 1824. Single.

Angelic, born 1770; died 1826. Mar. G. L. Martense.

\*John, born 1772; died 1855.

Martha, born 1767; died 1850. Single.

Aletta, born 1769; died —. Mar. A. O. Blemis.

Isaac, born 1774; died 1839. Single.

Daniel, born 1777; died 1823. Single.

Hendrick, born 1779; died —. Single. Heired his father's property about 1815. Sold to J. C. Freeke, 1825, then 1828 to Jacques W. Cropsey to Wm. Post to J. D. Brown.

NOTE—Built house, 4 rooms, by Narrows; rented property Aug. 13, 1793. Also owned property and house foot Bennett's Lane, at Father's death, 1765. Latter estate went to Daniel, 1811-12. Former bought by J. W. Cropsey. Isaac leased the "Old Farm" at Gowanus and resided there, with the youth Peter T. Cortelyou, later father to Adrian and Jacques, owners of the farm at Gowanus, 1840.

\*John Cortelyou (born 1772; died 1855). Mar. Catherine Lefferts. Issue:

Peter L., born —; died young.

Aletta, born 1801; died 1827. Single.

\*Isaac, of Flatbush, born 1797; died 1845. Mar. Sarah, dau. Timothy T. Issue:

Peter L., born 1829. Mar. Jane Bergen.

Ann, born 1829. Mar. H. G. Onderdonk.

Isaac, born 1832; died 1841.

Sarah T., born 1834. Mar. G. T. Bergen.

Jacob L., born 1836. Mar. Adeline Brower.

John, —.

Catherine, —.

Timothy T., —.

The children of Jaques Corteljou, emigrant of 1652, will be taken in order of size of descent line. This is regardless of birth order. It is done to accommodate the Pieter branch, which is both large and important to New Utrecht and Gowanus history.

Cornelis (son Jaques, 1652 emigrant), born —; died about 1690. He mar. Neeltje Volckerse, who mar. 2nd, Johannes VanderGrif. Cornelis took oath of allegiance as native of N. U., 1687. Issue: Annetje, who mar. Isaac Luqueer. (If others, not know.)

Helena (dau. Jaques, 1652 emigrant), born —; died 1726. Mar. 1st, Nicholas Van Brunt; mar. 2nd, Denyse Denyse; mar. 3d, Hendrick Hendrickson, all of New Utrecht. Record of Helena is found in Denyse and Van Brunt histories.

Maria (dau. Jaques, 1652 emigrant), born —; died —. Mar. Willem Barkaloo. See Barkaloo history.

Willem (son Jaques, 1652, emigrant), born —; died —. Took oath of allegiance as N. U. citizen, 1687. No further trace.

Pieter (son of Jaques, 1652 emigrant), born 1664; died April 10, 1757. Mar. prior to Nov. 1694, Diewertje, or Deborah DeWitt. He was a Surveyor. Owned part of his father's land. Took oath of allegiance, 1687. Purchased land in Somerset Co., N. J., 1710. Is mentioned in various land transactions. The branch of Pieter is

given carefully; his descendants are identified with Gowanus history, over which there has been much argument. Especially is this true of the "Old Farm" owned by Nicholas Vecht first and later by the Cortelyou family. Pieter and Deborah had 9 children (he built the so-called Simon Cortelyou house, about 1700 and resided there).

Neeltje, born Nov. 15, 1694; died young.

\*Jaques, born about 1698; died Oct. 10, 1757.

Peter, born Sept. 25, 1699; died 1764. (Mar. Feb. 24, 1720, Neeltj Van Pelt.)

Cornelis, born Aug. 17, 1701; died ——. Settled on S. I.; had 3 sons: Cornelis, died 1781, mar. Sarah Sprague; Aaron, of S. I., died 1789; Peter.

Helena, born Sept. 21, 1703.

William, born Sept. 27, 1705.

Maria, born Aug. 10, 1707; died young.

Deborah, born Nov. 20, 1711.

Neeltje, born March 20, 1712. Mar., Sept. 29, 1745, Barent Johnson.

The father signed his name to documents, "Pieter Corteljau."

\*Jacques, born 1698; died Oct. 10, 1757. Mar., April 25, 1718, Jacominte Van Pelt. He was a farmer of N. U. He had an Uncle Jaques Corteljau (son of emigrant). He also had a Cousin Jaques Corteljau. There were thus three Jaques's in N. U. at one time. Each had a different farm and each a different house. Issue of Jacques and Jacominte were:

Deborah, born 1720. Mar. Dirck Bergen of Gowanus.

\*Peter, born Oct. 3, 1722; died 1777.

Nelthe, born March 6, 1726.

\*Peter, born Oct. 3, 1722; died —, 1777. Mar. Angeneitje (Agnes) de Hart. Issue: *Jaques* and *Simon*. It was from these two branches that so much of the history of the Cortelyou family arises. The Simon branch will be taken first, for convenience of type.

Simon Cortelyou, born 1746; died 1828. Mar., 1763, Sarah Van Wyck (died 1816); mar. 2nd (1817), Maria Bogart, wid. Jaques Barkaloo. Issue:

Peter S., born —; died —. Mar. Elizabeth —. Issue: Simon (who mar. Lemuian Vandervere), Peter, John and others.

Jane.

Simon and wife Sarah, had a daughter Jane, who married secretly a Hessian officer by name Conrad. Their child mar. John Cornell, and had a dau. who became parent to the dau. who was later on, Mrs. Middleton. (Mrs. Merwin Rushmore, 477 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, has this record in letter form.) The Simon Cortelyou

house by the Narrows was the scene of this sad romance of Jane Cortelyou. It has been often related as an "elopement," which fact the Cortelyou family have disproved by records. It was John Conrad, the Hessian officer, who went to England to secure a permit to leave the British Army and return to claim his Bride. Simon refused to allow his daughter to even see the officer when he did return; refused to acknowledge the marriage; refused Conrad upon every point. A bitter and stormy scene ensued. Jane was kept a prisoner. Another story has it that Jane was forced to marry another man, being told her British officer was faithless. At any rate, John Conrad walked from the Simon Cortelyou house to the bluff near by and there shot himself, dying at once. His tragic death and the fact that he had been faithful to her, affected Jane's mind. Her grief was of the quiet, deep sort, it has been told. Mrs. Rime Stewart, near neighbor of the Simon Cortelyou's, had the young officer buried upon her own farmland, with all the military honor of his station. Jane is said to have had the body removed, later on, to the village cemetery. Only good was recorded of Conrad, he being anxious to prove to Simon Cortelyou that a Hessian could be good as a Dutchman. This is the true story of the romance by the Narrows. The Simon Cortelyou homestead was East of his brother Jaques' house. It was originally the Pieter Cortelyou house (born 1664) then the Jaques, then Peter (born 1722) and then to Simon, which latter name clung to the old structure. It has been without question, the most written of and the most lecture shown house of any in New Utrecht, barring the Van Pelt and Van Brunt homes. Mistakes have been made in calling it a Jaques and a Simon home when in reality it was erected by Pieter Cortelyou, about 1700. At this time the first home of Jaques Corteljou, emigrant of 1652, had disappeared.

To return to the line of descent of Jaques, son of Pieter and a brother of Simon, above named:

Jaques (born 1743; died 1815; son of Peter & Agnes de Hart). He mar., 1716, Mary Hewlett, who died 1771. Mar. 2d, 1773, Sarah Townsend, who died 1829. Issue:

Peter I, born 1768; died 1804. Mar., 1789, Femmetje Voorhies; mar. 2d, 1803, Mary Alstien. Issue: Adrian V., born —, at the Narrows; Jaques, born March 1, 1796, at the "Old Farm" at Gowanus; Maria, Phebe.

Timothy T., born 1774; died 1829. Mar., 1801, Anna Kouwenhoven (died 1843). Issue: Anna M., born 1812; Sarah T., born 1802, mar. Isaac Cortelyou, son John; Peter; Wm. K.; Johanna; Timothy T., born 1815, mar. Ann Stilwell.

This closes the genealogical portions of the Cortelyou family, so

far as the most important branches go. It is not intended to be complete, but merely to straighten out confusion existing in many recitals and printings of history by the Narrows and of the Cortelyou's. Jaques and his brother Simon had homesteads near each other. Jaques' was *West* of Simon's. The son of Jaques (Timothy T.) became next owner. The property was sold to John Delaplaine about 1848; to the Government 1862, when the house was soon after demolished.

It was Jaques, father of Peter I. and Timothy T., who bought the "Old Farm" at Gowanus, originally the Nicholas Vecht farm, then the Nicholas Cowenhoven property. But Jaques resided at the Narrows, in a house *West* of his brother Simon's house, or between Denyse Denyse's and Simon's, to be exact. His son Peter I. had resided at the Gowanus farm with Isaac Cortelyou (see Isaac history). When Peter I. married in 1789, his father bought the farm from Cowenhoven, 1790, and in 1804, when Peter I. died, the latter's two sons, Adrian V. and Jaques, heired the property, Jaques of the Narrows merely held title. The Cortelyou family have always regarded the Gowanus farm as the Isaac and the Peter I. homesteads, for not until 1804 did a Jaques reside there as owner. His age was then just *eight years*.

Perhaps the best authority on Cortelyou family history has been Mr. Peter L. Cortelyou, of 77th Street, Bay Ridge, who, October, 1893, told the writer all he had of records, he being *doubly* descended from Jaques, the founder of New Utrecht. Mr. Cortelyou has since passed away but his histories have been safely preserved within these pages; they are authentic and all proved. He owned a Dutch Bible 248 years old, in the Holland Dutch language. Mr. Cortelyou was positive that Governor Stuyvesant, of New Amsterdam, sent workmen down to the Narrows to help Jacques Corteljau rebuild his home, when burned. The house standing (1893) was the Simon Cortelyou house, so called, the third Cortelyou house by the Narrows.

Stones from the second house (of Jaques the founder) were used in its construction, about 1700. Another Jaques house was built *West* of Simon's house, later the Delaplaine house. This statement agrees with that made by Col. William Cropsey as to location of Jaques house, one which he remembered. It has been also stated by record, that Nancy Cortelyou, who welcomed the British by waving her red petticoat when she saw them landing just below her home, was not a young girl but a grown woman. The Cortelyou family burial plot was, like other family cemeteries near the home. When Garrison improvements were underway some human bones were discovered and the find announced, but nothing remained to tell a single item about whose bodies the bones represented and as the United

States Government was in no mood for halting work of Defence lines for its big Fort, the little family cemetery was wiped out of existence.

Dr. Lawrence B. Cortelyou, who in 1893 resided at 690 10th Street, Brooklyn, authoritatively stated his ancestors to have been "Neutrals," not Tories, that the stone house at Gowanus was the Isaac Cortelyou house, not a Jaques home; that his father was born there and he ought to know. Mrs. Merwin Rushmore is his sister. It was the opinion of both these gentlemen that their ancestral name was slowly dying out, so many intermarriages into other families having been made.

### TEUNIS NYSSSEN; DE NYSE; DENYSE; DENICE.

This name, originally French, should be written "de Nyse." It is of high standing. These Wallons or French-Huguenots were early settlers in America, fleeing from France to Holland to escape religious persecution and so imbued with Holland's free faith and ways as to be almost Dutch. The name, like many other of the Colonists to America, has been spelled and recorded in many ways.

Teunis Nyssen the general ancestor of the family emigrated from Bunnik, Province of Utrecht, Holland, about 1638. He settled at New Amsterdam, there marrying Femmetje Jans, widow of Hendrick the Boor and daughter of Jan Seales of N. A. From Manhattan he removed to Gowanus, near the Browsers. He sold land to Albert Cornelisson May 16, 1656. He owned Flatbush land in 1665 and was a Magistrate of Breucklen 1658-61. In 1660 he was a member of the Reformed Dutch Church of Breucklen. In May, 1657, he was taxed for Dominie Polhemus's support. During November, 1662, he was a student of the Catechism at the Breucklen Dutch Church, having become a member when Femmetje Jans did (1660). His name appears as a communicant from 1677 to 1685, when it is presumed he died. His children were as follows:

Jannetje Nyssen, bap. Dec. 22, 1641. Mar. Jan Hansen Bergen.

Marritje Nyssen, bap. April 3d, 1644. Mar. Derick Jans Woertman.

Aertje Nyssen, bap.—No record.

Annetje Nyssen, Bap. Feb. 18th, 1646. Mar. Hieronemous Rapalje, son of Joris J. Rapalje.

Elsje Nyssen, bap. May 10th, 1648. Mar. Gerret Snedeker.

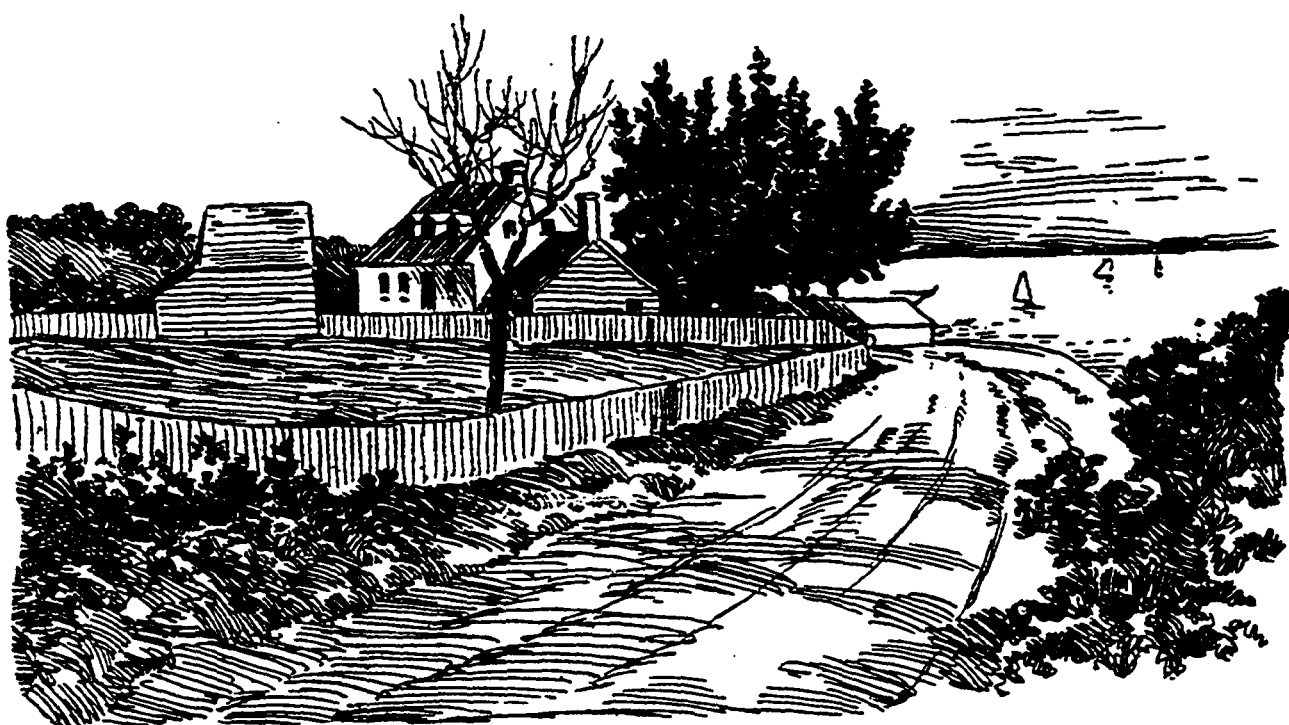
Femmetje Nyssen, bap. April 3d, 1650. Mar. Michael Hansen Bergen (the settler at Yellow Hook, now Bay Ridge).

Jan Nyssen, bap. April 12th, 1654. Mar. Cataline Boegart. He resided at the Wallabout; took oath of allegiance, 1687.

Dionys Nyssen, bap. April 12th, 1654.

There is mention of several *supposed* sons. Cornelis, James, Tunis and Joris, who settled in New Jersey and adopted the surname of Tunison and Van Midwout—that is, Tunis from Midwout, or Flatbush. Both these names are in New Jersey history, there being even a town called “Dennis,” Cape May County. There are also some 1776 soldiers by name of Dennis and Tunison. But the connection is not proved, and as it has no bearing on the New Utrecht family, is not here included.

The above named Dionys Nyssen, bap. April 12th, 1654, is the Long Island ancestor. He married, October 22d, 1682, Elizabeth Polhemus, daughter of Rev. Theodorus Polhemus of Flatbush. His trade was that of master carpenter. He bought land at Flatbush in 1685-87, where he resided and took the oath of allegiance in 1687.



NOTE—Simon Cortelyou house; near it was “Denys’s Ferry” to S. I. per building by water’s edge. Home of Denyse further west.

A second marriage is recorded on March 29th, 1685 (also stated to be August 12th, 1685), when Helena Cortelyou married Deonys Theunis. She was the daughter of Jacques Cortelyou and widow of Nicholas Van Brunt. After her marriage to Dionys Theunis he removed to the Narrows, now Fort Hamilton, where Helena owned land. Dionys also owned New Jersey and Staten Island land where he signed a petition in 1701, relating to it. He was assessed for about 80 acres in New Utrecht. He died prior to 1707. Helena lived until 1720, marrying Hendrick Hendrickson after the death of Dionys and residing at the Narrows.

The children of Denys and Helena, adopting the surname of “Denys” and “Denyse” were:

1st Jaques Denys (L. I. Ancestor).



2d Theunis Denys, bap. April 24th, 1687; died young.

3d Neeltje Denys, bap. Sept. 22d, 1689, Mar. Jacob Vander Bilt of S. I. Issue: Aris, Denys, Hilitje, Jacob & 7 others. Last named Jacob, mar. Mary Sprague. They had 7 children, a son Cornelius marrying Phebe Hand, whose son Cornelius, Jr., born 1794, died 1877, was the famed "Commodore Vanderbilt" of boat enterprises. Thus originates the wealthy New York family of this name.

4th Tunis Denys (2nd), bap. April 2d, 1692. Mar. Frances Hendrickson of N. J. He moved to Freehold, N. J., prior to 1740. Issue: Denise, Daniel, Femmetje or Phebe. This Phebe mar. Rev. Benj. Du Bois of Salem Co., N. J., and had children, among whom was a daughter Catherine, who mar. David G. Vanderveer, son of Garret Vanderveer. This said Catherine Vanderveer was the Grandmother of Hon. Garret A. Hobart, Vice President of the U. S.

5th Femmetje Denys, bap. — mar. — Gerretson of N. J.

6th Cornelis Denys, bap. April 26th, 1696.

7th Helena Denys, born 1700. Mar. March 9th, 1717, Frederic Van Leeuwen.

Of these children the first born Jaques Denys, is the ancestor identified with New Utrecht history. He mar. Reymeriga (Rymie) Simonson. They resided at the Narrows in a stone homestead built Northwest of the old Cortelyou house that in 1896 was standing. His will dated July 21, 1739, and recorded a few days later proves his death to have been near this date. His children were:

1. Denys Denys, born April 5th, 1726. New Utrecht man of note.
2. Isaac Denys, born Oct. 2d, 1728, died Aug. 22d, 1799. Mar. Sept., 1748, Cornelia, daughter of Elias Hubbard. Mar. 2d, Seytie, daughter of John Voorhees. Issue not known. Resided at Gravesend, Rev. services.

3. Helena Denys, born Oct. 27, 1732. Mar. Garret Rapalye of the Wallabout. Removed to New Orleans, La.

4. Antie Denys, bap. Dec. 24th, 1732.

5. Jaques Denys, born Nov. 28th, 1735; died Jan. 28th, 1812. Mar. Jacoba Emans or Emmons, born Oct. 7, 1734; died Feb. 14, 1825. She was only child of Jacobus and Jannetje Emans and was named for her father and called "Coubouche." Their children were: Jaques L., Jane, (2) De Nyse, James. Of these Jaques L. Denyse mar. Nelly Johnson and had 11 children; Jane, mar. William Cropsey; James, mar. Jane Cropsey; Denyse removed to S. I.

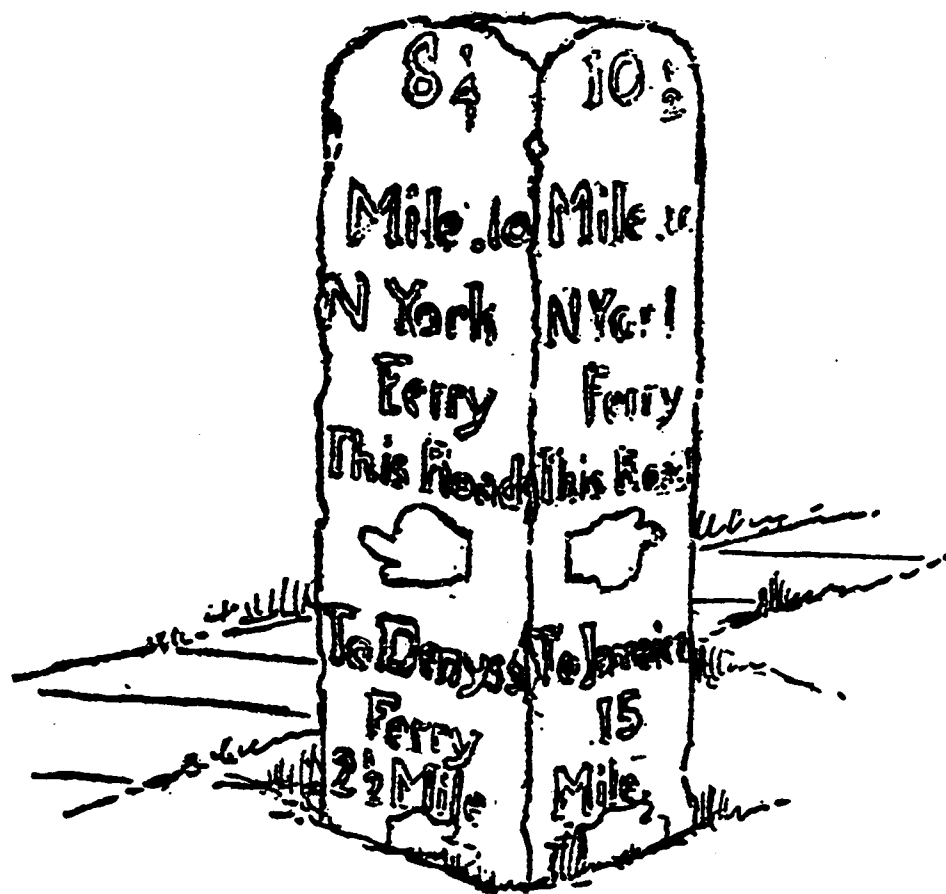
The father of these five children signed his name "Jaques Denys."

As the New Utrecht records tell most of the first born, Denys Denys (born April 5, 1726; died Sept. 21, 1806), it is fitting that something of a detailed sort be related of him. He mar. 1st, on May 18,



1743, Teuntje, dau. of Rutgert Van Brunt of N. U. Then he married, Elizabeth, *supposed* dau. of Jacob Bennett of Gowanus. The supposition is on the best of authorities, yet no record has been found of the Bennett name, only a family belief. Inscribed on an old stone that ornamented either the home of Denys Denys or else the Hamilton House, a hotel built close by and including his homestead, was this: "Denys Denys and Tientintie, Ao, 1751." Mrs. Geo. Gelsten found the stone on her property about 1890. It establishes the record of Teuntje as a first wife, while the second wife is proved by a tombstone in the village cemetery. It was thus inscribed, "Elizabeth, wife of Denys Denys, died Feb. 12th, 1854, in her 90th year."

Documents of land transactions also prove the existence of two wives, a fact which some descendants have disputed. In the last will of Denys he mentions his wife Elizabeth. In another document of previous date, it is recorded that he cared for his children's financial interest, his wife then being Teuntje, mother of the children mentioned therein. Of his public life, records tell that he was prominent, a large land owner and interested in the village and town's welfare. He was likewise a 1776 patriot. King George had, in 1742, granted him permission to run a ferry across the Narrows to Staten Island.



Milestone, for Denys's Ferry (by Townsend C. Van Pelt Homestead, 18th Avenue)

Milestones on the Kings Highway told of the distances from various points to "Denys's Ferry." Mr. Denys was also a Deputy to the Provincial Congress of New York to resist British oppression, April, 1775. In July, 1776, a British vessel, the "Asia," was fired on by a small Long Island battery established by American patriots near the home of Denys Denys, when a volley from the British ship did considerable damage to the houses by the

Narrows. (Stiles & Onderdonk's His. of Kings Co. in Rev.) It must always be a source of intense regret that Denys Denys left no per-

sonal letters or records of happenings at about this period. There must have been an immense amount of Revolutionary data that could so well have been recorded—persons, incidents, ferry, land and British matters of great importance. But no record was kept, since his descendants cannot tell of any such reminders of the past. Possibly he was too active and engrossed a man to have leisure for writing down happenings as they came along. But how such writings would be valued to-day! There has never been any old homestead to preserve, inasmuch as fire destroyed the Hamilton House, that having absorbed the Denyse homestead. A pretty story of 1776 days has been told regarding the daughter of Gerrit Denyse, whose daughter Rymeicka, a young and very pretty girl, saved a detachment of the American army from being overtaken by the British soldiers. Rymeicka heard the Englishmen coming, fully realized the danger of the encounter with the Continental men and heedless of her own grave danger she ran a long distance, to warn the Continentals of the British approach. Of this brave girl it is only known that she later married a Mr. John Walker and removed to Providence, R. I. So far as History goes, the Denyse branches were very well represented as patriots for the American cause. Scarcely a line but that has some 1776 soldier to its credit. Like many other Long Island and Staten Island families, New Jersey records tell considerable, but it is not purposed to give a complete genealogical record in this book of merely reminiscences. Descendants must do that for themselves.

The children of Denys Denys and wife Teuntje were:

1. Jaques Denys, born 1743, died Dec. 24, 1791. He mar. Ann Schenck, dau. of Gerrit and Jannetje Schenck of N. J. (Jannetje was a Kouwenhoven.) Their children were: Denyse D., Gerrit, John, William, Jane, Hendrick, Tunis, Isaac. It is this Jaques, the father of 8 children, who so often borrowed money, by note. Documents tell of the loans to him. The reason for this is not known.

2. Rutgert Denys, born 1746; died July 9, 1795—died unmarried.

3. Rhymie Denys, born 1749; died Jan. 25th, 1832. Mar. James Stewart. He was in the British Army. Documents tell of land transactions between Rymie and the children of her brother Jaques.,

4. Jane Denys, born 1762; died July 12th, 1833. Mar. Hugh Smith, D.D. This is the Rev. Hugh Smith Carpenter, branch of the Denyse family. Documents tell of land transactions between this Jane Smith (nee Denys) and the children of her brother Jaques. It is from this line that St. John's church at Fort Hamilton received its land for the church built March 24, 1835. The Denyse heirs so gave the property that only a church can occupy the ground, under forfeiture of property. The Rev. Hugh Smith Carpenter and Dr. John

Carpenter were both very prominent in their town, being able, learned men. Rev. Hugh Smith Carpenter, who married Miss Louise Broadhead of Milford, Pa., died March 12 or 14, 1899. They had one son Roswell H. Carpenter, who owns the original charter-grant from King George for the Ferry, run by Denys Denys, 1742.

There are, of course, many branches of the Denyse, De Nyse and Denice families throughout New York State and two are known of in Ohio. One is that of Hon. Sidney Denice Maxwell, of Cincinnati, O., and the other is that of George L. Denise, of Franklin, O., who married, April 9, 1839, Louise Bergen, daughter of David C. Bergen and wife Nancy Boyce. David was born January 2, 1795; died 1834. He lived in Kentucky. His daughter Louise, who became the wife of George Denise, had children as follows:

Ira C. Denise, born 1840.

Obediah H. Denise, born 1842.

Cornelia A. Denise, born 1844.

Charles E. Denise, born 1845.

Julia H. Denise, born 1848.

Sallie B. Denise, born 1851.

Henrietta B. Denise, born 1857.

Carrie S. Denise, born 1860.

Although there are hundreds of descendants of the common ancestor, on Long Island especially, it is not believed there is one ancestral homestead left in New Utrecht. This is very different from the Van Brunt family, who have three old homesteads to show for past days.

There are no especial stories or traditions connected with the Denyse family. No ghost, elopement or wonderful love tale. Except for the story of Rymeicka and her brave deed in saving part of the American Army in 1776, there is no thrilling story to relate of the Denys family as a whole. Nor have they a landmark to show. Only old records can now testify to their earlier days in the Township of New Utrecht. Present day records include descendants as public men and women. There was always a strong, marked pride in a "Denyse," "De Nyse," or "Denice." This noticeable trait differed from the more stolid Dutch types found in New Utrecht. The high-strung delicacy has been supposedly traced back to Courtly service for a King and Queen in France, before bloodshed followed religious persecutions. Holland life did much to convert this delicate pride into practical lines, yet New Utrecht did not wholly destroy the French traits, inborn beyond alteration.

## BENNETT.

It might be said of this family that it resembles somewhat the tale of "the old woman who lived in the shoe and had so many children she did not know what to do." To trace all lines of genealogy of the Bennett family would be undertaking a book unto itself. Present day descendants are never quite sure of ancestral branches, so that the very brief guide here presented is really only a basis for genealogists to work upon. The name of Bennett, or as it was earlier written, "Willems or Bennet," is of English origin. At least the ancestor of the family was an Englishman. William Adriaense, a cooper by trade, emigrated to the Netherlands prior to 1636. He purchased land at Gowanus, as did Jaques Bentyn, both having dealings with the Indians. In December, 1639, William Adriaense purchased Bentyn's share from him. William married Mary Badye, widow of Willem Bredenbent. Upon the death of William Adriaense, prior to 1644, Mary married Paulus Vanderbeck. But it is recorded that as widow of William Adriaense Bennet she obtained a land patent from Governor Kieft, comprising the farms formerly owned by Abraham Schermerhorn and Garret Bergen, both of Gowanus.

The children of William and Mary were:

Adriene Willemse, bap. 1639.

Willem Willemse.

Christian Willemse, bap. 1641 in N. A. (died young).

Sarah Willemse, bap. Nov., 1641.

Christian 2nd, bap. Mch., 1642.

Maria Willemse, bap. May, 1664.

Of these children the second, Willem Willemse, is the New Utrecht ancestor—at least *one* of the ancestors, for there were more than this one branch of Bennett's in the Township. Willem married April 9, 1660, Geertje Van Mullen, of New Amsterdam. He resided at Gowanus and owned land acquired by Cornelis W. Bennet and George Bennett. He was on the Brooklyn assessment rolls, 1675-76-83. Was a member of the Dutch Church of that place and is declared to have died prior to 1686. Issue:

Maria, bap. Nov. 10th, 1661 (mar. Jacobus Verhulst).

Jan, bap. Jan. 7, 1663.

Willem.

Jacob.

Adriene Willemse (son of the emigrant), bap. 1637 or 39; mar. on Dec. 3d, 1662, Annaietje Jans, dau. of Jan Tomasse Van Dyck of New Utrecht. Ariene settled first in New Utrecht. He was member of the Dutch church there, a Deacon in 1677; a constable of

the settlement in 1676. He owned a farm in the village of New Utrecht, also several lots at Yellow Hook, now Bay Ridge, the lots extending from the Bay back to present Third Avenue, in the vicinity of Van Brunt's Lane and Bay Ridge Ave. In 1675 he and others petitioned Governor Colve for land on Staten Island (page 643, Vol. II, Doc. of Col. N. Y. His.) He sold the Yellow Hook land to Denys Denys (recorded Denys Theunis), January 26, 1681. His village house and lot was also sold at this time to Hans Harmense (Van Barkeloo). After selling his farm in 1681 he removed to Gowanus, taking oath of allegiance there 1687. Carl Jans Van Dyck purchased his farmlands. The Schermerhorn farm at Gowanus was purchased by Adriene Willemse, who thus left New Utrecht and became identified with Gowanus locality. His children were:

\*Jan Adriense.

Tryntje Adrientse (bap. 1664, mar. Nov. 12th, 1685, Cornelis Rutgerz Van Brunt).

Arie Adrientse.

Jacob Adrientse.

Cornelis Adrientse.

Isaac Adrientse.

Isaac Adrientse.

Abraham Adrientse (bap. Mch., 1680. Mar. 1702, Jannetje Folckers. Conveyed land at Gowanus—Schermerhorn farm portion—to Jacob Bennet, Jan. 2d, 1708. Then moved to Freehold, N. J.).

Antje Adrientse.

Maria Adrientse.

Annatje Adrientse.

Engel Adrientse.

\*Of these Jan Adriense, born—died after 1739. Mar. 1st Altie Hendrickse; mar. 2d, July, 1690, Altje Wynant of the Wallabout (believed dau. of Wynant Pieterse). They had a son Jan Janse, bap. Mch. 29, 1696, who mar. Anna ——. He lived at Gowanus but is also an ancestor of the New Utrecht Bennett family. His children were:

William, mar. Sarah Sherman.

Jacob, mar. Elizabeth Conselyea.

John, mar. 1746 Ann Remsen.

Wynant, mar. Geertje, dau. of Jacobus Emans (of Gowanus).

Gertrude, mar. 1743, Jacob Boerum.

Mary, mar. Cornelis Vandervoort.

Altje, mar. May, 1746, Cornelius Schwout.

It is not intended to trace out all these various branches of the Bennett family, with many more not here included as descendants

of the Gowanus settler. All the Bennett's of New Utrecht have known and admitted their relationship to some extent, but so intricate have the lines become, with intermarriages into practically all the old families of the Township that the task is not possible of completion in this book of plain reminiscences. The J. Remsen Bennett family of the Shore Road, Bay Ridge, have long been identified with the history of the Town and have charming homes fronting the Bay, by 79th Street. Mrs. J. Remsen Bennett, Sr., had many tales of long ago days to relate and was accounted the oldest resident on the Shore Road. The sudden passing away of both Mr. and Mrs. Adolphus Bennett, a short time ago, greatly affected the whole family on the Shore Road. Husband and wife, devoted to each other in life, had often wished the end might come together—and it did, or so nearly that way the short interval of minutes made it seem together. A litigation of estate matters followed these unusual deaths, the law deciding that Mrs. Adolphus Bennett had expired first and her husband accordingly heired her property and so his heirs.

The David C. Bennett family is another prominent branch of the ancestral tree. He often wondered where the late Ex-Gov. David Bennett Hill obtained his name, but never settled down to the task of ascertaining. The Bennett farmlands extended along the present 79th Street.

### VAN BRUNT.

Two old Van Brunt homesteads in the Township of New Utrecht make it proper that something should be told regarding both. History and tradition have them prominently identified with their native Town. The Van Brunt family is a very numerous and scattered one at the present time, though many descendants reside in Greater New York and the old New Utrecht districts. Hon. Tunis G. Bergen published a history of the Van Brunt family, with detailed genealogies, before his death. It would therefore be unnecessary to repeat that good work. But a brief sketch is permissible, in view of the fact that reminiscences are told that relate directly to those earlier times.

Rutger Joosten (Van Brunt) emigrated from the Netherlands in 1653, but did not settle at New Utrecht until 1657, when the first patents were granted to settlers there, under the petition of Jacques Corteljaui, who requested that he be allowed to establish a Colony at Najeck, to be called New Utrecht. Among those first twenty settlers appears the name of Rutgert Joosten.

He married Tryntje Claes or Claeson, widow of Stoefel Harmensen; he married, 2nd, Gretien ——. His sons were Nicholas, Cornelis, Rutgerz, Joost. If he had any daughters none are mentioned.

Rutgert Joosten (Van Brunt) was Magistrate in New Utrecht, 1661, and from 1678 to '81. On Governor Dongan's patent in 1686 he was represented and took the oath of allegiance in 1687. During 1693 he was assessed for 100 morgans of land in New Utrecht and also had two lots at Yellow Hoek (11 and 12), by Arie Willemsse (Bennett), and on the other side by Luykes Mayers. These properties were later occupied by his descendants, Rulef and Daniel Van Brunt.

In order to better explain about the two old Van Brunt houses at present standing in Brooklyn's 30th Ward, it must be remembered that the New Utrecht village house belongs to one family branch and



*Rutger Joosten (Van Brunt) House, built 1658. The oldest house in New Utrecht.*

the Shore Road homestead to another branch of the family. The New Utrecht village house is the older house of the two. It was erected when the Colony was first established, per historic records that tell of the Van Brunt house being built when the de Silles house was, 1658.

It is known that Rutgert Joosten (Van Brunt) died prior to 1713. Of the four sons, Nicholas, Cornelis, Rutgerz and Joost, it is proved that Nicholas, a farmer of New Utrecht, married August 19, 1683, Helena Corteljou, daughter of Jacques Corteljou. Nicholas died about 1684, or before his father. His widow Helena, married second, Denyse Teunise (Denyse), and upon his death married third, Hendrick Hendrickson, of the Narrows. Old time records prove all this. Helena's son by Nicholas Rutgerz (Van Brunt) was baptized August 31, 1684, after the father died, and so was very naturally named Nicholas (2d).

This latter named Nicholas Van Brunt married Maria, daughter of Roeloffe Jans Verkerk, Nicholas 2nd, died about 1713, leaving children Nicholas (3rd), Roelof and Jaques. From this line there are many descendants of the Van Brunt family.

It will now be necessary to return to the ancestor of the village of New Utrecht and follow down along the line of his son Cornelis Rutgerz (Van Brunt) of New Utrecht. He married in 1685, Tryntje, daughter of Adrian Willemse (Bennett). Cornelis took the oath of allegiance in 1687. In 1698-1717, he was a member of the Colonial Assembly. He was a large landowner in New Utrecht, being assessed for 144 acres during 1706. He resided in the village of New Utrecht, buying his homestead from Johannes Swart or Swartout in 1714. This Swartout had been one of the original 20 patent holders under Jacques Corteljau's settlement at Najeck. It must thus be realized that there were then two Van Brunt homesteads in the village proper. Cornelis Rutgerz (Van Brunt) died about 1748.

The last named son of the ancestor Rutgert Joosten was Joost. He, too, was identified with New Utrecht history. He was a farmer and married first, — — —. Married second, April 16, 1687, Altie Van Vooris, daughter of Stephen Van Vooris or Voorhees. (This name has been variously spelled in the old records.) During 1687 Joost Rutgerz (Van Brunt) took the oath of allegiance. Joost was Supervisor of the town 1703 to 1743, except 1721, when Pieter Corteljau served as such. Joost Rutgerz Van Brunt was also Ensign, Captain, Lieut.-Colonel, and finally Colonel in the Militia. In 1706 he was assessed for 120 acres of land in New Utrecht. He died about 1746, leaving a son Rutgert Van Brunt.

Regarding the historic Van Brunt homestead on the Shore Road, it would appear that it was built by Jaques Van Brunt, son of Nicholas and Maria Van Brunt, which Nicholas was son of Nicholas and Helena and said named Nicholas the son of Rutgert Joosten the common ancestor of the first patent. The Shore Road homestead has always been occupied by a Van Brunt, although the house has been somewhat altered from its original lines and size. Yet it has not lost its quaintness nor history. Its present occupant is Mr. Rulef Van Brunt, son of Daniel Van Brunt, who was son of Jaques Van Brunt and so on backward to the ancestor of the family. Jaques Van Brunt had two sons, Daniel and Rulef, the old homestead descending to Daniel Van Brunt. It is told of "Dan," as he has been familiarly known in his native township that "Dan" always had all the way from one to 25 children in his wagon or sleigh every time he went out on the road. He was known to be a friend of all the children—they all loved to get a ride with their friend Dan—and



that was Dan Van Brunt," as the narrator told the story of the Shore Road descendant of Jaques Van Brunt.

This home is on the site where "Owl's Head" properly belongs. So say the old fishermen of New Utrecht, especially one now living at Fort Hamilton, who, when asked whether Owl's Head were near the E. W. Bliss estate at Bay Ridge (formerly owned by Henry C. Murphy) replied, "No need to ask us old fishermen where Owl's Head is—we all know it's by Van Brunt's." The Hon. Mr. Murphy went to great trouble to explain why Owl's Head existed on his own property by 65th Street, but the Van Brunt family stoutly contradicted any such claim and have always insisted that Owl's Head is by their own property, the Rulof Van Brunt homestead. And so it would appear to be, judging from the natural scenic condition of the Shore Road in its primitive state. Moreover, the general verdict of the elderly residents of the Township have invariably pronounced a verdict in favor of the Van Brunt locality for Owl's Head. If majority counts for anything in an argument of historic value the weight of the argument is assuredly on the Van Brunt side, not on the late Hon. Henry C. Murphy's claim to Owl's Head for the 65th Street locality.

There is much to relate about the old homestead still standing on the present 84th Street near 18th Avenue, Brooklyn. It was formerly Kings Highway, then Main Street (so named by Judge Andrew G. Cropsey of New Utrecht), and now is 84th Street. At the head of the street stands the present Dutch Church, and the West End electric cars pass around the curve of what was once the center of the village proper.

The Van Brunt house, typical of long ago days, is a relic often noted. It is older than even the Van Pelt house, which latter farmhouse is on 18th Avenue, not far away from the Van Brunt house.

History tells that the de Sille homestead was erected in 1658, and at the same time the Van Brunt house was built. It is unquestionably the first Van Brunt homestead built and is therefore parent to the others that followed in the general history of the town. Within its wide Dutch hall have been men noted in the history of New Amsterdam. One visitor was the pompous Gov. Pieter Stuyvesant, who came to the New Utrecht settlement to learn how matters were progressing there and to determine just what was most needed for the welfare and comfort of the new Colony. His visit was the occasion for great and notable festivity in the settlement. The first flag raised in New Utrecht was unfurled that day. Just who made the flag is not stated in the old records. After the outdoor jollification the Governor of New Amsterdam dined at the Van Brunt house, in the

village. This was February 6, 1660. It is also positive proof that the first Van Brunt house was established at this period.

During the Revolutionary war the house was used by the British, just as were many other homesteads throughout the Township. There were prisoners of war within its walls, also some echoes of the hospital, established in the first Dutch Church, which church was only a short distance down the Highway, toward the West. The red coated English were in the house and all around the locality. Because General Woodhull was carried to the de Silles house and there died, of course the de Silles place has more prominent a place in history, but the old Van Brunt homestead could tell many tales of those troublous war days if walls could only speak. The property became



*Judge Holmes Van Brunt House, Shore Road, Bay Ridge  
(Later the Crescent Athletic Club Property)*

attached to the Bergen family during recent years, Miss Johanna Bergen being present owner but not its occupant. Strangers have resided in it and have taken pride in the fact that it is an old house though never knowing or understanding its complete history. The story of Altje Van Brunt, as told by a descendant, Mr. John Franklin Berry, must be either a part of this particular homestead or else of the home of Cornelis or Joost, both of New Utrecht village. The Van Brunt homestead on 86th Street, near 18th Avenue, was built about 1812. Mr. Jeremiah L. Van Brunt resided there. It is a very large, old fashioned homestead, but not so old as its ancestral home, or homes. In this way the Van Brunt family have become a scattered family of old homesteads, records and traditions. Each branch have been puzzled to know about the other branches, while the various historic homesteads known to be Van Brunt homesteads have been

just as mixed up as have been the genealogies. But certain it is, whatever the genealogies, there were three Van Brunt houses in the village of New Utrecht during the 1776 war and also one on the Shore Road, between the Narrows and Yellow Hook, now Bay Ridge. Each family must straighten out its own particular branch from the general ancestor, Rutgert Joosten, or his sons, Nicholas, Cornelis, Rutgerz, Joost. (The third son, Rutgerz, has no mention here because that is a New Jersey branch.)

The name of Van Brunt has been generously handed down to posterity. It has also been identified with American history in many ways and with honor. Perhaps no better proof of this can be found than in the public records of Greater New York. Brooklyn has also a Van Brunt



*Albert Van Brunt House, Shore Road, Bay Ridge  
(Next Judge Van Brunt's)*

Street, which thoroughfare along the water front, an important street long ago, was named for the old New Utrecht family of that name. Judge Holmes Van Brunt was a notable figure on the Bench. It was in his beautiful residence on the Shore Road that Douglas and his partner Mosher were shot as burglars, one night when a burglary was nipped in the bud by the alert family next door. The man Mosher declared just before he died that the kidnapping of Charlie Ross had been the work of his partner and himself, but before any post mortem could be taken the man died. That was the only act of justice the Judge ever regretted—that the burglar had been wounded sufficiently to prevent a confession in detail. The homestead afterward became the property of the Crescent Athletic Club of Brooklyn.

It is likely the Van Brunt family on the whole, have more old homesteads to its credit than any other of the Colonial families of

the Township. And at the present time two of the oldest are still in existence.

It has been related that "another cultivated and attractive young Brooklyn woman was Miss Van Brunt, daughter of Cornelis Van Brunt, who resided on what was a part of the old Staats farm on the Gowanus Road. Her complexion was blonde and she had a beautifully rounded form, regular features and black hair. A liberal education had qualified her to do credit to her Dutch ancestry in such society as that of the Polhemuses, the Schoonmakers and other leading families of the times." This young lady so mentioned married Mr. Thomas Tallmadge, who was elected Mayor of Brooklyn in 1845 (46).

### THE STORY OF ALTJE VAN BRUNT.

By a Descendant, Mrs. John Franklin Berry, of Brooklyn.

The sun was shining brightly on the morning of August 22, 1776, and there was great bustling around the Van Brunt house. Father was Captain of the Militia and was with the Company, away from home. Mother was left to be the Captain of the Home Guard and as we shall see, was a Commanding officer not to be despised. There was bread to be baked in the great Dutch oven this busy morning, chickens and cows to be cared for and everyone was busy.

"Now, Rutgert, take the cows down to the pasture by the shore," said Mother, and off went the boy, but in a few moments came back crying, "Oh, Mother, the British are coming."

She, hearing the alarming news, went in a great hurry to the door and looked toward the shore. Surely, there were the soldiers, hundreds of them and many pieces of cannon. Slowly they marched along, their guns shining in the sunlight. No time now, for delay. This was a time when "discretion was the better part of valor." Mother directed the horses to be put to the farm wagon, some treasures collected, the frightened children were safely stowed away in the cumbersome vehicle and then, leaving a few old slaves in charge, the horses were whipped up and they started for New Lots, where they hoped to be safe. As they raced around the corner of the Kings Highway, poor little Altje lost her new pink sunbonnet. So loud were her lamentations that in spite of haste, they were obliged to stop for it. Then on they went, like Paul Revere, calling out the news as they passed each farm house—"The British are coming."

After a few days, news was brought Mother that the British had taken possession of her home. This was too much. To think that the British and Hessians in her house were using her goods, her stores and everything dear to the heart of a good housekeeper. Calling

up her pluck she decided to take her family back and claim her own. So again were the horses made ready, the children stowed in the wagon, Altje's pink bonnet tied firmly under her chin and they started for home. When they arrived they were met at the door by an Officer who said, "Madam, who are you and what do you want?"

"I am the owner of this house and I want to come in," said Mother. "Not so," replied the officer. "We have taken this house for ours." "Well," answered Mother, "the house is mine and I must have some place for my children." The officer was apparently struck with her determined manner; they compromised. Mother was allowed one part of the house, while the British used the other part. Having gained this point Mother set about making herself as comfortable as she could, under the circumstances.

"Where are my cows?" asked she.

"You have no cows," replied the Englishman.

"No cows? Why, how am I to feed my children without cows or chickens?"

All this time Maria, the eldest daughter, stood modestly by her mother's side. Perhaps her sweet face had already touched the Englishman's heart, for he said, "If you can describe one cow you can have it for your own use." Mother promptly described the best cow and also claimed the chickens in the same way. Be it said, to the credit of the British Officer, that she was always treated with great respect. The Lord has given us all fathers, some brothers, some have husbands, so we naturally ask "Where was the man?" As I said, father was Captain in the Militia and after the Battle of Long Island and the occupation of the Island by the British, father, whose name was Adrian Van Brunt, with his neighbor, were compelled either to take the oath of allegiance to the King, to leave the country, or to suffer the pains and penalties of a refusal. Not being prepared to emigrate and unwilling to run the risk of starvation and suffering, he and nearly all the farmers in Kings County took the oath of allegiance and remained under British government until the end of the war. On the 13th of June, 1778, William Marriner, with Lieut. John Schenck and 28 militiamen from New Jersey, landed with two boats on the beach of Adrian's farm. Having called on their friends, they marched to Flatbush, intending to take as prisoners, Matthews and Sherbrook. They succeeded, and in addition Captain Forest, who were carried from their beds, marched to the beach, and so taken to Jersey. The British authorities very rightly supposed it was impossible for Marroiner's party to have marched to Flatbush in the evening without having been seen by some one. Those who knew of, or had seen the party and failed to give the alarm, were guilty of treason. So

Adrian, his brother Rutgart, Rem Van Pelt and his brother Auert, were arrested on suspicion and confined, separately, in the Provost jail in New York. Rutgart, who had some money in his pocket, managed to bribe the jailer. He so managed to have a midnight interview with his fellow prisoners, at which it was agreed to deny all knowledge of the affair. When examined separately, they all agreed in the one story, and as there was no proof against them they were discharged. That Adrian's friends and neighbors thought well of him is shown by the records that he was a member of the Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church, from 1763 until the end of his life, and his name appears at head of all addresses and Committees.

In the meantime, Mother was closely guarding her daughters, who were growing to be pretty maidens, from the smiles and wiles of the English officers. But, as has often been sung in verse and story, "Love laughs at Locksmiths," the old sweet story was told in the Van Brunt home. One morning Mother awoke to find her daughter Maria had eloped with Robert Chesley, one of those "Awful" British.

To St. Mary's County, Maryland, went the lovers and there lived, always happy in their great love. After some years the parental hearts softened toward their daughter, so many miles from all her kin and Father and Altje started to pay her a visit. Many were the trials and dangers encountered by land and sea but at last, after many days journeying, they reached their destination and settled down to have a nice visit.

But alas! Father was taken ill. In spite of copious bleedings and all the skill possessed by the Doctor, he grew steadily worse. So he called his daughters to his side, gave them his blessing and some directions, then turned his face to the wall and died. Then poor Altje had the long, lonely journey back home, with the sad news to tell Mother, father's clothes and his funeral sermon, to comfort the Mother. Before putting his clothes away in the big chest, Mother searched his pockets, much the same as the wives of the present day do. In one of the pockets of the garment thus sadly returned, Mother found two hickory nuts. She planted these in the garden and to-day one of those trees is still standing as witness of her thrift and love.

Altje married Engelbert Lott, of Flatbush, who came to New Utrecht and lived on the farm which Altje inherited from her father, not a stone's throw from the spot where her brother first saw the British landing. Surrounded by her children and children's children, she often sang the songs and repeated verses, which she had learned of the officers in her old home, as a child. During 1861, Altje, of sun-bonnet fame, died.

## VAN PELT.

Whatever changes New Utrecht has undergone as a town, one landmark remains intact—the Van Pelt homestead on 18th Avenue and what was called Kings Highway. When the farm was sold, Mr. J. Lott Nostrand and lawyer first called the place Van Pelt Manor, and so changed the name of New Utrecht village to that of Van Pelt Manor, in 1890. Now this is swallowed up in a Rapid Transit railroad platform marked 84th Street. Thus have Brooklyn streets extended countryward.

The low white farmhouse, with its historic milestone in front, has always been occupied by a Van Pelt. Mr. Townsend C. Van



*Gysbert Van Pelt House (Van Pelt Manor), built 1664. (Occupied, 1900, by Mr. and Mrs. Townsend C. Van Pelt, 7th generation)*

Pelt, seventh generation from Gysbert Van Pelt, died in his ancestral home during 1910. It will doubtless always remain in the family. The house was erected in 1664. In the oldest portion of it (on the West side) is a fire place made of bricks and having tiles, brought from Holland in 1663. The New York Historical Society endeavored to secure the tiles but they were not to be given up. They are as originally placed, some upside down, others sideways. They depict noted places in Holland. It is supposed the strange looking birds represented, are for Holland's national bird. There are broad beams, cupboards, tall mantel shelves and deep window ledges for interior build. Nothing has been modernized in this respect. The lower half of the house was built of stone, as a needed protection against Indian raids.



Gysbert (Gilbert) Van Pelt emigrated from Holland to New Utrecht 1663. Then comes Aurt (Anthony), Petras (Peter), Rem, Jacob, John, Townsend C., making just seven generations for the old homestead. In those earlier days, New Utrecht was a stretch of woodlands, with farmhouses scattered here and there and roads at wide intervals.

Among those who secured one of the 20 plots of 50 acres each, given by Jacques Cortelyou when he founded the township, was the first Van Pelt, and descendants possess intact, the only remaining original grant of 50 acres, of those 20 plots. It was this land which Mr. J. Lott Nostrand of Bath Beach cut up into small plots for sale, dropping the name of old New Utrecht village for that of Van Pelt Manor. The family gave consent.

History should relate that on one of the diamond paned windows of the homestead was scratched the names of Lieut. George Forest and others of the Royal prisoners confined there, by order of General Howe, who was also an occupant of the house. Capt. W. Marriner, who desired revenge upon several noted Tories, obnoxious to the American cause, quietly originated a plan that resulted in an upheaval. On the night of June 13, 1778, he tapped on the window pane of the back bedroom and inquired how the family all were. He explained he was going to Flatbush. As he frequently called, nothing was thought of this. The family knew him well. But they did not know he had come to New Utrecht that night in company with an armed crew, who left their boats on the beach below and marched to Flatbush in hope of capturing Colonel Matthews, Mayor of New York; Miles Sherbrook, Major Moncriffe and Theoplylaet Bache, all of Flatbush. Also Lieutenant Forest of New Utrecht. The two latter Flatbush men were taken prisoners by Marriner and transported to New Jersey. Soon after the British searched for those who failed to give information regarding Marriner's movements that night. It ended in the arrest of Col. Adrian Van Brunt, Rem Van Pelt, and his brother Aurt Van Pelt. They were taken to New York and imprisoned on a charge of treason. Each man was placed in a separate cell.

Colonel Van Brunt had some golden guineas hidden and with these he bribed the keeper's wife (who served the meals), and so managed to communicate with his prisoner friends. It was agreed each should deny knowledge of Captain Marriner's night visit. When each prisoner was examined separately before the British authorities, no proof was obtained and all were reluctantly discharged.

It is known that Gen. George Washington visited the Van Pelt home, though only for a brief while. After the war closed, he came to New Utrecht again and visiting the little village schoolhouse,



patted small Peter Van Pelt upon the head, telling him to grow up to be a good citizen and man. Strangely enough Peter became a Minister and preached for years on Staten Island. The house opposite the old Grave yard formerly owned by John E. Lott, now by J. Lott and George Nostrand, was the place where Washington took dinner the day he visited the school house; it was then a tavern and kept by a man named Barrie.

Mrs. Townsend C. Van Pelt, the present occupant of the old homestead, has a wealth of delightful historic keepsakes and also memories. She is the ninth generation in direct descent from Sarah deRapelje, whom New York history tells of in detail. Mrs. Van Pelt, as Miss Maria E. Ditmars, of Flatlands, naturally recalls more of her native town than she does of other localities. Events of the Civil War are remembered because of a little poem she heard at St. Johns, N. B., where she met a school teacher during a drive there, a young woman equally pleased to meet somebody from New York, being an American sympathizer. Here is the verse:

“In 1861 it was the year the war begun,  
In 1862 they thought they’d show what they could do,  
In 1863 they thought they would agree,  
In 1864 they laid Jeff Davis on the floor.”

That verse, Mrs. Van Pelt declares, took her fancy; she had the young school teacher repeat it, until it was memorized, which has been the way Mrs. Van Pelt never forgot Civil War dates. She was not a resident of New Utrecht until after her marriage. Villages seemed far apart those days. She remembers the first flag for Flatbush was made in the home of her great-great-grandfather, Capt. Cornelius Vanderveer, of Flatbush. Flag making meant considerable painstaking labor at that time. Of the historic milestone, standing near the Van Pelt house, she tells a humorous story. When A. V. B. Bennett was Road Commissioner, about 30 years ago, he came along one day and Mrs. Van Pelt soon heard a great bumping, thumping noise outside. She found Mr. Bennett putting the milestone in his wagon, to take it away. He was clearing up the road, believed she would be glad to have the old stone removed out of the way and cheerfully was obliging. When she explained he should promptly take it out of his wagon he did so, putting it where it stands to-day. The original site was on a triangle about 50 feet from 82d Street. It stood near a big Walnut tree, since cut down. Young Van Pelts used the top of the milestone to crack the black walnuts gathered, but this has been stopped for some years, or since the tree was cut down. Eighteenth Avenue was then New Utrecht Lane. As few reminders

of the old times are left, the 19 milestones left within Greater New York's limits have been placed in custody of the City History Club of New York.

The Club has secured and will preserve the milestone by legal gift of land and stone from the Van Pelts, who, during May, 1910, gave a square of land 20 by 15 feet to the City History Club for such purpose. There will be a bronze railing from post to post and a coping around the whole square of land.

The original site for the milestone will be the one for final resting place, near 82d Street. Ceremonies of emplacement will be fittingly observed at a future date. Mrs. Van Pelt has also been deeply interested in preservation of the Liberty Pole, first erected in New Utrecht in 1783, with successive second, third and fourth foundations to the original pole. The original site has been retained and presented to the Liberty Pole Association, on September 10, 1910, by Mr. and Mrs. Townsend C. Van Pelt, a few weeks previous to the death of Mr. Van Pelt. The third plate on the Pole tells this. Mr. and Mrs. Van Pelt had taken charge of the flag and for the past 30 years had seen that it was floating on the breeze for all holidays or patriotic occasions.

The Liberty Pole Association was formed two years ago, having for its object, preservation of the historic pole, whose first erection marked British evacuation from American shores at close of the Revolutionary war, amid gala times in the Dutch Township of New Utrecht. It is said to be the only original Liberty Pole on Long Island. Mrs. Van Pelt is both a Colonial Dame and a Daughter of the Revolution, and is interested in everything relating to historic matters.

### **THE BERGEN FAMILY.**

It is not purposed to give a detailed history of this family, for who has done this better than one member, the Hon. Teunis G. Bergen. The Bergen properties and interests took in a large part of Gowanus, now the Eighth Ward of Brooklyn, and extended into New Utrecht (30th Ward) taking up a part of Yellow Hoek now called Bay Ridge. Bergen properties were thus in New Utrecht and also Brooklyn. Establishment of what was "City Lane," at 65th Street, was between the Bergen homesteads.

Bergen and Van Bergen is from the Netherlands but it is also known in Germany and Ireland. In Dutch the name is pronounced "Bar-rer-gen." It signifies Hills. Amsterdam history has mention of the name among Municipal officers.

Hans Hansen Bergen, the first ancestor to America, emigrated

from Holland in 1663, but was a native of Bergen in Norway. He was a ship carpenter by trade. With him was Wouter Van Twiller, second Director General of the West India Company. The ship was "de Zoutberg," or Salt Mountain. It had 20 guns and was commanded by Jurian Blancke. Hans Hansen Bergen married Sarah, daughter of Jores (George) Jansen Rapalie, born June 9, 1625. Sarah's mother was Catalyn Trico, daughter of Jeronomis Trico of France. Hans Hansen Bergen settled at New Amsterdam, near the present Pearl Street. In 1643 he was on Long Island, but records tell of his return to New Amsterdam during Indian troubles. Later on he became owner of a tract of land in the Gowanus district and therewith the Bergen family became identified with Long Island and New Utrecht history, for Michael Hans Bergen, a son, settled at Yellow Hoek, now Bay Ridge.

Of Hans Hansen Bergen a tradition is told that relates to his experience with the Indians, then causing fear among the white settlers of the Colonies. Not only was Hans a capable ship carpenter but he must also have been a man of musical talent as well as pious mind. Surrounded by the enemy, with no escape possible, he sought temporary safety in a huge tree top, where the Indians found him. Hans thereupon began singing, "In myn grootste nood o'Heere." (In my greatest need, O'Lord.) The Dutch hymn song so charmed the astonished and listening Indians that they allowed him to depart in peace. In telling this pretty tradition existing in the Bergen family it would seem fitting to add a sort of postscript, showing how a later date descendant had exactly the same brave heart and exquisite faith—the life and work of Hon. Teunis G. Bergen. What he did for New Utrecht has never been fully told. When events around him were registering great changes; when he saw his town developing, changing, he turned his attention to duty, as he knew it, putting on paper just what was happening—and what was already past. In the face of discouragement, in spite of indifference on the part of many of the Townspeople in his work, Teunis G. Bergen was even then inscribing his name upon a page that to-day stands forth prominently. Like his ancestor, Hans, he had the beauty of faith.

Mr. Teunis G. Bergen, born in New Utrecht, October 6, 1806, was son of Garret Bergen and Jane Wyckoff. His boyhood days were spent on his father's farm at Gowanus. He grew up to be not only a farmer but also a surveyor. Later he was in the Militia, being Ensign, Lieutenant, Captain, Adjutant, and the Colonel of the 241st Regiment, N. Y. S. N. G. As Supervisor of New Utrecht he served from 1836 to 1859. He was also chairman of the Board, 1842 to 46. He was a member of the National Democratic Convention at Charles-

ton, S. C., in 1860, where he intrepidly opposed the resolution causing the breach between the Northern and Southern Democracy. He was also a Representative in Congress from the Second District, 1864, being elected by a majority of 4,800 over the "Union" candidate. Following his active life as citizen, he finally turned his attention to collecting history data of his town and townspeople. To better accomplish his purpose he resorted to the Dutch language. During his younger days the Dutch language was still to a great extent, the language of the descendants of the Hollanders in Kings County. When he first attended school he could not speak any English. English, however, was the language of the school. From boyhood he kept his knowledge of the Dutch and became very proficient in translating the old manuscript. The language of the manuscripts is very different from modern Dutch.

It was in this way he made interpretation of the old manuscripts and records that came to his notice. Few errors exist. Often he reproached his fellow citizens for lack of interest in their Township's records and genealogies. Replies were usually careless "Of what use is all this to us? It is waste time." Nevertheless he published books as follows: "History of the Bergen Family." "History of the Van Brunt Family." "History of the Lefferts Family." "Old Families of New Utrecht." "The Reformed Dutch Church History."

These books were not largely purchased at the time. Many of the very people who idly wondered at so much time spent on apparently useless scraps of data, are thankful indeed to be able to turn to the pages of history now intact. For Teunis G. Bergen left behind him a monument that can never be obliterated. Every passing year must add to his memory. His written words are beyond any question—a Bergen history is a Bergen truth. Especially is this true of his attitude and forceful statements regarding the assumption of Crests and Nobility claims by many of the descendants of those early Colonists to America. He had the absolute knowledge that those Colonists were not of the Aristocracy of Europe and so he frankly stated in plain type. He scoffed, humorously, but decisively, at the various published works on Coat of Arms, which he believed lacked any proof and could not be connected with American Colonists. That stand of his is now being upheld by New York State Colonial Dutch records at Albany, which correct former historians and so coincide exactly with Mr. Bergen's view of humble origin for the Colonial ancestors. Such was the man's supreme courage. His work as historian was not fully understood while he toiled. It is only now, after years have elapsed, that New Utrecht realized all he accomplished in its behalf. Notes he left may some day see type. When this happens a

warm welcome will be given such a volume. Teunis G. Bergen was no ordinary man of moods and tenses. He had a duty—a truth—to present, and he presented it. His death, April 24, 1881, was unexpected and lamented.

His son, Mr. Van Brunt Bergen, who resides on the Shore Road, Bay Ridge, differs considerably from his Father. Instead of writing history he talks it; instead of delving into the long ago past, he keeps pace with the progressive present. As a public man in Brooklyn, he is prominently known. Speaking of the old Township where he resides he has said, "Why, of course it is largely a matter of sentiment with us, these recent changes throughout the place. As time goes along and progress comes, we have to submit to it. It is, in fact, a submission to progress, not one of liking. We descendants of those early settlers like the old times best. That is past, however. The new is with us. The transitional stage is not a pleasant one.

"Another condition, while the city is being built new streets and avenues destroy the old landmarks, so carefully raised and cared for by our forefathers. No, we do not pretend to like to see their utter destruction. Why pretend what is not felt? Our Shore Road is now a city street where 10 years ago there were briars and wild flowers growing in untrained beauty. There were cedar trees on the river bank, too. Progress must come but it will take several generations to crowd out the sentiment. We cannot go back: we must go forward. The past is gone: the present is with us, but sentiment stands first in the hearts of we older residents of New Utrecht."

And so it would seem with Mr. Bergen. He remembered one tree in particular that stood near New Utrecht Avenue, between 50th and 60th Streets, and so admired its magnificent height and spread that he had a picture taken of it. With city progress the tree was cut down but the picture tells the story. This tree shaded many a weary pedestrian along that route in summer time, while in winter it was a favorite playground for the children. Mr. Van Brunt is an "out door" man, as it were, liking dogs, horses, firearms, military. He has intense respect for history but no love as his father had. Seated in the library of his home on the Shore Road, Bay Ridge, Mr. Bergen talked of his dogs, telling of "Scotty," who was friend and companion for 16 years. Then "Taffy," a Cocker Spaniel, reigned for 13 years. It seems that "Taffy's" place in the family's affections have not been taken as yet. Mr. Bergen had his portrait painted, which reminder of Taffy hangs prominently in the beautiful library room where his master works at desk. When the Bergen family went to Europe on a pleasure trip some years ago, it was not convenient to take Taffy along, so the big homestead on the Shore Road was kept open just for Taffy's comfort.

"Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a—No, not the usual finish," for Mr. Bergen laughed and finished with "Just say that Taffy was—a Spaniel." Thus does Taffy's biography creep into history because he lies buried in historic ground, under some tall bushes that grow on the lawn right in front of the library window. There, too, reposes "Scotty." There is one stranger in the plot, a poor dog run over by an automobile and killed. Still another is the dog that was owned by Dr. Crane's young daughter and which Mr. Bergen allowed to be buried in the plot of honor. A canary bird and several cats are also buried there. Since Taffy passed away the Bergen family took to cats. They had no desire to fill Taffy's place. This accounts for the little cemetery so near the front path, under the big flowering bush on the lawn.

Mr. Bergen, who has many memories of past days, lived apart from the village of Fort Hamilton and so believes he never even saw either Stonewall Jackson or Capt. Robert E. Lee. He recalls during Civil War times that Fort Lafayette was used as a prison for Northern rebels and knows that Hawley D. Clapp, imprisoned there, was a prisoner who was able to look out of the casement window of the Fort and see his own home.

Mr. Bergen believes his branch of the Bergen family, according to tradition, has always been deficient in musical talent. Perhaps the story of the Indians and Hans accounts for this—all was expended in that one great effort and no music left for Hans' descendants. No musical instruments are known among the family heirlooms. An honor paid Mr. Tunis G. Bergen, of Brooklyn, nephew of the late Hon. Tunis G. Bergen, was in his selection to visit The Hague, in order that Holland and America should agree upon the "Half Moon" problem for the big Hudson-Fulton Celebration of September-October, 1910. Being a student of the early history of this country, he was able to lay magic fingers upon questions of past and present, so that the little vessel all New York greeted with wild enthusiasm was no queer stranger to him, nor to Holland.

Of latter days, the fine old Bergen homestead on 3rd Avenue, near the present 39th Street Ferry, was demolished. Its slave kitchen, a relic of past days, was saved by being placed in Prospect Park. History of that part of Gowanus belongs naturally to Brooklyn. March of progress took the Bergen historic home, much of which cannot here be told. But Mr. Tunis G. Bergen, nephew of the New Utrecht man of that name, occupied the house until its destruction about 1890-91. Then he and family removed to 127 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn.

Mr. Tunis Bergen of Gowanus Cove and later of Brooklyn, has always said the Gowanus landmark stood prominently out as the house Gen. George Washington did NOT visit. In Mr. Bergen's opinion the

General simply could not get there. If the American forces were beyond (Fourth Avenue, now so-called), and they retreated from Gowanus Cove, he naturally could not visit the Bergens. The old Corteljau house stood where Washington Park ball field existed, on 5th Avenue and 4th to 5th Streets. Mr. Bergen believed it very doubtful if Washington visited the Corteljau house, though the Corteljaus so claim in their family records. For years the British were quartered in the Bergen homestead by Gowanus Cove, which house has so much of history to relate that it would necessarily come under the head of a Gowanus chapter. Mr. Tunis G. Bergen is a student of history and collector of olden time relics, many of which he lost in the fire of a storage company at the time his old homestead was being demolished.

Reminiscences of the Bergen family would make a book by itself.

In connection with the trip abroad, it was related how Mr. Harmanus Barcaloo Hubbard, a Brooklyn lawyer of note, was viewing an old church and cemetery in Holland when the attention of several of the party was called to the fact that Mr. Hubbard was idly standing on a vault slab, on which his own name of Barcaloo appeared. It was quite true. There was actually the name of a Harmanus Barcaloo who died in the 15th Century. It very strangely proved to Mr. Hubbard his genuine Dutch ancestry.

Speaking of his father's historic writings and town services, Mr. Bergen stated he believed that O'Callaghan's was the best interpretation of the old Dutch language as it was used in Colonial and Revolutionary days in New York State. Mr. O'Callaghan died some 20 or 25 years ago but left valuable writings at Albany. Another student of the Dutch language was Hon. Henry C. Murphy, of what HE called "Owl's Head," Bay Ridge. His writings and splendid library were well known to all his admirers at the time he resided in New Utrecht. But Mr. Bergen believes the real "Owl's Head" to have been where the Jaques Van Brunt homestead now stands on the Shore Road. There the land is shaped like an owl's head and there the fishermen knew the original head to be, not at Bay Ridge. From his father's papers it was positively known that a Thomas Stilwell ran a Ferry between Staten Island and 60th to 86th Street, or what was then called Yellow Hook. This was during 1760. It was a small affair and controlled to some extent by Denyse, who owned considerable land, stretching between his home by the Narrows and a point to where the John I. Bennett farmlands existed.

### **CROPSEY.**

This name is recorded in various ways in American history, but later day descendants of the American ancestors seem to have settled upon either Cropsy, Cropsey or Crapsey. In New Utrecht the name occurs



very frequently during the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, later date prominence settling upon only a few, the descendants having widely scattered. No general uniformity of family tradition exists, the various branches having different tales of long ago. It is believed the ancestor of the Cropsey family came from Germany. Record of two brothers are found in America and a "Melle" is mentioned, but this latter named may be a son of either of the two brothers.

During 1652, Joost Casperse, Johannes Casperse and their mother, Geertje, emigrated from Gronigen, Holland. But there is no Holland town relating to their name nor is the name of Casper found there. Although emigrating in 1652 there is no record of any land patents or other business transactions before 1661, though in 1687 Joost Casperse and Johannes, his brother, declared themselves residents of America for 35 years past (page 203, Stiles His. of L. I.). The second proof is the manuscript record of Joost's expenses to America, per old Bergen papers and the fact that he was employed by Michael Hans Bergen (who married Femmetje Nyssen or Denyse and settled at Yellow Hook, now Bay Ridge). This same Bergen property was afterwards purchased by Joost's grandson, Casper Casparse or Cropsy. Now, after a lapse of over 200 years, the name has been honored and preserved in the United States. There are three towns in witness of this: Cropseyville, N. Y.; Cropsey, Neb.; Cropsey, Ill.; and New Utrecht's beautiful driveway, Cropsey Avenue. Beside this, many descendants have taken prominent place in the history of State and Country.

Joost and Johannes Casparse settled on Long Island, but not until 1661 does record appear of land or public services. They signed a petition in Bushwick in March, 1661-2 and another petition at Newtown, 1662. On the old muster roll for Bushwick appear the names of private Joost and Johannes Casparse, Melle Caspersen and Jan Caspersen, the latter an Ensign. Date of 1663. In 1683 Johannes was assessed for five morgans of land and some cattle, amount of the tax being £77. In 1687 Joost and Johannes took the oath of allegiance in Breucklen, stating a 35 years residence in America. None of the family names appear on the Bushwick records in 1700, showing they had scattered to other parts.

Of Johannes Casparse it is known that he emigrated in 1652 and married Maria Theunis. Was assessed at Flatbush, 1675 and 1683. He made a will dated 1674. He took oath of allegiance in Breucklen, 1687. His children were: Barbara, Jannetje, Ann Maria; all baptized at New Amsterdam during 1667 to 1676. (Nothing more of this branch is known, but it is possible the Western Cropseys descend from Johannes. If not, then it is from John, proved son of Joost.)

Joost Casparse emigrated to America in 1652 and married on June



10, 1663, Cathren, daughter of Abraham Lothie and widow of Pieter Prae. Joost married, second, Magdalen Jans. He sold land at Bushwick, February 28, 1667, to Hendrick Welmson and in 1677-78 purchased land at Flatbush from Minnie Johannes. He sold land to Jan Dirckson Van Vliet, October 30, 1684. In 1687 he took the oath of allegiance at Breucklen, being in America 35 years. His children were:

Johannes, or John, bap. March 16, 1679, at Flatbush;

Cathren, bap., February 6, 1681; died an infant;

Cathren, 2nd, mar., 1700, Johannes Texel;

Jannetje, bap., April 6, 1684;

Joost, first born, but put last here in order to carry out the Long Island branches. Joost Casparse died May 21, 1729. In the English records and writing the Dutch Joost became Jasper and so Casper. Joost Casparse died, 1729.

He married, 1st, Maria Storm. Married, 2nd, August 9, 1693, Wyntje Jurex. Married, 3rd, July 28, 1695, Jannetje Jacobs. Joost first resided at Bushwick, then Flatbush. He was in Westchester County a short while and then returned to Long Island, near Newtown. His children were:

Derrick Casparse, settled in Delaware;

Abraham Casparse, mar. Abigail Betts;

David Casparse, mar. Mary Alburtis;

Gertrude Casparse, mar. William Miller;

Melle or Melie Casparse, bap., January 31, 1694. Believed to have settled up in New York State, but no proofs;

Jasper Casparse, born, — -, died after 1777, at Yellow Hook, now Bay Ridge, L. I.

This is the Casparse or Cropsy who settled at Yellow Hook. He purchased lands originally owned by Michael Hans Bergen located by the Sea Beach R.R., foot of what is now 65th Street, Bay Ridge. The first Cropsey homestead was built there. It was on the same land where his grandfather was in the employ and bonded to Michael Hans Bergen and must have appealed to Jasper or Casper on that very account.

Casper Cropsy married, May 27, 1749, Margretje (Maria) Barkaloo, daughter of Harmonus Barkaloo, also of Yellow Hook. The names of Harmonus and Maria have been generously perpetuated in the Cropsey family for many generations. In 1755 Casper Cropsy owned slaves, being accounted a well-to-do resident of the town. In 1772-3-7 he was a Deacon and Elder in the Reformed Dutch Church of New Utrecht, which was of course the only church then existing. In July, 1766, he sold land to Denyse Denyse, putting his Mark to the document since he could not then write English. After 1777 no trace of Casper Casperse or Cropsey is found. He died before 1800.

Judge Andrew G. Cropsey of Van Pelt Manor, now of New City, N. J., has said that Casper died in 1806, because of a will probate known, but had the 1806 date been correct there should be some trace of Casper up to that time. When Mr. Langley, Sr., bought the property by the ferry house some 20 years ago (from 1806), the tombstones in the old Cropsey burial plot had nearly disappeared. But it happens that only a couple of years ago (from 1911), that workmen employed in excavating on the former Wm. Langley place at 64th Street and 1st Avenue, made discovery of an old tombstone. It was partly covered by an old barn floor. There were no traces of any grave, nor were any human bones found. Work upon the Freight Yards for the Pennsylvania R.R. Co. stopped long enough to rescue the historic stone. And this was the inscription it bore:

“In memory of Maria, wife of Jasper Cropsy, daughter of Harmonus Barkuloo, who departed this life, October 12th, 1799, in the 69th year of her age.”

News of the discovery of the tombstone spread around the neighborhood and at the time many visitors called to inspect the relic. The Barkaloo family residence and land was where the John McKay property now exists, he keeping the Barkaloo private burial plot in the rear of his Shore Road residence. According to law the little cemetery of the Barkaloos can never be legally disturbed or sold.

The children of Maria and Jasper or Casper Cropsy were: Jacobus (James) Cropsey, Andries (Andrew) Cropsy, Valentine Cropsy, Hendrick (Henry) Cropsy, Johannes (John) Cropsy, Harmonus (Harmon) Cropsy, Wilhelmus (William) Cropsy, Maria Cropsy, Sarah Cropsy, Catherine Cropsy.

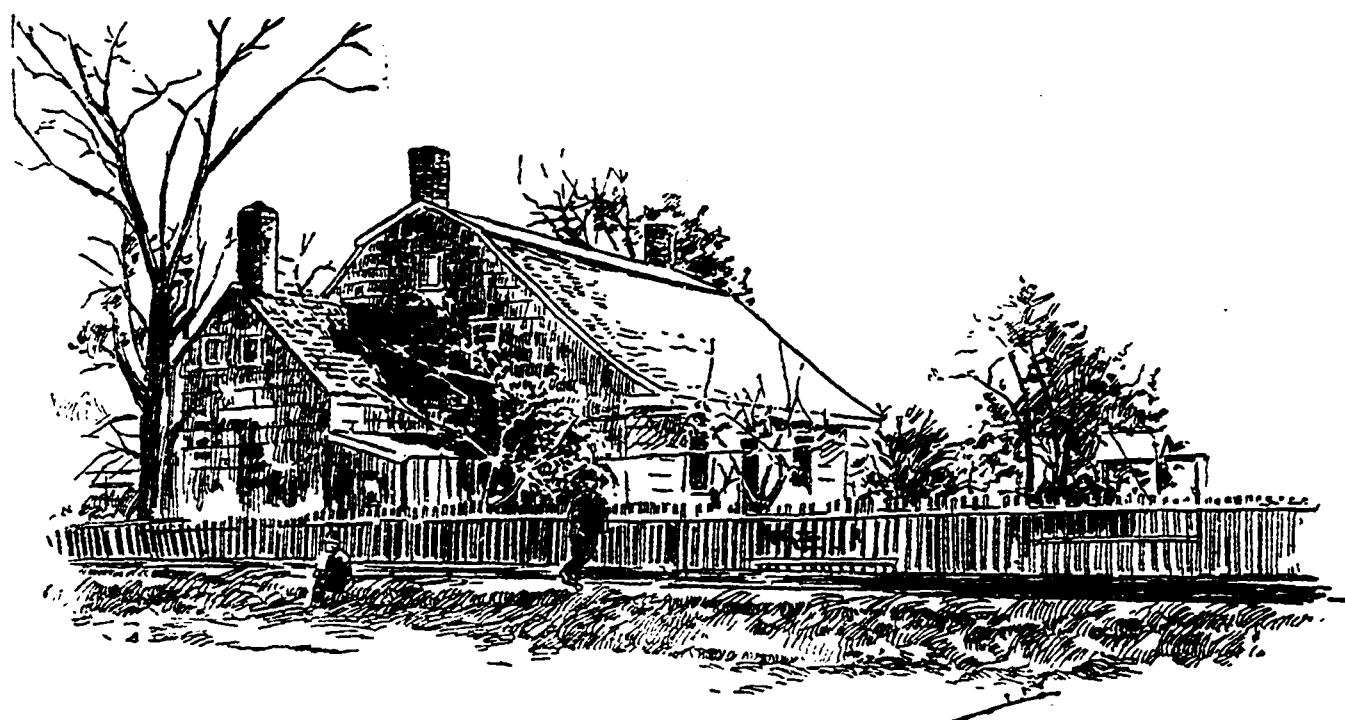
These names have all been identified with the history of New Utrecht. The book “Our Ancestors” tells their genealogies and records in detail. James Cropsey, William Cropsey and Judge Andrew G. Cropsey have left enviable records to tell of their life work. The Jacobus or James Cropsy, who died between 1830-32, was a hero during the 1776 war. History tells of his brave act in crossing the Sound, from Huntington to Norwalk, Conn., when few others would respond. Andries, his brother, built himself a home on the Shore Road, which house is told of separately. He, too, was a 1776 patriot. Valentine was a Deacon in the Dutch church. He is buried in the old village church cemetery; likewise his wife, Sarah. No proof of 1776 service found.

Hendrick Cropsy lived to be 101 years old. He married Mary Peckwell Jenkins. His 1776 war service was in Colonel Hawthorn’s regiment. Johannes or John Cropsy married Polly or Mary Bennett, daughter of Mr. Christopher Bennett. John and Mary resided on the present

35th Street or in the district between Gowanus Cove and Yellow Hook. The Christopher Bennett family was a well known quantity and quality of Bay Ridge. Their home still exists on 79th Street. Johannes died 1809.

Harmonus or Harmon Cropsy, born September 2, 1753; died, October 7, 1830. He married, 1st, Anna Cowenhoven and married, 2nd, Elizabeth Rezeau. There are many descendants along this branch.

Wilhelmus or William Cropsy, born May 26, 1760; died, July 9, 1806. Married Jane Denyse, daughter of Jaques Denyse and wife, Cou-bouche (or Jacoba, the name was called in Dutch. She was only child of Jacobus and Jannetje Emans or Emmons, being so called for her



*Wilhelmus Cropsy Homestead.*

father). This Jaques Denyse was born November 28, 1735, and died January 28, 1812. He was uncle to the Jaques Denyse who borrowed money and who died December 12, 1791. The two Jaques should thus not be confused in reading about each one. Descendants of the man who died in 1791 can claim Revolutionary war service from New Jersey State service records (page 420, Officers and Men of N. J. in Rev. War, by Gen. Strycker).

The Cropsey family were well represented in service to their country. Reminiscences are left to one member of the family to relate, he having dwelt there much of his lifetime.

## **COLONEL WILLIAM J. CROPSEY.**

(REMINISCENCES.)

Not every native of the old town of New Utrecht has such unusual recollections, inclusive of military, civic and general township matters, as has Col. William J. Cropsey, an honored resident of the City of

Churches, even better known and loved in his native town. To few men have such opportunities been given and to fewer still has that rare thing—accomplishment—been granted. Colonel Cropsey was born in New Utrecht village, February 24, 1826. His father, Jaques W. (son of Wilhelmus or William Cropsey and Jane Denyse), lived at the Narrows, where he bought a farm and took his bride. She was Miss Maria Emmons, daughter of Andrew Emmons and Phebe Bergen, his wife. Jacques was born November 15, 1782; died January 19, 1835. Maria, his wife, died January 2, 1884, aged 84 years. It was at his grandmother Emmons' home in New Utrecht village, just West of the first Dutch Church and burial ground, that the British soldiers had their noted feast of good things, the day they landed near the Corteljau house. Mrs. Emmons had baked that morning. All the home-made good things were stored away when the Britishers, traveling toward Brooklyn, entered her home, ransacked the place and ate up all the food she had so carefully prepared for her own family needs. This little event has been mentioned several times in patriotic papers read, but the exact farmhouse was never known until now. Colonel Cropsey declares the story to be one relating to his grandmother.

The Jaques Cropsey homestead existed close by the Narrows, now called Fort Hamilton. It was originally the Isaac Cortelyou house. The farm lay just around the bluff, where the United States Government's fortifications stand. The Cropsey farm, like others along the water front, combined fishing as part business. Fine catches of fish were made, especially during shad seasons. It is declared the fisheries yielded thousands and thousands of shad, the best ever known in any waters. Fishing off Fort Hamilton was then no small part of the New Utrecht farmers' livelihood, being uninterrupted by ocean travel. According to Mr. Cropsey's memory, no fish of the present day can compare with the fish caught those earlier days, when he lived close by the Narrows.

As a boy he recalls attending the little red schoolhouse, situated near the old Dutch Church, then Main Street, New Utrecht village. It was a two-mile walk from his home, but was nearer than the yellow schoolhouse at Yellow Hoek. There were about 40 pupils in the New Utrecht school. Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson taught the smallest children. Mr. Ferguson later became principal of Erasmus Hall School. Young Cropsey's first day at the little red schoolhouse is well remembered because "Uncle Jimmy," in the person of Mr. James W. Cropsey, introduced the two new pupils to several of the girls playing outside the door with a jolly, "Here, girls, are a couple of nice beaus for you," which introduction naturally increased the boys' bashfulness. Belinda Hegeman and Catharine Lott stopped their play to laugh at "Uncle Jimmy's" fun. The schoolhouse had very hard wooden benches and only few school sup-

plies. Pupils came from scattered points throughout the township limits. The Dutch language had, by that time, ceased to be taught in the two small schools, only English being used. There were catechism lessons, but no music. Colonel Cropsey remembers that while his parents spoke Dutch, they always discouraged their children's attempt to speak anything except English. He believes the people of Flatlands retained the Dutch language longer than any other of the settlements on Long Island. From the red schoolhouse (which records make prominent because Gen. George Washington once visited it, and then dined across the street), young William Cropsey next attended Erasmus Hall School, at Flatbush. Many pupils came from much longer distances than he, some riding to and from their homes only once a week, thus becoming a "school boarder." Schooling was attained with far greater difficulties than present-day conditions hold. English, arithmetic, spelling and the Bible were important to the parents of the Dutch communities.

A tender reminiscence is that of his schoolmate, Peter Wyckoff, who lately passed away in his historic family homestead, on Flushing Avenue, Brooklyn. Old Mr. Wyckoff, nearly blind, would often sit alone by the great fireplace in his sitting-room, when Colonel Cropsey entering, would disguise his voice to a deep, deep tone as he politely said: "How do you do, Mr. Wyckoff. I thought—" But Peter Wyckoff would slide his chair around instantly, laugh, and exclaim: "Bill Cropsey, you can't fool me! Come in, you rascal!" Whereupon the two veteran school-boys would spin yarns of long ago days, including present days as well. Peter was said to forget his lost eyesight at such times.

Boyhood days with Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, as well as incidents connected with many of the then residents of Fort Hamilton Village, are recalled. Mr. Cropsey was about eight or perhaps ten years old when he played with the sons of Robert E. Lee, later a famed General in the Civil War. Recollections of Mr. Lee and his family are that it was a very happy family circle, and Captain Lee a fine soldier and lovable man.

Of Stonewall Jackson it is said that he was a man who had eccentricities. One fact to this day makes Colonel Cropsey laugh amusedly, for Stonewall had a regular bedtime, kept religiously. No matter where Mr. Jackson went nor whom he met, when the clock denoted his hour it was "Good-night" for Stonewall Jackson. It is said, too, that he was very particular about his eating. As late fancy suppers had been proved to disagree with him, he made a point to carry his own crackers and cheese with him whenever he attended a social or military function. It mattered not whether it were an affair of State on Governor's Island, or Staten Island, or Brooklyn, he carried his supper. The crackers and

cheese were vouched for by the late Mr. Francis Hopkins of Fort Hamilton, who also recalled many eccentricities of Mr. Jackson.

Regarding Mr. Hopkins, it appears he was coaxed away to Jersey for a few days lest he be put in Fort Lafayette for his words against President Lincoln. "Francis was a red-hot Tory," is said of him. "Friends just had to smuggle him away for a short time until the excitement, then uppermost, had cooled somewhat. Francis Hopkins never cared what he said. We were for the North, of course, but we could not see Francis put in Lafayette, so we coaxed him away. Our telling him to be quiet had no effect. He was only kept out of prison by going to Jersey. Then his friends breathed easy."

Of Civil War days much that happened is remembered both in New Utrecht and in Brooklyn. Mr. Cropsey had never been anxious to be a soldier, the profession of farmer and fisherman occupying all of his time. But when summoned to jury duty one day, Stedman Wright, then Justice of the Peace, smiled mischievously, exclaiming, "I've got you now, Bill; you can't get out of it." He meant he had him fixed for jury duty. Thereupon William Cropsey bethought himself of how Stedman Wright should *not* get him. It meant six weeks loss of time. There was only one escape possible—the militia. Accordingly he joined the Kings County Troop, a crack Cavalry organization. This was March 17, 1851. He told Captain Suydam, of New Lots, that he did not especially want to be a soldier but had to be, adding: "But if I *am* going to be a soldier I want to be one right up and down." Captain Suydam explained there would be a meeting of the Troop the week following, asking Private Cropsey if he could be ready with his uniform, and so he appeared as a member of the Troop on scheduled date. A few days later he was summoned to Court by Judge John A. Lott. When known that he was ineligible because of military duty, Stedman Wright appeared dumfounded. "Why, I never knew you belonged to that Troop. When did you join?"

This story of his start as a soldier is told amusedly. His election as Captain of the Kings County Troop was in the Hotel conducted by Mrs. Schoonmaker, opposite Erasmus High School. 77 votes were cast; 76 were for Cropsey. The other vote Cropsey cast for Lieut. John Duryea. He did not want the office, but unanimous vote made his acceptance inevitable. He was commissioned Captain, April 15, 1856. He served about four years. Then he was elected Major of the 70th Regiment, June 19, 1860; then Colonel, serving ten years as Colonel, 5th Brigade, 2nd Division, being commissioned Colonel, February 23, 1863. He supported Lincoln's policy throughout the Civil War period. He spent all of one summer at the Armory located near Fort Greene, recalling one particular Sunday at the jail, where, with all his forces, they waited for the riot that did not come. The negroes were a part of the Rebellion. The Troop

had been sent to an important post, which happened to be the jail. The men had no food, but after skirmishing around they managed to get some cheese. Mr. Cropsey's one regret is that he did not keep a personal diary of the events that transpired during those stirring war times. In 1870, the Kings County Troop made its last appearance, being soon after disbanded, as was also the 70th Regiment. The striking uniform of blue, with accompanying shako hat and plumes, gave the militia a dashing and brilliant appearance. It cost \$40 for epaulets alone. Uniforms were costly outfits. Colonel Cropsey still keeps the shako and epaulets as a memento of the past.

Many events connected with the Troop, which comprised about sixty or seventy men, are related in an interesting manner. One was Brooklyn's big event, called the "Water Celebration," in honor of Brooklyn's water supply; then the Prince of Wales' coming was another big event. The Troop was ordered to the Battery at 6 A. M. The Prince was to be there at nine o'clock sharp, but did not land until 4 P. M. There was a grand parade up Broadway, with the Troop in all its glory as chief escort. That was a proud day for the Captain and all his men. Then Kossuth came. For that memorable occasion the Kings County Troop were ordered to the Astor House, New York, to escort Kossuth to Brooklyn. It was on a Sunday afternoon. The uniform of the Troop included no overcoats. The weather was bitter cold, one of the coldest days Colonel Cropsey ever remembers. Every member of the Troop sat on horseback, all lined up on Vesey Street, from 6 to 8 P. M. and nearly froze. But they managed to get over to Brooklyn, escorting Kossuth, where they went to Military Headquarters somewhere near Fulton Ferry.

When yellow fever broke out, in 1856, most of the inhabitants residing on shore frontage moved inland. This epidemic doubtless had something to do with a new Cropsey homestead being built, which was done in 1857. It was the second on the same site. Originally the farm had been a Cortelyou property.

During the erection of the new house, Mr. and Mrs. Cropsey occupied the old house, moved back under a big willow tree, from where they watched the modern house develop. This was sold in 1882, being soon after acquired by the United States Government for fortification works. It is believed that no picture of either of these two homesteads exist, which now is a source of great regret. It was Jaques W. Cropsey who built the big sitting room on the home he bought, making it the first Cropsey house by the Narrows. There was a famous open fire place in this sitting room of his. The one spare room was where Cornelius Woglum, of Staten Island, made his home. Mr. Woglum was then employed by the Government in work affecting the completion of Fort Hamilton, being also paymaster. He married Miss Sarah A. Cropsey,



youngest daughter of William Cropsey and Jane Denyse, and later removed to Fort Schuyler.

James W. Cropsey was identified with the work on building Fort Hamilton. He and Mr. Woglum were also joint owners of the first hotel established on Coney Island, a then fashionable resort, where President Van Buren was entertained one season.

The yellow fever epidemic naturally had much in connection with Dr. Crane and Dr. James Du Bois, or "Jim," as the Colonel knew him. "Jim was one of the bravest of men. When whole families were stricken, when others fled from danger, Jim stayed on duty until he, too, fell a victim." All who could, left Fort Hamilton for the safer districts of Brooklyn, but some could not leave. Such families suffered heavy penalties. The yellow fever germs were scattered from several vessels anchored near the Fort, bedding being washed ashore, where "rag pickers" pulled the infected mattresses to pieces, thus scattering the disease.

The present 60th Street was considered the dividing line for New Utrecht and Brooklyn. Third Avenue was the first public highway to Fort Hamilton, and Peter Bennett ran the first stage line along this route, to Gowanus, where 25th Street was the changing point for Fort Hamilton. This seemed a big saving of time over the former stage route from Fulton Ferry via Flatbush, where in this latter case a change of stage and horses was made opposite the present Erasmus Hall High School. 50 cents was paid for that trip, which then continued by way of New Utrecht (Kings Highway) to Fort Hamilton Village. This took almost a day. Opening of Third Avenue seemed a big convenience. Row boats formerly went up what is now Union Street; Third Avenue was near the water's edge. All that is changed by modern dock and dumping work. Gowanus, a separate place, seemed always, more properly speaking, a part of Brooklyn, even as a Colony.

Scattered along this line of roadway were several historic homesteads, the Wynant Bennett, Schermerhorn, Bergen, Barcaloo, DeHart, Delaplaine, and others, and so on toward Owl's Head. This latter point the late Hon. Henry C. Murphy declared to be positively where his home existed, near 65th Street, now Bay Ridge. The Van Brunts of the Shore Road dispute this claim. Owl's Head is said by them to be by the Jaques Van Brunt homestead and in Colonel Cropsey's opinion this was the true location. Speaking of changes, if he had ever dreamed of electric cars and subways, or of living so long, he would have kept a diary of those long ago days. But who could then tell of the wonders to come.

It would seem there was but little music in old New Utrecht. There was singing in church, but no organ. He does not remember having seen



or heard a piano or any other musical instrument until a later-day period. Whenever a dance occurred, it was always "old Tom Barlow" who played fiddle. Tom was a black man. He was in great demand, musically. In fact, no dance could be given without Tom. How he happened to own and play a fiddle when the white folks had none, Colonel Cropsey is unable to say. The fact did not impress itself at the time, but now the wonder is how and where Tom obtained his fiddle. He had been a slave; all the negroes had been. Upon one occasion, when the young people had attended a dance at one of the fine Gowanus houses, where Tom Barlow was orchestrarian, some of the New Utrecht young gentlemen planned a "scare" for Tom. When the black musician emerged in the darkness and was journeying along the road homeward, a white figure was seen to wave and beckon from a big rock, which unnatural sight caused Tom to sprint at a lively gait, much to the amusement of the perpetrators of that joke. The darkies were known to be superstitious. Tom's musical talents were all needed for New Utrecht 'tis related of that Gowanus "scare." Pianos and music came, but not until later. Parents sang in Dutch. No doubt the songs were Holland airs: they are not recalled.

As regards public life, Colonel Cropsey served twelve years as Supervisor of Brooklyn and New Utrecht. He was a member of the Board of Supervisors, which body chose the site for the present Court House on Court Square, 1860. For seven years he served as Postmaster at Fort Hamilton, being appointed November 8, 1875, under President Grant. Marshal Jewell was then Postmaster General.

When New Utrecht streets were being laid out, Cropsey Avenue was named for him. He also served 18 years in the Custom House at New York. Mrs. Cropsey was Mary V. Church, of Fort Hamilton. Their son, James Church Cropsey, was appointed Police Commissioner by Mayor Gaynor, November, 1910. October, 1911, he was nominated and elected November, 1911, as District Attorney for Kings County. He married Miss Florence Greason of Brooklyn.

### **COWENHOVEN; KOUWENHOVEN; VAN COUWENHOVEN AND (BENSON).**

This name has been so variously spelled and recorded with the one of "Conover" in New Jersey, a part of the old Dutch name, that it would be an impossible task to straighten out all the various family branches except under a separate genealogical chart. But as relates to the Town of New Utrecht, the Cowenhoven family records can be briefly touched upon. It was an important name in the Colony. There are many descendants living to-day who can trace a clear line back to the common ancestor of the whole family.

This man was Wolfert Gerretse (van Couwenhoven), who emigrated from Amersfort, Province of Utrecht, Holland, during 1630. He was employed about this year as Superintendent of farms and plantations by the Patroon at "Rensellaerswick." Later there is record of him at Manhattans Island. June, 1636, he purchased land from the Indians, this land being at Flatlands and at Flatbush. The patent was granted by Governor Van Twiller, 1637. Wolfert Gerretse (van Couwenhoven) made his mark to documents—he could not write English. He was married to Neeltje —. His death was after 1660.

Issue: Gerret Wolfertse, born 1610; Jacob Wolfertse; Peter Wolfertse. Records tell that Gerret Wolfertse, born 1610, emigrated from Holland with his father in 1630. Said Gerret resided in Flatlands and married Altie, daughter of Cornelis Lambertse Cool, of Gowanus. Gerret died about 1645. He was one of the eight men who represented the People, November 3, 1643, when they sought relief from their defenceless and poor condition.

A patent was not issued for his 19 morgans of land in Breucklen, on the valley of Gowanus Kil, between lands of Jacob Stoeffelsen and Frederick Lubbertson, until March 11th, 1647, or after his death. He could not write English during the several land transactions at Flatlands, but made his mark to documents. His children were:

William Gerretse, born 1636.

Jan Gerretse, born 1639.

Neeltje Gerretse, bap. 1641.

Marretje Gerretse, bap. 1644 (last two bap. in N. A.).

Of these children it is recorded that Jan Gerretse, born 1639, and later a farmer, married Gerendientje de Sille, daughter of Niciasious de Sille. Jan and his wife resided at Breucklen Ferry. He was lame and so received more of his father's estate. He signed his name "Jan Gerretse Van Couwenhoven."

In those days Brooklyn Ferry was a distinct place, apart from the colonies, further inland. Its desirability as a place of residence or for farmlands, was even then understood.

Broadhead's mentions a Jacob Van Couwenhoven who came to New Netherlands on the ship "Soutberg." His brother-in-law was Govert Loockermans. Both men were taken into the service of the West India Company, afterward rising to prominence in the Province. Under Gov. Pieter Stuyvesant, a Committee composed of what was called the "Nine Men," was formed for the purpose of adjusting needed public works and buildings. On this Committee of Nine Men were Augustine Heermans, Arnoldus Van Hardenburg and Govert Loockermans of the merchants; from the citizens were Jan Jansen Dam, Jacob Wolfertsen Van Cowenhoven and Hendrick Hendrickson.

From the farmers were, Michael Jansen, Jan Evertson Bout, Thomas Hall. Documents which were drawn up by these nine men resulted in three of them being sent to represent the people at The Hague. This was the first delegation so sent from the Colonies to the Directors in Holland. The three were Van Der Donck, Couwenhoven and Bout. This was in 1649. During 1650 the return of Couwenhoven and Bout are recorded.

It is not the intention of this book to cover family genealogies and so the interesting lines of descent along the various Cowenhoven branches cannot here be undertaken. So far as the old houses are concerned, there was one on 18th Avenue, north of the Reformed Dutch Church, which house was built before 1700.

Mention of Lady Moody is proper in that a portion of her land was later absorbed in the tract later called "Bensonhurst." And as the Benson family are identified with the Cowenhoven family the two must be told of in this connection.



*The Lady Deborah Moody House (before 1700)  
(Bensonhurst) (Benson family; then  
Walter E. Parfitt—1890)*

During ravages by the Indians, Lady Deborah Moody had shown great bravery. In compliment for this, as well as for general assistance which she had given, Governor Kieft granted a patent to Lady Moody and her son, Sir Henry Moody, also to George Baxter and James Hubbard, that portion of Long Island adjoining Coney Island. It was called by the Dutch, "Gravesend." Lady Moody was a refugee from religious persecution and was the one titled person of note who settled near New Utrecht. (Her home was built as substantially as possible, she having means. In 1655 the settlement was attacked by Indians. The Dutch settlers sent soldiers from New Amsterdam to aid in restoring order and to protect the Lady Deborah. She afterward removed from the settlement, owing to the Indian outbreaks.

Coming down to a more recent date, the property was acquired through the purchase of the five Benson farms, titles being passed by Robert, Susan, Richard and Egbert Benson and Margaret Benson,

now Mrs. John F. Berry. The 100 acre farm of Ex-Mayor Smith was included in the tract, followed by portions of Van Sicklen, Wyckoff, McGraw, and Schmidt homesteads and land, which comprised a total of some 400 acres. From this acreage was developed the "Bensonhurst" property, named for the Benson family.

Among all the old homes only one was left intact—the Benson house. This later became the property of Mr. Walter E. Parfitt, noted as an Architect, who bought the place as a home for his large family. He did not seek to dig for hidden history so he always declared. One portion of the cellar was strongly built, which made it seem very likely that refractory slaves had sometimes been confined there. But it is in that homestead that family tradition has made George Washington once a guest of honor, when he had supper there. Mrs. Berry has one of the plates used at table for that memorable supper, with other of the china pieces so used.

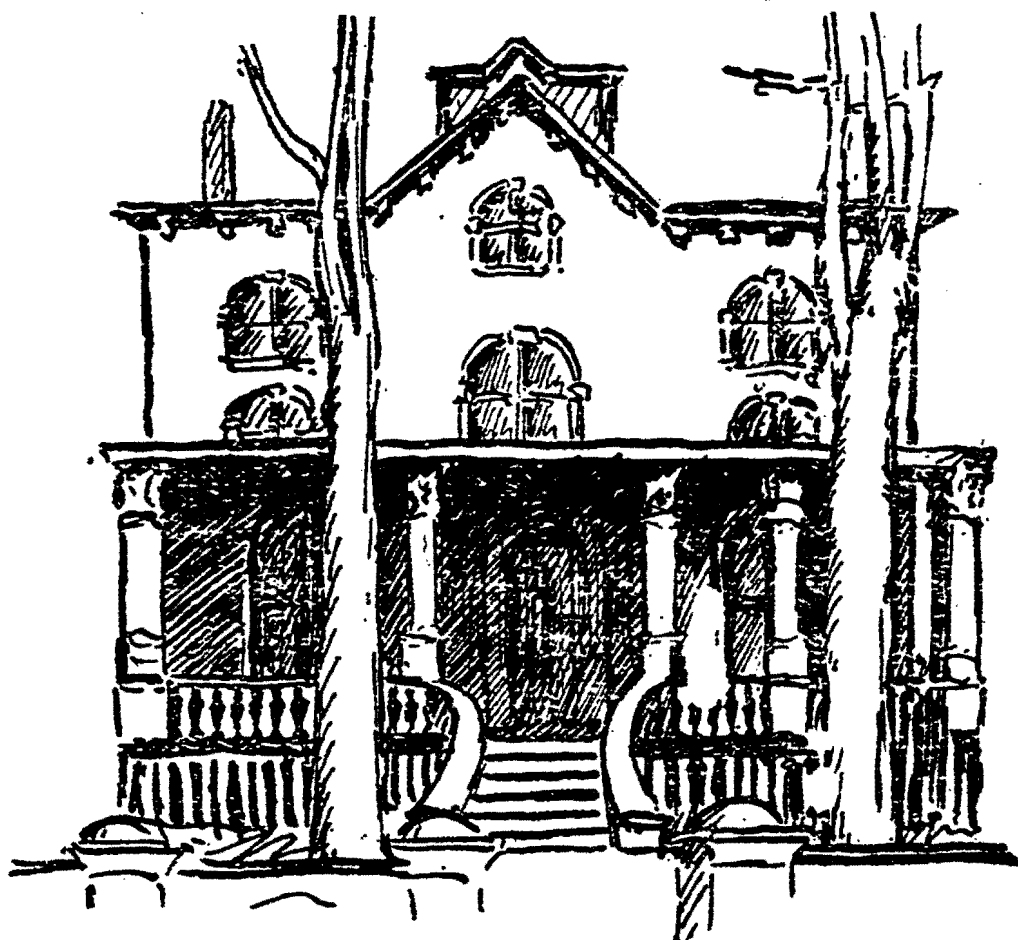
There is frequent mention of a Nicholas Cowenhoven in connection with land matters of the Denyse family at the Narrows, but family records must supply links necessary to complete the genealogy.

### GELSTON.

One of the most interesting reminiscences, because it has so much bearing upon the military side of Fort Hamilton, is that of Mrs. George S. Gelston and her daughter, Miss M. Antoinette Gelston. From a womanly point of view, the olden time happenings are reviewed with a quaintness of recital not often given ordinary recollections. The Gelston homestead, close to the waters of the Narrows and overlooking the Forts, gave its occupants the advantage of knowing and seeing much of what transpired around them. Mrs. Gelston, who was Miss Maria Meinel, married George S. Gelston in 1840. Together they established their first home on Marine and Fourth Avenues, Fort Hamilton. Their children were born there; George, M. Antoinette, Mary, Henry and Lillie. Their ancestor was William Gelston, of Connecticut, who was a patriot in the Revolutionary war, he being only 19 years old when he enlisted. He was, later on, a prisoner on the ship "Jersey," famed in history as the foulest of all the prison ships anchored near the Wallabout. William Gelston, paroled and exchanged, then became a Privateersman and saw service again, this last time along the Connecticut River. He is buried in Connecticut. Mr. David Gelston, a Cousin, was Collector of the Port of New York for 25 years, doing splendid public service. The big stone mansion built in 1853 is a familiar landmark. In summer its front yard is gay with blossoms, shown in a real old fashioned garden, for Miss Gelston has never had any other kind of garden. She also

found time to establish a Free Public Library and Reading Room in her village, having only a set of "Dickens," a few paper novels and just \$5.00. As has been told of Fort Hamilton's first Library, it was established "on Faith and Five Dollars." Later, 1,000 books were donated, then aid from the Bay Ridge Library came and finally it became the Carnegie Free Library, which Mayor Boody of Brooklyn formally dedicated. Miss Gelston's work and thought for the sick in the Hospital of her Town and Garrison village has been commendable and unusual.

Mrs. Gelston, while being 90 years of age at the present time, is yet an active woman. She does much knitting for the Church



*The George Gelston Homestead, by the Narrows. (Built 1835.)*

Charity Foundation and makes beautiful patchwork quilts. As a younger woman, her days at Fort Hamilton were filled with activities incidental to epidemic and war. Letters she received from soldiers who had spent days of imprisonment at Fort Lafayette, she treasures as sacred relics. Nor will she allow any picture of herself to be printed. Yet it was the Gelston home that sent forth courage and cheer to many soldiers and others in the Town, at most troublous times. Hers was a strong and Christian character at all times, especially so under martial surroundings. Life at Fort Hamilton has been a serious and earnest one for the family. One bit of memory shines out with pretty distinctness—the grand ball held at Fort Lafayette which Miss Antoinette recalls as a very gay affair for those days. Guests for the ball were rowed to the Fort in small boats. The Gar-

rison Band furnished the music and all the young people were eager to attend, there being so many gallant partners. There was a lovers' lane arranged on one side of the outside wall of the Fort, the dancing, of course, being inside. The night being extremely warm, the ladies wore very pretty dresses of gauze or light silk. The whole scene was one of great beauty and a rare treat, as balls went. How quickly the scene changed may be imagined when Miss Gelston remembers that the very next day the first prisoner of war was within those very stone walls of Fort Lafayette. His name was Captain Saunders. Many noted prisoners soon followed him, but he was the first. The Mayor of Baltimore was there, also the Mayor of Washington, D. C., as well as Mayor Wood, of New York. The Fort was better known as the "Bastile of America," during the Civil War. It is not a part of history that any suffering or extreme personal hardship existed, Fort Lafayette being largely used as a prison for war and political offenders. Mrs. Gelston never knew of any suffering there. She should know because the Government, as a great privilege, gave her a pass to send food, etc., to the prisoners at the Fort. Every day she sent food over to the Fort and personally visited the prisoners. For those services she afterward received many letters of thanks from discharged prisoners. Those letters she positively refuses to let the public read—to her they are sacred. She was often amused to find that pies sent to the Fortress would have the cover lifted to see what the pie contained. Chicken or other dainties for the sick or special prisoner, would be invariably opened and examined before it was given to the individual. It is recalled that one man was hung at the Fort, one day at noon. His crime was that of being a carpet bagger and his name was either J. or H. Kennedy. He had tried to burn Barnum's Museum at Ann Street, New York. The Gelston family heard from Chaplain Burke, of the Army, who attended the prisoner to the gallows, that he had never seen such a death—Kennedy went swearing, using the most vile language anyone could imagine.

Regarding the yellow fever epidemic, the Gelston family have considerable to remember, their home being nearest to where the anchored ship brought the disease. It is related that General Stanton, a retired Army officer who resided on the Shore Road, came to the Gelston home one morning, much perturbed. He told Mr. Gelston, "just look at that vessel over there, Gelston. I have been watching her—she has sickness aboard. We must get her away from these parts." General Stanton's practised eyes had not failed him in that instance. It appears that particular ship threw over mattresses, buried some dead at night and was anchored just below the Fort, near enough to send contagion to the shore. It was not until some

thirty or forty New Utrecht citizens were ill or dying that strict measures were taken by the New York authorities to check the disease. Then it was hard work. This happened in 1856, and for two years many of the homes along the Shore Road were deserted. Local help was strained to the utmost. One who died was the very man who first discovered the fatal ship—General Stanton. He waited too long to leave. Or possibly he did not intend to leave duty. A safety line was established all around the Town and nobody was allowed to come or go inside the Shore Road belt. Mrs. Gelston took her children to Quogue, L. I. For two years the Fort was closed, with only a few men on guard. The Gelstons remember that noble work was done by the Doctors who remained on duty. One of those was Dr. Bell, of Staten Island, in the Navy, but sent to the Fort. He had the honor of being the single Doctor who did not believe yellow fever contagious. Strange to say he did not take it himself through all his work. Both Doctor Crane and Doctor DuBois are remembered to have sacrificed their lives for their fellow citizens. Dr. Roethe, a well known German physician from Staten Island Quarantine Station was also in New Utrecht. It is recalled that Paul A. Oliver, who lived in the Shore Road and did fine work, escaped death and to-day is one of the wealthy business men of Wilkesbarre, Pa. Paul A. Oliver afterward fought in the Civil war and rose from Second Lieutenant to rank of Brigadier General.

One of the most exciting incidents connected with the Gelstons' life by the Narrows was when Fort Lafayette caught fire and the seventeen tons of powder, with bombs added, were in danger of blowing up. The whole family were anxious, in fact the entire community. It happened in March, and the wind, according to Miss Gelston's memory, was blowing about 40 miles an hour. The hour was noon; she was very much astonished to see smoke and flames coming from some of the windows of Fort Lafayette. Other members of the family were called, when Mrs. Gelston said at once there was fire inside the walls. Such proved the case. It had been started by one of the men cooking his dinner and in careless manner letting sparks escape. An unused chimney was chief cause, too. An alarm was sounded, then everybody was ordered out of their homes, fearful of great destruction from what seemed to be an inevitable explosion. The Gelston family went to their other house, back in the village. Mrs. Gelston was finally missed. She had returned to the home by the Narrows, declaring if she were to be injured it might as well come and she have her best dress on. That was what she said. But they found she had every intention of preparing comforts for the policemen whom circumstances had compelled to make headquarters in the big



Gelston homestead, opposite Fort Lafayette. There were meals to be prepared for the visiting men and others. During this, people, soldiers and officials were waiting for what did not happen—the explosion. The Governor's Island officers came; so did the Brooklyn fire fighters, but there was no work to be done and according to memories they were not sorry to go back. It is recalled that at this critical point, two officers from Fort Hamilton determined to see what progress the fire had made inside Fort Lafayette. The name of one of the men was Lieut. Thomas Barker, according to Miss Gelston, but she has been unable to recall the name of the other brave officer, which is deeply regretted. These two men entered the windows of the Fort, not knowing at what moment their life would be snuffed out. But a miracle had happened. The fire had receded, so report was made. Only a door, with a keyhole large enough to admit sparks, had separated those 17 tons of powder from ignition. No sparks went in the keyhole and the fire strangely swept in an opposite direction from the wooden door. It seemed indeed a Providence. Another way of accounting for it would be that the wind suddenly changed. They recall this as a most exciting time. Another memory is of the old Simon Cortelyou house, destroyed when the Government took possession of that estate and enlarged its reservation. Once it was told that Captain Kidd's treasure was buried in his garden. A city clairvoyant was brought down and she went in a trance, telling how the treasure was truly enough buried right there. They should dig for it. So, of course, digging was next in order. Miss Gelston believes nothing but extra good crops resulted from that great upheaval of ground. At least she never heard of the treasure itself.

When the Simon Cortelyou house was to be demolished a series of pictures were taken of the old Dutch farmhouse, an example of earlier days along the Shore. The old Denyse Denyse house, which was near where the Ferry existed, was a part of the Hamilton House as built and later owned by Mr. Gelston. Miss Gelston knows positively that the Denyse homestead was incorporated in the hotel, the whole structure being consumed by fire, an event well remembered. The stone, marking either the doorway or else a mantel and inscribed about Denyse Denyse and Teuntje, his wife, was found in the ruins of the fire some time after. Miss Gelston saved the relic and finally presented it to the Long Island Historical Society of Brooklyn, feeling it to be of historic value.

### THE CHURCH FAMILY.

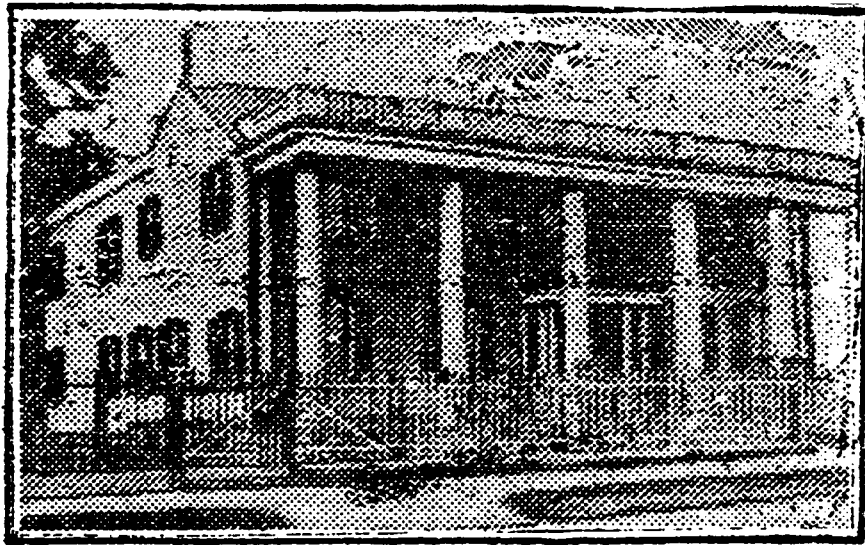
When Holland and Scotland unite in one person, something remarkable must naturally be the result. Such is the case with the



Col. James C. Church family, identified with Fort Hamilton's history from 1837 to date; the present occupant of the old homestead, Judge Charles W. Church, standing out prominently.

Col. James C. Church, whose home was in the district called "Mapleton," now 18th Avenue, Brooklyn, married Maria Turnbull, daughter of Thomas Turnbull, whose wife was a Voris, of Gravesend. The Turnbull farm existed where the Sea Beach Railroad line extends toward Bath Beach. The Turnbolls were among early settlers, being identified with the first Reformed Dutch Church of New Utrecht, and also with the second church.

James C. Church and his wife removed from their Mapleton home (since owned by Mr. Aaron Lott) to Fort Hamilton, on what was then called State Lane, now Fort Hamilton Avenue. Charles W. Church was then four or five years old, being born at Mapleton, December 29, 1833.



*Col. James C. Church Homestead at Fort Hamilton*

The Church homestead built 1833, is that standing to-day and is a familiar landmark. Mr. Church established a general store at the end of the same street. He sold everything from a needle to a load of hay. He also had other business interests; a wagon shop, coal and lumber yard, and finally started a stage route from Fort Hamilton to Fulton Ferry, by way of Flatbush and the old Kings Highway. Another stage route was started about 1844, through Bay Ridge to the Ferry, while a branch route went to Hamilton Ferry. This proved a great convenience to the public. The fare charged was 25 cents and time consumed varied. Col. James Church, who was also Post Master of the town, carried the mails, having the Post Office in one corner of his store on State Lane, close to the water of the Narrows. Being a man of great activity in business, Mr. Church was averse to doing military service, yet he was elected first, Captain then Lieutenant Colonel, and finally Colonel of the National

Guard Regiment of Brooklyn, and served nearly six years. That is how the title of Colonel comes. It was while engaged among his numerous business helpers that one day he conceived the idea of teaching his employees how to read and write. His son Charles, then a young student at Erasmus Hall School in Flatbush, was asked, "Eh, Bub, don't you think you could teach the boys at night, using our dining room as schoolroom?" Bub thought he might at least try, which he did. Not being a disciplinarian he was unable to cope with the spirit of mischievousness among some of the pupils, all much older than himself and therefore unmanagable from a boy's standpoint. One night, "Jim" Flood, who was present, addressed the night school audience by pounding on the table and telling them, "Here, fellows, you're carrying on and interrupting things; I mean business here. If you don't, then let those who don't clear out."

Jim was about 20 or 21 years old at the time, and a powerful speaker. It was Charles W. Church who taught him to read and write. Later he went far West and there became the famed millionaire "Jim Flood," whom Western histories unite in honoring. Another employee of Colonel Church was Dave Jack, who also went West, becoming rich and famous as a speculator. James C. Church died in 1856. During his residence at Fort Hamilton he was in close touch with many noted military officers stationed at the Fort. His home was the scene of brilliant social gatherings, for his two young daughters, Matilda and Mary, were in society, and his son Charles W., a young man of great promise.

Capt. Robert E. Lee, of the Engineer Corps (later a noted General on the Confederate side during the Civil War), and Stonewall Jackson, then a Major by Brevet of the Artillery Regiment, were among the friends whom he loved. It is told of Captain Lee that he was a courteous man and honorable soldier. His home life was ideal. For a while he was a guest at the Church home, then became domiciled, with his wife and two sons, in the frame house on Fourth Avenue adjoining the Church garden and owned by Mr. Church.

The sons, George Washington Curtis Lee, nicknamed "Boo" by his Father, and William Henry Fitzhugh Lee, called lovingly "Rooney," were sturdy lads and playmates of Charles W. Church, whom he still remembers. Charles was about eight or ten years of age at the time. One day while playing together in the barn, "Rooney" became mixed up in the hay chopping machine and lost the tips of his fingers. He was cared for in the Church homestead and an army surgeon dressed the wounded hand regretting that the lad must lose his finger tips, because the tips had not been quickly enough replaced on the wound. These mutilated fingers, Captain, then

General, Lee, carried all through his life. Later, when the Civil War came and Charles W. Church was reminded that a Lee, of Virginia, was among the prisoners in Fort Lafayette, he wondered if the man could be *his* Lee. "Why not ask the prisoner?" suggested the informant, an army officer of Fort Hamilton. But Mr. Church disliked doing so. Instead, he begged the officer to note the fingers of the prisoners hand, which request was done. Next day the officer reported, "He is your Lee." Then Mr. Church made himself known, renewed boyhood friendship and every day sent delicacies to Brig. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee, of Virginia. It is told that when General Lee was returned to the South, he wrote and thanked Mr. Church for his great kindness and hoping to return favors, released a Northern prisoner whom Mr. Church was interested in, but who happened to be the wrong man with the same name as Mr. Church's friend.

It is also told that the greatest confusion existed in military and civic circles, even to this day, owing to the fact that there were two Brig. Gen. Fitzhugh Lees. One was son of Gen. Robert E. Lee and the other his nephew. In this way events and dates of the appearance of these two Confederate Generals were often strangely misunderstood.

During the family's residence at Fort Hamilton, Mrs. Lee kept house in Southern manner and had the Virginia "Mammy's" of book lore aspect. Young Charles Church was always addressed by Captain Lee as "Master Charles."

The recollections of Stonewall Jackson are of the most interesting and amusing kind. Jackson had many peculiarities, according to the memory of Judge Church. One of them was that every day Major Jackson could be seen busily chopping wood. He considered this necessary exercise. He was a man of very strict habits as to bed time, which fact was well known by all his friends during his three years stay at Fort Hamilton. Being well acquainted with the eldest Miss Church (later Mrs. Dr. Whiting), he was often at the James Church home. Once, in a spirit of fun, Miss Church and several other ladies determined to engage Major Jackson in a game of cards so that a finish would carry him beyond the usual bed time, which was shortly after "Tattoo" sounded. The ladies were warned that their plans would be in vain. "You will see," declared Mr. Church. But they believed Southern Chivalry and card games, where ladies were playing, would surely triumph over the clock. Not so, however. Major Jackson rose from his seat at his accustomed bed time hour, asked to be excused and actually left the game unfinished. He was known to be particular about his diet, and his food was of the plainest description. Regarding the baptismal controversy over the Major's

full name and St. John's Church record that it was "Thomas Jefferson Jackson," Judge Church is very positive this entry is correct. In further proof it must be related that Miss Church once asked him, "Major, what is your full name?" whereupon he replied in that quick decisive way he had, "Thomas Jefferson Jackson."

Judge Church understands the positiveness of the late Francis Hopkins upon this subject, for the two old time residents of Fort Hamilton always disagreed on the Jonathan-Jefferson name, Mr. Hopkins always insisting there was no mistake about Jonathan.

Judge Church owns an excellent likeness of Major Jackson, taken about this time, but has none of the Lee family. He remembers Mrs. Lee as being called "Mary."

Memory serves him better on old Tom Barlow, the musician, who played fiddle for every dance held in New Utrecht. Tom was short and thin and had a nervous way of humming aloud the tune he played. He lived somewhere back in New Utrecht village, Judge Church believes. Once, in meeting Tom, Charles ventured the remark that he seemed to be getting pretty old, when Tom smiled, shook his black head and answered, "I kinder reckon they've forgot me." Judge Church never forgot the reply and so the musician. He thought Tom's music rather "tough," as he remembered it. And speaking of music made the Judge reminiscent regarding boyhood school days. He attended the "Yellow Hoek" school, between Bay Ridge and the Fort, a short distance from the Judge Van Brunt property, now the Crescent Athletic Club House. Peter Rouget was then Teacher. He told Judge Church he had learned his letters all in one day. Mr. Douget later became principal of a Brooklyn school, where, strange to say, Charles W. Church, a nephew of the Judge, attended Mr. Rouget's class. The little schoolhouse of Yellow Hoek had, after Mr. Rouget, a Mr. Fulton, Dr. J. V. D. Berier, D. C. Winslow, then a Mr. Slater, who was the last teacher to serve. Mr. Winslow had a wife who was very musical and together they endeavored to introduce music in school work. Charles Church was made Leader, though he declares, he was not aware of being especially musical. He remembers the pupils sang from a little book of songs, and that the introduction of music in a school was something new at that time. From Yellow Hoek school he went to Erasmus, then graduated from University of New York in 1852, in his 19th year. He was 22 years old when nominated for Justice of the Peace by the Democrats. He was also made a member of the Town Board, Board of Police, and Board of Health. In July, 1856, when the yellow fever came, Dr. Thompson was Health Officer of the port of New York. Those were hard days for Mr. Church, but he rose to the emergency with fearless action.

He first compelled Dr. Thompson to remove the infected vessels to the Southwest Spit buoy. Next, when his fellow Board members fled the Town, Charles W. Church remained on duty. He saw many sad sights; had quick burials to attend to, visited homes where the black vomit was known to be, yet never flinched from duty. Supervisor of the Town was the late Tunis G. Bergen; Jeremiah Van Brunt was Town Clerk. Justices were John A. Emmons and Stedman Wright. They all worked, but the epidemic proved fatal to many. The Bergen family lost heavily by death. Cold weather finally checked the disease.

In the Fall of 1856 Charles W. Church was nominated for a member of the Board of County Superintendent of the Poor. There were five members to the Board, then in bad repute, owing to scandal regarding extravagances and bad management. Justice Church, when apprised of the nomination, refused it. But prominent citizens prevailed for an acceptance. Ex-Mayor Samuel Smith, Major Powell (afterwards Mayor), Tunis G. Bergen and others, and Mr. Church was elected. His three year term resulted in cutting down the appropriation from \$250,000 to \$150,000 for the first year, then down to \$35,000. He has always regarded this as his best public work.

The fire at Fort Lafayette about 1868 was an eventful time for his village, and he recalls how the tons of stored powder were expected to blow up, yet did not. He saw General Newton, of the Engineers' Corps of New York Harbor, also General Vogdes, Commander at the Fort, both experts and asked what the result would be of such explosion. "It is utterly impossible to foresee the result," declared General Newton, who ordered the inhabitants nearby to remain in their cellar, and gave strict caution to have no lights in their homes. Mr. Church, from his office near the shore, watched some bombs burst. In preparation of what might follow, he telegraphed the Fire Department in Brooklyn, and they sent a Company with Fire Engine, to Fort Hamilton to subdue flames. But no terrible explosion or fire occurred, much to everybody's surprise. Mr. Church explains the mystery by stating that the shingles left on the Fortress floor burned themselves out and so failed to reach the powder.

Later day acts of Judge Church was the making of a short cut road across the Dyker meadows, connecting Bath and Fort Hamilton and saving a three-mile circuitous route. It was declared an impossible feat, because of marsh lands, but he accomplished it. Up to 1861, railroad cars did not go beyond Bay Ridge Avenue, then called Pope's Lane. The Company refused to extend the line to the Fort until Third Avenue was graded, which was done through the efforts of Judge Church. Before 1862, the railroad ran cars through to Fort

Hamilton. Although Judge Church took up law, he never actually followed the profession, yet was always considered one of the ablest men at the bar. No decision of his was ever reversed during the 40 years on the bench. When New Utrecht was annexed to Brooklyn, he considered his public duties ended. It was his sister, Mary V. Church, who married Col. William J. Cropsey. Their son, James Church Cropsey was Police Commissioner of New York, so appointed by Mayor Gaynor, later elected as District Attorney, November, 1911.

Judge Church never married. He resides in the old homestead amid his beautiful garden, and is a fine specimen of the courtly gentleman of past and present. Any reminiscences of his must necessarily be brief in a book of history data. His experiences in life would make a book in themselves.

### EMANS—EMMONS.

Andries Emans emigrated from Leyden, Holland, May 9, 1661, in ship St. Jean Baptist. Settled at Gravesend. In August, 1661, petitioned for land on S. I. Mar. ——. Issue: John G. (of Gravesend); Hendrick (of N. J.); Abraham (of N. J.); Jacobus (of Gravesend); Andries, Jr.

Andries, Jr., born 1677. Mar., 1693, Rebecca Van Cleef, of Gravesend. Bought farm in New Utrecht of Stoeffel Romyn, where he removed from Gravesend. Will probated January 6, 1729. Issue: Henry (died young); Johannes; Andries (N. U.); Benjamin (N. J.); Jacobus (N. U.); Hendrick 2d; Antie; Ann; Sarah; Rebecca.

Signed name, "Andries Emans."

Jacobus (mar. Jannetje Cowenhoven, dau. Wm.). He died, 1735. Owned and occupied his father's land, bought of Romyn, later the John E. Lott farm. Issue: Jacoba, born October 7, 1733, who mar. Jacques Denyse; died February 14, 1825.

Signed name, "Jacobus Emans."

It was this homestead where the British soldiers feasted on the baking done the day of their landing on American shores, August 22, 1776. They confiscated everything and took possession of house and stock.

The Emans family left many descendants on L. I.

### BOGERT—BOGART.

Tunis Gysbertse emigrated, 1652, from Province of Utrecht, Holland. Mar. 1st, Sarah, dau. Joris J. Rapalje, and wid. Hans Hansen Bergen; mar 2d, 1687, Geertje Jans, wid. Derick Dey. Resided at

the Wallabout. Mag. of Breucklen, 1663-67. Issue: Artje, bap. 1655 (mar., 1677, Theodorus Polhemus); Catalynte, bap. 1657 (mar., Nov., 1679, Jan Denyse); Neeltje, died young; Altje, bap. 1661 (mar. Charles Claasge of N. J.); Annetje, bap. 1665 (mar. Joris Brinkerhoff); Neeltje, bap. 1665 (mar. Cornelis Denyse); Gisbert, ~~Adrian, Grietje, Cornelis~~. Signed name, "Tenis Gisbertse Bogaert." *not his.*

### THE OLD WHITE HOUSE.

This means the Chandler White stone house, built about 1775, with alteration by the addition of two wings at each side of the original part, about 1820. Mr. White died 1856. The house was occupied by Mrs. R. Cornell White and Joseph B. White, descendants. It is by no means the oldest structure in the Township, but its West parlor has a most interesting bit of modern history attached. During 1854 an important meeting of prominent men was held in that room. It was for considering and promoting an invention that, later on, set the world astir—the great Atlantic cable.

On May 8, 1854, the following men assembled in the West parlor, by invitation of Mr. White: Peter Cooper, Moses Taylor, Cyrus W. Field, Marshall O. Roberts, Fredk. N. Gisborne, Chandler White. Because of Mr. White's illness the company met at his home. Preliminary steps were taken for laying the Atlantic Cable. Peter Cooper was elected President of the Company. The entire minutes of that meeting was owned by Mr. Jos. B. White. It was copied by Secretary Gisborne in an old account book and bears his signature. The second meeting took place May 23, 1854, at 82 Broadway, New York, when Mr. Cyrus W. Field was made President of the enterprise that perpetuated his name.

The old "White House," so called because its owner bore that name, was by strange contrast, very near the modern building of Neil Poulson.

### MAJOR FRANCIS E. BERIER.

Major Francis E. Berier, who was a direct descendant of the Cortelyou family, was born at Fort Hamilton and died there, aged 77 years. His early home was on the site of the Mr. John Robinson house, Shore Road and 94th Street. His mother was a Van Dyke. He married a daughter of General Stanton, who owned and resided in a charming house at the Fort, which property was later acquired by Col. A. W. Johnson, father of Hon. Tom Johnson, of Ohio. Major Berier's son, DeLaguel Berier, survived, and was a resident of Ridgefield, N. J. The Major served as Q. M. under Robert E. Lee, and was



South some years. Before the Mexican war Major Berier was in the Civil Engineers' Department of the Army, and during the war was with General Lee. Following peace, he later became a wine merchant of Pine Street, New York City. He was one of the old time residents of Fort Hamilton and recalled much of his Township.

The Bogart family, Hendrickson, Barkaloo, all are prominently identified with New Utrecht history.

### VAN BORCULO—BARKALOO.

This name ranks high. The first of the family in America was Willem Jans Van Borculo, who emigrated from Borculo, province of Gelderland, Holland, about 1657-60. He resided first at New Amsterdam (N. Y. City), next Flatlands, then Gravesend. He married Lysbet, widow of Christoffal Jans. Issue: Jannetje W. (married, 1679, Jan B. Van Driest), Cornelia, Jan, Willem, Dirck, Danul, Coenrad, Lisbeth. The father signed his name "Wyllem Jansen Van Borckeloo." Of these eight children, Willem Van Borckeloo, Jr., is the New Utrecht ancestor. His wife was Maria, daughter of Jaques Cortelyou. William, Jr., took oath of allegiance in 1687. Resided at Gravesend about 1696-98, then removed to New Utrecht, on his wife's lands. In 1706 he was assessed for 90 acres. Issue of Willem, Jr., and Maria:

1. Jaques Borckeloo (settled in New Jersey).
2. Willemitten Borckeloo (supposed to have married Jan Nevins).
3. Harmanus Borckeloo (married, about 1730, Sarah Terhune).
4. Helen Borckeloo (married Michael Bleuw, of New Jersey).
5. Anna Borckeloo (married Pieter Luyster).

The father made his mark, "W. B." to documents.

The above third child, Harmanus Borckeloo (wife, Sarah Terhune), connects the John, Valentine and William Cropsey, descendants with Revolutionary service claim. Harmanus was a Second Lieutenant, New Utrecht Co., Kings County Militia, signing declaration and taking commission March, 1776 (page 120, Onderdonk's Rev. Inc. of Kings Co.; page 286, Fernow's N. Y. Archives). Among Harmanus's children was a daughter, Margretje, or Maria, who married, on May 27, 1749, Caspar Casparse, or Cropsy. (John, Valentine and William were their sons—see Cropsey history). The old Borckeloo private cemetery adjoined the homestead, both being close by the Cropsey lands. The former is included in the property (1895) of Mr. John McKay, Shore Road, Bay Ridge. It is a sadly neglected, rubbish covered little spot, near the future McKay Place, where some forty members of this family were years ago buried. A few stones still stand, one being for Jaques Barkeloo, the man who, in 1794,



advertised for a school teacher, capable of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic in English. This was the introduction of the English language in the little school in New Utrecht village. There are no local Barkeloos left now, and no one cares for the hallowed spot where sleep Harmanus and Jaques. The writer could only reverently copy the scene and here pay tribute to their memories.

Nearly fifty descendants of the first New Utrecht Van Borculo settler are buried there. Mr. John McKay owns the property adjoining but can never legally own the cemetery. It is a secluded, rubbish-covered little spot on Narrows Avenue, near Bay Ridge Avenue, yet overlooking New York Bay. Only three stones now remain, being those of Jaques Barkeloo (born 1749) and wife, Catharine Suydam; also Maria Barkeloo, wife of Simon Cortelyou, buried in 1788, 1815 and 1841 respectively. This Jaques Barkeloo established the English language in New Utrecht's Dutch school. And in this cemetery also sleeps the patriot soldier, Harmanus Barkeloo, whose Revolutionary services are claimed by the descendants of John, Valentine and William Cropsey, of New Utrecht. Surely this hallowed spot merits a reverent care the writer cannot give, yet would rejoice to see bestowed by a united family composed of local "Sons" and "Daughters" of the Revolution.

### **"THE BEECHES" AND THOMAS FAMILY.**

One of the oddest and to them the most pathetic side of the progress of modern times in the former Township of New Utrecht, is that viewed by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Thomas, residing on 75th Street and Second Avenue, Bay Ridge. With the cutting through of streets in that locality their place called "The Beeches," was literally cut in two. Not the less remarkable was that their famed clump of beech trees, aged about 200 years old, have been left standing directly in the middle of what is now 74th Street.

Property owners thereabouts have been loath to see the splendid group of trees cut down. A petition was even circulated to this effect. It was feared, however, that progress of the present day would scarcely halt because of historic trees.

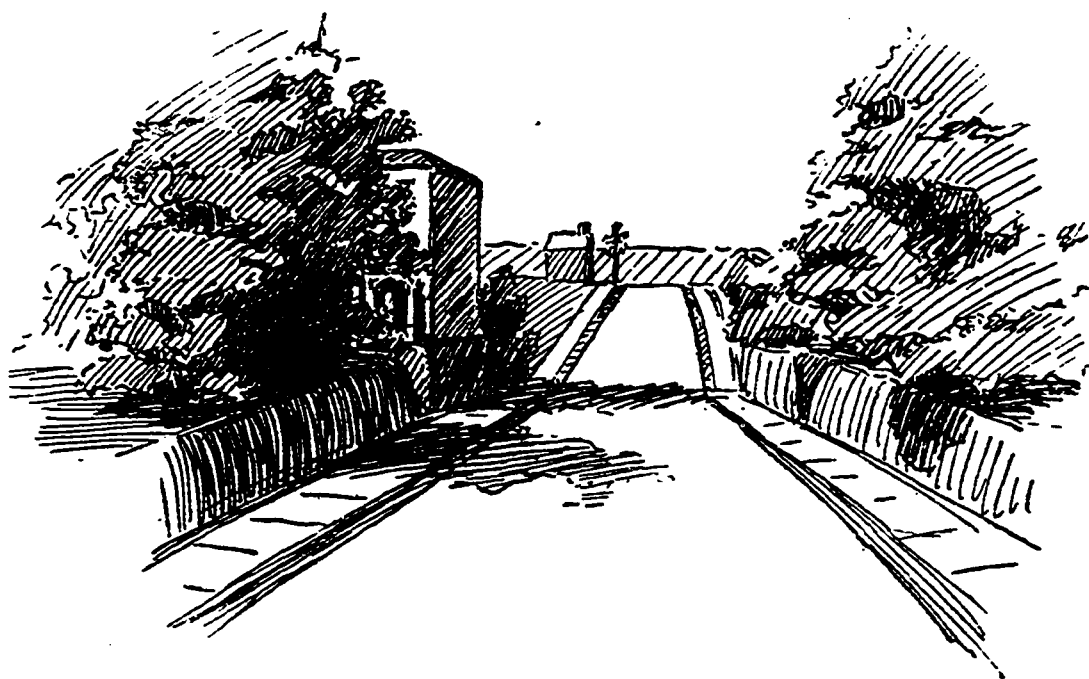
"The Beeches" is the property owned by the late Mr. Benjamin C. Townsend, whose ancestry dates back to Oyster Bay settlement. He emigrated from that place to Bay Ridge in the days when Hon. Henry C. Murphy also resided in that section of New Utrecht. He and Mr. Murphy were firm friends. "We call our place the Ex-Beeches now," said Mrs. Thomas, who is a daughter of Mr. Townsend. "When 75th Street was cut through it took away 13 rooms of

our house. The big center hall, which people came for miles around just to see, because it was wide enough for two teams of horses to drive abreast—a thing remarkable when this house was built—that hall is now the side of our house. The kitchen side was cut clean off. So were the beech trees. They are now on 74th Street.

Our rose garden, where some days we have gathered as many as 280 roses, is now on the other side of the street, where the new Schultzscheiss grounds are. When people look wonderingly at our



*"The Beeches" (before)*



*"The Beeches" (after)*

house to-day and exclaim in astonished tone, "Gracious! why did you build a house on such a big hill, with such a tremendous stone wall to keep you from sliding off the hill?" we tell them that the Townsend house was all right before 74th Street went through to the Shore Road; that the 25 foot stone fence was a necessity. The Schultzscheiss house has the opposite wall. Is it not a dreadful wall? But what could be done? I was thankful to have even half our house spared,

especially the old hall. All this work—this so-called Progress—has aged me ten years. And to think of those beautiful beech trees being right in the middle of 74th Street—over 200 years old. They are the finest specimens of natural growth trees on Long Island, so we have been told. There are about 20 trees in the group. The streets should not have been graded as they were. “We used to have good times in New Utrecht but now——.” Then Mrs. Thomas went on to relate how those former days were passed. She remembered how Mr. Tunis Bergen would come sit in her father’s summer house chatting enjoyably upon many topics; how Henry C. Murphy would visit or else entertain in his own delightful manner; how Brooklyn seemed



*“The Actual Beeches”*

far enough away for going there for an afternoon drive; how the flower gardens and bush lined roadways had all disappeared for asphalt and cobblestones.

One of the Thomas residences was built in 1854 by Mr. McElrath, then of the *New York Tribune*. The other was built by a Mr. Spencer, of New York, a dry goods merchant. Both houses passed into the hands of the families now owning them. As for the beech trees, they are uncommon in our country, being rather similar to those found in parks or gardens in England. Possibly that is where the seed came from, out of which grew the group that made the 74th Street cutting through a matter to be halted. The grounds of W. H. and

R. H. Thomas' homesteads are notable because of the fine trees. There were about twelve acres to this parklike stretch of beautiful ridgeland. Nearby is the Ridge Club, of which Mr. James A. Townsend was President. Its location is 72d and 73d Streets, overlooking the Bay from a fine site above First Avenue. Near it are the fine homes of Mr. George Schlehel and Mr. Peter Bogart, both well known business men. The Col. R. J. Hinton homestead was just across the street.

This locality was the private residential part of Bay Ridge, while the farmlands lay further inland.

The Samuel W. Thomas homestead stood in the midst of a beautiful Park along Third Avenue and the present 75th to 78th Streets, but is now on an elevated piece of ground with a row of city houses in front of the big homestead. Mr. Samuel Thomas has done much for his locality and for the Church. His recollections of the old roads, homes, trees and people are enhanced by photographs, taken when at leisure and with the sole pleasure of being able to please others by his work of reproduction. His impromptu lectures on "Old Bay Ridge" have been much enjoyed by friends.

### THE ANDRIES CROPSY HOMESTEAD.

In direct contrast to "The Beeches," with its magnificent surroundings and stately trees and park, back in 1895, was the Andries Cropsy house on the Shore Road, near where 74th Street would be when cut through. It was historic but forlorn. On March 26, 1895, it was burned to the ground and so one of the most picturesque portions of the former Shore Drive was lost. The Cropsey homestead was a familiar landmark and had been photographed and painted by many an artist because of its quaintness and true Dutch architectural construction. The house was built about 1770 by Andries Cropsy, who was born in 1750, and who married Eida (Ida) Ryerson, of the

Wallabout. Andries was son of Casper Cropsy or Casparse. The house built by Andries was never the original Cropsey homestead as has been often erroneously told or printed. The very first house existed near where 65th Street now is and was the home of Casper and his wife, Maria Barcaloo, both of Yellow Hoek, later called Bay Ridge.



*Old Andries Cropsy Homestead,  
Shore Road, Bay Ridge, L. I.*

At any rate Andries Cropsy built his own home on the Shore Road. He died there about 1800-01. Close by his place was a Ferry, started in 1738 and kept running until 1760.

It was his son Jacob Cropsey who last lived in the home, where he died in 1817. Then Mr. John I. Bennett became owner of the property. Mr. Bennett occupied the premises and lived to the age of 80 years when he passed away. Just before his death he had built a new home and moved to it, making the last occupant of the old house a farm laborer employed by N. M. L. Bennett, son of John I. About 1890 he left the place, when it soon began to show its forlorn neglect. Tramps found it a convenient resting spot and several of them were arrested for using it as lodging. Then Mr. Simon Steiner, of 55th Street, purchased the property, the house being named in the sale price as of no value on account of its neglected and damaged condition. The old fashioned door knocker was cherished by a Mr. William Stillwell. The big willow tree in front of the house lent an especial charm to the place, the branches spreading far over the roof of the dwelling, then over the walk in front. It is believed this old place has been sketched more than any other house in New Utrecht. Students would often come from the city just to put it on canvas or paper.

It is supposed that tramps again were occupying the kitchen, for late on the night of March 26th, it was burned. Thus ended one of the picturesque sections of the Shore Road as it was long ago.

## THE "COPPER HOUSE."

(Mr. Neil Poulson's home.)

In sharpest contrast to the olden time landmarks speaking of Holland, was the new home built by Mr. Neil Poulson on the Shore Road, near 92d Street, Fort Hamilton, during 1890-2.

Mr. and Mrs. Poulson's home was the only fireproof edifice in the Town of New Utrecht. It was built of steel and copper. Years ago, architects would have thought such a feat impossible, but Mr. Poulson, of the firm Poulson & Egar, had completed the New *World* building's copper dome, a marvel of workmanship at the time. The copper idea was carried out by building himself a house on the same lines of structure as the *World* dome. The Shore Road site was chosen for its great beauty. Builders all over the country were deeply interested in Mr. Poulson's experiment.

Everything was metal save the furnishings. Compared with the low-roofed Colonial and Revolutionary homesteads of the locality, Mr. Poulson's odd house was prominent. Modern method of casting

metals by electricity differed considerably from hand hewn beams. Mr. and Mrs. Poulson shunned any publicity. They erected a beautiful home and modestly occupied it.

Exterior walls were entirely of copper. Upon a customary foundation a wrought iron skeleton was placed. Angle irons were secured to upright framing. Horizontal angle irons were at each sill and door frame, extending around the building. The angle irons were covered with spare columns made of copper, then riveted to the angle irons to leave an edge. Copper panels (3 feet) were riveted to the edges. Some panels represent (in decorative features) America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

The copper work was done by galvano plastic process, permitting delicate designs. After emplacement of the copper panels for exterior, the whole was backed up by solid brick walls. The name "Copper House" was accordingly given the unique structure. Its roof is of red tile, the tower likewise, but with copper finish. The balcony has iron columns, plated with copper. Its open work frieze was made in 12 length pieces, then riveted to the angle iron house frame. The railings are very beautiful and quite weather proof. Entrance is on the Northern side. Opening from the main hall are library, parlor, and dining rooms. Floors are of tiles, in lovely designs. A circular opening denotes upper stories, the hall circle being decorated with iron ribs stretching across. Iron network over the portieres is handsome. The stairway is solid metal, decorated also. Dining room and breakfast room are separated by wrought iron doors, panelled. It was Mr. Poulson's thought, so he once told the writer, that a breakfast room should be "light and sunshiny to start the day with." It mattered not if handsome so that a breakfast were eaten under bright cheeriness before beginning one's work. With this feeling, Mr. Poulson had his breakfast room a separate apartment on the East side of his home, with practically the large windows letting in all outdoors. The nearby conservatory helped along the idea. For dinner, which was more formal, Mr. and Mrs. Poulson used the handsome dining room, heavier in finish, with music box playing during the meal a sweet tinkling amid the flowers and ferns near by. Such was the master of the Copper House, whom few understood to have so much sentiment. When he passed away, May, 1911, it was surprisedly announced he had left much to charity, and was especially mindful of those who had served him and Mrs. Poulson in their home. Mrs. Poulson's death preceded his by several years. They had no children. Under will probated, May 8, 1911, the housekeeper, Nicolene Christensen was left \$50,000, and Nina Olsen, a domestic, received \$5,000.

His secretary, Miss Anna Brush, received \$20,000. Gardener and coachman were each remembered.

Neil Poulson was a man of great modesty and retirement. His home was his castle, and Mrs. Poulson his ideal portion of it. His heart and purse were connected most frequently in charities that few heard of. His death was lamented by all who knew him. As President of the Hecla Iron Works of Brooklyn, Mr. Poulson had a wide circle of acquaintances. His "Copper House" was bequeathed to Mr. Wm. N. Dykman, friend and comrade.

Such is the story of Neil Poulson and his home on the Shore Road.

### **COL. A. W. JOHNSON HOMESTEAD AND FAMILY.**

Along the Shore Road, near Narrows Avenue and Fort Hamilton, a large house was built during 1889-90, on the water side of the driveway, making the architect plan a home where its owner necessarily went downstairs to bed and upstairs to his entrance door. Col. A. W. Johnson, ex-Confederate officer chose the site because of its natural beauties. Its cost was \$60,000. Mr. John H. Stearn, of Indianapolis, built the odd house, after many photographs had been sent him of the bluff, the Narrows and New York Harbor. Colonel Johnson's son, Tom L. Johnson, was the prominent Ohio politician. Mr. Johnson, Sr., died some years ago. He always declared his 20 room home to have the most magnificent view in the world. Being a friend of Henry George, he once remarked that possibly it had something to do with being thought something of a crank. Mr. George frequently visited Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, who entertained with their warm Southern hospitality, all who entered their home as guest. They always declared themselves "unfortunate rebels—remnants of the South's lost cause." Yet despite their loved South loyalty, they made many friends at the fort. One of their standbys for time was the clock on the steeple of St. John's Church at Clifton, L. I. They had a "yacht named Single Tax and one Son—out West," was always told neighbors and friends. That son was Tom L. Johnson, Mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, twice Governor of the same State, who walked out of his rich, fine home when financial reverses came and with his wife, returned cheerfully to the small house where they first began their married life. "We'll start over again," laughed he. And they did. Many stories are told of the late Mr. Tom L. Johnson, for, sad to relate, he died April 10th, at his home in Cleveland, Ohio, after an illness that proved his courage and unique character. A dispatch of March 20, 1911, told this: "Tom Johnson Better—Former Mayor



Johnson rallied a bit to-day and was stronger than any time since his sudden attack last week. He sent his valet for the morning papers. His Doctors had particularly forbidden him reading any account of his illness. The valet, returning with the papers was commanded to read them through. Any attempt to omit phrases relating to Johnson's illness, showing his hopeless condition, failed. Mr. Johnson made him read them all."

This but illustrates the wonderful mind of the man. He was four times Mayor of Cleveland. Twice a Representative in Congress, 22d District, and was father of the three cent fare. He inherited all his parents' spirit and energy and was much loved by all who knew him personally. His remains were brought to Brooklyn and interred in Greenwood Cemetery, next his parents and close by the plot of their friend Henry George. Mr. Johnson retained the home he gave his father, on the Shore Road, near Fort Hamilton, and his estate still owns 140 lots of the original 180. His widow and married daughter will remove from Cleveland to the New Utrecht home. Many of the happiest days of both Mr. Johnson, Sr., and of his son, Tom L. Johnson, were spent on the Shore Road. It is fitting they they should be here included in the later day history of the Township.

### **LAFAYETTE PUNCH BOWL.**

Robert T. Michell, of Bath Beach, came into possession of a rare treasure August 17, 1851. It was the huge punch bowl from which General Lafayette drank at the banquet tendered to the illustrious soldier August 16, 1824, at the old Washington Hotel, Bowling Green, New York. The present Washington Building occupies the hotel site where this remarkable dinner took place. It marked the occasion of General Lafayette's second visit to this country. The bowl, which was of exquisite china, was imported from France expressly for the event, and was a beautiful piece of workmanship, as well as being very large in size. It held 32 gallons, and stood three feet high from top to bottom. On one side was pictured a naval scene, with blue sky, water and flag-decked ships. On the other side, an eagle surmounts a shield. Two American flags were crossed and intertwined with leaves. There was a portrayal of Castle Garden as it was in earlier days. The bowl was thus inscribed:

"Landing of General Lafayette  
at Castle Garden  
on August 16, 1824."





*Gen. Lafayette Punch Bowl*

There were old walls with a long promenade where people once flocked to listen to Jenny Lind. These pictures were all burnt in the china, being delicately colored and of lasting quality. Mr. Mitchell was frequently offered large sums of money to part with the punch bowl, but no amount would induce him to part with the precious relic. Every year, on August 16th, Mr. Mitchell observed the famous banquet of 1824 by filling the bowl to the brim and serving his callers with a refreshing beverage similar to that given to General Lafayette. Mr. Mitchell's home was Bath Avenue, corner 19th Street, Bath Beach. He lent the bowl to St. Finbar's Church for a Fair, the bowl

not being out of the house since its arrival, forty years before. Whether breaking his rule had anything to do with it or not, is not known; but certain it is that fire soon after demolished Mitchell's home and so the bowl.

### **CRESCENT ATHLETIC CLUB.**

It was the Judge Holmes Van Brunt house on the Shore Road that the Crescent Athletic Club of Brooklyn purchased during 1890. A summer home for the Club was thus established and that it was on land overlooking New York Harbor, as well as being historic, was an added attraction to many of its members. There were about 60 acres, a commodious house and with various alterations given the situation was ideal for the Crescent Club, who purchased the Van Brunt place for \$15,500. It has been told of the homestead that during Judge Van Brunt's occupancy of it burglars entered one night. Help from the Holmes Van Brunt house (near by) was very speedy, with a result that the burglar named "Mosher" was shot and mortally wounded, his partner caught and the burglary attempt foiled. This man Mosher, realizing his end was near, confessed to having stolen the child Charlie Ross, a famed kidnapping case not long before, but the burglar unfortunately died without having time to fully establish all the facts of such verbal and hurried confession. It was always a great source of regret that the man's life had not been spared long enough to finally establish the ultimate fate of Charlie Ross, whom the burglar Mosher, under dying breath, declared to have been killed.

Judge Van Brunt never forgot to lament this fact, though not the shooting.

The Crescent Athletic Club, in taking over the handsome property, soon enlarged its summer home into splendid quarters, where outdoor sports were indulged in by members who came there from city homes. With the gradual change of New Utrecht from a country and outlying district to Brooklyn's 30th Ward, and so a city district, with city improvements, a change of summer home has been apparently needed by the Club. The 20 acres devoted to tennis, lacrosse, baseball, football, etc., have been encroached upon by buildings. The last shooting at the range was done this early Spring. The golf course has quite gone—the Governors realize a new home is necessary and accordingly have under way a plan for securing a fine property at Glen Head, L. I. The Bay Ridge property will be held as valuable assets. Mr. Paul Bonyng is President of the Club (1911).

### NEW UTRECHT ROD AND GUN CLUB.

Among prominent local organizations the "New Utrecht Rod and Gun Club" should be included. Organized in 1890 its prosperity was unprecedented. Its officers were:

President Walter F. Sykes.

Vice-President P. A. Hegeman

Captain Donley Deacon

Secretary and Treasurer Mortimer Van Brunt

Directors Jere Lott, R. J. Van Brunt.

Among the "crack" shots were:

J. Lott Nostrand

Cornelius Ferguson, Jr.

Jerre Lott

Dr. S. N. Cook

D. V. B. Hegeman

Peter Hegeman

Andrew A. Hegeman

Garrett W. Cropsey

Donley Deacon

Robert Street

Charles Sykes

Charles C. Bennett

George Nostrand

Anson Squires

W. T. Sykes

R. H. Sherwood

Harry Cook

G. Bondies

John Koster.

The active members included—(1892):

Dr. John E. DeMund

Thos. L. Dickinson

Geo. H. Bressette

C. Slater

J. Harding

Edw. Dexter

J. Keegan

Jos. Lake

J. Furey

W. Constant

J. E. Roberts

J. Napier

C. Magnus

Robt. Kirkwood

Dudley Dickenson

Dr. Blankley

Harry Twyford

F. Kelly

R. Street

H. W. Graves

M. S. Dickenson

Henry Martin

J. Abrahams

J. Magnus

W. C. Crolus

F. A. Beer

H. Ray

L. T. Estey

J. Harvey

T. R. Nicholson

Walter Sykes

A. E. Hassell

F. Sykes

Thornton Hopkins

Cornelius Ferguson, Jr.

Wm. B. Hatfield

G. D. Manning

John J. Ward

F. C. Marvin

J. D. Boyd

S. Canfield

Geo. Beer

Thos. H. Johnson

M. H. White

Chas. J. Doyle

J. M. Dickson

W. Pitcher

J. T. Morgan

J. Gill

H. Fisher

S. A. White

F. W. Styles

Thos. Costigan

Frank Blankley

R. Wendler

G. B. Gerrard

Geo. Wykes

A. Wykes

Geo. Thompson

W. Clifford

A. L. Sykes

Sidney A. Noon

J. G. Williams

Mr. Gaukrouger

Paul Jaurin

B. G. McGwynn

C. F. Turner.

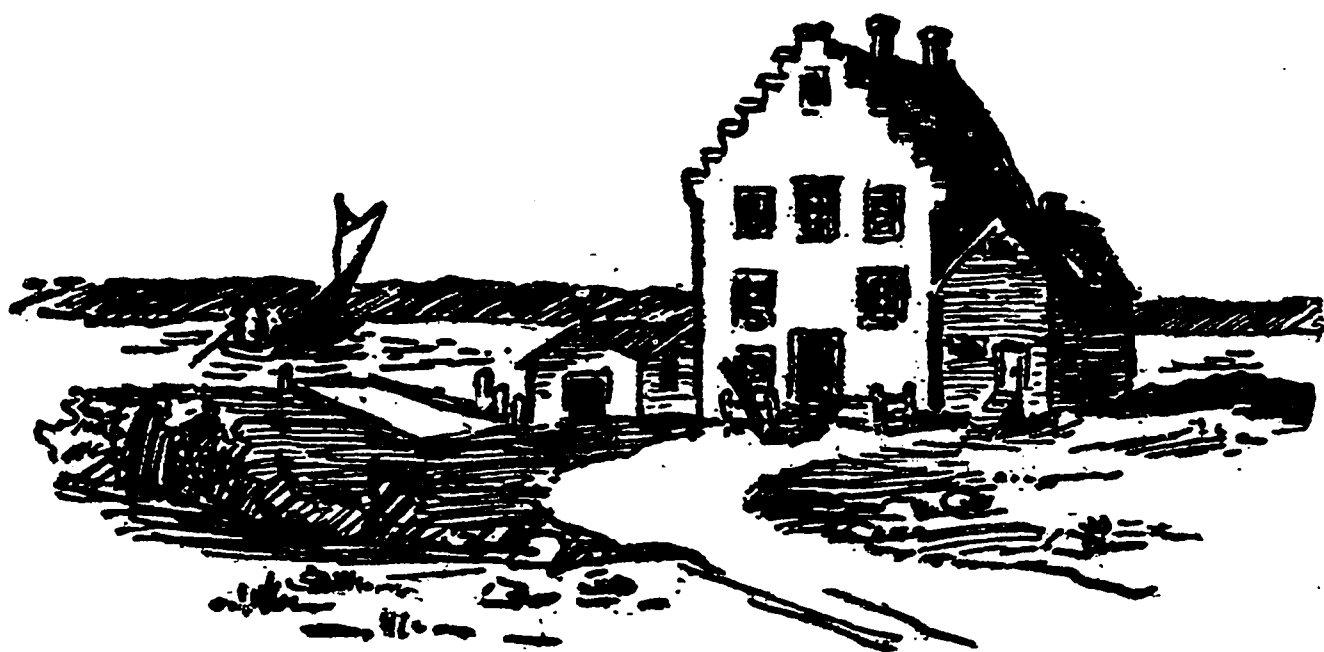
## OLDEN TIME FERRIES.

In order to better understand the relation between the Ferry connecting Manhatans and Long Island, also New Jersey, and thence in later years to Washington, D. C., it is purposed to roughly outline this important route for travelers of those earlier days.

Some interesting data tells that the Ferry House and 16 morgans of land were sold by Cornelius Dirckson to William Tomassen, including the Ferry, for the sum of 23 hundred guilders, cash or wares. This house and garden stood where Fulton Ferry House now stands.

Witnesses were William Koster, Garreyt Dyrcksen Blaw.

Signed by William Tohanssen and Cornelis Dirckssen, date (page 42, Fernow's Colonial Documents).



*Fulton Ferry (Colonial period)*

Again there is record of the Ferry from Manhattans to Long Island when the lease expired and its renewal caused a proposition to let it to the present ferryman, Egbert Van Borsum, "since those who lease the ferry are poor and cannot go in debt to built a scow suitable for transporting animals." It was figured out by the official Board that Van Borsum could do so in four or five months' time. The Committee appointed for the Ferry matter were Nicasius de Sille and Johan de Deckere and they were to bring agreement in the matter. Dated May 28, 1658 (page 421, Fernow's).

Records show that Ariantie Bleeker, widow of Johannes Nevius, who lately held the Ferry lease in Breucklen, petitioned for a six year lease of the Ferry. This was granted July 1, 1672.

Begging for franchises for public utilities in Manhattan is old as that city itself. A Ferry was important as a public work.

As far back as 1674 a spot of land on the banks of the Harlem River was valuable as a landing place for a ferry. John Archer, of

Fordham, laid claim to this "nock of land, Humock or Island, commonly called Papivinion and by vertue of his purchase and pattent." Governor Lovelace did "setle Johannes Vervelon for some years to keepe a ferry for the Conveniency of passengers betweene the Island of Manhattan and the maine from and to which it is the only rohad." There was evidently some trouble over Vervelon using this "nock" or "humock" for a ferry dock. In the end Archer sold the coveted spot. "Now know yee," an old document reads, "that for and in consideration of a certaine sum of money in hand payd or secured to be paid by Matthias Nicolls, Secretaire to his Royall Highnesse Government, hee the said John Archer, hath for himself his heirs and executors sold his right title and interest unto the said nock of lands."

It must be remembered that after crossing the Ferry to Breucklen, a circuitous route was taken before reaching the Narrows. This route lay through Breucklen to Flatbush along the Kings Highway to New Utrecht and so to the Narrows later called Fort Hamilton. Rowboats were used, or even hand made "scows." Kings Highway had a number of milestones to better mark the route from Ferry to Ferry. In front of Mrs. Townsend Cortelyou Van Pelt's homestead on 18th Avenue and 82d Street, exists the only milestone left to tell the tale of such journeys. On the North side is this inscription:

10½  
Miles to  
N York  
Ferry  
This Road  
Returning  
15  
Miles

On the West side of the old Milestone, facing 18th Avenue, or New Utrecht Lane as it was then called, is this inscription:

8¼  
Miles To  
N York  
Ferry  
This Road  
To Denys's  
Ferry—2½ Miles.

The date of this Ferry grant was October 13, 1740, made to Denyse Denyse, by King George 2d. It was described as a ferry

situated by the Southerly corner of William Barkaloo's land, by the Narrows. The original patent is a monstrous sized document, with an equally monstrous seal. It was owned by the late Rev. Hugh Smith Carpenter, D.D., of New Utrecht and descended to his son, Mr. Roswel Carpenter, same place.

Rev. Dr. Carpenter always cherished the Ferry grant, which he heired from the ancestral line of Jane Smith, nee Denyse. Continuing along the Ferry route from Narrows across to Staten Island, the long ago traveler then reached Rossville, where the "Blazing Star Ferry," carried passengers across the Kil to the Jersey shore. Thence the route lay on to Washington, D. C. Such was the mode of traveling, with time no consideration. There was also another Ferry across the Narrows, June 18, 1753, called the "Upper Ferry," which plied between Yellow Hoek and original Owl Head (Rulef Van Brunt's). This ferry was kept by Nicholas Stilwell. There were two boats, one for man and horse, so old records state. There is mention of a John Lane who ran a Ferry from Yellow Hoek to Smith's Ferry on Staten Island, with the caution "In going from Flatbush to the Ferry, keep the marked trees on the right hand."

There was only one Ferry from Yellow Hook to Staten Island, so these two mentioned Ferries were evidently one and the same, operated on different dates by different men. Of Denyse's Ferry much goes down in history relating to that part of New Utrecht and its connection with Staten Island. It was a very important route during the period of the Revolutionary war. Many noted passengers embarked for the trip across the Narrows and could Denyse Denyse tell his own personal reminiscences of those stirring times there would be indeed much to relate, and the same with "Blazing Star Ferry" at Rossville, S. I. It was across this little ferry that many patriots went to New Jersey military Regiments, causing names of Long Island and Staten Island families to be found on the New Jersey muster roll for 1776 service.

Just so numerous land transactions occurred between these three separated districts, separated only by a narrow margin of water and so frequently connected in business and military ways.

Almost no records exist of the Blazing Star Ferry. Denys's Ferry was discontinued as progress came to the town of New Utrecht. The old Denyse homestead, near where the Ferry existed, was absorbed in the Hamilton House and later burned to the ground, leaving no outward mark to tell its history.

When good roads, cars and finally electricity carried passengers to Fort Hamilton old routes were forgotten.

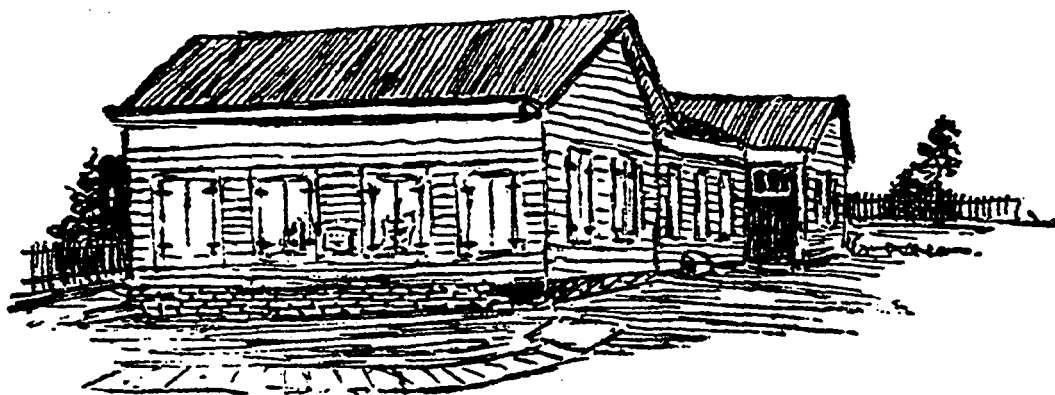
## SCHOOLS.

The Township of New Utrecht had two schools of its own, both established by the Dutch settlers in the Township.

The little red school house at New Utrecht village was built first, the little yellow school house at Yellow Hoek (now Bay Ridge) being second.

If there were about 40 pupils in the first established school during 1840 to 1850, and probably no more in the second school, the total number of pupils for both schools could not have exceeded 50 children in total, the latter part of the 1700 period. No mention is made of the pupils in any of the records found. One fact positively established is that Mr. J. M. Sperling was School Master of New Utrecht, October 3, 1724.

As Mr. Jacques Corteljau had been tutor to Mr. Van Woerckhoven's children, they residing on land afterwards mentioned as New



*First Schoolhouse at Yellow Hook (second in New Utrecht)  
(87-88th Streets, Bay Ridge)*

Utrecht village, it is most likely that Mr. Corteljau was, in reality, the first Colonial school teacher in the settlement at Najack. As he died about 1693, and Mr. Sperling was serving as teacher in 1724, the interval between remains unaccounted for.

May 9, 1704, it was ordered by the authorities of New York that "no Towne laws be brought to Court in Dutch or any other language than English."

Mr. Sperling could write a clear good English hand and also spell correctly, as evidenced by various legal documents he signed, he being also a Notary Public and Commissioner of Deeds, during many of the land transactions in New Utrecht during the 1700 period. But despite the order from New York the Dutch language was taught in school until 1776, also English. Thus, both sides were satisfied.

The red school house at New Utrecht always felt itself honored because of a visit from General George Washington, who came one day and so left a vivid memory for the Townspeople. A bit of history thus was chronicled. Not all his remarks are on record, un-

fortunately, but young Peter Van Pelt was patted on the head and told he must become a good man, which Peter did: what better than a Minister? Some of the little girls were smiled upon and those smiles have become family boasts among the descendants of those little girls.

That same eventful day General Washington completed his visit by dining in the house on the opposite side of the road, which premises were later owned and occupied by Judge J. Lott Nostrand.

This was a proud day for the village and was General Washington's second visit to the locality, the other being when he visited the Benson homestead.

It has been difficult to learn the exact date the little red school house was demolished. It stood near the old de Sille house, and so near the center of the original village of New Utrecht, on the South side of Kings Highway, later Main Street.

When Yellow Hook became a settlement and the Narrows was also a place of family homes, it became necessary to provide a second school, one convenient to those residents. An old newspaper published at 82 Water Street, New York, August 28, 1794, and called the *Diary or Evening Register*, has an advertisement of interest. It is most quaintly printed, thus: "Wanted—an English School-Master at New Utrecht, Kings County, capable of teaching reading, writing and Arithmetic. Any person recommended for good morals and sober deportment, with suitable qualifications, will meet with good encouragement by applying to the subscriber.

JAQUES BARKELOO.

May 22, 1794."

The Barkelooos were property holders at Yellow Hook and as Jaques was, therefore, interested in the school near his home this advertisement for a teacher was probably intended for the little yellow school house.

Jaques Barkeloo died April 8, 1815, aged 66 years 1 month 16 days. His tombstone and grave exists on the John McKay property, Bay Ridge.

One former attendant of both the red and the yellow schoolhouse is Mr. Peter Denyse, Sr., of 79th Street, Bay Ridge. He was about seven years old when he first became a pupil of the New Utrecht school. That must have been 1838 to 40 as Mr. Denyse was born 1831. He remembers the teachers to have been Mr. Davenport, Mr. Abel or Abeel and Mr. Londen.

Later he attended the Yellow Hook school, which was more convenient, and there had only one teacher whose name is recalled, Mr. David Winslow.

The Yellow Hook schoolhouse was located about where 87th-88th Street now exists, or near where Albert Van Brunt then lived.

There was a third school established as the Township grew in population, it being called "the Schoolhouse by the Lane." This Lane was where 17th Avenue now exists, nearer 16th-17th Streets. With English taught in the first two schools of New Utrecht, it was not long before higher English study subjects were desired. Erasmus Hall thus became the important school for miles around Flatbush, which naturally became a school center of note.

Old Erasmus Hall has many a history within the walls of its first building. Nearly every descendant of Dutch ancestry in New Utrecht traces school days back to finishing touches at Erasmus Hall, following the little red or yellow school house start. Many of these pupils have risen to prominence in public life, but they never forgot their native school.

To-day the Public and High Schools of Brooklyn's 30th Ward are among the best in Greater New York.

## MUSIC.

During recent years, music in America has become so well cultivated and important a factor in educational circles, including colleges, that it is interesting to turn backward a little and learn something about the music the Colonial settlers to America really had. In truth they had little or no music. Records do not tell of any musical instruments being carried from the mother country. Not even the Mayflower, most elastic of all the Colonial vessels to these shores, had any musical instruments on board. Nor do any of the old wills or other documents include mention of any, though all sorts of household goods are mentioned and farming implements as well. It is, therefore, safe to assume that there were no musical instruments in the homes of those Colonists. The very first mention of music known or heard in New Netherlands is that of a Trumpet. It was played, or blown, at a banquet held August 8, 1636, at Fort Amsterdam. Record has it that the player kept up such a noise with his tooting and trumpeting that speech was not easy to be heard, whereupon some of the men present insisted the Governor should demand a stopping of the music noise, which was done. Who the musician was is not recorded.

Other Colonial music of a more beautiful and effective character was that indulged in by the ancestor of the Bergen family—Hans Hansen Bergen—who, surrounded by the Indians and fearing capture and horrible death, managed to escape into a tree top, from whence Hans sang to God, for deliverance. The Bergen family records



and tradition tell of this Dutch hymn being sung. The English words are, "In my greatest need, O Lord." The singing by Hans so astonished and charmed the Indians they requested its repetition. They forgot their plans to kill him and instead set him free. No date of this occurrence is recorded.

In 1673 the Commissioner for Plantations reported to the Director in Holland, "There are no musicians by trade in the whole Colony." From the trend of this letter it would appear that music was looked upon as something not needed and of no commercial value. During 1687, Francis Stepney, a dancing master of Boston, was ejected from that Colony and thereupon made his way to New Netherlands. There he was promptly notified he would be unable to practice his art at New York, where the Authorities forbade any such lessons being given. Moreover, he was told he should qualify and show if he were capable of supporting himself, else at once leave the Colony. The Dancing Master appealed directly to the King for "good justice in his case." What answer was given is not on record. This would show that the Hollanders, while heartily loving and singing their "Dutch Lullaby" for their home circle, had strong aversion to any kind of music such as involved frivolous dancing lessons. It is very doubtful if there were any musical instruments in New Utrecht before the Revolutionary war period. In 1776 a city newspaper mentions in an advertisement, "Violins for sale, along with frying pans, window glass, sewing goods, etc."

James Rivington, of New York, also advertised in the *New York Mercury* as follows, "For sale—some pills, drops, cure for mad dogs, also fiddles, guitars, tabors, pipes, German flutes, violincellos and most kind of music. Orders would be shipped by first boat." This was during 1773. Harpsichords were advertised and sold during 1768. These instruments came from London. A "Grande Pianoforte" was mentioned in Boston in 1798.

The inventor of the first piano was at Salem, Mass. He copied the model from the old Nathaniel Rogers pianoforte of that place, which then noted instrument had been manufactured at Cornhill, London, by Astor & Co. This John Jacob Astor is the ancestor of the New York family of that name and the London firm of Astor & Co. was sufficient guarantee to have on the plate of a pianoforte.

It is positively established that New Utrecht had a spinnet made by John Jacob Astor, which instrument was undoubtedly the first in the Township. Mrs. Benson, Grandmother of Mrs. John Franklin Berry, of Bensonhurst, now of Brooklyn, was the owner of the spinnet. It was in the old Benson homestead, a landmark of the Township. Later the spinnet was played by Mrs. Berry's mother, whom all the

girls of New Utrecht loved dearly and visited often as possible, just to hear her play the spinnet. Her daughter, Mrs. Berry, recalls that Miss Benson, an aunt, gave the plate from the spinnet to J. Carson Brevcoort, and there trace of the old John Jacob Astor plate ends. The spinnet, thus robbed of its trademark and pedigree, descended to Maria Cowenhoven Benson, Cousin to Mrs. Berry.

There was a Harpsichord in Flatbush, played by a young woman during 1785. She died in 1786, aged 24 years.

Mention of a miniature being painted as a work of wonderful and pleasing accomplishment about this time, would infer that neither art nor music were especially cultivated in that locality at that time. It was then the exception. Judging from the personal recollections of Judge Charles W. Church, of Fort Hamilton, regarding the little yellow schoolhouse at Yellow Hook (after 1840), music was then attempted in an educational way among the pupils of that particular school. Yet neither he nor Col. William J. Cropsey recall any rival to old Tom Barlow's violin music. Musical instruments were not numerous in New Utrecht nor was there any church music on a built organ until 1875. Then the Dutch Reformed Church dedicated its new instrument.

The first church organ in America was built at Boston, by Edward Bromfield, Jr., during 1745. He died, however, in 1746, not entirely completing the instrument. It was in the Episcopal churches that mention is made of music. New England congregations objected to such worldliness. As for learning to sing by note, their verdict was "The names of the notes are blasphemous." They said, too, that if they were to be taught to sing by rule it might happen they would be expected to pray by rule, to which objections arose. Much controversy existed.

Salem, Mass., had the first church organ, in 1748. During 1752 Christ Church, Boston, had its first organ built. It was 1770 before the Puritans leaned toward church music for services. In 1785 it was declared that church choirs in general should be allowed to sit in the gallery and sing, without any "line reading" by the Deacons. This "Deaconing" or lining out a hymn tune was the cause of much confusion in the first church music before notes were taught. It is told how one stray worshipper entering the church door heard the starting of a hymn tune, "The Lord will come but he will not." His astonishment increased when he heard the second line read aloud by the good Deacon, "Hold your peace but speak aloud."

Not until 1800 did the Boston Conservatory appear as a musical Academy. Then ladies and gentlemen were taught music. It was no longer considered a devilish art, to be feared and pushed aside. Sing-

ing Schools were established during 1772 and immediately won favor. One venerable farmer at Monroe, Orange County, N. Y. (Mr. George W. Thompson), remembers well how eagerly the singing school weekly lesson was looked forward to. He owned a little parlor melodeon and as it folded up into small space he was considered the important man in his locality, since his instrument was used by the Teacher. On those nights the milking was finished earlier than usual, the supper cleared away in haste and then all the younger inmates of the farmhouse, including the hired man, would stow themselves away in the wagon for the long drive to "Singin' School." There were met all the young folks for miles around. The lesson was a matter of strict obedience and profit to each attendant there.

It was in this manner that music began to spread throughout the settled districts of America. Singing by note thus became the proper thing. Pianoforte playing was soon considered the finishing touch to an education and fortunate the individual so favored. Then the schools of America adopted singing and notes. And so America became musical after long years without any music.

Among all the foreign countries England does not stand prominently forth as a musical Nation. Its cultivation of music under Henry 8th, Queen Elizabeth and James 1st, was offset by supremacy of Puritan religious influences, which banished all serious culture. With the period of the Restoration, music as an art was in very bad shape. Puritans were taught to look upon music as something evil and frivolous. Only when the Clergy finally quoted Bible lore for Psalm singing, did the Puritan admit that music was commended by God. During England's 15th century, music was so scarce that the Government pressed musicians into service by a warrant. It can be thus understood how in 1673 the Colonies of New Netherland had word sent back to Holland by its Commissioner of Plantations, "There are no musicians by trade in the whole Colony."

Music in the American Colonies can be said to have been divided into three periods:

1. Puritan to Revolutionary.
2. Revolution to cessation of Puritanism.
3. Progress to the present time.

It must be remembered that the Puritans and the Pilgrims were a separate people, just as the Dutch settlers were. While all these first comers to American shores had little or no music in their new country, the red man, whom they found here, was *all* music. To the Indian, everything was by Sound. He could imitate the call of birds, could play his own made "flageolet" or sing either love song or war

song. The Indian felt and so played his music. Inspiration came from the rippling waters, or the wind in the forest trees, or mayhaps the blue skies, or silver moon—all was nature to him and he worshipped the Great Father. His departed ones were thus reached by way of the music and the Great Father who heard. In this respect the red man of the forests stands supreme in his musical education and conception. Every note or cadence of his music had special meaning to him. It was his very Soul. With ear close to the ground he could tell what no white man was ever able to even understand of the forest or meadow or stream. Everything was Sound and so Sound was Music. The Indian's music was, therefore, a part of himself and of wild nature. The music was not then understood. To-day it is coming into its own, just as the Indian seems to be doing. And with American schools receiving and training all the foreign musical talents it cannot be long before America must stand at the head of Musical Nations of the World.

In closing these reminiscences of New Utrecht it must be remembered that while much has been told, there is doubtless much that has not yet been told. For all omissions the author begs forgiveness. New Utrecht, the outer door for New York, is rich in history data. At least its *chief* records are saved in type, and faithful, careful work has made them correct as possible.

