

145  
1893  
.1435

de

de

# HALVE·MAEN

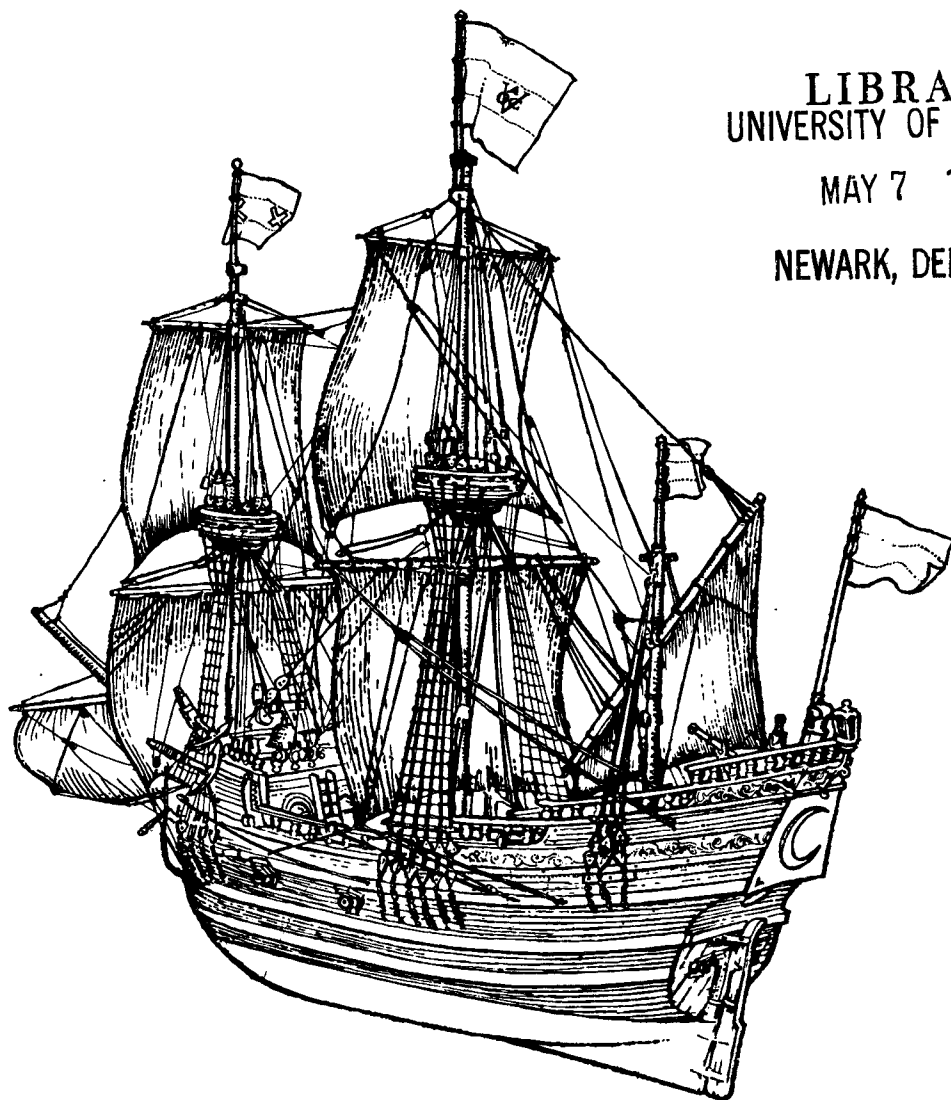
Quarterly Magazine of The Dutch Colonial

✠ Period in America ✠

LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

MAY 7 1965

NEWARK, DELAWARE



*Vol. xxxix January, 1965*

*No. 4*

---

*Published by The Holland Society of New York*

de

de

# The City-Colony of New Amstel on the Delaware: I.

by Dr. Simon Hart, Archivist of the City of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

*In 1656 the City of Amsterdam undertook to develop colony in area where Company operations had been largely ineffective.*

ABOUT the year 1614, or more than 350 years ago, the Dutch discovered and sailed up a waterway which they called South River, later to be known as the Delaware. The region adjacent to this great river came within the patent-area of the West India Company (WIC) after that venture was established in 1621. To consolidate its authority there, the Company built a fort opposite the present city of Philadelphia, named Nassau (where Gloucester, N. J., now stands), which also served as a trading post.

As the source materials for this article make clear,<sup>1\*</sup> Dutch enterprise soon became further evident in the area. In 1629 a director of the WIC named Samuel Godin (usually spelled Godijn in the records) was registered as patroon of a tract to be colonized on the west side of Delaware Bay. Called Swanendael, it embraced lands now part of Kent and Sussex counties in Delaware. Godin associated several partners in his undertaking, among them David Pietersz de Vries. Unfavorable developments in this settlement, which was destroyed by Indian attack about 1631, and the fact that management was divided among ten patroons, caused the Company to buy it back within a few years. However, the WIC did not remain very long in undisturbed possession.

In 1638 the Swedes fitted out two ships under command of Peter Minuit, a former Director General of New Netherland. This expedition, which had some Dutch support, sailed to the Delaware and succeeded in establishing a colony. The choice of locale appears to have been advised by certain influential Dutchmen in whose view this region, scene of the WIC's recent setback, presented a highly promising business opportunity. Samuel Blommaert, an Amsterdam merchant with many commercial interests in Sweden who held office as a Company director and had been a patroon of Swanendael, was one of the Dutch parties to this Swedish venture.<sup>2</sup>

Despite protests by Director Willem Kieft of New Netherland, the Swedes built a fort on the west bank of the Delaware, near the Minquas Kill, and named it after their queen, Christina (now Wilmington, Del.). This redoubt was sited more favorably than Fort Nassau on the east bank for control of the river and the profitable Indian fur trade. Since the European political situation governed relations between the Dutch and Swedish colonies in America, New Sweden was allowed some years in which to develop pending the peace which would end a savage conflict than raging in Central Europe (the Thirty Years War), in which Dutch opinion favored the embattled Swedes. After the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, a change occurred in the more or less allied relationship between the two countries. Consequently, in 1651, Peter Stuyvesant, who had succeeded Kieft as Director General in 1647, was instructed to effect a frontier settlement with New Sweden.

Stuyvesant promptly used this opportunity to strengthen the Company position against the rival

colony. On July 19, 1651, he acquired Indian title to a stretch of land west of the Delaware lying between Christina Creek and the river mouth at Bombay Hook (Boompjes Hoek). Fort Nassau was dismantled and Fort Casimir (site of present New Castle, Del.) was built to take its place about thirty miles downstream, on the purchased land, just below Fort Christina.

The Dutch thereby regained control of the Delaware and acquired a strategic pressure point against the Swedes. Johan Rising, the Swedish governor who came out in 1654, considered this situation unacceptable and accordingly seized Fort Casimir that same year. But Stuyvesant was not the man to decline this kind of challenge. An expedition commanded by him set out from New Amsterdam after divine service on Sunday, September 5, 1655, and overran the entire Swedish colony in four weeks without a single blow being struck.

Throughout its existence the WIC lacked means to provide New Netherland with the support it needed. At first the intention had been to turn the region into a kind of Roman province, as the East India Company had done so successfully in the East Indies. In America, however, the neighboring English and French colonies benefited from the circumstances which helped them grow. Located to the north and south of the Dutch, these settlers (especially the English) came in great numbers to stay, often impelled by repressive policies or poor economic conditions at home. Rapid increase of the English colonial population posed a threat to New Netherland because the Dutch, with prosperity and religious toleration in full sway in the homeland, could find so few immigrants. Plainly, the colony had to expand or fail. But the WIC, its debt load increased by loss of Brazil and Guinea, and the expedition against New Sweden, seemed powerless to act.

At this juncture, economic considerations moved the City Council of Amsterdam to offer help. At a Council meeting on February 12, 1656, delegates were appointed to start negotiations with directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Company. The latter pointed out to the delegates that governmental authority over New Netherland had been placed in their hands, a fact which, they said, would prove of advantage in the negotiation. Of the new region in America they wrote: ". . . that the climate there is very mild and healthy, entirely agreeable to the constitutions of the inhabitants of this country, also by nature adapted to the production of all kinds of products and crops which now have to come from the Baltic, besides the convenience of trade which daily increases, in divers respects, both with the natives of those parts and the neighboring English."<sup>3</sup>

Since the Company had been unable to promote suf-

GUEST AUTHOR.—Born at Zaandam in the province of North Holland in 1911, Dr. Hart is head-archivist of the Municipal Record Office (City Archives) of Amsterdam, where he began his career in 1937. Eminent as author of the scholarly *Pre-History of the New Netherland Company* (Amsterdam, 1959; reviewed in *de Halve Maen* for October, 1960), and as co-author of books on Lutheran Church colonial history in New York and New England, he has also published studies about genealogy, mills, demography and the whale trade. *De Halve Maen* readers will recall his admirable articles on Hudson's voyage of 1609 (issues of April and June, 1961), and the Kip Papers (October, 1962). His present article is a revision of that which appeared in the June, 1951, number of *Amstelodamum*, monthly magazine of the Amsterdam Society.

\*Footnotes begin on page 6.

ficiently the population of the colony, however, certain inducements ought to be provided. Emigrants should enjoy free passage for themselves, their families, and luggage, and be supported during the first year and supplied with agricultural implements and seeds. As to location, three places were suggested as sites for a colony of the City of Amsterdam: (1) near Fort Casimir on the west side of the Delaware, (2) on a stretch of land east of that river near the former Forts Nassau and Elsenburg, and (3) on the North, or Hudson, river close by Fort Orange. The Fort Casimir site was chosen, and it was decided that the colony would bear the name of "Nieuwer-Amstel" (New Amstel).<sup>4</sup>

On March 3, 1656, the Burgomasters reported to the Amsterdam Council: ". . . in case enough people were sent from this country thither, all the products that come at present from the Baltic, masts inclusive, could be found and raised in New Netherland."<sup>5</sup> Moreover, they pointed out, ". . . that all the lands the Company (WIC) possess there had been purchased from the Indians and inhabitants."<sup>6</sup> The Councillors, urged to judge the proposal "highly expedient to promote the trade in New Netherland in the present conjuncture, in order not to be always dependent exclusively on the Baltic,"<sup>7</sup> were convinced. Accordingly, they authorized the Burgomasters and Treasurers to negotiate the purchase of the tract of land in New Netherland with Company directors.

Conditions upon which Amsterdam accepted colonists may certainly be called reasonable. The City was to pay their passage, food and clothing for one year, although these costs were recoverable from them later. Products which the colonists should send to Amsterdam were to be stored in a City warehouse and sold on behalf of the owners. In settlement of debts ten percent would be deducted from the net revenue, with the City charging a commission of two percent. The City was also to arrange for the government of New Amstel, the administration of justice, and maintenance of a schoolmaster. When the emigrants were sufficiently numerous a minister would be sent. A smith, a wheelwright and a carpenter were provided. The City was also to furnish seed, building materials, and the like. Besides free hunting, fishing and timber-felling privileges, the colonists were to have mining rights for the first ten years in respect of any minerals found.

On August 16, 1656, the agreement reached between the City Council of Amsterdam and the WIC was ratified by the States General. The City had taken a momentous step and thereby had assumed many burdens, not the least being that of defense. In Fort Casimir, manned by Company soldiers up to that time, City soldiers were now to be lodged. Martin Krijger, a man with experience of New Netherland, was appointed Captain of the forty-five City soldiers. Alexander d'Hinoyossa, who had served several years in Brazil, became his Lieutenant. As director of the City-colony the authorities appointed Jacob Alrichs, also a man with Brazilian experience. As Commissioners to aid in governing the colony, the Burgomasters of Amsterdam named Coenraad Burgh (City Councillor and formerly Schepen), Hendrik Roeters (Chief Commissioner of the Wisselbank), Eduard Man, Isaac van Beek, Hector Pietersz, and Joan Taijispil.

The City then had to start disbursing funds, as it would so often in the future. In order to meet direct expenditures, the Council voted the sum of 25,000

guilders (more than \$250,000 in present-day money). The ship *Prins Maurits* was chartered to transport Director Alrichs, his soldiers and colonists. On December 25, 1656, this ship with 129 souls on board set sail from Texel to the promised land in convoy with two other vessels, *de Beer* and *de Geldersche Blom*. When a storm scattered the little fleet, the *Prins Maurits* proceeded alone, an unfortunate circumstance since neither Skipper Dirck Cornelisz Honingh nor any of his officers had sailed to New Netherland before. On March 8, 1657, the ship ran aground on Long Island. Although passengers, crew and part of the cargo were brought safely ashore, the vessel was lost. The salvaged goods were carried in some yachts to Manhattan, but the timber, bricks, tiles, lime, forge-coal, etc., had to be abandoned. At New Amsterdam the ship *de Vergulde Bever*, chartered to take Alrichs' party to the Delaware, sailed on April 16. On April 25 the newcomers set foot in the City-colony.

Two weeks before, in Manhattan, on April 12, 1657, Director Stuyvesant had formally transferred the Delaware tract and Fort Casimir to Jacob Alrichs in the latter's capacity as deputy for the Burgomasters of Amsterdam. The land was the same as that which Stuyvesant had purchased from the Indians on July 19, 1651. Writing from "Fortresse Nieuwer Amstel" on May 8, Alrichs informed the Burgomasters that he had taken physical possession of the land and fort. With him were 125 people, the captain and lieutenant having

(Continued on Page 13)

<sup>4</sup>As the most important source should be mentioned three volumes of *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, Vol. I (Albany, 1856); Vol. II (Albany, 1858); and Vol. XII (Albany, 1877). The first two volumes, edited by John Romeyn Brodhead, include translations of relevant deeds in the Algemeen Rijksarchief, at The Hague, and in the Gemeente-Archief of Amsterdam. Documents from the Gemeente-Archief dealing almost exclusively with the City colony of New Amstel comprise: (a) Archives Burgomasters, portfolio "Commerce" No. 4, New Netherland; (b) Accounts and other documents regarding the City colony; (c) Register of Muniments of the City Council; (d) the Grand Memorial and the General Missives.

Of further importance are the following:

Dr. A. Eekhof, *De Hervormde Kerk in Amerika, 1624-1664* (The Hague, 1913), I, pp. 246-267. "De Gemeente Nieuwe-Amstel aan de Zuid-Rivier."

B. H. Wabeke, *Dutch Emigration to North America, 1624-1860* (New York, 1944), pp. 52-60.

G. J. van Grol, *De grondpolitiek van het West-Indische domein der Generaliteit, een historische studie*, II, "De rechtstoestand van het grondbezit" (The Hague, 1942), pp. 24-57 and *passim*; "De Patroonschappen," pp. 67-84, 179-181.

<sup>5</sup>He was also a partner in the patroonship of Rensselaerswyck on the Hudson. In 1641 the Dutch shareholders in the Swedish company were bought out.

<sup>6</sup>". . . dat het climaet seer getempert en gesont is, 't eenemaal overeencomende met de humeuren van de ingesetenen van dese landen, oock uijtter natuure bequaem om allerhande Oosterse vruchten en gewassen te produceren, behalven de commoditeit van negotie dewelcke in verscheijde respecten so met de naturellen van het land als de nabuijrige Engelse dagelijcx toeneemt." Note that Brodhead, in *Documents* (Holland), *op. cit.*, I, 612, translates "allerhande Oosterse vruchten en gewassen" as "all sorts of Eastern fruits and crops." This is misunderstood.

<sup>7</sup>The name of a village and country district adjoining the City of Amsterdam.

<sup>8</sup>". . . dat in Nieuw Nederlandt, ingevalle maer menschen genoegh van dese landen derwaerts aengesonden wierden, soude connen gevonden ende aengequeect werden allen 't gene jegenwoordig uijt Oosten vandaen comt, tot masten incluyt."

<sup>9</sup>". . . dat de Compagnie het landbezit aldaer van de wilde of inwoonders gekocht had."

<sup>10</sup>"Hoognoedig oordeelend dat de handel in dese constitutie der tijden in Nieuw-Nederlandt worde voortgeset, omme niet altoos ende alleen van d'Oostzee te dependeren."

## Place-Names in Albany Area: II.

Back in the earliest days, before Albany was called Beverwyck (beginning in 1652), or Willemstadt (1673), it was sometimes known as "The Fuyck." This was because the two tiny streets, with their scattering of primitive dwellings, were not parallel but tended to converge. Thus they reminded the Dutch of their fishing net, called a "fuyck." This net was large at one end to admit the fish and small at the other, to keep them trapped.

Colonie was the name often used in early times for the patroonship of Rensselaerswyck, to distinguish it from Fort Orange, the hamlet clustered about the original 1624 fort of the Dutch West India Company and the land within the later palisaded area of the home government. The word *colonie* means colony or settlement. This land (Fort Orange) would be roughly the same as the present Plaza and the steamboat square, and the State Street-Pearl Street areas. A later fort, up the State Street hill, accounts for the extreme width of that street.

Harlem in the Bronx is supposed to have been given that name because none of the first settlers came from Haarlem in the province of North Holland. Many of them were actually French, just as many of the settlers of Fort Orange in 1624 were Walloons—French-speaking Protestants who had gone to the Netherlands from the border provinces of France and what is now Belgium. We sometimes follow a similar plan nowadays in naming a central school district that includes several villages; instead of naming it for any one of them, a new name is chosen.

Coeymans is named for Barent Pieterse Coeymans, which in the Dutch nomenclature means literally, in English, Bernard, the cowman, son of Peter. Altamont derives from two Latin words and means high mountain. This village used to be known as Knowersville, for Benjamin Knower, a founder and early president of the Mechanics & Farmers Bank and father-in-law of Governor William Marcy, for whom Mount Marcy in the Adirondacks is named. There is a good deal of argument about the meaning of "helder" in Helderberg; probably, in association, the expression means bright mountain.

And Glenville is named for Alexander Lindsey, from the Glen, in Scotland. His national origin was also responsible for the name of nearby Scotia, just west of Schenectady. The Dutch colonists rendered the unfamiliar syllables of the name Alexander Lindsey as "Sander Leenderts" (Glen), and under that name the Scotsman most often appears in the early records. Until recent years it had been thought that his wife Catalyna Donckx was Dutch, but it is now thought that she, too, was Scottish — Catherine Duncan.

Poestenkill, near Troy, may mean foaming creek but it may have taken its name from an early settler there, Jan Barents Wemp, nicknamed Poest. He was the ancestor of the Schenectady Wemple family. And, to conclude, the Lansing for whom Lansingburgh was named long pre-dated any "Abe Jackson Lansing." He was Abraham Jacob Lansing, of the Lansing family which settled in Beverwyck in 1655. [E. R. V. K.]

(Concluded)

### USES OF BUTTER AS DOGBITE SALVE

Butter was sometimes used by the Dutch in New Netherland to treat dog bites.

## CITY-COLONY OF NEW AMSTEL

(Continued from Page 6)

arrived on May 1 with 38 soldiers after an overland journey from Manhattan. Goods brought by the colonists were stored in tents.

Soon afterward, Alrichs allocated twenty-five plots to the colonists. Twenty families had been found living on or near the site, mostly Swedes and five or six families of Dutch nationality. The fort was in ruinous condition. Lack of the material which had been lost or left behind in Manhattan made itself felt almost at once. Two years later the roof of Alrich's house was only one-third tiled. Food supplies had to be augmented with venison; during the early years hunters shot thousands of deer for meat and hides. Moreover, there was an almost immediate shortage of the so-called dry victuals, such as beans, peas, and dried cereal foods. The soldiers, with their wives and children (some families had also a maid-servant with them), were mostly non-productive customers of the City storehouse.

New colonists continued to arrive regularly, but their quality could have been better. In October, 1658, Alrichs wrote: ". . . there are about 600 souls here now, among these are many rough people, who furnish plenty of work." But, he added, ". . . Many who come hither are as poor as worms, and lazy withal."<sup>8</sup> Only a few of the immigrants were qualified farmers. The Amsterdam authorities then sent orphans from the Almshouse to the colony. They were boarded out and became very useful, subject to the provision that weak children and those under fifteen years could not be employed. Efforts to recruit colonists continued in the homeland. Advertisements stating the conditions for settling in New Amstel were posted in the Betuwe and the Veluwe, two districts in Gelderland where many farmers lived.

At first, as might be expected, the City-colony did not prosper. Harvest failures, heavy rains, sickness, and the behavior of the English all contributed to its unfavorable condition. By 1658 the prevalent fevers had caused the death of about one hundred persons, thereby leaving a number of families without support. In August, 1659, New Amstel had 110 houses and several public buildings. The colony still needed capable colonists, a matter not improved by the arrival of 137 artisans (many of them incompetent), 70 soldiers, and some 300 women and children.

For a long time the City continued to lose money. Many of the debts which colonists had contracted with the City Council were never paid. By the end of the year 1660, Amsterdam had advanced more than 150,000 guilders in subsidies, an enormous sum in that day. It became necessary to amend the conditions for admission of colonists. The so-called "year of grace," during which the City had made disbursements to defray colonists' expenses for food and clothing, was limited. To cover its expenditures the City was obliged to levy an agio, or adjustment charge, of fifty percent on cargoes sent over to the colony. Immigrants in New Amstel who had paid their debts to the City, however, could trade all products, excepting furs, wherever and with whom they wished. The Amsterdam Commissioners feared that the colonists ". . . will shear the sheep and this City the hogs."<sup>9</sup>

A calculation of costs, drawn up in 1659, shows that

<sup>8</sup>" . . . hier sijn nu omtrent 600 zielen, daeronder veel harich volck daer men genoech mede te stellen heeft." And, "Veele die hier comen sijn soo arm als wormen en luij daerbij."

<sup>9</sup>" . . . de schapen ende dese stadt de verckens scheren sullen."

the difference between transatlantic transport in chartered vessels and in private ships was negligible. As a rule, however, transportation was arranged in private carriers. Since this calculation is of considerable interest, as illustrating certain aspects of the economics of colonization in the 17th century, an annotated translation has been appended to this article. (It will appear with the concluding instalment of Dr. Hart's article in the April issue—Ed.).

(To be concluded)

## OLD BERGEN COUNTY

(Continued from Page 10)

roads, acts to regulate the distance between the wheels of carts and wagons were introduced in the legislature in 1730, 1767, and 1787;<sup>55</sup> and in 1813 all wheeled traffic was ordered to keep to the right.<sup>56</sup>

New Jersey roads were built and maintained for the most part under the act of 1716 until December 5, 1760, when a new law further expanded local control over highway and bridge building. Inhabitants called out for road work were required to appear "at or before the Sun shall be two Hours high in the Morning, with a Spade, Mathook, Axe, or such other Instrument" as the overseer ordered them to bring, and were to continue to work, if necessary, "until Sun-set, Dinner-Time only excepted, for which they shall be allowed one Hour." Specific requirements for rails on bridges over mill-races and dams, and the covering of mill-wheels also were set forth, and the act repealed Section IV of the road act of 1753 which had directed the appointment of highway overseers.<sup>57</sup> Until the 19th century, provisions of the colonial road acts supplied the legal interpretation for road construction, and labor continued to be furnished by residents called upon for the purpose. No general system of raising road taxes to be spent for hired labor in construction work was instituted until after 1850.<sup>58</sup>

By 1761 each of the townships in Bergen County had one or two main highways. Along the Passaic was Slotterdam Road, later called River Road; following the Hackensack north was Kinderkamack Road; Valley Road ran north along the Ramapo foothills from Pompton to Suffern; and along the top of the mountains to the west was the Corduroy Road. Through the middle of the county, along Saddle River, Paramus Road connected Hoboken with New York State.<sup>59</sup> By 1775, there were roads from Morristown to Hackensack and Woodbridge; from Jersey City a road ran along the Palisades to Haverstraw, then north; and another highway ran through Schraalenburgh and Ringwood.<sup>60</sup>

In 1765 the Provincial Assembly had appointed and incorporated as "the Trustees of the Road and Ferries from Newark to the Road Leading from Bergen Point to Paulus Hook,"<sup>61</sup> commissioners to lay out a road from the lower end of Great Neck in Newark across the marshes to the public road leading from Bergen Point to Paulus Hook, where the ferry connected with New York. In 1766 the legislature provided for "a road from Bergen Point, along up Newark Bay" and thence to and over Paulus Hook, "to low water mark" on the Hudson River. One section of the road was to be kept in repair by the owners of the Bergen Point Ferry; and that part lying between the "uplands of Ahasimus and the uplands of Paulus Hook" was to be "maintained . . . by the . . . owners of the Ferry at Paulus Hook."<sup>62</sup> Maintenance of the remainder fell under the usual regulations governing public highways, but changes in the

status of sections of the road were made in 1775, 1784, and 1797.<sup>63</sup>

With the establishment of the Paulus Hook Ferry in 1764, and the improvement of the road between the Hook and Bergen Point, a shifting of stage routes occurred. It was now possible for stages, having crossed the northwestern tip of Staten Island, to come up the western side of the Hudson to Paulus Hook and cross by the new ferry.<sup>64</sup> Late in 1764, Sovereign Sybrandt, who kept an inn near Elizabeth Town, "fitted up and completed in the neatest Manner, a new and genteel stage Waggon," and offered weekly roundtrip service from Philadelphia to New York, with four stops en route.<sup>65</sup> Competition appeared March 28, 1765, when John Mersereau announced twice a week service, the longest time between start and finish of the journey being three days. He emphasized that a new stage, horses, and driver took over at each stopping place.<sup>66</sup> (Relays on such journeys were about twelve miles apart.) Early in 1766, Mersereau and John Barnhill planned to travel between Philadelphia and New York in two days from April 14th to November 14th, and then for the remaining months in three days, by having stages set off simultaneously from the two cities and change passengers at Princeton.<sup>67</sup> In 1771, Mersereau advertised improvements in his "Flying Machines", "one of which is in Imitation of a Coach," and scheduled service between Philadelphia and Paulus Hook three times a week for the summer and twice a week from November 1st to May 1st, the journey taking one and a half days.<sup>68</sup>

The act of November 24, 1786, for raising a "Revenue from certain Stages, . . ." etc., set a yearly license fee of £150 for each line of stages operated across the state, and a £20 levy for other lines, the law to take effect January 1, 1787. The penalty for failure to obtain a license was a fine of £10 a week, and for each infraction of the law £10 and costs.<sup>69</sup> A supplement to this act, adopted February 24, 1794, repealed the clause concerning fees and fixed the cost of licenses for each stage line running through New Jersey from Trenton to Paulus Hook or Hoboken at £100 a year. One-fourth of the money paid in 1793 for stage coach licenses was remitted.<sup>70</sup> The acts of 1786 and 1794 were repealed November 20, 1799, by a law which lifted the tax on stage lines retroactively and ordered the State Treasurer to refund such sums as had been paid on account of taxes or licenses since January 1, 1798.<sup>71</sup>

(To be continued)

<sup>55</sup>Acts of the General Assembly of the Province of New Jersey, 1730, 1767; Laws of the State of New Jersey, 1787.

<sup>56</sup>Federal Writers Projects—N. J., *op. cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>57</sup>Acts of the General Assembly of the Province of New Jersey, 1760.

<sup>58</sup>Federal Writers Projects—N. J., *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>60</sup>Francis B. Lee (ed.), *New Jersey As A Colony and As A State* (New York: The Publishing Society of New Jersey, 1902), I, 236.

<sup>61</sup>Acts of the General Assembly of the Province of New Jersey, 1765.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 1766.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 1775; Acts of the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, 1784, 1797.

<sup>64</sup>Lane, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>65</sup>Archives of the State of New Jersey, XXIV, 428.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 512-513.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, XXV, 25-26.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, XXVII, 550.

<sup>69</sup>Acts of the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, 1786.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, 1794.

<sup>71</sup>Laws of the State of New Jersey, 1799.



# The City-Colony of New Amstel on the Delaware: II.

by Dr. Simon Hart, Archivist of the City of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

*Colony established so as to provide City with alternate source of urgently needed supplies made steady progress up to 1664.*

WITH the death of Director Jacob Alrichs on December 30, 1659, at New Amstel (present New Castle, Del.), leadership of the Dutch colony passed to a former army officer, Alexander d'Hinoyossa, who continued in control until the English occupation five years later. Besides Alrichs, a capable administrator whose death the enterprise could ill afford, the City-colony in 1659 lost another leader when Domine Everardus Welius died on December 9. Domine Welius, an ordained clergyman sent out by the City of Amsterdam some time before, had ministered to the colonists' spiritual needs in a building remodeled in 1657 as a church, for which a bell weighing 242 pounds was purchased in 1661 and supplied by Jan Moors.

Vexations which the City had experienced with its colony now led to discussions in which it was suggested that the whole venture be returned to the West India Company. When it became apparent that the Company could not shoulder such an extra burden, however, the City re-examined the problem with a view to improving matters. For one thing, the quality of emigrants was more carefully considered. The WIC on its part made several concessions, of which one result was to expand the territorial boundaries of the colony. On December 22, 1663, the Company transferred to the City of Amsterdam the entire South River region from river-mouth upwards as far as the stream flowed and inland, on the east bank, for 14 kilometers and on the west side as far as the English colony in Maryland.

Today this area embraces the whole of the State of Delaware and parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Fort Altena, formerly called Fort Christina (present Wilmington, Del.), was included in the City's domain. Purpose of the expansion, essentially economic, was to gain greater productivity at comparatively small expense. Since several Swedish settlements came within the new frontiers, trade with the English colonies was made easier — a circumstance which, however, had no appeal to the Crown authorities in England. A possible further argument for enlarging the City-colony may have been the fact that copper and other minerals had meanwhile been found just outside its former boundaries.

Indicative of the effort made to encourage emigration, the burgomasters and magistrates of Amsterdam on June 9, 1662, entered into a colonization agreement with Pieter Cornelisz Plockhoy, a Mennonite from Zeriksee. Plockhoy undertook to settle 25 men and their families at the Hoerenkil (present Lewes Creek, Del.) in the former patroonship of Swanendael. Granted a loan of 2500 guilders and local self-governing powers, Plockhoy's party of 41 persons, mostly fellow-Mennonites, established their community at the designated place in the following year.

During these years the City-colony outgrew its teething troubles. No longer did Amsterdam have to bear development costs alone. The commissioners of New

Amstel began to share in cargoes which were sent over to Holland. As productivity of the City-colony increased, the authorities at home and on the Delaware joined equally in the ladings shipped. Toward the end of the Dutch regime, the City of Amsterdam had to participate only in one-quarter of the shipments, a fact which reveals the confidence New Amstel's leaders held for its future. That the ship *de Purmerlanderkerck* in 1662 brought over the ironwork needed for a sawmill with 24 blades also evidenced brightening prospects.

In September and October, 1664, however, the English seized New Netherland and with it New Amstel, the colony of the City of Amsterdam. Since d'Hinoyossa would not yield without a fight, the town and outlying settlements were plundered upon capture. Early in October, English troops in an amphibious expedition commanded by Sir Robert Carr took the fort by storm without loss to themselves but at a cost to the defenders, besides City soldiers taken prisoner, of three killed and ten wounded. A year later, d'Hinoyossa wrote that he lost all his property because he resisted the English, whereas Stuyvesant had been able to keep his possessions by surrendering without a contest.

In Amsterdam the City Council was ever mindful of the fact that municipal prosperity was based on trade and commerce. In favorable times the City government never hesitated to pursue active policies in aid of the business community. Likewise, when events and circumstances brought about a change in conditions, efforts were made to adjust matters accordingly. In establishing the colony of New Amstel, the City had not meant to broaden its municipal function. One of their reports makes this clear: "And as the government of Amsterdam has no intention to extend any authority or power abroad, but merely designs to promote commerce which is the life of this State."<sup>10\*</sup> Neither can it be said that the City sought to rid itself of unproductive inhabitants, for only a negligible percentage of the colonists came from Amsterdam.

Plainly, as stated in the very first of the Council Resolutions, the City hoped to derive from New Amstel products which up to that time had been imported almost exclusively from the Baltic. Two markets would thus be available in which to purchase at competitive prices such vitally needed materials as naval stores. If one of these markets were to be City-owned, and its growth aided by remission of dues and imposts, the City might in due course become independent of foreign sources.

We should keep in mind that in 1654 the warlike Charles X had succeeded Queen Christina on the Swedish throne. His quarrel with Poland's King John Casimir over a dynastic issue moved Charles to invade and overrun that country in 1656, an event which created dismay throughout the Baltic region. Two attacks on Denmark, whose existence was preserved by Dutch naval intervention in 1658, and other Swedish military ventures kept northern Europe in ferment until Charles' death in 1660 and for some time afterward.

Disruption of commercial relations with Poland, then the granary of the west, became a matter of grave concern in Holland. Amsterdam saw its vital Baltic trade menaced. The City therefore seized the oppor-

\*The footnotes beginning on Page 8 continue in sequence those published in the January issue.

## HERE AND THERE

(Continued from Page 6)

tunity to develop New Amstel for reasons of self-protection and security. In a letter from the City Commissioners to Jacob Alrichs in New Amstel we read: ". . . Promoting the cultivation of the lands is the principal, yea, the sole design of this City in establishing the colony there."<sup>11</sup> At the very moment when the first important shipments of wheat were to be dispatched to Amsterdam, the English overran the colony.

Other valuable products, especially timber and furs, were shipped to the homeland from New Amstel. Although the quality of timber improved later on, cargoes initially received were of poor grade, with sales proceeds covering less than half the freight. Transatlantic shipping costs were of course much higher than those in the Baltic trade. Expenses of this kind, a significant factor in transporting bulk goods, such as lumber and grain, make it a moot question whether New Amstel could have become competitive with the Baltic region. To those living in the City-colony, the privilege granted to trade freely with other localities on the Atlantic seaboard was certainly important.

Supplies of furs acquired from Indians in the South River region became a source of wealth, as elsewhere in colonial America. Otter and fox peltries sent over to Amsterdam were traded by way of Hamburg to the various German states. Beaver skins continued as one of the principal articles of trade with Russia, where the pelts were made into castor-wool and sold again in this form via Amsterdam into France.

As its population increased, the City-colony became a not insignificant consumption area for dry goods, wines, and other finished products. Among the people who came to New Amstel were a number of Finns, attracted by the toleration generally accorded Lutherans and their churches in the former Swedish settlements. The official attitude toward non-Calvinist modes of worship had become much milder by this time, a factor which drew many emigrants, including persons who had been living in the English colonies. In these last years, New Amstel's inhabitants traded extensively with the English. The tobacco thus acquired, mostly in exchange for Dutch dry goods, was shipped directly to the Amsterdam market. The City established a brewery at New Amstel that produced a beer of special strength, much esteemed by the English.

Throughout the City-colony's eight years of existence (1656-1664), there is discernible a steady decline in the influence of the West India Company. By the end of this period the Company, persistently ignored and continuously elbowed aside, had become a relatively minor factor. The loss of New Netherland, while it came as a blow to Dutch pride, caused no perceptible disruption of the business community in Holland. Although increasingly significant at the time of the English occupation, the American colony's economic value to the homeland was still relatively small. Maritime traffic between the Netherlands and the Dutch possessions in North America had grown but slowly. The City-colony was visited yearly by about ten ships.

(Continued on Page 13)

<sup>11</sup>"Ende dewijl de regeringe van Amsterdam niet en heeft eenig insicht, om eenige autoriteit off macht uyt te setten buytenslants, maer haer insicht alleen streckt tot voortzettinge van de commercie twelck de ziel is van desen staet." Brodhead translated the last phrase, "of this City."

<sup>12</sup>". . . de bevorderinge van de cultuijre der landen het voornaemste ja 't eenichste oogemerck waeromme dese stadt die colonie aldaar heeft gestablieert."

of the Ulster County Board of Health in January. For the past 14 years a member of this body, he has served as its president since 1960.

Joseph E. Hasbrouck, Jr., Harold L. Wood, Dr. Virgil B. DeWitt and former Congressman Jay LeFevre are life members of the board of trustees of New Paltz, N. Y., Savings Bank.

Henry H. Livingston and Mrs. Livingston have announced the engagement of their daughter, Miss Isabel Church Livingston, to Henry Curtis Blackiston III, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Blackiston of this city and New Canaan, Conn. The bride-elect is an alumna of Chapin School and Bradford Junior College. Her fiance, a graduate of Groton School, is a senior at Princeton University. A Fall wedding is planned.

Wilfred B. Talman is subject of a write-up in the March issue of *Relics*, of the Pascack Historical Society, Park Ridge, N. J., which besides citing his work as writer and historian refers to him as probably the only person living who, by word of mouth, was taught the quinary-vigesimal system of Indian counting used in trade in earliest colonial times.

Ernest H. Wyckoff is president of the associated descendants of Dutch settler Pieter Claesen (Wyckoff) whose 1637-built Brooklyn home, the nation's oldest frame house, now owned by the Association, was commented upon in a TV program broadcast over the facilities of CBS on February 23.

Wynant D. Vanderpoel, Jr., was married to Mrs. Anne Wheeler Johnson in Washington, D. C., January 22. The bride, daughter of Mrs. Richard C. Wheeler of Providence, R. I., and the late Mr. Wheeler, was graduated from Miss Porter's School and Vassar College. Mr. Vanderpoel is an alumnus of St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H., and Princeton University, where he also received the master's degree in architecture.

Gerrit W. Van Schaick and Mrs. Van Schaick are parents of Miss Alexandra Cameron Van Schaick, who became the bride of Michael E. A. Ward, son of Mrs. Thomas F. Ward, and the late Mr. Ward, of East Hampton, L. I., and Santa Barbara, Calif., at St. James Church here October 31. The bride was graduated from Foxcroft School and Vassar College '64. The bridegroom, Princeton '62 and veteran of Marine Corps service, is with Time, Inc., here.

John C. Traphagen serves on the Free Europe Committee Inc., of New York, which since 1948 has operated Radio Free Europe as a major channel of communication to bridge the Iron Curtain and keep open the lines of concern and information for a recently estimated 20 million listeners in East Europe each week. General Lucius B. Clay, USA (Ret.), the Society's Medalist in 1949, is also a member of the Committee and former Ambassador Joseph C. Grew, Medalist in 1943, is board chairman emeritus.

Edgar W. Hatfield and Mrs. Hatfield have announced the engagement of their daughter, Miss Ellen Elizabeth Hatfield, to Frederick W. Feuerhake, son of Mrs. William G. Feuerhake of Allendale, N. J., and the late Mr. Feuerhake. Miss Hatfield, an alumna of Knox School, is attending Endicott Junior College. Mr. Feuerhake, who attended University of Southern California and was graduated from the N.Y.U. School of Business, is with Warwick & Legler, Inc., New York advertising firm, and is studying for the master's degree in business administration.