

A View of The Town of New Castle From The River Delaware, -- Taken the 4th July 1797 -- By Ives le Blanc



New Castle History

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Who am I?

- Not a historian!
- College at William and Mary in Williamsburg and got to love colonial revival!
- My career was in research:
 - Ph. D in biochemistry, post doc with Arvid Carlsson in Sweden (Nobel Prize, 2000)
 - 14 years in research at NIMH, Washington (lived in victorian house) on Capitol Hill
 - 17 years in research at Dupont Exp. Sta. (research, creating in-company web sites)
 - 2 years at Astra Zeneca
 - 3 years at the News Journal in the newsroom doing web maps and database work
- We bought 30 The Strand, N.C. in 2003, started researching our house, the street, the town
- Together with people from U.D., Courthouse and Delaware Historical Society I formed NC-CHAP – New Castle Community History and Archaeology Program
- I started putting the information up on nc-chap.org and have never stopped

http://nc-chap.org

Currently > 6,000 pages, files and images according to Google!

Search bar to find stuff on this VERY large site

New information used in today's lecture

Lectures from 2015

Resources: Histories, guidebooks, census and tax records

Archaeology, maps, aerial photos, Portrait, railroad and railroad engine manufacture ...

Churches: Lutheran, Presbyt. Episcopal, Quaker, Methodist

Women in Ft. Casimir

Virtual tours

Oral History, Post cards

Day in Old New Castle

"Williamsburg on the Delaware"

Crime & punishment: hanging, scarlet letters, whipping...

...

The screenshot shows the homepage of the New Castle, Delaware Community History and Archaeology Program (nc-chap.org). At the top, there is a Google Custom Search bar and a navigation menu with links for Overview, Resource Links, Projects, History, Archaeology, Images, and Maps. Below the navigation is a large historical painting of New Castle from 1797. A section titled "Recent NC CHAP Projects" features several project highlights: "Some personal perspectives on the History of Fort Casimir and New Amstel" with a collage of images; "Lectures on New Castle History" with a grid of slide thumbnails; "Recently Rediscovered 1759 Portrait of Siator Clay Jr. of New Castle by John Hesselius"; "The Battery(s) in Battery Park" with a diagram; and "Portraits of the rich and powerful in New Castle (1750-1850)" with a row of portrait thumbnails. At the bottom, there are sections for "Resources" and "Annotated Tax records".

Google Custom Search

Related web sites: [NCJIS](#), [DHS](#), [Courthouse City](#)

New Castle, Delaware
Community History and Archaeology Program (nc-chap.org)

Overview | Resource Links | Projects | History | Archaeology | Images | Maps

Recent NC CHAP Projects

Some personal perspectives on the History of Fort Casimir and New Amstel. Visits to Amsterdam, Banff (Canada), San Juan (PR), and Cincinnati, Ohio provide original 1656 documents and food for thought on our founders vs slavery and outrageous quotes about our early emigrants: "lazy as worms and stupid to boot, artisans who did not know their jobs"

Lectures on New Castle History. PDFs of slides from a series of fourteen lecture in 2015. Hundreds of interesting text slides and >650 supporting images about people, events, war, famine, portraits, pirates, religion, food, architecture, industry, women's dresses ...

Recently Rediscovered 1759 Portrait of Siator Clay Jr. of New Castle by John Hesselius was auctioned November 11.

The Battery(s) in Battery Park -- their purpose: protection against French and Spanish pirates, privateers; French and British warships, probable current location, and funding (via lottery!)

Portraits of the rich and powerful in New Castle (1750-1850). Portraits of more than 40 people who lived within four blocks of each other, including four signers of the Declaration of Independence (2 from DE, 1 each from NJ & PA), governors, judges, state and U. S. senators, an opium merchant/Consul-General/son of a Signer and a Bishop of Virginia.

Resources: Online official records, laws, histories, census records, births, deaths, marriages, biographies, student theses and papers ...

Annotated Tax records for New Castle, 1776-1826 -- data on wealth, politics and religion! Tax records for the **New Castle Constabulary**, 1683. An easy to understand tax method.

Course Plan

First half of the course:

- dates, wars, people etc. the usual history
- the not-usual history – why it happened

Second half of course

- virtual tours, clothing, transportation, architecture

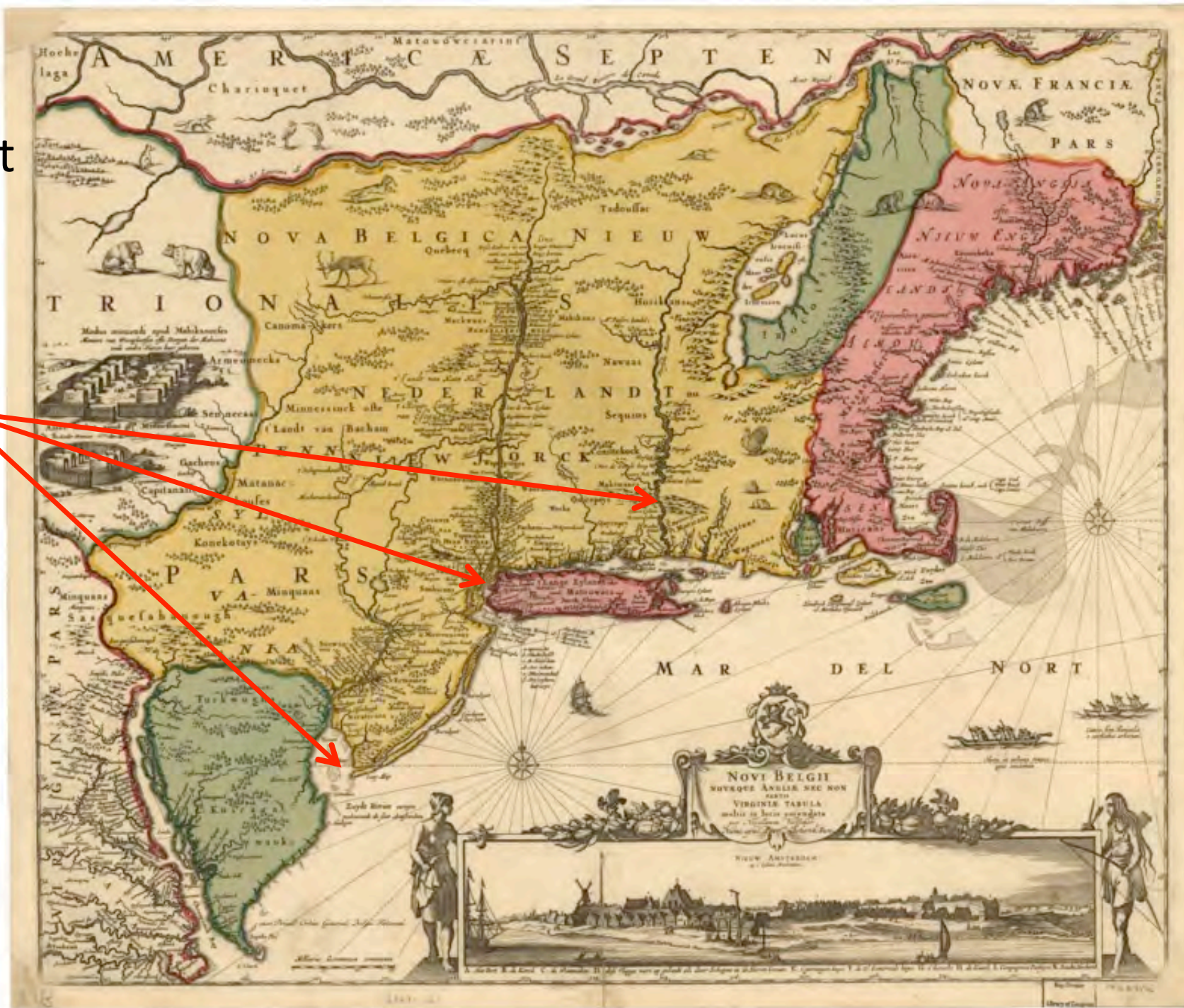
(maybe a few words: beer, punishment, scarlet letters, organized religion, prostitution)

The Usual Beginning, not The Very Beginning

- 1609 H. Hudson-S, N, Fresh Rivers
- 1625 Peter Minuit & WIC buys
Manhattan for \$24
- 1638 Minuit, Swedes, Kalmar Nyckel
- 1651 Stuyvesant/Ft. Casimir
- 1655 Swedes/Ft. Trinity
- 1655 Amsterdam/New Amstel
- 1664 Duke of York/New Castle
- 1682 Grant to Wm. Penn



Visscher map (1650/1685)



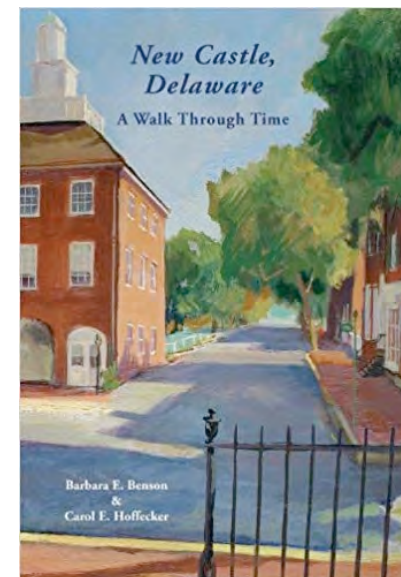
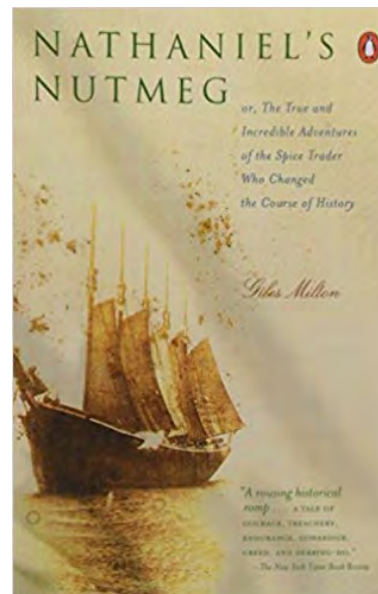
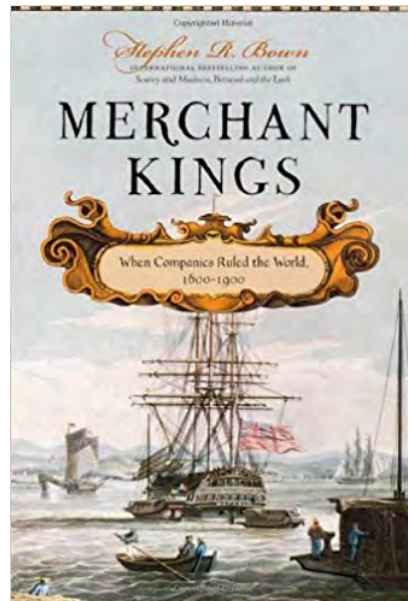
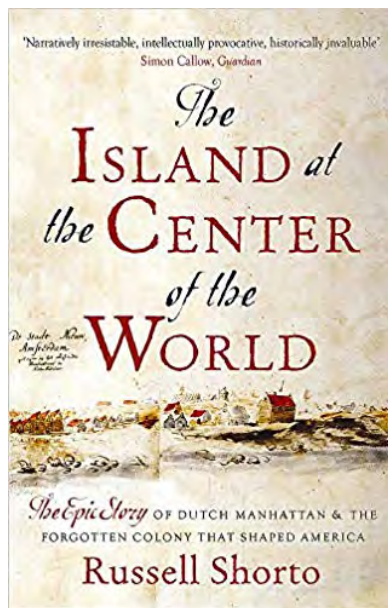
What the usual beginning doesn't answer

The 'usual beginning' is available from histories from Scharf (1888) to Federal Writers program in the 30's

- What kind of a trading company was the WIC -- like Macy's?
- What were it's major trade products, here and elsewhere?
- Why did it wait from 1625 to 1651 to build Ft. Casimir?
- Who was Ft. Casimir named for?
- What was life like here?
- What were the relations like between the Dutch & Swedes?
- When/why did it become New Amstel

I got answers to most of these questions from a few books, and serendipitous occasions on vacations!

Recommended books



Island at the Center of the World (Russel Shorto) -- Hudson, WIC, New Amsterdam (New York), Stuyvesant..Not much about New Castle. Available in Delaware libraries both in print and audio form. Great to listen to in the car!

Merchant Kings: When Companies Ruled the World, 1600-1900. (Stephen Bown) -- Chapters on the Dutch EAST India Company, Stuyvesant and the WIC, and the Hudson's Bay Company. Perspective on the way people given power to rule a colony behave so unlike the behavior of the countrymen at home. Blunt: Stuyvesant: **"We derive our authority from God and the WIC, not from the pleasure of a few ignorant subjects."**

Nathaniel's Nutmeg: Or the True and Incredible Adventures of the Spice Trader Who Changed the Course of History (Giles Milton) -- Details on the Spice Race -- the race for the incredibly lucrative spice trade between the English and Dutch, and why at the end of the Anglo Dutch wars, England chose to take New Netherland including New York, despite it's relatively puny trade income, and the Dutch chose the East Indies with their fabled spices.

New Castle Delaware,: A Walk Through Time, Benson & Hoffecker Best book I know of on New Castle.

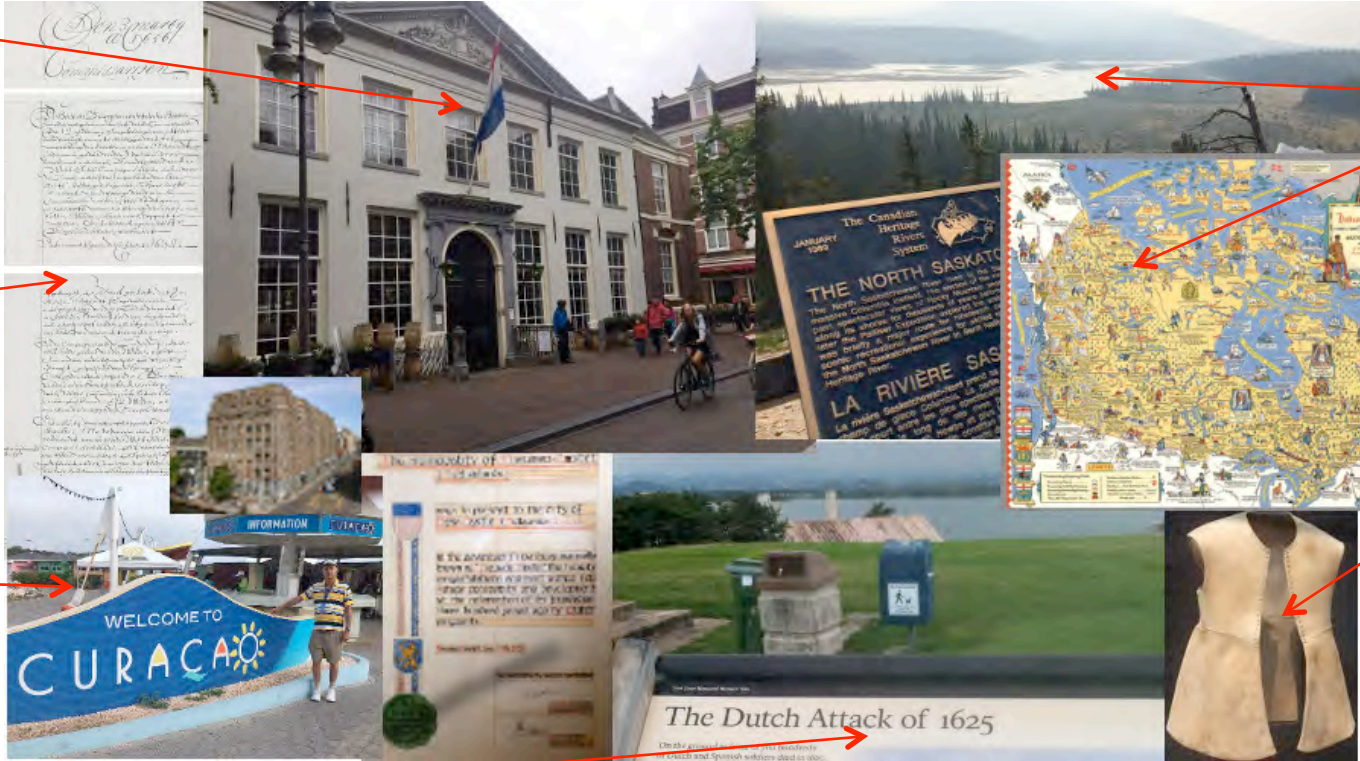
What's new: new perspectives from trips on the history of Fort Casimir and New Amstel

Amsterdam, headquarters of the West India Company (WIC)

Amsterdam, original documents for purchase of land from WIC for New Amstel

Curacao. WIC center for trade in salt and slaves

San Juan, PR where the WIC besieged, then burned the town



Hudson's Bay Company, Banff, Canada. Another monopoly trading company

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Clothes (with bullet holes) worn by Mr. Casimir

Details on nc-chap.org -- the first link (<http://nc-chap.org/newAmstel/>)

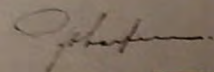
The municipality of Nieuwer-Amstel
(Netherlands)

begs to present to the city of
New-Castle (Delaware, U.S.A.)

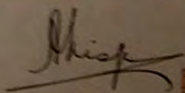
in the seventeenth century originally
known as "Nieuwer-Amstel", the hearty
congratulations and best wishes for
future prosperity and development
at the celebration of its foundation
three hundred years ago by Dutch
emigrants.

Nieuwer-Amstel, June 10th, 1951.

The municipality above mentioned



G.P. Haspels
Burgomaster



A. Visser
Secretary



Certificate in the stairwell in the New Castle City offices given by the City of Nieuwer Amstel (suburb of Amsterdam) on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of founding of New Castle in 1651.

Minor discrepancies from fact. The town was originally founded as the military outpost Ft. Casimir by the Dutch West India Company in 1651, not by ordinary emigrants. It replaced Ft. Nassau (near current Camden, N.J.)

Why did the Dutch want to come to North America?



Seal of New York City



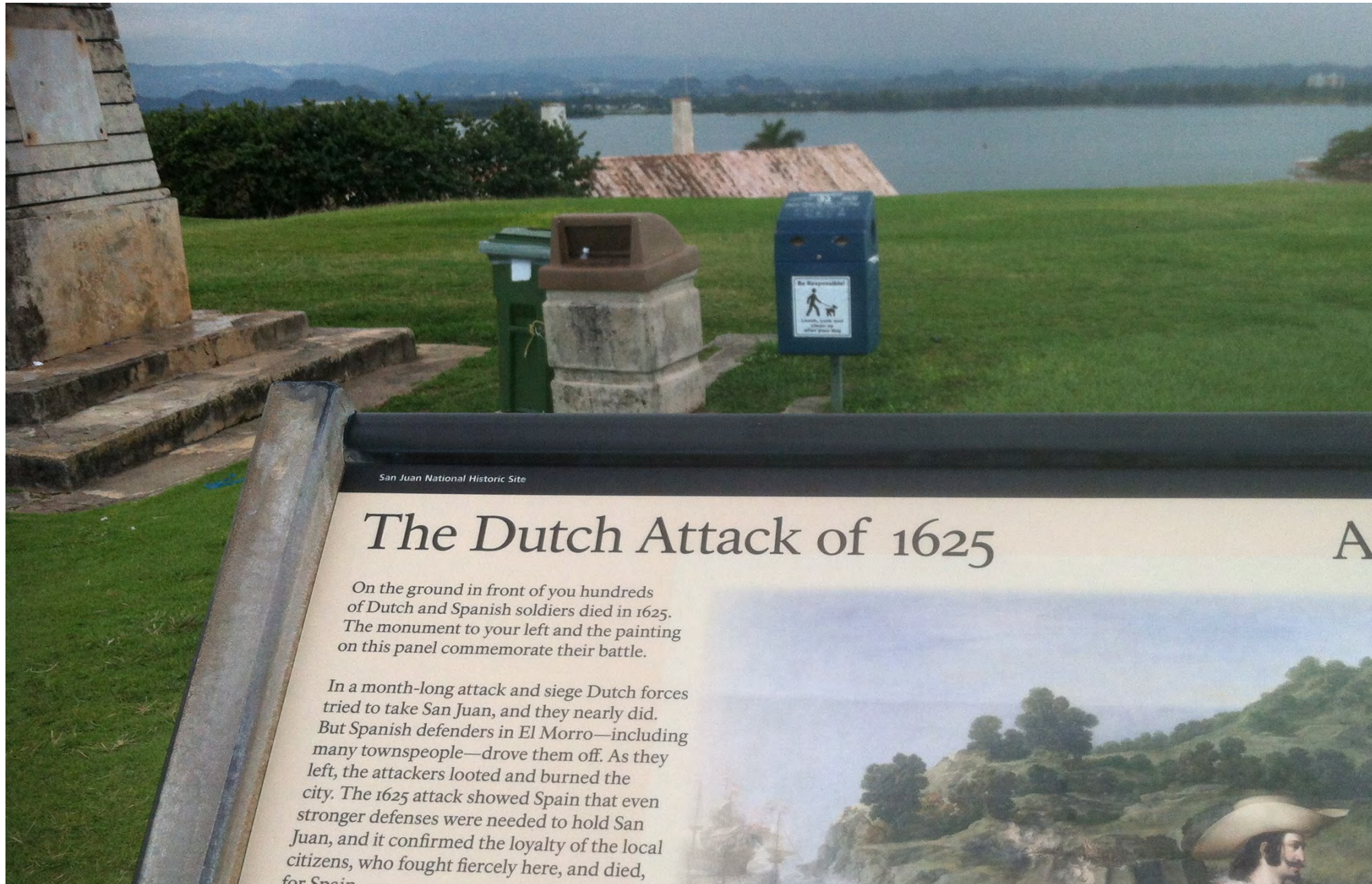
Seal of New Netherlands





The Dutch West India Company was not just a warm and friendly trading company

The WIC in 1625 was simultaneously seeking to expand trading areas in Manhattan, Delaware River and San Juan!



San Juan National Historic Site

The Dutch Attack of 1625

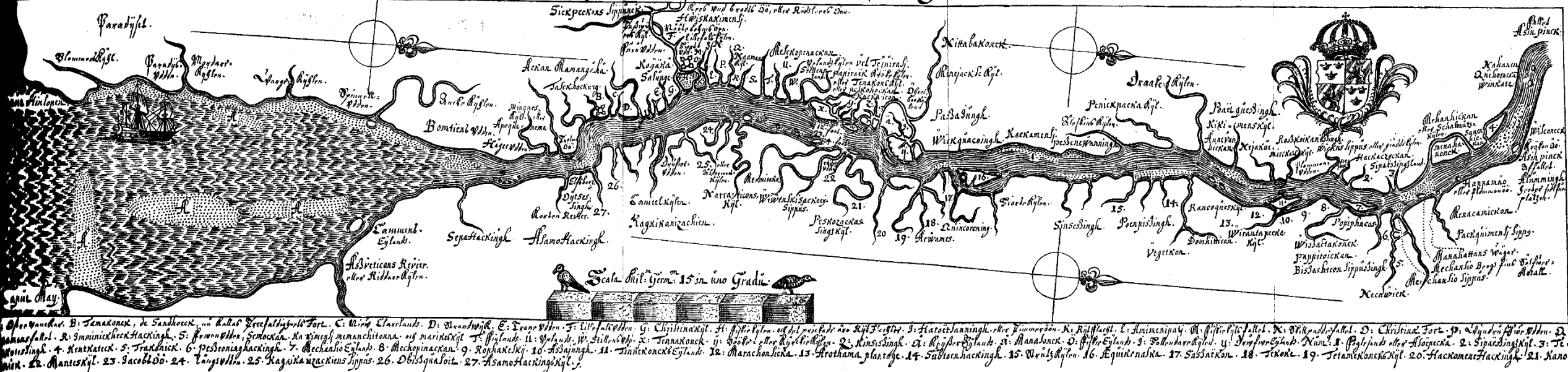
On the ground in front of you hundreds of Dutch and Spanish soldiers died in 1625. The monument to your left and the painting on this panel commemorate their battle.

In a month-long attack and siege Dutch forces tried to take San Juan, and they nearly did. But Spanish defenders in El Morro—including many townspeople—drove them off. As they left, the attackers looted and burned the city. The 1625 attack showed Spain that even stronger defenses were needed to hold San Juan, and it confirmed the loyalty of the local citizens, who fought fiercely here, and died, for Spain.



New Sweden, or the Swedish River in East India

NOVA SUECIA: Eller the Swenskas RIVER, IN INDIA OCCIDENTALI.



The Swedes had only a few villages but many farms spread along 'their' river.

Summary of the Very Beginning, or why the Dutch West India Company was part of the founding of Fort Casimir/New Amstel/New Castle

Geotroyeerde Westindische Compagnie



<1650 >1650

- 1492-1508 Columbus discovered Puerto Rico, found gold, built fort, started colonization
- 1498 Pope gave Caribbean and West Coast of America to Spain; Portuguese got Brazil
The Caribbean was a "closed sea" Trade was restricted to Spain
- 1500s Dutch and English came to Caribbean anyway to trade salt, hides, spices, dyewoods
- 1609 EAST India Company (VOC) hired Hudson to search for northwest passage; he discovered Delaware River
- 1621 WEST India company (WIC) founded for trading and for military attacks on Spain and Portuguese colonies
- 1625 WIC attacked Puerto Rico; couldn't get into the forts. Burned San Juan; built fort on South River (Delaware)
- 1628 WIC seized the Spanish silver fleet, hurting Spain
- 1630 WIC conquered part of Brazil
- 1638 Former WIC Director General Peter Minuit arrives on Kalmar Nyckel to found New Sweden at The Rocks, Dutch are allies of Sweden
- 1643 WIC names Peter Stuyvesant Director General of Dutch West Indies islands: Curacao, Aruba, Bonaire; later America
- 1648 **Thirty years war over, Dutch no longer allies of Sweden**
- 1651 **Stuyvesant builds Ft. Casimir for WIC to counteract Swedish presence**
- 1655/1656 **SWEDISH CAPTURE FT. CASIMIR/ STUUVESANT CAPTURES FT. CASIMIR, IT IS BOUGHT BY AMSTERDAM RENAMED NEW AMSTEL**
- 1664 English capture New Netherland including Ft. Casimir/New Amstel (2nd Anglo Dutch War)
- 1674 Treaty of Westminster (3rd Anglo Dutch War) England gets New York, New Castle, Dutch get Surinam, Caribbean islands

We now speak English, not Dutch

Hudson's Bay Company Forts and Trading Posts



Canadian headquarters: York Factory (trading post)

As seen in a Banff, Canada HBC store Aug, 2018

Dutch (red) & Swedish forts (pink)



Like the HBC, the Dutch favored building 'factorijen', factories or trading posts with soldiers and a few settlers.

The 'thin' business model of a few employees covering a very long area did work for the Hudson's Bay Company for many years



Route north of Banff between the Pacific and Hudson Bay



HBC store in Banff, Canada



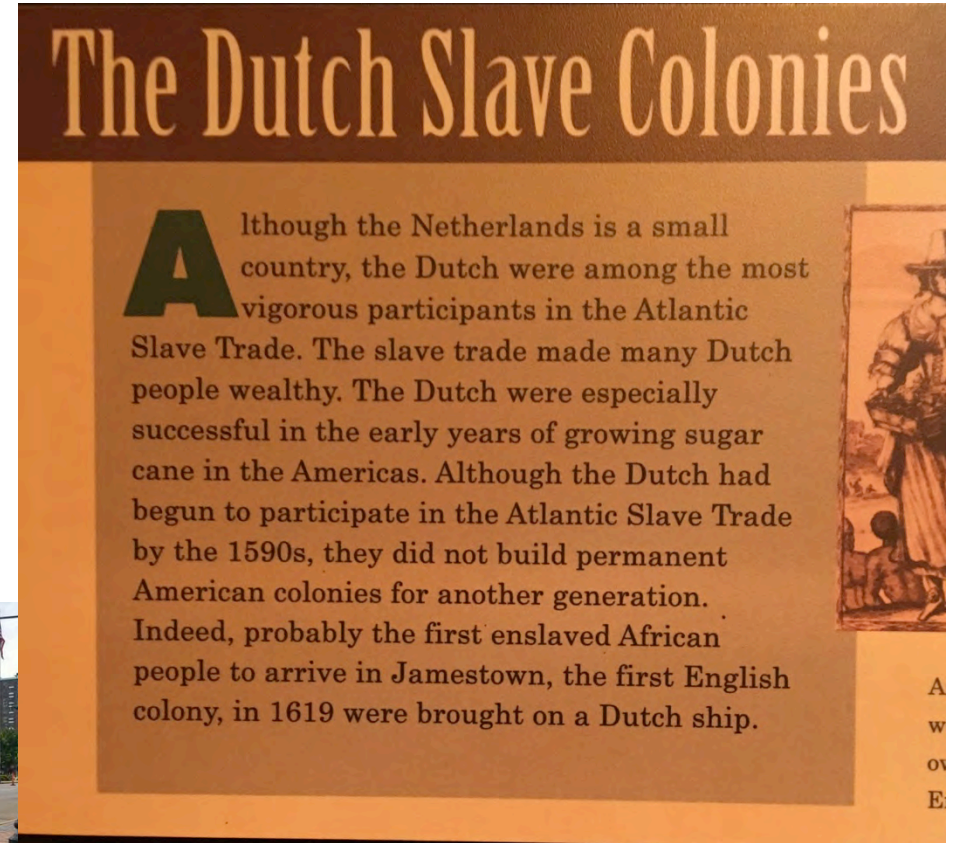
Last HBC post built

New Castle Research while traveling: From the Underground Railroad Museum, Cincinnati, OH Aug. 31, 2018

View from 2nd floor window, past temporary ferris wheel, Roebling bridge over Ohio R. to Kentucky (a slave state)



“The Dutch [West India Company] were among the most vigorous participants in the Atlantic Slave Trade.”
Elsewhere stated more than England & Portugal combined.



Bird electric rental scooter



Peter Stuyvesant , the West India Company and Ft. Casimir/New Amstel

- 1643 Peter Stuyvesant director general of Dutch West Indies islands
Curacao, Aruba, Bonaire
- 1644 He lost right leg to a cannonball attacking Spanish-held Sint Maarten
- 1645 He became governor general of all Dutch possessions in North America
and the Caribbean
- 1651 He founds Fort Casimir on South (Delaware) River
- 1654 He travels to Barbados; captured, released by Admiral William Penn
- 1655 Stuyvesant recaptures Ft. Casimir from Swedes
- 1664 English capture New Netherland



Peter Stuyvesant
attr. H. Couturier

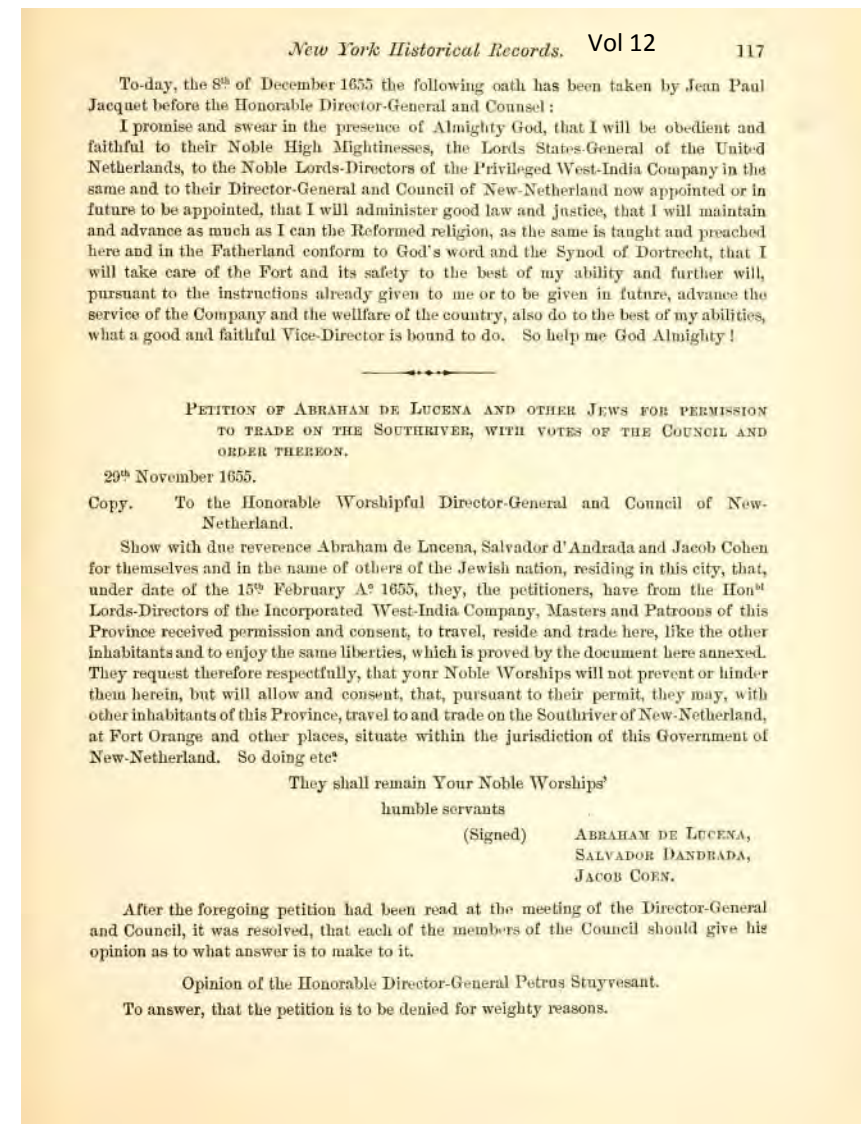
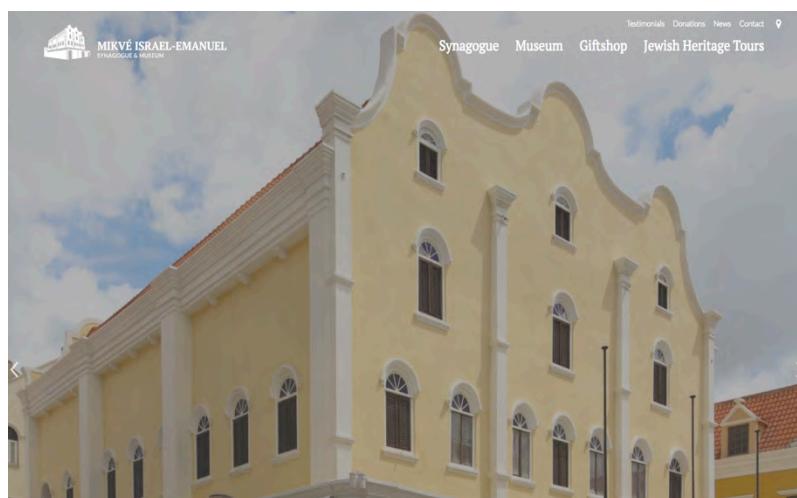
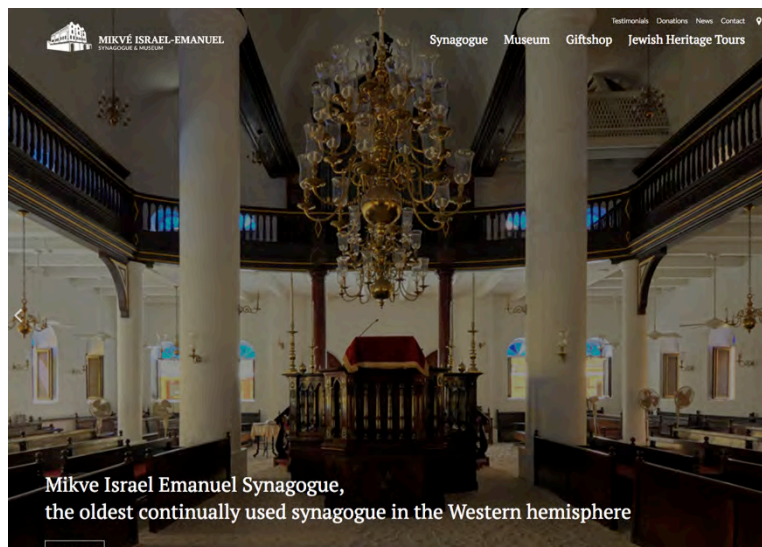


Dutch Islands: Curacao, Bonaire, Aruba and St. Maarten/St. Martin:

Snorkeling, beaches, tourist amenities, early synagogue, slavery museum
 Stuyvesant was Director General of the first three then lost his leg trying to retake St. Maarten

Jews were in Curacao, New Amsterdam, but not permitted to trade in Ft. Casimir

Jews were granted land for a farming community on the coast in 1651. Unable to grow their own food on the poor land they moved town in 1674; their interests moved to banking and commerce. A portion of the congregation emigrated to Newport RI in 1694.



Aruba, Bonaire & Curacao were not particularly profitable. In 1650 the WIC had proposed to give it away or open it up to other companies and traders.

As the islands of Curacao, Bonaire and Aruba have been found for many years to be only a burden to the Company, not producing any profit, we have, therefore, considered whether it would not be well to request permission of the Supreme government to give up said Islands: but if such were not feasible, 'twould, in our opinion, be best, to permit every one to establish Colonies on said Islands, to distribute and concede the land free of rent,

Claims to Delaware by Dutch, Swedes, and English (Baltimore & Penn) were conflicting

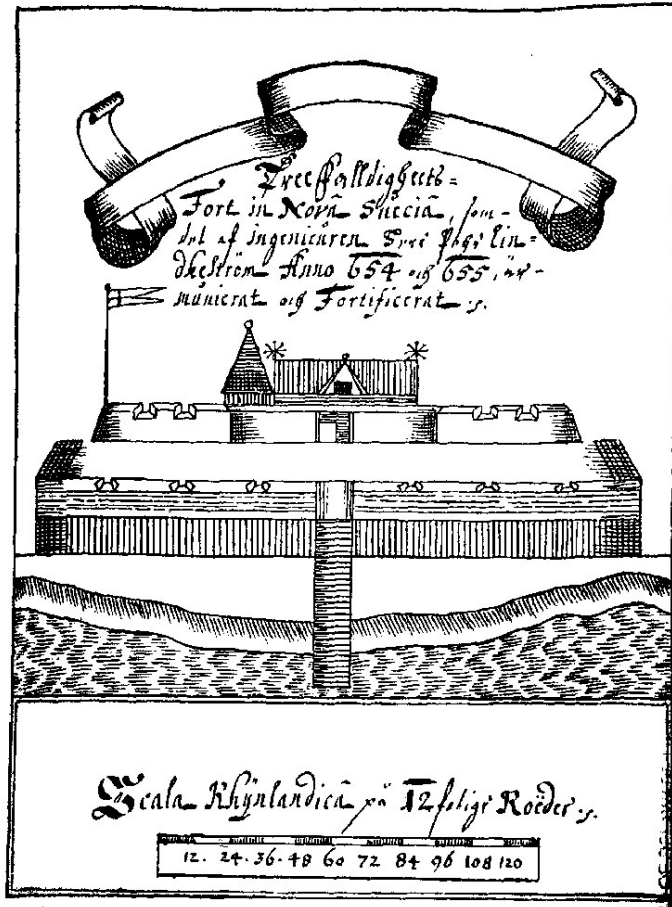
- 1497 Italian John Cabot claims all North America for English based on discovery of Newfoundland
- 1609 Dutch claim New Netherland, including Delaware based on Hudson and settlement
- 1632 Charles I granted Maryland from north of the Potomac and Watkins point to 40th parallel
- 1638 Swedes claim land near Ft. Christina based on settlement and treaty
- 1676 Charles II granted James, Duke of York James II “Hudsons river, and all the lands from the west side of Connecticut, to the east side of Delaware Bay.” (NY, NJ)
- 1681 Charles II grants Wm. Penn “All That tract of land in America Called by the name of Pennsylvania as the same is bounded on the East by Delaware River, **from twelve miles distance Northwards of New Castle Towne**, unto the three and fortieth degree of Northern Latitude, etc”
- 1682 Subsequent grant of the New Castle and south (Three Lower Counties)

In the end, “might makes right”, possession is 9/10”

Fort Casimir/ Fort Trefalidighet

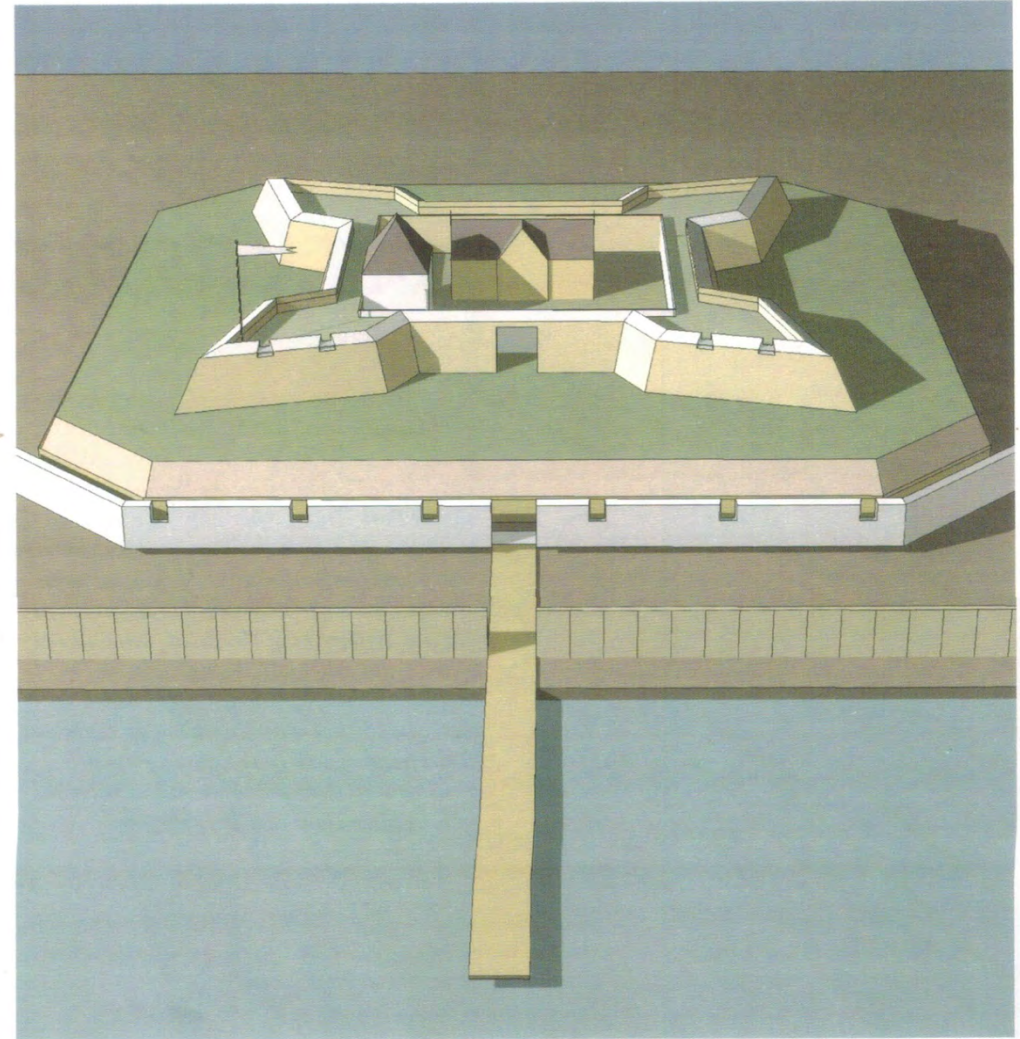
Lit. C.

Fig. 155



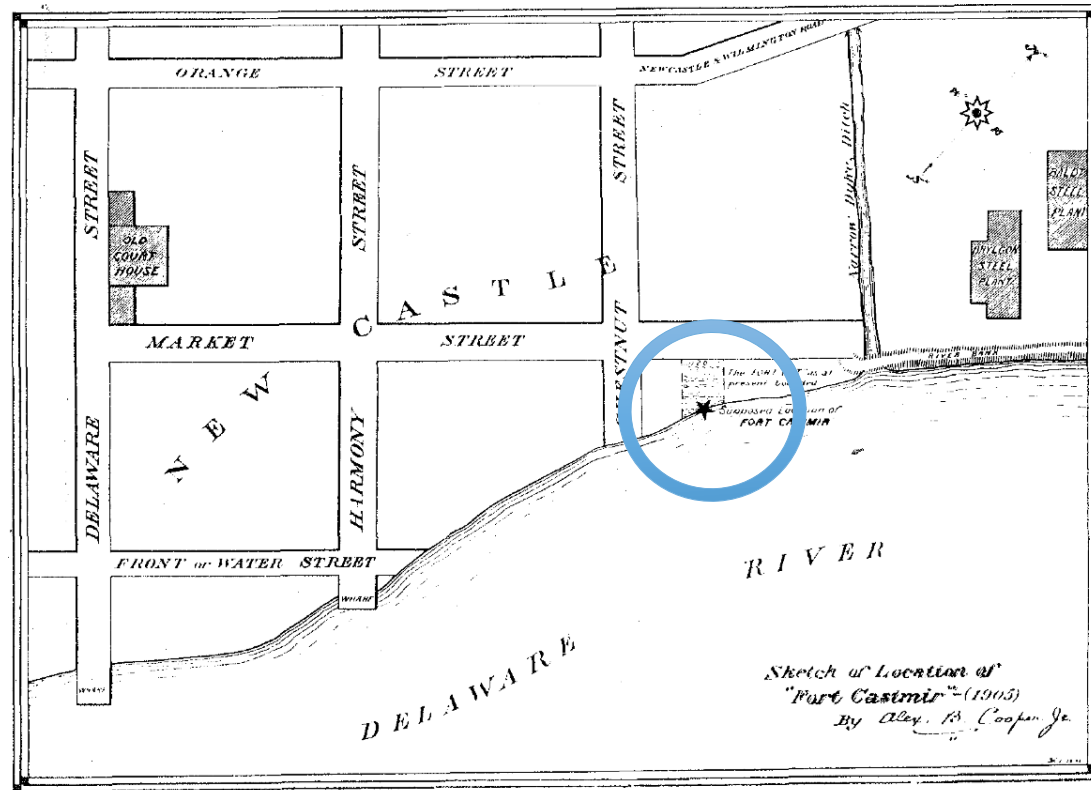
"FORT TRINITY IN NEW SWEDEN, AS IT WAS MOUNTED AND FORTIFIED, 1654 AND 1655. BY MR. PEHR LINDESTROM." FROM THE ORIGINAL SKETCH IN THE *Geographia*.

Pehr Lindestrom, 1655/1695



Len Tantilillo, The Edge of New Netherland, 2012

Location of Fort Casimir



Alexander B. Cooper, 1905



Items in Dutch Paintings
found at site of Ft. Casimir



Archaeological evidence for foodways

Artifacts from Ft. Casimir



Red glazed earthenware pot



Wan-Li period tableware



Rim of salt glazed cream colored vessel with cobalt blue decorations

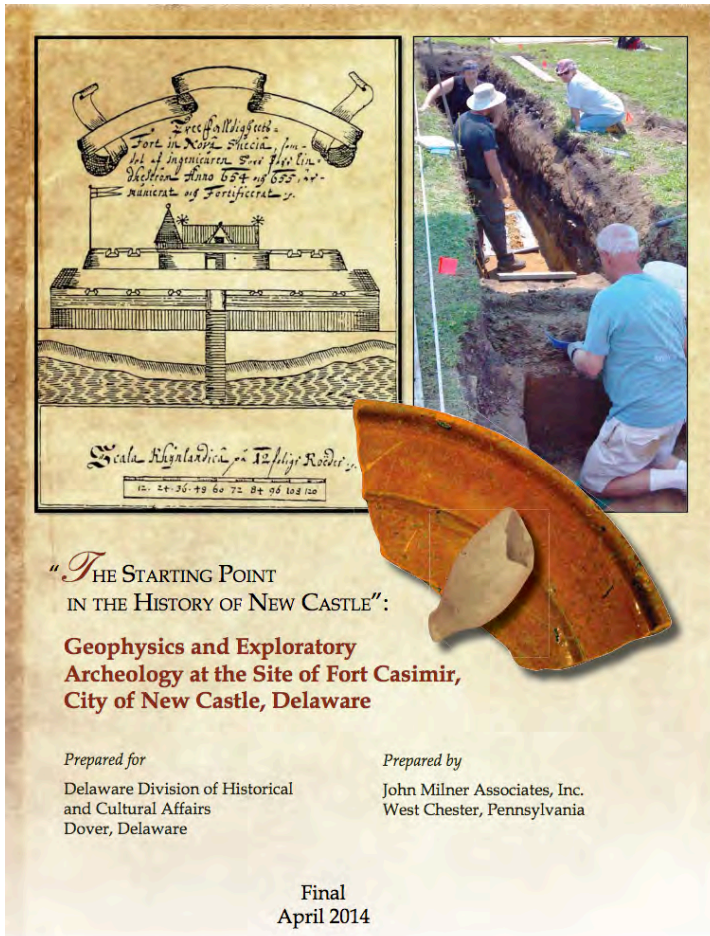


Fragment of dark brown glazed pottery with a handle attachment



Plate 22. Glass fragments, including roemer glass (r), ER20 XIV-XV (E/F).

Follow-up archaeological dig in 2014 by John Milner Assoc. at the Ft. Casimir site at 2nd & Chesnut



Initial ground penetrating radar scan to locate areas of interest



Figure 2. GPR survey area boundaries overlaid on modern aerial photograph.

Trench away from where Heite found Dutch artifacts to look for fortification lines



Result: found possible palisade line. Needs another study to find out where it goes, and shape.

Who was Ft. Casimir named after?

A display case in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam has a coat, once owned by Henry Casimir (1628) and a hat of Ernst Casimir (1628-1640). Both had bullet holes in them, and the owners both were 'Stadsholders' (~kings) of Friesland, the province where Stuyvesant grew up. Both they, and king John II Casimir of Poland have been suggested as a source for the name.

However we don't know, nor did the Directors of the City of Amsterdam.

They wrote in 1652 "For what reason this fort is so named has not been revealed to us."

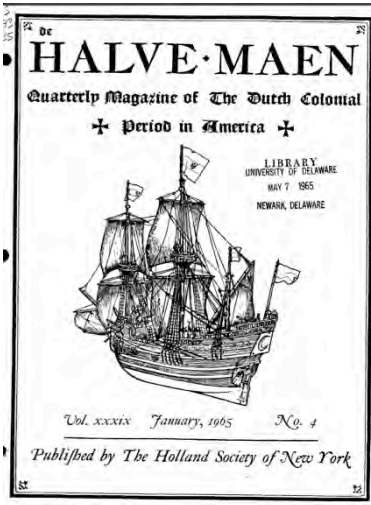


Bullet
Hole

The Rise and Fall of the Dutch West India Company



The headquarters was built in 1617, rented to the WIC from 1623, until 1647 when the company went bankrupt the first time. Stuyvesant would have come here after his leg was shot off in 1644 until he was named "Director General of New Netherland, Curacao, Bonaire, Aruba and their dependencies" in 1645. The company was then in [deep financial difficulties](#) due to the loss of its Brazilian colonies and the expense of the war thereof. Initially the company's goals were land conquest and privateering. A major success in that area was the capture of the 16 ships in the Spanish "Silver fleet". The company was in financial difficulties in 1656 when Stuyvesant retook Ft. Casimir, and that contributed to selling it to the Amsterdam. After the second bankruptcy in 1674, a new company was formed, mostly funded by the financially lucrative slave trade in the Caribbean.



Simon Hart, Director of the Amsterdam City Archives, wrote an article for the Halve Maen in 1956 on the “Colony of the City of Amsterdam on the Delaware River”. In it he quotes a 1658 letter from Jacob Alrichs, director of New Amstel to the burgomasters who had appointed him.

"Many that come hither are as poor as worms, and lazy to boot."

Comparatively few of the new arrivals were capable of doing agricultural work. The City Fathers then sent out poor house orphans to the colony. The City colony did not prosper, harvest failure, heavy rains, sickness and the behaviour of the British all contributed to its decline. In 1658 the prevalent fevers had already caused the deaths of about one hundred persons, owing to which many families were left unsupported. In August 1659 there were 110 houses and some public buildings. The number of really good farmers was estimated as being three! For the rest a total of 137 artisans (most of whom did not know their jobs), 70 soldiers and 300 women and children, had come into the colony. With one thing, and another, the City was losing money. The debts which many colonists had contracted to the City Council were never paid.

The feeling was mutual. Fifty residents (1659) deserted to Virginia and Maryland, apparently because of Alrichs' “too great preciseness”

What did New Amstel Look Like?

Maybe like New Amsterdam 1650-1657,
or Amsterdam (1600-1665)

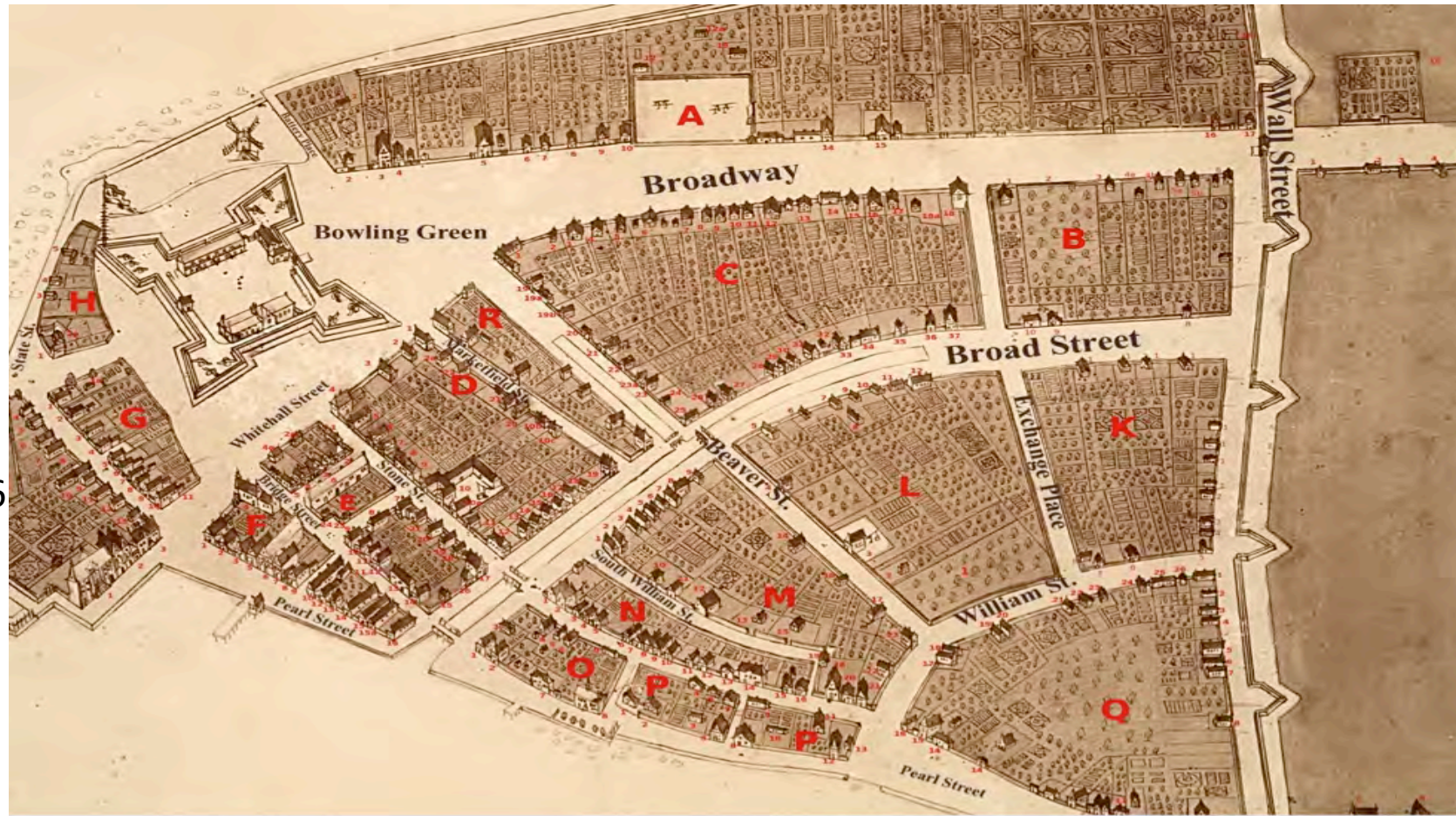


Maybe like some of the buildings in New Castle in 1804 (and 1884)



Gardens in New Amsterdam c1655

- Most houses in Manhattan had gardens, either vegetable, formal or orchard
- Lot dimensions in New Amstel were similar to those in Manhattan and were described as for 'a house and garden'
- Colonial records show that gardens in New Amstel produced cabbages and hops. Adam Onkelbach, a soldier, was accused of stealing 23 cabbages in 1656



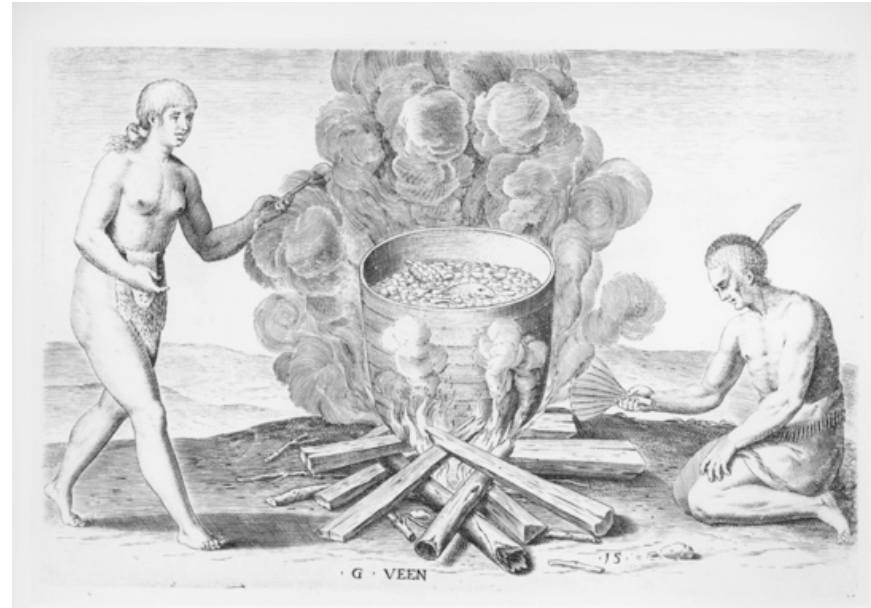
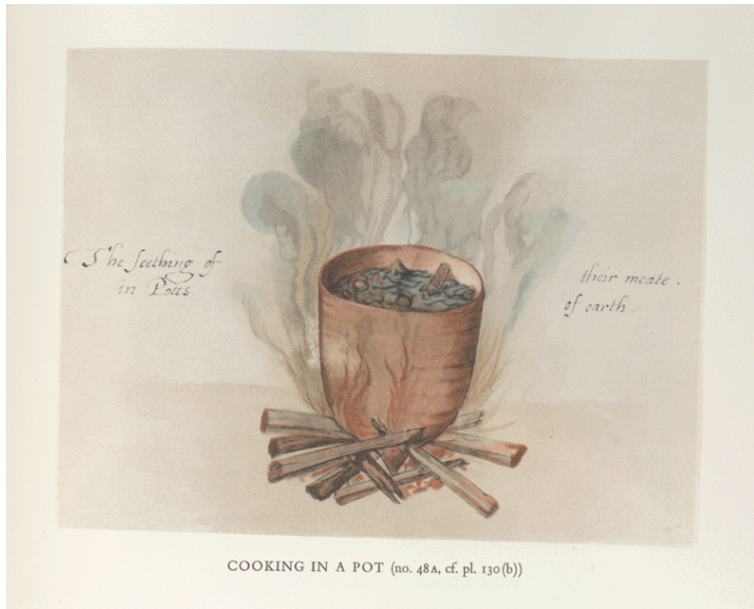
Castello Plan, NYPL

Food

(During good times)



A Common Indian food was Sepawn (suppan/sepon/suppawn) corn meal mush



Boiling stew in wooden vessel

Theodore de Bry, 1590 after John White's
1585 watercolors of North Carolina

"their common fare for which this grain [maize] is most used is porridge, there known as sappaen. Its use among the Indians is so general that rarely a day passes without their eating it, unless they are traveling or hunting., and one can hardly ever enter an Indian dwelling that this porridge is not being eaten. When they visit us or one another they first of ask and look for sappaen. It is often cooked with meat or fish when available, mostly not fresh but dried and pounded into meal. ...

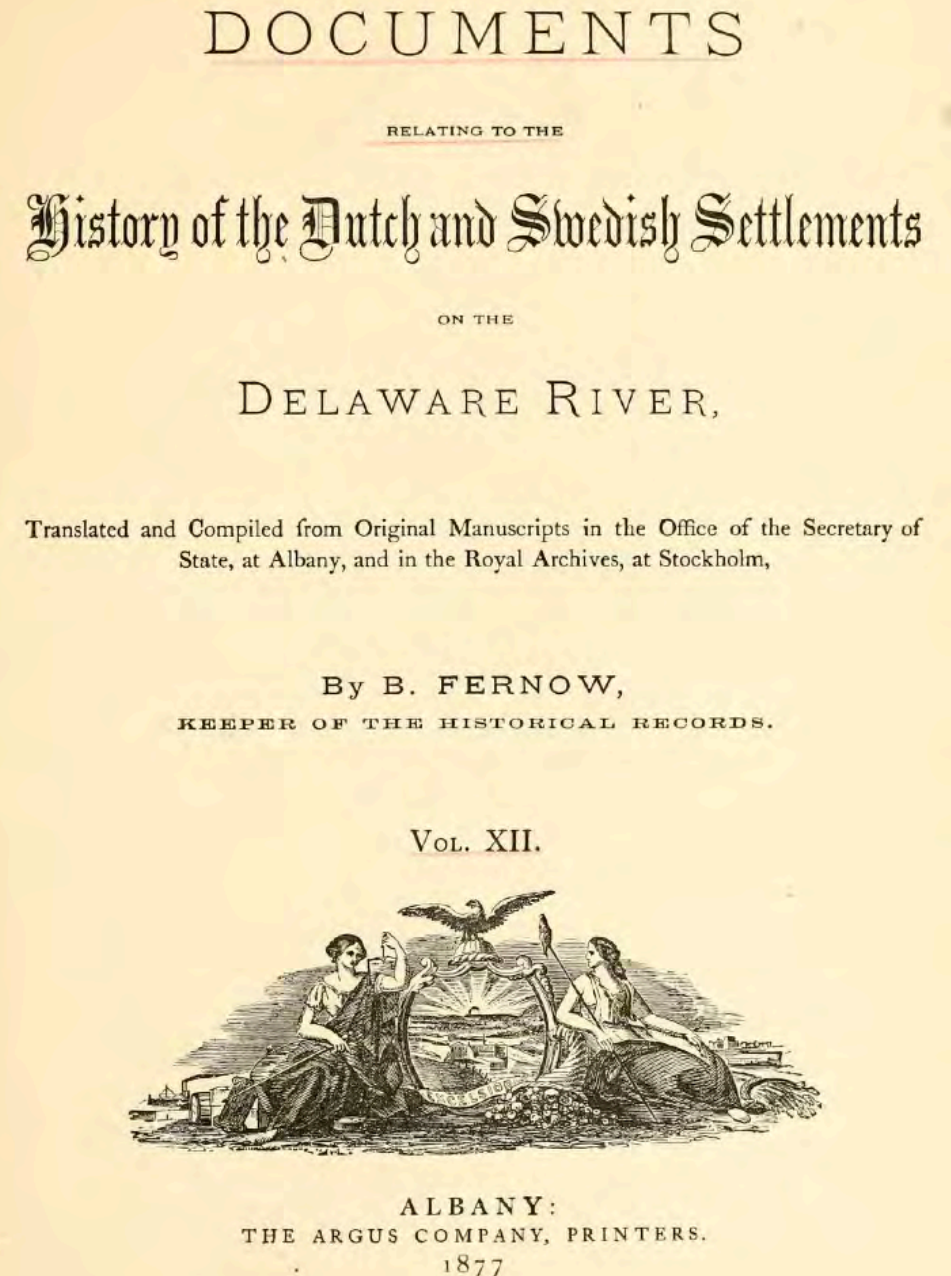
What was life like in Ft. Casimir/New Amstel?

Translations of primary documents are online
(google & archive.org):

e.g. letters to and from Stuyvesant and the directors
of Ft. Casimir & New Amstel

[NYHD \(New York Historical Documents\)](#)

<https://archive.org/details/documentsrelativ12brod>



We DO know of foods shipped into New Amstel from official records and one ship's manifest from Amsterdam, 1863

the river by undue measures, therefore it is our intention to direct hereby and earnestly recommend to your Honors, to comply with and carry out the aforesaid request, by first issuing the necessary orders, that such complaints may be avoided and the Honorable Administration of this City may have no reasons to become prejudiced against the Company's Administration in New-Netherland, which, as your Honors ought to know, cannot be advantageous for it.

5th of May, 1663, at Amsterdam.

Invoice of goods shipped in the ship "St. Jacob," skipper Peter Lucas van der Goes, destined to go to New-Amstel on the Southriver of New-Netherland.

The Honorable Commissioners and Directors of the Colony of New-Amstel consign to the Hon^{ble} Director and Council of the same.

- 2 cases of socks, 1 case of duffels, 1 pkge of linen for clothing
- 1 pkge of Muscovite cloth, 1 pkge of coarse cloth } as above
- 1 case of Pommeranian cloth, shirts and shoes
- 1 case of shoes, 1 small box of shirts
- 1 case of guns, fire-locks and others
- 1 case of matches, 1 case of swords and belts
- 1 case of bandeliers, cartridge-boxes, wheelwright's implements and other things.
- 4 kegs with bullets
- 1 case, wherein a pair of bellows
- 1 case with all kinds of tools
- 8 kegs of gunpowder
- 9 casks of seed grain
- 1 cask with soap
- 1 package of wheels
- 22 powderbags
- 4 small boxes of candies
- 1 small case of Spanish wine
- 10 hogsheads of vinegar
- 12 half awms of oil
- 600 cabbages
- 4 barrels of hard bread
- 1 small box of agricultural implements and a lot necessary for this and other purposes

Niclaes de Ring to himself

- Two mill-stones with a ring and iron handle
- 3 small packages of soap
- 1 large saw, 1 hammock
- 1 case with glas, 1 small case with sundries
- 1 chest, in it a small keg with 30 lbs of gunpowder

- 1 crate with pots and pans
- 1 half radishes.
- 4 shovels and spades and tongs packed together

Peter Cornelissen Plockhooy takes along for himself and his family

P. C. P. All kinds of necessaries and small articles for his own uses, for agricultural purposes and clothing etc., also 2 half bags of hops, guns for his people and for Frederic Gysbertsen

1 whole and 1 half wardrobe with clothing, furniture and sundries.

M Peter Lucassen for himself.

D 2 bags of hops
 D 2 hogsheads (of a hogshead) of train-oil
 16 pkges of Muscovite linen and cloth
 2 p. of brandy
 1 case of pictures

CNB 2 small bales of sail-cloth material
 P.L. 1 case with glas
 P O L

Value altogether 1338fl. Dutiable 325fl. 14 st. } 148fl 8

Jacob Coettrier to Henrick Coettrier
 1 pkge with 9 p. of duffels 38 fl = fl342
 at f 4. 16 } 54. 14
 f 49. 11 } f 293. 9

J. B. LIEFRINCK.

17th May (1663)

PETITION OF WILLIAM BEEKMAN, COMMISSARY ON THE SOUTH RIVER, FOR A PIECE OF LAND.

To the Noble, Very Worshipful, Honorable Director-General and Council of New-Netherland.

Copy. Commissary Beekman respectfully requests, that your Hon^{ble} Worships will please to grant him a certain piece of marshland and six morgens of upland or woodland, bordering on the said marsh, which is situated on the westside of Fort Altena and measures by guess about eight morgens. He would inclose it with a dike, if your Honors consent to it, and turn it into arable land. Expecting your Honors' favorable decision, etc^s

Your Hon^{ble} Worships' obedient servant
 WILH. BEECKMAN.

- Deer
- Pork, Bacon
- Peas
- Wheat, Bread
- Corn
- Grapes
- Cabbages
- Vinegar
- Cheese
- Radishes
- Beer
- Spanish, German Wine
- Brandy
- Partridges (law against shooting on Sunday in town)
- Waterfowl
- Dried codfish
- Fresh fish

Common occurrences in Ft. Casimir/New Amstel: hunger, sickness, death, fear

Glimpses of hunger in official letters to from New Amstel, New Amsterdam (NYHD)

1658, to Stuyvesant:

To the Noble, Honorable, Worshipful, Wise, Prudent and Very Discreet Mr. Petrus Stuyvesant, General in New-Netherland, Curacao etc, residing at the Mannhattans in Fort New-Amsterdam. By a savage.

I have not received .. Duffels, which is very inconvenient, as without duffels it is hard to get deer-meat or maize from the savages. Over one hundred souls have also arrived now, without that provisions have been sent with them, which causes here rather some scarcity and inconvenience. It is rather difficult to provide for many mouths, when one has but little stores, one hardly dares to think of it and I am ashamed to speak of it or to ask again your Honor, to send some necessaries of grain, which is very much needed here, also a lot of peas and some bacon.

The outposts/settlements were marginal and not self supporting;
supplies came from New Amsterdam

They complained to me lately, that they had no more victuals, as they harvested little from their land last summer, they had received their seed-corn from Alrichs very late, which was English corn and ripened late; therefore it was mostly frozen on the field, so that they have little or no provisions. These farmers have got a good deal of winter grain into the soil: yet some say, that **if they cannot get help or assistance, they will have to leave, before the new corn ripens, for they have sold their remaining clothes for eatables last winter.**

To Stuyvesant from Beekman, Ft. Altena, Jan. 1660

Last Saturday I distributed our last meat, I have yet about one ration of **bacon** and 200 lbs. of **dried codfish**. I request that your Honor will please to send us some bacon and meat by first opportunity.

To Stuyvesant from Beekman, Ft. Altena, June 1660

Sickness a frequent problem

I have been very unwell and have suffered a hard shock, likewise my wife, who is still very weak, together with some 3 or 4 of my housepeople, for a **fever or other disease prevails** here very much, so that **hardly a family is free from it**, although nobody has died yet).

Jacob Alrichs to Stuyvesant, Oct 1657

Some positive notes about the colony

Extract from the letter of Evert Pietersen, Comforter of the sick, and Schoolmaster in the Colonie established by this city, Amsterdam, on the South river, in New Netherland, dated 10 th August, 1657.

We arrived here at the South river, on the 25 th April, and found 20 families there, mostly Swedes, not more than 5 or 6 families belonging to our nation. I find the land here right good and well timbered...fine oak and hickory trees ; also, excellent land for tillage the land produces whatever it can, but of the best kind ; I therefore firmly believe were we to have 1 to 2 thousand hearty farmers we should reap an excellent crop here, where, therefore, nothing is wanting but people. Wharves are already laid out here and almost built ; land is also given out already, and every effort made to get the winter grain in the ground....

I already begin to keep school, and have 25 children, etc.

Your Honors' most obedient servant,
(Signed), Evert Pietersen.

Dated the 10 ,h August, 1657. In Fort New Amstel, on the South river, in New Netherland.

More Illness

To Mr. Petrus Stuyvesant,
General in New-Netherland, Curacao etc. residing at the Mannhattans
Per skipper Jacob, whom God may guide.

.....

A general fever-like disease has raged here again for some time and it is prevailing much among the inhabitants. The Lord please to take us into his merciful protection and relieve many weak people from it. I, too, have been ill for some days, but am now, thanks to God, a little better.

Closing herewith. Noble, Honorable, Worshipful, Wise, Prudent Sir, I commend your Honor and family with cordial salutations to God's Almighty protection. In New- Amstel, the 6th of August 1658.

Your Honor's obedient and faithful servant
J. Alrichs.

More Illness

a burning and violent feverraged badly..... almost all people here..... but few old ones have died, but rather many young children, who could not endure it ; we have also had our turn with six of us, but, God be praised, I myself did not lie long. The members of the Council Messrs. Hinijossa and Rynevelt, as well as the Sheriff and all the Schepens have most of them had *a long sickness* and are mostly still a-bed, but I hope, it will take a turn to the better, as the disease now begins to subside and the good God may please to take it away entirely and keep it from us.

Alrichs to Stuyvesant
Oct 1658, p226

Alrichs' response to criticism of his leadership and lack of ability to hire soldiers in defense of town includes illness and acts of God

that God Almighty has continually visited and punished the whole of New-Netherland, but especially this Colony, since it was established, with different plagues, as excessive winds and superabundant rains, whereby bad harvests of every kind of necessaries of life for the people as well as of fodder for the cattle and consequently great dearness of the one and the other were caused ; then came diseases, **sickness** and maladies of violent and pestilential fevers and other weakening illness, by which many died. Probably most all inhabitants of New-Netherland have been visited by them, yet none so much and so heavily as our people here, as is well known and also can be proved by the proclamations of days of fast and prayer, made in regard to them from time to time. And this too

Alrichs to Council in Manhattan , Oct, 1659

The Minister dies

Domine Welius has been buried yesterday, he died of his sickness on the 10th day. I too have had again an attack of violent fever last Monday night, having a great pressure on the chest with violent pains in the side, so that I feel very miserably; during the first three days and nights I discharged only blood and phlegm, so that it was horrible to see, it has weakened me so, than I hardly can walk alone. I hope that the Lord God will grant me a little longer life considering my wife and little children.

Beekman, Ft. Altena Dec. 1659

Director Alrichs dies

Noble, Honorable, Very Worshipful, Wise, Very Prudent Sir.
Sir.

Since my last by the Galiot we lost the Hon^l Director, Mr. Jacob Alrichs, who died at New-Amstel on the 30th of December. His Honor' s death causes a great alteration in the Colony, especially among the Council and the heirs. Mr. Hinojossa is desired as successor by a clause in the last will of the late Mr. Alrichs and established himself already somewhat sharply and harshly, as I am informed. The inhabitants desire (to see) your Honor here in the spring, to bring everything in order and appoint another Director.

...

I have been yesterday at New-Amstel the first time after my severe illness, going overland. Many of the inhabitants received me cordially and rejoiced at my being well. I did not hear that many more are inclined to go to Virginia, they prefer the Manhatans.

...

I would have like to send this letter sooner, but could not get a savage for the journey,

Beekman in Ft. Altena to Stuyvesant, Feb 1660

Prayer and fasting

[Stuyvesant ordered general days of prayer and fasting at various times including for general sickness, preparation for attacks on the Swedes, anticipation of attacks by the English ...]

Gentlemen ! I received on the 9th inst. your Honors' orders and directions in regard to a **general day of fasting and prayer**, which we shall observe and carry out according to their contents.

I refer to my last regarding our wants ; we are almost destitute of everything.

Beekman to Stuyvesant Aug, 1663

Summary: Two periods of Dutch of New Castle: Ft. Casimir and New Amstel

- Founded by Director General Peter Stuyvesant for the WIC in 1651
 - Direct response to increased Swedish Forts & end of 30 years war
 - It was a military garrison with minimal goal of settlement
 - WIC in financial difficulties, recapture from Swedes added to these
-
- Bought by City of Amsterdam in 1656 with goal of creating a colony
 - Initial troubles with quality of settlers, harvests ...
 - Close to making a trading profit when English captured it in 1664

Architectural Features – Early Georgian, 1700-1750



Amstel House, 2 E 4th

String/belt course

Glazed header
Flemish bond
Brickwork

Arch

Water table



McWilliams House, 8 The Strand

New Castle, A Walk Through Time

Benson & Hoffecker, 2011

New Castle is an extraordinary town, an early outpost of European explorers and settlers and a colonial capital beautifully situated on one of America's great rivers.

In a compact space it provides an unusual richness of architecture that spans more than three centuries. Sometimes people say that New Castle is so beautiful because it is a town that time forgot, but that isn't exactly true ... the town itself is not a museum, nor is it a place that remains frozen in an earlier era.

New Castle – an active adult community but not limited to over 55

- Easy walk to library, post office, drugstore, senior center, parks, activities, churches, restaurants
- Strong sense of community
- Housing is modest sized and affordable (maybe quirky)
- Little or no yard maintenance
- Many younger citizens including young families
- Safe, cute, interesting, picturesque