The Editor's Corner

Though it would appear that the family is the basic unit of any society, what is meant by the term "family" is constantly evolving. The modern American nuclear family, with father, mother, and their birth children, would have been as alien to the ancient Romans as it is to us our concept of the family, which included blood relations as well as all unrelated slaves and clients living within a household. The seventeenth-century Dutch concept of the family was also different from ours. Blood and marital relations went undifferentiated. Birth parents, step-parents, and in-laws were indiscriminately accorded the terms "mother" and "father." Birth siblings and stepsiblings as well as siblings-in-law were simply designated as "brother" or "sister." Distant relatives, to whom modern society attaches no label, were called "cousin."

For the historian who looks at the past from the perspective of the late twentieth century, premodern familial designations can cause considerable confusion. Genealogists play an important role in helping historians sort out these interpersonal associations. This issue of De Halve Maen presents two essays relating to the relationship between genealogy and history: Harry Macy's 1994 Rensselaerswyck Seminar talk on the interplay between genealogists and historians, and Peter Christoph's 1991 Leisler Conference talk on the impact of interfamilial relationships in late seventeenth-century New York politics.

Mr. Macy takes to task those historians who use bad genealogy for their interpretations as well as those genealogists who use fanciful historical contexts for their compilations. He perceptively notes that "reliable compiled genealogies can contribute valuable raw data for historians in their study of a society," while historians help set "family history in the larger historical context." Mr. Christoph presents a dramatically new interpretation of political events by suggesting that in breaking unspoken codes by jailing "members of his family," Jacob Leisler unleashed the bitter disputes that rent New York after 1689.

Genealogists and historians share a common reliance on written records. This means that documentary information is only what the scribe or author wanted the reader to know and thus remains interpretive. Without genetic testing, for example, blood relationships are claimed not factual; causations for historical events will always be speculative. Moreover, historians and genealogists look at documents through the prism of their age. Each generation has its own way of perceiving the same information. What genealogists and historians can do, however, is provide a clearer picture of the past so that we are able to have a better understanding of our present.

The Holland Society suffered a tragic double loss with the recent passing of past-Treasurer John Pruyn and past-President John Vander Veer. Both men contributed considerably to the promotion of the Society and its goal of preserving the record of New Netherland. They will be greatly missed by all who knew them.

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Why New Netherland Genealogists and Historians Need Each Other — An Editor’s Perspective

Harry Macy, Jr.

The editors of The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record have a good vantage point for judging the current state of New Netherland genealogy. When an author completes an article on a New Netherland family, the chances are that the article will come across our desk for consideration. Most new books on New Netherland families are sent to us for review. We get to know many of the people who are doing serious research and writing in this area. We have the opportunity as well to get to know some of the historians who specialize in New Netherland and Dutch-American history and to become acquainted with their work.

As a genealogist, most of my remarks that follow are about genealogy, but they are directed to historians as much as to genealogists. I hope they may dispel some misconceptions about genealogy and encourage historians to make more use of good genealogy.

There are differences between historians and genealogists that go beyond the subject matter they deal with. When we think of New Netherland historians today, we first think of a small group of people who hold university degrees in history, who are professors in universities or affiliated with historical societies or enterprises like the New Netherland Project, and whose work is published by university presses and in scholarly journals. There are also local amateur historians whose work may be published and many more Americans who just have an interest in history, but I do not think that anyone confuses them with the professionals in the field.

When we turn to genealogy we find a different landscape. An enormous number of Americans are pursuing genealogy as a hobby, and a significant percentage are publishing their work, usually financing publication themselves. But genealogy is not a level playing field populated entirely by amateurs. The quality of genealogical work produced in this country has always varied tremendously, and within the genealogical world some people have always risen to the top and been recognized as the best genealogical researchers, writers, editors, educators, and librarians. This is one group that rightfully claims the name “professional genealogists.” Another group of professional genealogists is those who do research for clients for pay. There is, of course, much overlap between these two groups. But historians need to recognize that the first group exists, that in the vast amount of genealogy being published there is some, if only a relatively small percentage of the whole, that tries to meet the same standards of scholarship that professional historians set for their own work. Other genealogical work must not be ignored, but it should be used with great caution. This is as true for genealogies of New Netherland families as for any other.

The best genealogists cannot be distinguished by academic credentials, since almost no American universities offer a major in genealogy. Instead, the genealogical world has developed its own institutions for research, education, and publishing. It has also developed means of identifying excellence in the field. First, there is The American Society of Genealogists, which consists of fifty fellows elected for the quality of their published work. The Board for Certification of Genealogists grants the use of the initials C.G. (and several other categories) to genealogists whose work satisfies their requirements; generally these are genealogists who intend to do work for clients. There are also many good genealogists who have not yet received either certification or one of the honors in the field. One can find them by looking to see who has had articles accepted by the leading journals or written books that have received awards or praise from reviewers.

All genealogists with an interest in New Netherland should recognize that it is to their advantage to know the top names in this specialized area and to study their work in order to see what sources they are using and how they are presenting the results of their research. It is not easy to get many genealogists to do this because the books or articles we are asking them to read do not pertain to their own families. But the exercise is essential for the molding of a good genealogist.

It probably would be impossible to determine how many...
Americans today have some New Netherland ancestry. We do know that it is a relatively low percentage compared to those for colonial New England or the South. New Netherland contained a smaller colonial population, and over the centuries their descendants intermarried extensively with other ethnic strains. Thus the modern American who has New Netherland ancestry, even if he or she still bears a New Netherland surname, almost always also has other kinds of ancestry. In fact the percentage of their ancestry that goes back to New Netherland may be relatively small.

For genealogists, this means that nationwide, researchers with New Netherland roots are a small percentage of the total. And for many of them, their New Netherland ancestry is an oddity to which they do not devote much attention. It follows that at national genealogical conferences you rarely have any New Netherland lectures, New Netherland genealogical books are not considered to sell well on the national market, and most of the genealogical periodicals devote little or no space to New Netherland. This means that those who want to encourage an interest in New Netherland genealogy must try harder to make their voices heard to ensure that New Netherland genealogy is recognized as an essential element in the larger American genealogical scene.

Interest in the genealogy of New Netherland families can be traced back to at least the middle of the nineteenth century. Jerome Holgate's American Families, published in 1848, consists of genealogies of early New York families, many with roots in New Netherland. In 1852 came James Riker's Annals of Newtown and later his History of Harlem (1881, rev. 1904), both containing many genealogies beginning in New Netherland. Jonathan Pearson's First Settlers of Albany and First Settlers of Schenectady were published in 1872 and 1873, while 1881 saw the publication of Edwin R. Purple's Ancient Families of New Amsterdam and New York. Meanwhile on Long Island, Tenus Gerrit Bergen compiled his Bergen Family in 1876 and in 1881 published his directory of Early Settlers of Kings County.

These works do not meet today's standards for documentation, and all of them contain errors, especially regarding the European origins of the settlers. Many of these early genealogists did not fully understand the old Dutch naming system. Nonetheless, much of the genealogy which they compiled has proved to be correct, and their works can still be useful starting points for the modern genealogist and historian.

As we move into the twentieth century the field widens, and it would be impossible to mention all those who have done good work on New Netherland settlers and their descendants. Special mention must be made, however, of William J. Hoffman. Hoffman was born in the Netherlands but became a United States citizen and a specialist in uncovering the Netherlands origins of New Netherland settlers. Much of his work was published in The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record. At his death, he left unfinished a dictionary of the settlers of New Netherland, arranged by province of the old country, which is available only at the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society Library. Hoffman's work was of a high standard and clearly met the demands of modern genealogical scholarship.1

The standards for modern genealogical scholarship in the United States were created by a group of genealogists led by Donald Lines Jacobus, often called the father of modern American genealogy. Though Jacobus bore a Dutch name, he lived in Connecticut and displayed a keener interest in his New Netherland ancestry than his New Netherland roots. Nevertheless, it was he who led the movement to raise the standards of American genealogy so that the same principles of scholarly research were applied to it as to other fields. This movement got underway in the 1930s but did not coalesce until after World War II. Jacobus demonstrated the new standards in articles published in his journal, The American Genealogist.2 His ideas were picked up by others and are reflected in the later issues of such other journals as The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record.3

When The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society [NYG&B] was founded in 1869, its founders were people with New England names who modeled the new organization after the New England Historic Genealogical Society, then already twenty-four years old and the only other genealogical society in the country. But, as noted, some work had already been done in New Netherland genealogy, and the NYG&B quickly attracted descendants of New Netherland families. When the Record began publication in 1870, it included genealogies and source records going back to New Netherland.

Today, 125 years later, the NYG&B Record continues to publish a significant number of compiled genealogies beginning with a New Netherland settler.4 It also includes a great deal of non-New Netherland material. Indeed, one of the problems in editing the Record is balancing the content of each issue, both to keep our readers happy and to serve the larger New York genealogical community. In each issue we try, for example, to get an ethnic mix, so that if we have a Dutch genealogy, we also have an English one, and hopefully one or more of other origins as well. We inevitably get complaints — one reader will say that the Record is too Dutch, another that we devote too many pages to Yankees, and so forth.

We also try to balance time periods so that the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries are all represented. Finally, we try to balance issues geographically to cover Long Island, New York City, and the Hudson Valley, and sometimes other parts of New York State, though we recognize that there are regional journals that can better serve such areas as Central and Western New York. In any case, you see that we cannot consider ourselves a New Netherland or Dutch journal, even though that is a significant element in our mix.

Among the current genealogical periodicals, the Record is almost the only one that is publishing compiled genealogies of New Netherland families. The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey is more or less limited to publishing source records, although in the past it too published much New Netherland

1 Hoffman's articles in the The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record run from vol. 63 (1932) through vol. 85 (1954). Of particular interest is his series "An Armory of American Families of Dutch Descent," which ran in vols. 64-72 and concluded in The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, vol. 106. He also had articles published in The American Genealogist, of which "Random Notes Concerning Settlers of Dutch Descent" (vols. 29-30) is of particular interest. Some of Hoffman's papers are in the library of The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (122 East 58th St., New York, NY 10022), as is his unfinished typescript "Settlers From The Netherlands in America Before 1700: A Compendium of Genealogical Information."

2 See Jean D. Worden, The American Genealogist, Index to Subjects in Volumes 1-60 (Franklin, Ohio, 1985).

3 See Jean D. Worden, The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record 113 Years Master Index 1870-1982 (Franklin, Ohio, 1983).

genealogy. Occasionally, a New Netherland family may be featured in The American Genealogist or National Genealogical Society Quarterly. Most other genealogical periodicals publish only source records, not compiled genealogy. In that category are the many regional, county, or local periodicals for parts of New York State and New Jersey. In still another category are such publications as the Dutch Family Heritage Quarterly and The NYG&B Newsletter, which largely publish information about genealogical research.

Although it is an historical rather than a genealogical journal, I should mention here the Holland Society's de Halve Maen, now ably edited by David William Voorhees. In the past, this journal carried some very important genealogical articles on New Netherland families and it continues to carry historical articles that should be of interest to genealogists.

In this brief look at the history of New Netherland genealogy, I have not said anything about the publication of transcripts and translations of the primary sources on which compiled genealogies are largely based. I cannot go back and name all the people who have made these records accessible to us, but special mention must be made here of the New Netherland Project and the New York Historical Manuscripts series and the many volumes they have turned out over the past twenty years. Go to the NYG&B Record, and look at the genealogies of seventeenth-century families that we have published in recent years, and every one of them will contain numerous citations to these volumes edited by Charles Gehring, Peter and Florence Christoph, and their colleagues. In fact, we cannot imagine receiving such an article today without seeing these volumes cited in it. New Netherland and New York genealogy are far richer today as a result of their efforts. Certainly this is an outstanding example of the inter-relationship between history and genealogy.

Mention must also be made of the microfilming program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has made it possible for us to see original documents with much greater ease — not just American sources but also the many European sources which they have made available on this side of the Atlantic. Again, look at recent articles on New Netherland families in the Record and observe how frequently there are references to films of the Family History Library.

Before going further, I want to make a few general remarks about genealogy. You who are genealogists should already know all this, but perhaps not all historians do. First, I am using the term "compiled genealogy." I want to be sure everyone understands that in the case of the major journals, this means a genealogy presented in a prescribed format, more specifically the preferred format in this country, which is known as "Register," after The New England Historical and Genealogical Register where it was developed. It is used, with relatively minor variations, by all of the scholarly genealogical journals.

For a compiled genealogy to be accepted by one of these journals, it is not enough for it to be complete and correct and in the proper format, it must also be properly documented. This means that a source must be cited for every claimed relationship and every event mentioned in the compilation. If possible, the citation should be to a primary source or to a previous compilation that was properly documented. The citation should be made in an accepted format and tied to the relevant text by a footnote or endnote or by being inserted into the text. In most cases, it is not acceptable to just list all the sources at the end of a family group without indicating which information was taken from which source. Furthermore, when there are discrepancies in the data as presented in the primary sources or in previous compilations, those discrepancies must be discussed. If there is no direct evidence for a statement, the author must lay out the circumstantial evidence and explain any conclusions being drawn from it. Keep these comments about documentation in mind when you look at any compiled genealogy and wonder about its quality.

I cannot claim that before Jacobus there was no acceptable documentation in American genealogy. Even in the late nineteenth century you can find American genealogies with documentation that is fairly good by today's standards. However, well into the twentieth century even the best genealogists were often still publishing inadequately documented work. For example, when Rosalie Fellows Bailey wrote her Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses in 1936, she felt no need to document most of her statements. Her later work in the Record shows how much she changed her attitude toward documentation.

While much of the best compiled genealogy is and always has been in the periodicals, in terms of number of pages much more has been published in book form, by individuals generally working without the benefit of an editor or peer review. In the Record we publish book reviews for well over 100 titles a year, including many dealing at least in part with the

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6 The Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) is located in Salt Lake City, but copies of its catalog are available at Family History Centers and many other genealogical libraries throughout the country.
New Netherland period. These titles are a mixed bag, however. Despite all the courses, lectures, and writings on how to do genealogy and how to write up the results, not to mention the examples shown in the Record and other journals, a large percentage of the compiled genealogy being published today in book form is still not properly documented. Many of these books are also poorly organized and too many authors have shown a fondness for non-standard formats and numbering systems.

It is interesting to note that in many of the new book genealogies, it is the nineteenth and twentieth century sections that are the best, because for them the compilers usually have to do original research in primary sources. For the colonial period, on the other hand, they often find that someone else already has published material on the family, and they copy that rather than do any original research. Of course, the work they are copying is not at all well documented, and in many cases is incorrect. Frequently it contains fanciful stories about a family's European origins. Or, the work being copied may be cautiously worded, but the copier ignores all the "probablist" and "perhapses," turning the previous author's guesses into facts. The result is that the colonial portion of the compilation is not just secondhand but often second-rate.

This dichotomy is especially seen in the many "all my ancestors" works which are appearing these days. Some of these volumes, tracing all of the ancestors of one individual, take up scarce library shelf space without making much of a contribution to genealogy. They often include accounts of New Netherland families, but most of these are rarely worth a second look. The knowledgeable genealogist should avoid using such secondhand accounts for the colonial period and try to get back to the original compilations and then to the primary sources from which those compilations were made, as well as to the primary sources that no previous writer has utilized.

I do not want to give the impression that all genealogies being published in book form are bad. There are many good ones. An outstanding example is Marjorie Dikeman Chamberlain's genealogy of the Johannes Dyckman family, which last year received the first Book Award of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society. In her treatment of a New Netherland family, Chamberlain met all the requirements of modern genealogical scholarship.

Many genealogists avidly collect names, dates, and places, thinking that this is all there is to genealogy or professing that it is all that they are interested in doing. They can go on forever collecting these data, filling up hundreds if not thousands of family group sheets and pedigree charts. I have always felt very strongly that genealogy must go much further than this. In order to prove relationships and find the requisite dates and places, we utilize primary sources that tell us so much more. Usually we can easily determine someone's occupation, and there are land, probate, or tax records that tell us the extent of a family's real and personal property. We can compare these to similar records for their neighbors to get an idea of the family's economic status in the community, giving us some feeling for their social position as well.

Other records tell us whether an individual was involved in public life, holding an office major or minor. At certain crucial points in history we may even gain an idea of their political beliefs. In examining court records, a particularly rich source for New Netherland and seventeenth-century New York, we may find that individuals ran afoul of the law or were frequently in court because of debts owed or owing or suits involving slander, all of which give us an idea of their personality and habits. If we are fortunate enough to have surviving letters or a diary, the individual's personality becomes more clearly defined.

Church records may at least indicate an individual's religious affiliation and sometimes shed light on their religious beliefs. We can usually determine whether someone could sign his or her name. The existence of letters, or finding a collection of books listed in an estate inventory, or the fact that someone was elected to high office or as a clerk all help us detect the extent of their education.

Few males, at least, could avoid being involved in military service, and if this included a war, the records may be numerous. They may also tell us more than military matters — for example, many eighteenth-century New York muster rolls give each man's height and coloring.

Naturally we do not find every one of these items for each individual, but by the time we have culled through these sources, we usually can begin to paint a portrait of real people, not just names, dates, and places. Genealogy, in its fullest sense, includes all these data, and the genealogist draws conclusions from them.

The genealogist should also want to set the family history in the larger historical context, and for this we turn to the

1 Marjorie Dikeman Chamberlain, Johannes Dyckman of Fort Orange and His Descendants, Volume I - The First Five Generations (East Poland, Maine, 1988).

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**THE NEW YORK**

**Genealogical & Biographical Record.**

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society having determined, at a meeting of its Board of Trustees, held on the 14th of March, 1870, to issue a regular quarterly publication, and having at the same meeting appointed a "Publication Committee," to carry out this resolve, the result, in the form of this little "Record," is now presented to the public.

A perusal of its pages will sufficiently indicate its aims and objects, and it is trusted, will serve to awaken, or at least will open the way to awakening an interest in the subjects treated therein. It will be issued quarterly, commencing with January, 1870. At present it is small in size, but the endeavor will be to make it large in interest. It will be published in the interests of American Genealogy and Biography, modelled somewhat upon the admirable production of our sister Society in Boston.

At the earliest practicable moment, the size of the Record will be doubled, and will continue to be increased in the same ratio from time to time. Contributions of literary material, such as ancient records, pedigrees, wills, &c., together with short essays on historical incidents relating to genealogy or biography, and announcement of forthcoming works in genealogy, biography, or local history are respectfully solicited.

The terms of subscription for the year 1870 will be One Dollar, and subscriptions are requested.

The Record is published under the sole supervision of the Publication Committee, and all communications relating to it, containing subscriptions, &c., should be addressed to the:

**PUBLICATION COMMITTEE,**

**MOTT MEMORIAL HALL, 64 MADISON AVE.**

New York City.

Announcement for the publication of The NYG&B Record. March 1870.

(82)
work of historians. Most genealogists start out knowing nothing, or next to nothing, about New Netherland. If they grew up in New York State, they may know a little more from studying the state’s history in school. But their picture of colonial America is usually going to be one molded by the media — whether movies, television, historical novels, or historical restorations and theme parks — and this is far more likely to have left them with images of Colonial Williamsburg and Plymouth Plantation than of New Netherland.

When a genealogist has compiled a genealogy of a New Netherland family and wants to add a bit of historical commentary to his or her work, some may turn to the first reference work they can find, often an old encyclopedia or a nineteenth-century history, and from this they come up with a simplistic and dated interpretation of New Netherland history. Thus many published genealogies of recent years contain brief paragraphs on the Dutch colony which tell us little more than the most basic facts, and often these are incorrect.

The genealogists who have delved into the primary sources, of course, have already begun to get a better idea of what an unusual colony New Netherland was, and they may convey some of this in the family history they compile. But few genealogists turn to the work of recent New Netherland historians to learn the broader significance of their data. Most are not even aware that this body of work exists, despite the efforts of some of us to bring it to their attention. A bridge is needed — perhaps a relatively popular history of New Netherland to introduce the subject, with a good bibliography for those who want to delve more deeply.

Of course, the educational problem is more than one of New Netherland history. Americans generally have very little knowledge of European history prior to the settlement of this country, except perhaps for that of the British Isles. One cannot understand New Netherland if one only looks at this side of the Atlantic. But again, the remedy has to start at a very basic and popular level, or you are going to miss most of your audience. Until something is done at this level, I am afraid that I really do not hold out much hope for improving the handling of the subject in most genealogies.

Some of the aspects of Netherland and New Netherland history that genealogists should know about are obvious, but others may not be. Some genealogists will find that their ancestors benefited from institutions that were peculiar to the Dutch. For example, the deacons of the Dutch Reformed churches and their responsibility for the poor are an important part of Netherland history. Janny Venema’s study of the Albany deacons’ records sheds light on many families affected by this institution. An interesting example is that of Gerrit Segers, whose genealogy was recently put together by Phyllis Miller and published in the Record. During the years Gerrit lived in Albany, he was almost always in need of public assistance, and the deacons’ records are actually the only direct confirmation we have that he was married and had children born in those years. Later he lived on Long Island, and the Flatbush deacons’ records again show him receiving their aid, so we know that his dependency was a long-term one. Equally interesting is the fact that his son Thomas ended up marrying Elizabeth Carstens, whose own family had also sought help from the deacons. Without these deacons’ records we might not have realized the economic and social status of these families. Without Janny Venema’s work, we also would not understand the way the Dutch provided assistance to such poor families.

The work of David Narrett, Firth Fabend, Joyce Goodfriend, and others on inheritance in colonial New York will tell the genealogist why family members made wills in a particular form, how the joint wills of a Dutch husband and wife and the equal distribution of the estate among their children reflected Dutch custom, and how these customs slowly disappeared after 1664 as English norms were forced on the colony. New Netherland’s multi-ethnic character is obvious to anyone who uses the genealogical sources, but the average researcher is unaware of the interpretation which some recent historians have drawn from this, that society in New Netherland and its successors, New York and New Jersey, was in many respects more the predecessor of modern American society than was the more homogeneous society of New England.

New Netherland genealogy is often compared or contrasted with that of New England. This is because of the geographical proximity of the two but more so because of the heavy migration from New England into New York and New Jersey, which


has resulted in so many people today having both New Netherland and New England ancestry.

We know from their writings that New Englanders often had a low opinion of native New Yorkers. If you read New Yorkers’ letters and diaries, you will find that the reverse was also true. New England attitudes, however, prevailed in the history texts long used in American schools, and this helped relegate New Netherland to the sidelines of our national memory. The bare facts about the Dutch colony may have been taught but given no significance. This has helped mold popular images of “New England as colonial America.” For example, we are constantly told that the New England town meeting was the prototype for American democracy. Few people know that New York also held town meetings, in those parts of the colony that were organized into towns, even in towns originally established by the Dutch. Genealogists, who make much use of town meeting records, can help make this better known.

In the genealogical world we often hear complaints about how hard it is to do New York genealogy and how New York records are supposed to be so poor and so hard to find and use. The same criticism is sometimes directed at New Jersey. The comments usually come from people more accustomed to doing genealogical research in early New England where research is supposed to be much easier.

If New Netherland records are compared to New England records of the same period, however, New Netherland actually stands up very well, and it can even be argued that New Netherland records are better. Early Dutch church records have survived to the same extent as church or vital records in New England for the same period. In them and in other Dutch records, married women are almost always recorded with their maiden names, quite the opposite of New England practice. Since the Dutch had already converted to the modern Gregorian calendar, one does not need to worry about the double dates that confuse English records of the period. New Netherland records are filled with references to settlers’ places of origin in Europe, in sharp contrast to the relatively few such references in New England records. The listing of witnesses to baptisms, usually missing from New England church records, affords valuable clues for reconstructing New Netherland families. And in the many other New Netherland records, especially those of the various courts, we get a detailed picture of life in the colony quite equal to that afforded by comparable records of New England.

Where there is a weakness in the records of the New Netherland period, it is in the English settlements of New Netherland, where the seventeenth-century church records are completely lost, and there are very few vital records, even though many other civil records have survived. When comparing a New England town to an English town of New Netherland, the New England town may well have the better records of the two. Yet, if an English family happens to show up in a Dutch church or other Dutch record, information about them may be found there that would not appear in a comparable New England record. We only need to look at some of the early English marriages in the New Amsterdam Dutch Church, each giving at least a county of birth in England for both bride and groom, data not included in New England marriage records of the time.

After the 1664 English conquest, unfortunately, there was a gradual decline in the genealogical value of some categories of New York records at a time when records in New England become more complete. New York and New Jersey, however, continue to have good records overall. Indeed, even for the eighteenth century, if church records are available for a New York or New Jersey family there may be little difference between researching them and a contemporary family in New England.

The New Netherland genealogist may face some peculiar problems not encountered in other forms of American genealogy. One of these involves the late adoption of surnames, often resulting in male-line descendants of one settler having two or even three different surnames. Nothing comparable exists among English, French, or German settlers, all of whom arrived with fixed surnames already borne by their families for many generations.

In most cases, genealogists succeeded long ago in connecting the surnames adopted in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to the right New Netherland settler, who usually was known only by his patronymic. Some of these connections, however, have only been ascertained very recently, and some have yet to be resolved. A few years ago, the late George Olin Zabriskie published an account of the Van Blarcom family in the Record. The family descended from Jan Lubbertsz, a son of the immigrant Lubbert Ghysbertsz, who at one time had lived in Blaricum. Lubbert also had a son Gerrit, whom Zabriskie passed over rather quickly. Tracing back one of many Gerritsen or Garrison families, I discovered that they were in fact the descendants of this Gerrit Lubbertsz, having adopted their patronymic as a surname.10 This is a typical example, but one that took a long time to figure out.

Reliable compiled genealogies can contribute valuable raw data for historians in their study of a society. Historians, of course, are just as welcome as anyone else to try their hand at genealogical research. But genealogy can become very complicated and time-consuming. Good genealogists must be


Teunis G. Bergen, pioneer in New Netherland genealogy.
thoroughly acquainted with a vast array of primary and secondary sources for their areas of specialization. They must also have a thorough grounding in modern genealogical technique. They should be familiar with the state of the art in American genealogy today, which means keeping up to date with the leading periodicals and participating in organizations or attending conferences where there is the opportunity to network with other genealogists whose interests overlap their own. I doubt that most historians are going to have the spare time required to develop this kind of expertise or the interest in genealogy that one needs to pursue the subject in such depth. Historians should instead be able to rely on competent genealogists whose work they can trust sufficiently to use as data in their own studies.

How can these data be used? On one level the historian's research may involve specific individuals or families, and all that they need is some comment on the family's origin or composition. But at a broader level, the social historian in particular may be less interested in individuals than in the society as a whole, and the data in reliable compiled genealogies will help such historians to judge such topics as family size, age at marriage, infant mortality, naming customs, ethnic and religious intermarriage, social mobility, migration patterns, and, in the case of New Netherland families, the drift away from the Dutch language and Dutch Reformed Church.

If historians are going to use compiled genealogies, they need to know how to find these genealogies and how to judge the quality of what they find. To determine whether a genealogy has been compiled, one first looks at published catalogs of major libraries, such as the series on genealogies in the Library of Congress (LC) and the published catalog of the New York Public Library's Genealogy Division (NYPL), 11 One can go directly to a major library and search the catalog, but remember that no one collection is going to be so complete that it includes all titles on the subject. In the case of recent New Netherland genealogies in book form, one could scan recent volumes of the Record for book reviews. Also look for entries in our library's accession list published in the Record for recent titles that will not be found in the published LC or NYPL catalogs.

There are many collective genealogical works which contain relatively brief accounts of many families, often the only ones in print. Sometimes these are quite well done, but when a book deals with so many families, most libraries are not going to catalog it under each of the family names. Therefore, it is easy to miss such a compilation. There is a guide to some of the earlier books of this type by G. Rodney Crowther. 12 For some of the later collective works and also periodicals that include New Netherland genealogy, Henry Hoff has compiled lists of the families, published in our NYG&B Newsletter. 13

I have already stressed the importance of the periodicals, and for these there are several subject indexes. The most inclusive is the relatively new PERSI, or Periodical Source Index, covering all genealogical periodicals since 1847, including the Record. As it is not perfect, researchers may also find it wise to check the earlier index by Jacobus as well as the Genealogical Periodical Annual Index. still being published. Specifically for the Record, there are the annual every-name volume indexes and the composite subject index by Mrs. Jean Worden which goes up to 1982. The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey has a composite every-name index covering most of the volumes in which you are likely to find compiled genealogies. 14

There is a book called Founders of American Families, by Meredith Colket, which can be a shortcut to identifying published work on a family. The society for which this book was compiled requires descent from settlers arriving within fifty years of the founding of Jamestown, or by 1657, so it cuts off right in the middle of one of the busiest periods of immigration to New Netherland. For New Netherland arrivals up to 1657, however, it can be useful. 15

Finally, do not overlook the possibility that something has been published in the Netherlands. For this purpose we have the multi-volume index whose title in English would be the Genealogical Repertorium. Several recent articles in the Record benefited from checking the Repertorium. One was my own article on the Verschuer family of Bushwick. Using the Repertorium, I found a lengthy article on a family of the same

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name in a Dutch publication, and there in the middle of that article were the names of the couple who started the American family. They disappeared from Dutch records, and the author had not realized that this disappearance coincided with their migration to New Netherland. The Dutch article added several generations to the family’s lineage. Unfortunately, that kind of luck is unusual, but the *Repertorium* should be checked nevertheless.10

It is also possible that there is an article in the pipeline, waiting to be published, on the very family on which you are working. Editors like myself would be happy to let an historian know if such an article exists, and, with the consent of the author, the historian might be able to preview the article.

If you do not find everything that has been published, especially the more recent work, you may innocently end up using an outdated or inaccurate genealogy of the family or mistakenly conclude that no genealogy exists. For example, an article about a year ago in *Seaport* magazine dealt with a branch of the Van Beuren family for which there was a good genealogy in the *Record.*11 The author failed to check the *Record* and went to a lot of trouble looking in city directories, censuses, and like, never finding much of what was readily available in the *Record* article.

In describing an immigrant, the genealogist, historian, or biographer is going to want to include the person’s place of origin. If you cannot find a primary source statement or a good genealogy of the family that proves the origin, it may be best not to mention it at all. The example of Jochem Caljer comes to mind. Over the years everyone has suspected that Jochem was not Dutch, as he did not have a recognizable Dutch surname and never appeared with a patronymic. John Evjen, who was always looking for more Scandinavians among the settlers, thought Jochem was Norwegian or Danish.12 Some have thought he was English, because many descendants spell the surname Collier, in the English way. Of course, the first name Jochem or Joachim is unknown in England, but that fact was ignored. Still other genealogists have thought this man was German or French, and one decided to compromise and make him a Belgian. Several years ago, when I first looked at the Amsterdam notarial abstracts, a reference to Jochem Caljer jumped off the screen. It was Caljer’s contract with Jonas Bronck, who brought him over to New Netherland. There was the clue we had all been looking for, for the document called Jochem Caljer “van Buitenzen.” I subsequently was able to identify this town, which is in Mecklenburg, Germany, and I published the discovery in the *Record* in January 1990.13 Researchers on this family who do not do a thorough search for all the available literature may well miss this article and only find the earlier works with their hodgepodge of erroneous ideas of the Caljer origin.

Besides the name you are interested in, check genealogies of other families that lived in the same geographic area or were linked to your family by marriage or in some other way. Historians may want to communicate with the genealogists who are specialists in a particular time and place, such as New Netherland. How do you identify these genealogists? One way is to read journals like the *Record* to see who is writing on the subject in one form or another. Another is to check the programs of national conferences to see who is speaking on New Netherland or New York or New Jersey; there is a new publication by Joy Reisinger which indexes lectures given at twenty-seven national conferences over the past sixteen years.14 If you find one expert, the trail may lead to another, as they tend to know each other.

Once a genealogy is found, it is important to check for subsequent corrections or additions. If it is an article, later issues of the same periodical should be searched. In the *Record* we publish additions and corrections in each October issue, and these often contain crucially important information. In the case of a book, it is quite common for the author to issue a supplement several years later, and not every library may have this. The journals should also be checked for reviews of the book, as the reviewer may have made a critical comment of value to the researcher. The book may, of course, also be corrected in a subsequent article, not in book form. This just points up the importance of finding everything written on the family and not stopping at the first title discovered.

How can the historian judge whether a genealogy is competently compiled? I would say the first test is the documentation. If it is inadequate or non-existent, the warning flag should go up at once. Even if documentation is extensive, the reader should check some of the more important citations to see if they do support the compiler’s text. Particularly look to see whether the compiler has changed the sense of the original source by careless use of language.

Proof of basic relationships is key to a successful compiled genealogy. If a man and woman are listed as husband and wife, is adequate proof cited for the relationship? Is each of the children attributed to them adequately documented as their child? Watch out especially for dates of birth, marriage, and death. Do they make sense? Or, on closer analysis, do we find a woman in her thirties in an unlikely marriage with a boy half her age or a woman bearing children when she was in her fifties and sixties, who were perhaps actually her grandchildren? Such errors are more likely to be present when insufficient attention has been paid to dates. When no dates can be found, the genealogist should estimate the years and show the basis for the estimation. If they do not do this, there is a greater chance of confusing generations. Poorly-compiled American genealogies, especially for the colonial period, frequently contain errors like these, and the historian or the genealogist must beware, or they will only perpetuate a faulty account of a family.

One last comment — in looking at the work of historians, I always find the footnotes or endnotes and the bibliography of special interest, because they so often direct me to new sources. Hopefully, the notes in well-compiled genealogies will be similarly beneficial to historians.

Too many genealogists are making use of bad history, or inadequate history, or no history at all. But historians cannot be smug about this — time and again we see historians citing outdated genealogies, suggesting to us that they have either missed the later work on the family or missed the point that when no later work has been done, it may be wise to go to the primary sources rather than utilize a now ancient and discredited genealogy. Most of the New Netherland historians have had a few genealogical references in their work, and some have included a great many such references and have shown a good command of the subject. We hope that we can encourage all of them to be more familiar with what has been accomplished and what is being accomplished by good genealogists. By working together we can, I think, produce both better history and better genealogy, as we strive to understand the people of New Netherland and their descendants.


13 Harry Macy, Jr., “Jochem Kalten/Calijer/Colyer: His Place of Origin Identified,” *NYGAB Record,* 121 (January 1990), 36-37.

Social and Religious Tensions in Leisler’s New York

Peter R. Christoph

Social, political, religious, and economic conflict increasingly polarized New York in the 1680s: Dutch against French and English, Puritan against Royalist, fur traders against port authorities, American merchants against European ones, Catholic against Anglican, Reformed against Lutheran, rising generation against the establishment. These unresolved areas of conflict turned the unstable political situation of 1689 into a dangerous and eventually tragic one during Jacob Leisler’s administration of government in New York.

New York from the beginning had a multitude of languages and nationalities, religions and races, a fact traceable in large part to its Dutch origins: the Netherlands in the seventeenth century had permitted freedom of expression in politics and freedom of conscience in religion, which attracted refugees from every country in Europe. One English traveller wrote that you could hear the Dutch say things about the government on every street corner that would get them hanged in any other country. In the religious sphere there was in theory an established church, the Dutch Reformed. In the major port cities of the Netherlands, however, the pragmatic Dutch looked the other way when immigrant communities organized their own congregations, letting these illegal churches exist as part of the price to pay in order to attract foreign laborers to the Netherlands, which, like most of plague-ridden Europe, remained seriously underpopulated. Scandinavians, Germans, French, English, Scots and Irish, Spaniards and Italians, Poles, Czechs and Croatians, Jews, Catholics, and all manner of Protestants: the Netherlands was a magnet for the discontented and adventurous.

Thus the settlers of New Netherland included a great many people from the Netherlands who were neither Dutch nor Reformed but rather former immigrants to the Netherlands who had not made a success there and had come to the New World to try again. But what they found here was greater restriction on religious practice, particularly after the arrival of Petrus Stuyvesant, who harassed Lutherans, Quakers, and Jews. Roman Catholics living in New York and Albany as early as 1643, as well as Mennonites on Manhattan in 1659, also were not allowed to worship publicly. Non-Calvinists were discontented with this situation. Among the Lutherans, the Frisians had a further grudge against the Dutch, who had been trying for centuries to eradicate their language, customs, and ethnic identity.

New Netherland was conquered by the English in 1664.

This displeased not only the Dutch inhabitants but also the Puritans on Long Island, who were unhappy to fall under a Royalist government, having come to America to escape the Anglican church and the king. They sought to have Long Island placed under the authority of either Connecticut or Massachusetts but submitted when Governor Richard Nicolls threatened to prosecute them for treason.

Governor Nicolls had been ordered by the Catholic duke of York to tolerate non-Anglicans, which of course included everyone in the colony outside of the new government. New York therefore was to enjoy greater tolerance than the English in England. Without getting into the political reasons for this, we do want to consider the results. The Lutherans, for example, had been persecuted by the Dutch until the English granted them freedom of public worship in 1664. This continued until 1673, when a military force from the Netherlands re-captured New York. During the next fifteen months under Dutch rule, the Lutheran minister was forbidden to baptize, the sextons were forbidden to dig graves, and in October 1673 the Lutheran church building at Manhattan was torn down.


Two important early studies of religion in New Netherland are Frederick James Zwierlein, Religion in New Netherland, 1623-1664 (Rochester, N.Y., 1910) and Samuel Oppenheim, The Early History of the Jews in New York, 1654-1664 (New York, 1909).

In a letter from Nicolls to John Underhill, for which see Peter R. Christoph and Florence A. Christoph, eds., Books of General Entries of the Colony of New York, 1664-1673, (Baltimore, Md., 1982) 125-127.

Christoph and Books of General Entries. 67While there is no question that the Netherlands offered freedom in the area of religion to a greater extent than any other country of that time, it was far from freedom of religion in the modern sense. The strictness or liberality of interpreting laws pertaining to religious toleration depended at any particular moment upon the political strengths of Calvinist hardliners in government. The unpredictability of the situation is suggested in a letter of May 4, 1655 (Arnold J.F. van Laer, trans., The Lutheran Church in New York, 1649-1772 [New York, 1946], 19), from the Lutheran consistory at Amsterdam to the Lutherans at Manhattan:

As to our advice and counsel regarding the presentation and delivery of the two distinct petitions sent over, one to the high and Mighty Lords the States General of the United Netherlands and the other to the honourable directors of the Charter of West India Company here, to obtain freedom of the public exercise of religion, we are of opinion and fear that the presentation thereof will hurt rather than promote your cause and intention and that they would only be thrown into the fire, since we daily and more and more find it to be the maxim of our high as well as lower authorities that on the subject of religion, other than their own, they are willing to connive to some extent and to overlook, but never, or very rarely, directly, by apostasy, to give their consent to the public exercise thereof, for which reason we have kept your petitions in our custody. That, by the grace of God, we, here in this country, under our laudable regents, freely and unmolested practice and exercise our religion, this has likewise come about in no other way than in length of time, by connivance, and we advise you follow this example.


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Permission to rebuild elsewhere was not granted until the following May. In the autumn of 1674, the colony was returned to English rule, and the Lutherans were again granted freedom of public worship, this time by Governor Edmund Andros. When the second Andros administration fell in 1689 and the Calvinist Jacob Leisler assumed command, we should not be surprised that most Lutherans did not flock to Leisler’s banner.

When New Netherland became an English province, English Jesuits in Maryland began riding the circuit to New York, at first using Staten Island as a base, since a Catholic community was already in existence there. During King William’s War (1689-1697), Jacob Leisler would order Richmond County officials to secure anyone so much as reputed to be a Catholic; the charge did not have to be proved. It is not hard to imagine where Catholic sentiments lay during the Leisler administration, but were Catholics numerous enough to matter? There is some evidence that they were.

During Thomas Dongan's administration, 1683-1688, it is certainly significant that not only was Governor Dongan a Catholic, but so were the commandants of both forts in the colony — Anthony Brockholls in New York and Jarvis Baxter at Albany. Provincial Father John Warner in Maryland proposed making New York the “head and centre” of the Jesuit mission in English America, and three Jesuits and two lay brothers settled on Manhattan, where they established a church and parochial school. Incidentally, city residents were shocked when several major officials of the government, all Protestants, enrolled their sons in the Jesuit school in order to study Latin.

Religion was only one area of tension in the colony. After 1664 the English held the political power in the colony, but power is not particularly useful unless it can be translated into something tangible, such as land or money, and the Dutch were not inclined to share much of either. However, it was sometimes necessary to compromise, and the Dutch of New York were, if nothing else, pragmatic. We find a nice example of a merger of interests in the marriage between William Nicolls, colonial attorney general, Queens County clerk, and member of the Provincial Council, and Anna van Rensselaer, sister of the fourth patroon of Rensselaerswyck. Through this connection, William Nicolls soon became possessed of property on Long Island, in New Jersey, and in the Hudson Valley. His son, Rensselaer Nicolls, inherited van Rensselaer lands near Albany where he settled, married a Dutch-English wife, became a judge, and enjoyed the comforts of being connected to both the English political system and the Dutch landed gentry.

For persons of whatever status contemplating marriage in the seventeenth century, the possible advantages for both

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6 The church was one of several buildings torn down in order to improve the city’s fortifications, but the delay in permitting the relocating of the Lutheran church was hardly due to lack of available space (I.N.P. Stokes, The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 2: 225, which cites Records of New Amsterdam, 7: 13 and New York Colonial Documents 2: 633-636; see also New York Colonial Manuscripts, 23: 424-425, 433 [p. 53] at the New York State Archives, Albany). One suspects that the delay was somehow related to the Lutheran minister’s annual schedule of departing in the fall to spend six months in Albany.


8 For a detailed study of the Catholic presence in seventeenth-century New Netherland and New York, see Peter R. Christoph, “The Time and Place of Jan van Loon: A Roman Catholic in Colonial Albany,” de Halve Maen, 60 (September-December 1987), nos. 2-3.

9 Brodhead, History of the State of New York, 2: 487.
parties (or both families, for that matter) were considered most seriously. It is misleading to think in terms of discrete families of wealthy colonists — the Schuyler family, or Livingston family, or Bleecker family. There was one extended family of wealthy merchants and gentry. One branch was composed of landowners with estates of hundreds of thousands of acres in the Hudson Valley — Van Cortlandts, Schuylers, and Van Rensselaers. Another branch of the family, including Cuylers and Bleeckers, controlled Albany city hall. A third branch, Van Cortlandts, Philipses, and Bayards, served on the governor's council and enjoyed great influence in Manhattan. The economic and political base of the colony was virtually in the hands of this one extended family.

In colonial New York, the family served many of the purposes later assumed by labor unions, chambers of commerce, political parties, and lobbyists, providing jobs to its members and exerting political pressure in favor of laws beneficial to the family. Bonds of kinship encouraged people to work together for their mutual benefit, even when there was considerable personal animosity as, for instance, between Maria van Rensselaer and Robert Livingston, who both wanted to control Rensselaerswyck.

When the English conquered the Dutch colony of New Netherland in 1664, it changed the roster somewhat as to who was socially acceptable and politically important but did not change the fact that one needed family connections to advance. One person who was well aware of how the game was played was Robert Livingston. Born in Scotland and raised in the Netherlands, Livingston was comfortable in both the English and Dutch languages, which gave him a great advantage in New York. However, there were limits as to how far a Scotsman could go in a society controlled by Dutch merchants. He solved the problem by marrying Alida Schuyler, sister of Albany's mayor and widow of Nicolaes van Rensselaer. Both admired and despised for his ambition, Livingston neutralized opposition to him by contracting the marriage with Alida, for to spite him, the Dutch families would also have had to spite her. Though they balked at his efforts to take control of Rensselaerswyck, they encouraged the governor to give him a manor of his own.

Not all Dutch families were wealthy. A middling family was established by the brothers Albert and Andries Bradt, who arrived in Rensselaerswyck in 1637. They operated at various times a tobacco plantation, some sawmills, a fur trading business, apple orchards, and cattle herds and speculated in real estate. Various members of the family married into local families of merchants, plantation managers, and middle-level public officials. These families intermarried, cousins marrying cousins, as had their social betters, forming, as they had, a group holding its position in society by restricting family membership to those of a certain class. They aimed not to marry beneath their station but rather to contract marriages with those who could help them rise on the ladder through business or political connections. Thus we find the occasional marriage of a Bradt or one of their kin with a van Rensselaer or Schuyler or Livingston.

For those at the bottom, there was little value in a tight family structure: people wanted to move up, not stay where they were. We might note for an example the family of John Radcliff, a corporal in the English army and so a person of no great consequence by either rank or nationality in Albany society. Radcliff married a Dutch girl, Rachel van Valkenburg, which gave him access to some very minor city offices, such as city porter and rattle watch. But there was no advantage at this economic level in their children marrying cousins, and only one of their seven children did. Among the other spouses is a mixture of nationalities and religions and of incomes from middling to poor.

Just as there were political and economic considerations to marriage among Anglicans and Dutch Reformed, so was the same true of Lutherans. It appears that Lutherans were shut out of the top level of society — no Lutherans were among either the landed gentry or members of the governor's council but otherwise they ran the full gamut of society from upper middle class to slave. What we find is a structure very much like that of society at large, with certain groups within the church intermarrying while excluding other families. For example, in the Albany congregation, we find that no member of the four leading Lutheran families (Evertsen, La Grange, Van Loon, and Halenbeck) married a Lutheran who was not

10 The seminal work is by Sung Bok Kim, Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York: Manor Society, 1664-1775 (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1978).
11 Thirty-one of the first thirty-three mayors were related by blood or marriage.
14 The term should be understood in a relative sense. Jeremias van Rensselaer was land poor, often short of hard cash, but was the son of a diamond merchant. Hard cash was extremely difficult to come by in the colony, and there were no banks, so wealth was measured in property and paper (account book) wealth.
15 Peter R. Christoph, Albert Andriessen Bradt: A Norwegian Settler in Rensselaerswyck (Sarasota, Fla., 1987).
a member of these four families. Whenever there was a shortage of eligible marriage partners, well-to-do Lutherans married well-to-do Calvinists, which suggests that economic distinctions were of greater significance than religious or ethnic ones.

Whatever the truth of the matter, Lutherans perceived themselves as victims of economic discrimination. In 1670 they petitioned the Albany court for relief, claiming that they themselves as victims of economic discrimination. In 1670 they petitioned the Albany court for relief, claiming that they suffered from bias because of their religion and also that they were assessed more than their neighbors. The court denied that any basis existed for their complaints, but Lutherans continued to believe that the scales were tipped against them. In business they were finding themselves shut out of the best opportunities, particularly in the fur trade. Stymied in the city, most moved out into the countryside to form rural communities.

In considering tensions in the colony, we should not overlook regional differences. Every monopoly granted to New York City and every tax collected on imports and exports was money out of the pockets of Albany’s merchants. As a result they hated New York, and although the enmity predated the English conquest in 1664, it was greatly exacerbated when the tax collector became English. It did not take long before Albany hated English New York City with a passion. Twenty-five years after the English conquest, power in Albany was still held by the Dutch, who controlled commerce and the courts. The English were unwanted, unwelcome, and suffered all the usual tribulations of a newly arrived ethnic minority.

Englishman Richard Pretty was appointed by the governor as Albany tax collector in 1674, but he found it almost impossible to perform his duties, and the governor was finally forced to replace him with Robert Livingston who, as husband of Alida Schuyler, was more palatable to the inhabitants. Livingston already had numerous other paying jobs, and Pretty did not forgive him for taking away one of his, but there was hardly any point in arguing: Livingston’s brother-in-law, Peter Schuyler, was a colonial power as leader in the fur trade monopoly. Young Schuyler, early on, had accommodated himself to the English government and among other rewards was appointed by Governor Dongan in 1686 as Albany’s first mayor.

It is not surprising that when Jacob Leisler took control of New York in 1689, Schuyler and Livingston were identified with the ousted government of Sir Edmund Andros, while Englishman Richard Pretty supported the new government. Leisler appointed Pretty as Albany sheriff and tax collector, his two former positions, and also surveyor and searcher. A year later Pretty had the further satisfaction of forcing his enemy, Livingston, out of Albany and into exile. Those who explain away “Leisler’s rebellion” as Dutch versus English overlook such Leisler supporters as Richard Pretty (and, of course, Samuel Edsall, who was on Leisler’s council). In examining the ethnic factor in the rebellion it is also clear that not all of Albany’s wealthy Dutch sided with Schuyler. At least some of Abraham Staats’s sons were Leislerians. Staats had been a powerful leader in Albany before the English arrived, but since the governor thereafter had the final say as to who held public offices, even in Albany, it was possible to exclude the most recalcitrant Dutchmen and appoint persons with a more cooperative spirit. Thus occurred the fall of Abraham Staats, president of the city’s magistrates, and the rise of Peter Schuyler, not coincidentally a shirrta relative of the van Rensselaers.

Of course, those in Albany who were willing to go along with the English did not do so out of any fondness for them but because they wanted the governor to continue Albany’s monopoly in the fur trade. However, most residents were shut out of the fur trade and so had no particular reason to look favorably on the English, and many went out of their way to be unpleasant to Englishmen.

Albany’s attitude toward the English was shared by many New York City Dutch. When the city had been attacked in 1673 by a military force from the Netherlands, the city burgour guard mutinied and joined the invaders. When English control of the colony was reestablished a year later, the New York city fathers refused to swear allegiance to the King of England until they were arrested and threatened with confiscation of their property, and even then Nicolaes Bayard held out and actually spent time in the dungeon before finally submitting. New York’s Dutch were thereafter more circumspect than Albany’s, obviously because of their proximity to the English, but as Richard Nicolls had prophesied, “We cannot expect they love us.”

In the early 1680s the local Albany government, led by Peter Schuyler and Robert Livingston, had become sufficiently English to merit consideration for a city charter: Anglo-Saxon rules of jurisprudence had been adopted, followed by the use of the English language in court and the replacement of Dutch political offices with English ones. The ordinary inhabitant of Albany might well have perceived the courts thereafter as foreign, no longer representative of the community, but even worse was to come.

In 1685 the duke of York succeeded to the crown as James II and immediately began strengthening his control at home and abroad, including among his acts the nullification of New York’s Charter of Liberties and Privileges (except for the article guaranteeing freedom of conscience and public worship). Following King James’ lead, Governor Dongan issued a charter to Albany in 1686 that considerably reduced the independence of local authorities, including making the four principal officials dependent upon the governor and the king for their appointments. Peter Schuyler went along with this and was appointed mayor. Because the charter strengthened the hands of the Catholic king and governor, it was denounced by opponents as a papist document.

Relations between New France and New York were seriously complicated in this period, both by the threat of war between their parent nations and by the economic and military policies of New York’s allies, the Iroquois, who in the mid-

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16 A.J.F. van Laer, translator and editor, Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady, 1666-1673 (Albany, N.Y., 1926), 1: 144.

17 In particular at Preven Hook (Stottville, Columbia County), Normanskill (Guilderland, Albany County), and Loonenburgh (Athens, Greene County).

18 Christoph and Christoph, eds., Books of General Entries, 2, 22; van Laer, Minutes of the Court of Albany, Rensselaerswyck and Schenectady, 2: 160.

19 A simple scanning of the names of persons receiving commissions from Leisler reveals the ethnic diversity in his government; O’Callaghan, Calendar of Historical Manuscripts, 2: 185-200.

1680s laid siege to Montreal. When war between England and France led to hostilities between the colonies, the loyalties of New York's resident French immediately became suspect. The Albany area had a small but cohesive French community, united by language but diverse in religion. Huguenot merchants had come to Albany via Amsterdam and London, while a considerable number of Catholic fur traders from Canada had settled to the north at Saratoga.

In May 1689 the government of New York collapsed, having neither popular support nor a commission from William and Mary, who in the so-called Glorious Revolution had ousted James II and become rulers of England. From out of the ensuing anarchy, Jacob Leisler emerged as acting governor. By way of qualifications he was a wealthy merchant, captain of the burgher guard, arbitrary, staunch in his Calvinism, and fervently anti-Catholic.

 Seventeenth-century New Yorkers were not necessarily educated to the virtues of tolerance: more likely they had been taught not to trust anyone outside the family. To the north was a French army that had swept through Mohawk territory twice in the 1660s, once reaching Schenectady, and would again in 1690: people wondered, would the French traders at Saratoga provide expert guides to an invading force? A seaborne French army would want a staging area on shore: was New York City safe with a Roman Catholic community on Staten Island, led by Thomas Dongan who had long served in the French army? Without strong forts, New York and Albany could be easily conquered, as had been demonstrated in 1664 and 1673: in a war with Catholic France, were the forts secure under their Catholic commandants Brockholl and Baxter? And how reliable were Protestant government officials if their children in school were under the influence of clever Jesuits? These were troubling questions individually; collectively they seemed to spell disaster unless the government acted swiftly, decisively, even ruthlessly. Or so the rabidly anti-papist Leislerians convinced themselves.

While the war against New France agitated latent anti-Catholic prejudice, the political crisis at the outset of the Leisler administration triggered polarization of economic, political, ethnic, and religious groups. Lutherans, who owed their toleration to the English, preferred government by Anglicans or English Catholics to government by Calvinists. In up-river communities, Leislerian support was particularly strong from merchants, plantation managers, and public officials just below the top rank, all looking for the chance to move up if someone at the top slipped and frustrated that so few such opportunities occurred.

By all accounts, the rabble supported Leisler against Albany's leaders. A curious confrontation occurred when Leisler's son-in-law, Jacob Milbome, arrived in Albany at the head of an army to take control of the fort. Mayor and militia captain Pieter Schuyler and troops loyal to him locked themselves in the fort, which they refused to surrender. Milbome's army, meanwhile, was fed and housed by discontented Al bani ans, who then joined in the march on the fort. However, before shooting could start, warriors of the Mohawk nation arrived in support of Schuyler, one of their principal allies in the fur trade, and Milbome wisely abandoned the field and took his troops back to New York. The confrontation between New York troops supported by Albany residents and Albany militia backed by Mohawks suggests the complexity of the colony's factions. Since Albany controlled up-river commerce and Rensselaerswijk controlled the surrounding land, strong opposition to the Schuyler-van Rensselaer faction existed in outlying communities, and strong support for Leisler appeared at Schenectady, Claverack, and Catskill.

Almost everyone who had served in the provincial government under King James was accused of popery and treason. Catholics such as Dongan, Brockholl, Baxter, and the Jesuits were forced to flee the colony, as were such staunch Protestants as Stephanus van Cortlandt and Nicolaas Bayard. Bayard was captured in flight and confined in prison without trial for fourteen months. When William Nicolls protested at such high-handed tactics, he joined Bayard in the dungeon. Retribution came in 1691 after a new governor arrived from England. Bayard, Nicolls, and van Cortlandt received commissions from the king to serve on the governor's council, and Nicolls was appointed special prosecutor to try Leisler for treason. Leisler and Milbome were hanged; Richard Pretty and various other supporters of Leisler were sentenced to death, but the sentences were suspended, and eight years later they were pardoned by a governor sympathetic to the Leislerians.

Almost until the present day, most of what has been written about the Leisler period has been undisguised propaganda for latter-day causes that had nothing to do with Leisler and his times. Even the best writing, by and large, has been more impressionistic than factual. Careful study is needed of economic, religious, ethnic, and political factions in the colony. We cannot treat these groups as discrete: in the conflict between Leislerians and Anti-Leislerians, where would we find a Dutch Catholic — with the Dutch or with the Catholics? Or a rich Puritan — among the rich or among the Puritans? For that matter, why did so many wealthy Calvinist merchants oppose...
Jacob Leisler, who was also a wealthy Calvinist merchant? A reasonable supposition is that Jacob Leisler’s fatal mistake was to jail members of his wife’s family: William Nicolls, married to a van Rensselaer, and Nicolaes Bayard, nephew of Jacob Leisler, who was also a wealthy Calvinist merchant? William Nicolls, married to a van Rensselaer, and Nicolaes Bayard, nephew of Petrus Stuyvesant. Those acts cast him outside the folds of family protection. But a supposition is not proof: interpretation of the period requires careful analysis of the colony’s competing factions. Are there particular correlations that distinguish Leislcreans from Anti-Leislcreans? David William Voorhees in his doctoral dissertation found little distinction based on economics or class but did find among the principal figures definitive differences in the world of ideas. More of such original research is needed in order to shed the biases of the past. For most of the partisans, however, records of their individual ideas have yet to be discovered. We must also look to objective data: we have need of the cliometrician to analyze past. For most of the partisans, however, records of their individual ideas have yet to be discovered. We must also look to objective data: we have need of the cliometrician to analyze the interrelated variables including, but not limited to, ethnicity, religion, income, occupation, and geographic location so we can better study the composition of factions. Thomas Archdeacon’s much maligned study of New York City between

1664 and 1710 should, in fact, be seen as a pioneering step in the right direction. It has been criticized for reading too much into some data and insufficiently interpreting others, yet we still await a more substantive work. Donna Merwick’s journal article postulating economically and ethnically discrete neighborhoods in seventeenth-century Albany virtually cries for a detailed study of existing data to either prove or disprove her hypothesis. What is needed is more data, more subtly refined than these early efforts (one looks with anticipation to Stephan Bielinski’s Colonial Albany Social History Project, with its large database, in order to understand the dynamics that pitted Calvinist against Calvinist, Dutchman against Dutchman, gentleman against gentleman.


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Book Review


Since its first publication in 1965, The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600-1800 has become a classic. Its contribution to our understanding of how a small country could acquire a vast worldwide empire in less than fifty years remains unsurpassed. This empire was simultaneously the product and creator of what has been termed the “Golden Age” of the Dutch in the seventeenth century. In 1990 The Dutch Seaborne Empire was reprinted in paperback and is currently available in bookstores. Because this is such a significant work, its republication is being brought to the attention of our readers.

The author, Dr. Charles R. Boxer, was Professor of History at King’s College, University of London, England, at the time the book was written, and from 1967 to 1972 was Professor of History of European Overseas Expansion at Yale University. This book is but one of several works by Dr. Boxer dealing with European colonial expansion in the early modern era.

Dr. Boxer does not limit himself to the “seaborne empire” indicated in the title, but gives, topic by topic, a comprehensive survey of the social and economic conditions that led to the creation and maintenance of that empire in the “Golden” century and in the stagnant so-called “Periwig Period” that followed in the 1700s. Two of the ten chapters deal with religion and culture. Five others explain in detail the influence that the people and policies in Holland and the other Dutch provinces had upon colonial development and colonial attitudes. And three chapters concentrate on the internal development of the Dutch overseas possessions.

Some readers may be surprised by the worldwide extent of Holland’s possessions and trading posts. The Dutch were found in Japan, the East Indies (Java, Ceylon, and the Moluccas), Guinea and the Cape of Good Hope in Africa, Brazil and Surinam in South America, the West Indies, including the islands of Aruba, Curacao, and St. Maarten, and, naturally, New Netherland. Colonial development was mainly carried out by two private companies, the East India and the West India companies, rather than as national policy. That only a few pages are devoted to New Netherland emphasizes its minor role in the Dutch empire. The Dutch were more interested in commercial trade than in colonial settlement.

Though many historians blame the loss of New Netherland to the English on the lack of settlers, Boxer writes that “few people on either side of the Atlantic thought that the States-General had made a bad bargain when they renounced their claims to New Netherland in return for possession of the tropical colony of Surinam” [p. 256]. It was not until the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War of 1780-1784 that English competition had “catastrophic effects on Dutch seaborne trade and colonial power.”

Boxer exposes many shortcomings and evils of Dutch imperialism. Corruption, dissipation, and a callous indifference toward native populations are among the few he cites. At the same time he plays down the most obvious theme, that a remarkable little society, after winning its independence from Spain, was able to rapidly rise to be the greatest trading nation and naval power in Europe.

An appendix provides an outline chronology establishing the sequence of major events in Dutch history from 1568 to 1795; salary wages of seafarers; and weights, measures, and coinage of the Republic. There is also an extensive bibliography.

The Dutch Seaborne Empire is highly recommended as background material for understanding the Dutch colonial experience in North America.

The paperback edition is available for $12.95 from Penguin Books USA, Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014.

— David M. Riker
Society Activities

Annual Banquet

Celeste Holm, celebrated Academy Award winning star of movies, stage, and television, was recognized by The Holland Society of New York for her outstanding work in the performing arts, historic preservation, and public service. Ms. Holm received the Holland Society’s Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement at the Society’s Annual Banquet on November 10, 1994. More than one hundred Society members and their guests attended the glittering affair held at the Union League Club in New York City.

A cocktail reception preceded dinner, where members and guests had the chance to meet Ms. Holm and her husband, noted actor Wesley Addy. The traditional Parading of the Beaver, singing of the national anthems of the United States and the Netherlands, invocation, and toasts inaugurated the dinner ceremonies. Ms. Holm presented the toast to Her Royal Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, and the Honorable Mr. Tj. T. van den Hout, Consul General of the Netherlands in New York, hosted the one to the President of the United States.

Holland Society President Peter Van Dyke gave a delightful welcoming speech, in which he noted that several families were taking advantage of the banquet as a family affair. Single family groups, including Deyos, Bogarduses, and Van Derbeeks, filled several tables. At each setting beautifully packaged party favors of Dutch tulip bulbs, generously donated for the evening by the Neal Bulb Company of Montvale, New Jersey, had been placed.

Following a delicious four-course dinner, Society Treasurer and Banquet Chairman Mr. Ferdinand L. Wyckoff introduced Ms. Holm with a warm and entertaining speech, followed by President Van Dyke’s presentation of the Medalist with the Society’s Gold Medal. In her acceptance speech, Ms. Holm spoke of her childhood and gave the audience a first-hand account of the film and stage world within which she moved and of its varied and interesting people. Ms. Holm’s compassionate as well as entertaining speech drew a warm response from the gathering.

Festivities continued with dancing to the sounds of the Marty Stevens Orchestra. Banquet Chairman Ferdinand L. Wyckoff has again given the Holland Society members and their guests a night to remember.

Florida East Coast Branch Meeting

The Florida East Coast Branch met at Old Port Yacht Club in North Palm Beach, Florida, on Saturday, November 19, 1994. The invocation was given by Past President Ted Ditmars. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Past Branch President Theodore P. Schoonmaker, who died September 6, 1994, and member Palmer Van Arsdale, who died August 18, 1994.

Society Trustee John Voorhis spoke to the gathering and brought greetings from Peter Van Dyke, President of the Society. He then announced that the Society is seeking to increase membership, with achieving a goal of 900 members. He reminded the group of the outstanding genealogical research of the Society, its publication of de Halve Maen, and the current project to translate and publish the records of the Flatbush Reformed Church. New member John R. Ditmars and his wife were then introduced and welcomed into our Society.

After luncheon the gathering was entertained by guest speaker, Florida State Attorney David Bludworth, who presented, in appropriate attire, his impressions of one of The Holland Society’s more famous members, “Teddy” Roosevelt.

Officers elected to serve for the coming year are James J. Ringo as President and Richard G. Post as Vice President. Those in attendance were Branch President Robert W. Banta and Virginia Banta, Edward V. Ditmars and Barbara Ditmars, Richard G. Post and Helen Y. Post, John R. Voorhis III and Janet Voorhis and guest Sally Hetzel, Robert Van Winkle, William C. Longstreet, Jr. and Shirley R. Longstreet, James J. Ringo and guest Betty S. Bailey, James John Ringo, Frank C. Snedeker and Christine Snedeker, Arthur D. Van Winkle and Adeleide Van Winkle, Sedgwick Snedeker and Betty Snedeker, Richard W. Lent, Mr. and Mrs. John R. Ditmars
and their guests Earl Killian and Loretta Killian, and David Bludworth as Teddy Roosevelt.

Florida West Coast Branch Meeting

The Florida West Coast Branch met at Sarabay Country Club, Sarasota, Florida, at noon on Saturday, November 5, 1994. An informal cocktail hour was followed by the invocation by Albert ("Les") Wyckoff, and the meeting was presided over by Branch President Henry DeGrove. At the brief business meeting Henry DeGrove was re-elected President for the coming year. Following a delicious luncheon, a travel film was shown on Holland. Attending the meeting were Henry and Marion DeGrove, Dudley Van Kleek, Carl and Virginia Whitbeck, Les and Mary Wyckoff, Arthur and Adeleide Van Winkle, Richard and Jeri Van Etten with guests Kenneth and Mary Ann Garm. The next meeting of the branch will be held on Saturday, March 25, 1995.

Connecticut-Westchester Branch Meeting

On October 17, 1994, the Connecticut-Westchester Branch assembled at the Hudson Valley Historic Center in Tarrytown, New York, to be bused to the newly opened Rockefeller estate, "Kijkuit," for a tour of the mansion and grounds. Members who attended this interesting and worthwhile trip included Mr. and Mrs. Theodore L. Cuyler, Mr. Paul F. Palen, Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Lydecker, and Mr. and Mrs. Harrold deGroff. Additional guests were Marjorie Smith, Mr. and Mrs. William Longstreet, and two friends of the Cuylers. The group immensely enjoyed the mixture of art, sculpture, mansion, and landscaping of "kijkuit," finding the setting intimate and liveable. It is hoped that the branch will be able to repeat the tour this Spring.

Jersey Shore Branch Meeting

The Jersey Shore Branch gathered on October 13, 1994, at the Point Pleasant Branch of the Ocean County Library and joined with sixty-three participants in attending a symposium entitled "A Very Good Land: New Amsterdam and the Early Settlement of the Jersey Shore." Symposium speakers were Robert Jahn, author and historian, who gave a most interesting and informative narrated slide presentation, accompanied by seventeenth-century music, on "A Very Good Land;" Robert "Graywolf" Hamilton, president of the New Jersey Native American Association, who discussed colonization from the perspective of the indigenous peoples who had lived here for thousands of years; Florence Johnson Asman, educator and author, who discussed the research that went into her most recent book, Brouwer - Brower Ancestry, a study of the Brouwer family which first settled in New Amsterdam in 1642 and subsequently migrated to Monmouth and Ocean Counties, New Jersey, in the 1700s; and Wayne Hartman, educator and lecturer, who gave an inspired reading from "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," followed by a fascinating, entertaining, and educational discussion of the author, Washington Irving. A panel discussion followed on "Researching Family History," during which William Van Winkle, President of the Jersey Shore Branch, presented the history, objectives, and purposes of the Holland Society and invited inquiries from interested parties. Jersey Shore Branch members in attendance were Rev. William S. Ackerman and his wife, Frank A. Cole, Barry Douglas Jerolamon and his wife, Manning W. Voorhees and his wife, and William Van Winkle and his wife.

South River Branch Meeting

The South River Branch held its annual meeting at Winterthur Gardens and Museum near Wilmington, Delaware, on November 19, 1994. The gathering enjoyed a wonderful luncheon in the restaurant of the Visitors Pavilion with its sweeping views of the surrounding fields, woods, gardens, and ponds. A business meeting followed lunch, at which time Walton Van Winkle, III, was elected President for the coming year. Several ideas were also discussed for future branch events, including details of an upcoming symposium on the Dutch and Swedish presence in the Delaware Valley being held on April 1, 1995, at the American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia. The symposium is being jointly sponsored by the Holland Society South River Branch and the Swedish Colonial Society.

The business meeting adjourned at about 2:00 p.m. and headed to the museum, where a private tour was conducted of the Hardenbergh Rooms — two Dutch rooms (a parlor and a bedroom) from an early eighteenth-century Dutch house near Kingston, New York, which were brought to Winterthur complete. (For members who are interested, these rooms can be seen as part of the "Decorative Arts Tour" held regularly at Winterthur Museum.) Attending the meeting were William Alrich, Richard de Mott, David Riker and his wife Patricia, Walton Van Winkle III and his wife Tamara, David R. Voorhees, and Curtis Vreeland and his wife Gretchen.
James E. Quackenbush, a Past-President of The Holland Society of New York, has now written one hundred obituaries for de Halve Maen and found it the appropriate time to pause a moment and reflect. Jim wrote to the editor, “Because of my accounting background and my career as a Certified Public Accountant, I will first deal with the numbers. Alphabetically, there are no (G), (I), (U), (X), or (Y) obituaries. There are however, thirty-six (V), eleven (S), nine (B), six (T) and (W) obituaries and five (A’s). All the rest are either three or one, including one (Z).” He continued in his letter, “Enough of the numbers. I have probably gotten to know during this exercise, more thoroughly than any other member of our Society, the rich and fascinating lives of our members, and have in a small way, tried to insure that none of them are forgotten and that their spirit is properly and respectfully recorded.” Jim has succeeded in his efforts, and we all owe a great debt to him for his important contribution to de Halve Maen.

C. Spencer Terhune, Treasurer of The Old Bergen Branch of The Holland Society of New York and a member for almost twenty years, was recently the subject of a full-page article in The Record, the major newspaper of northern New Jersey. The subject: his volunteerism.

For the past four years “Spence” has manned the courtesy desk of Holy Name Hospital at Teaneck, New Jersey, five days each week from 7:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and has earned a reputation as a “very compassionate man” whose “hand is the very first up to volunteer for anything that has to be done.”

“Spence” has been the recipient of numerous Society scholarships. His study of the Dutch Reformed church and its role in the development of Flatbush, Long Island, is a seminal work in Dutch colonial studies, being the first in-depth study of a New Netherland farming community. “Between Heaven and Earth” is available at the Holland Society Library. Dr. Nooter’s dissertation advisor, noted Dutch historian Dr. A. Th. Van Deursen, seemed particularly pleased with the defense, which was conducted in both Dutch and English.

Dr. Nooter, who is well known to the Holland Society’s membership, has contributed articles to past issues of de Halve Maen and has been the recipient of numerous Society scholarships. His study of the Dutch Reformed church and its role in the development of Flatbush, Long Island, is a seminal work in Dutch colonial studies, being the first in-depth study of a New Netherland farming community. “Between Heaven and Earth” is available at the Holland Society Library. Dr. Nooter is currently editing the Flatbush Dutch Reformed church records for publication by the Holland Society.

During his stay in the Netherlands, Dr. Voorhees spent several pleasant days at the ancestral Voorhees farmland in the boerderij of Hees near Ruinen in the province of Drenthe.
George Underwood Adriance

It was recently brought to our attention by a new member, Robert A. Adriance, that his brother George Underwood Adriance, who had been a member of The Holland Society of New York since 1929, died more than five years ago on October 21, 1989, at the age of eighty-four.

Mr. Adriance claimed descent from Adrian Ryersz, who came to this country from Amsterdam in 1646. He was born in New York City on July 12, 1905, and was the son of Thomas Floy Adriance and Grace Florence Underwood. His ancestors had lived in Flatbush, Flushing, Fishkill, Hopewell, and New York City, all in New York, and in Jersey City, New Jersey. Mr. Adriance attended schools in New York City. He was a stockbroker with the New York City brokerage firm of Foster, McConnell. After retirement, he moved to Largo, Florida. He was living at Dunedin, Florida, at the time of his death.

John Avery Pruyn

John Avery Pruyn, a past Treasurer of The Holland Society of New York and, at the time of his death, a Trustee Emeritus of the Society, died on his eighty-fifth birthday on November 3, 1994, in New York City.

Claiming descent from Jansen Pruyn, who was living in Albany in 1665, Mr. Pruyn was born on November 3, 1909, in Chicago, Illinois. He was the son of William Henry Pruyn and Mary Maud Avery.

A Registered Architect since 1933, Mr. Pruyn graduated from the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago in 1927 and then went on to Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, earning a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1932. At one point in his career, he was a registered architect in New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, Missouri, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, and the Territory of Hawaii. In addition to his work within the United States, Mr. Pruyn designed construction in Lima, Peru, the Central and South Pacific, Burma, and Bermuda.

By the early 1940s Mr. Pruyn had become the chief engineer of the Byrne Organization General Contractors in Honolulu before moving on to Howard T. Fisher & Associates, architects and engineers in Chicago, where he was first a vice-president in 1947 before becoming president in 1952. In 1957 he became a vice-president of Paul Tishman General Contractor, Inc., in New York City. Later he became the senior partner of Pruyn-Bergren and Associates, architects and planning consultants, with offices in New York City and Hamilton, Bermuda, where he had a diversified architectural practice with a concentration from 1963 on in large-scale urban renewal and housing projects. By 1974 he maintained residences at 200 East 66th Street, New York City, and at "Roxdene," Pitt's Bay Road, in Hamilton, Bermuda. His professional associations included the American Institute of Architects, the New York Society of Architects, and the New York Building Congress.

A member of The Holland Society since 1957, Mr. Pruyn was the Society's Treasurer from 1973 until 1976 and from 1984 until 1986. He also served as a Trustee from 1967 until 1970. He became a Trustee Emeritus in 1989. Besides his membership in The Holland Society, Mr. Pruyn held memberships in the University Club of New York, the Metropolitan Opera Club of New York, the Apawamis Club in Rye (New York), the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, and the Mid-Ocean Golf Club (in Bermuda).

Other clubs to which he had belonged include Theta Delta Chi Fraternity, the University Club of Chicago, the Saddle and Cycle Club of Chicago, the Cornell Club of New York, and the Rotary Club of Chicago. Mr. Pruyn enjoyed golf and swimming, and his politics were Republican.

Mr. Pruyn married LaVerne Louer of Chicago on December 28, 1946. She survives him. In addition, survivors include his two step-daughters: Elise Hellyer Page of Providence, Rhode Island, and LaVerne Hellyer of Honolulu, Hawaii; a twin-brother, William H. Pruyn; a sister, Marion Pruyn Gossel; four grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. A memorial service was held on November 7, 1994, at Saint James Episcopal Church, 71st Street and Madison Avenue, in New York City, where he had been a member for many years.

Henry Newman Staats, III

Henry Newman Staats, III, a member of The Holland Society of New York since 1971, died on September 28, 1994, at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where he had lived in retirement since 1983. He was seventy-five years old.

Mr. Staats claimed descent from Abraham Staats, a surgeon of the Dutch West India Company, who came to this country from Amsterdam, Holland, in the year 1642. Born on January 7, 1919, at Chicago, Illinois, he was the son of Henry Newman Staats, Jr., and Helen Hathaway.

After attending local public schools, Mr. Staats first attended Wright Junior College from 1936 until 1938, before going on to Northwestern University from 1938 until 1949, while working full time, when he received a degree in chemistry and mathematics. He was a professional engineer in the state of Illinois for most of his adult life, acquiring more than eighty United States patents and some 160 foreign patents.

Mr. Staats began his career in 1944 as a research and development engineer with Magnaflux Corporation of Chicago, and rose to the position manager of their special products division by 1956. He moved on to senior engineer with Booz, Allen & Hamilton, out of Chicago, where he primarily consulted with the United States Air Force on scientific and engineering problems in air navigation, chemical power, and ground support equipment. Later he worked for Continental Materials Corporation of Chicago as the general manager of its captive scientific consulting firm and two of its subsidiaries (1957-1960); Coleman Instruments, Inc., of Maywood, Illinois, as development director (1960-1962); and the General Binding Corporation of Northbrook, Illinois, where he managed advanced development, research, product design, tool design, machine design, and quality control (1962-1978). From 1978
until he retired, Mr. Staats was self-employed in innovative product development, legal testimony, and in technical editing.

When Mr. Staats retired to Chapel Hill, he became the president of PROBUS, the Professional Business Club of Chapel Hill. In addition to his membership in our Society, Mr. Staats was a member of the New York Chapter of the Society of the Cincinnati which he joined in 1941, being eligible for membership through his great-great-great grandfather, Garret Staats, a lieutenant in the 3rd Continental Infantry, who served under General George Washington.

Mr. Staats was also active in the Boy Scouts of America and in Rotary Club International, serving as president and as chairman of numerous committees during his twenty-five-year membership in Deerfield, Illinois, and then in Chapel Hill. His avocations included photography, writing, woodworking, and travel. His religion was Presbyterian, which he served for many years on the board of trustees and counsel of the elders for the First Presbyterian Church in Illinois and at the University Presbyterian Church in Chapel Hill. His politics were “mainly Republican — occasionally Democrat — an example being when he voted for Stevenson for president.”

Mr. Staats married Phyllis Jeanette Butler on September 23, 1944, at Waukegan, Illinois. They had four children: Henry N. Staats was born November 1, 1945, in Chicago; Timothy Butler Staats was born December 10, 1947, in Chicago; Dana Hathaway Staats was born June 14, 1951, in Evanston, Illinois; and Kathryn Elizabeth Staats was born September 28, 1953, in Evanston. His wife and four children survive him, as well as eight grandchildren. Henry is now living in Atlanta, Georgia; Dr. Timothy resides in Northridge, California; Dana lives in Chapel Hill; and Kathryn Staats Hornbeak resides in Tustin, California.

A memorial service was held at Chapel Hill at the University Presbyterian Church and arrangements were by the Cremation Society of the Carolinas.

W. Palmer Van Arsdale

W. Palmer Van Arsdale, who first became a member of The Holland Society of New York in 1962 and then resumed membership in 1992, died on August 18, 1994, at his summer residence in Flat Rock, North Carolina. He also maintained a residence in Vero Beach, Florida, where he participated in the activities of the Society’s Florida East Coast Branch. Mr. Van Arsdale was eighty-one years old.

Claiming descent from Symon Jansen Van Arsdale, who came to this country from Bailiwick of Arsdalen, Holland, in 1653, Mr. Van Arsdale was born in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, on September 21, 1912, and was the son of J. Howard Van Arsdale and Lottie Pearl. His ancestors were the founders of Harrodsburg, located in Mercer County Kentucky.

Mr. Van Arsdale was raised on “Cold Spring Farm,” in Danville, Kentucky, where he attended public schools before going on to the pre-law program at Centre College, Kentucky, from which he graduated in 1936. He was a member of Phi Beta Gamma there. He then attended the University of Louisville Law School, receiving his LL.B., before going on to the University of Michigan and earning his L.L.M.

Mr. Van Arsdale first practiced as an attorney in Louisville from 1935 until 1942, while serving as assistant to two mayors of Louisville during that period. In 1942 he enlisted in the United States Army Air Force as a private. Serving first in North Africa and Europe, he was later assigned to General MacArthur’s staff in New Guinea and later in Manila. In 1945 he retired from the service with the rank of colonel after receiving the Distinguished Service Medal (the Philippines, highest non-combat award). Immediately after he was discharged, he established the Manila-Hong Kong law firm of Van Arsdale, McClure and Salas, and during this time he was admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the Philippines and the United States Supreme Court.

In 1950 Mr. Van Arsdale returned to the United States and settled in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where he practiced as an attorney and became, in addition, an entrepreneur with interests in banking and insurance, truck and barge transportation, cement manufacturing, and land development and real estate. He was the founder and chairman of several corporations and banks in Florida.

Mr. Van Arsdale had many political and public interests: he was a founding member of the “Florida Council 100,” chairman of the Florida Waterways and Canal Authority, chairman of the Florida Industrial Commission, judge of the Workmens Compensation Appeals Court, a special assistant to the White House under President Lyndon Johnson as liaison with state governors, vice-president of the Mississippi Valley Association, and vice-president of the National Rivers & Harbors Conference.

Some of the clubs in which Mr. Van Arsdale held membership, in addition to various bar and business and banking associations, included the Lauderdale Yacht Club, the University Club, the Thoroughbred Club, the Neeneland Racing Club, the Hendersonville (North Carolina) Country Club, the Propellor Club, the Pedennis Club (in Louisville, Kentucky), and the Punta Vedra Country Club. A licensed pilot, he enjoyed flying, fishing, horseback riding, and golf, and was interested in historic home preservation. His religion was Presbyterian, and his politics were Democratic. He was always proud of the fact that he was a direct descendent of Symon Janse Van Arsdalen, who is buried in the Old Trinity Church Yard in lower Manhattan, and that another direct ancestor, Sergeant John Van Arsdale, in the presence of General George Washington, tore down the last English flag from a pole that the English had greased before fleeing to sea and replaced it with the United States national flag.

Mr. Van Arsdale was married three times: to Katherine Gernet in 1942; to Sarah Hall Marshall in 1960; and to Betty I. McIntosh in 1970. There were no children. His wife Betty survives him. He was buried in the Spring Hill Cemetery, in Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

Robert Leo Willise

Robert Leo Willise, a member of The Holland Society of New York since 1976, died August 5, 1994, at WCA Hospital in Chautauqua County, New York. He was eighty-three years old and lived at Cheney’s Point, New York. He had been an active member of the Niagara Frontier Branch and from 1976 until his death. On May 1, 1929, he was married to Ethel Leona Godfrey, and they had one son, Robert Leo Willise, Jr., born on March 3, 1931. Ethel had been born in El Paso, Texas, on August 19, 1892, and had died on September 26, 1991.

Mr. Willise claimed descent from Hendrick Martensen Wilsee (Van Copenhagen) who came to this country from Copenhagen, Denmark, in the year 1658. He was born on April 26, 1911, at Jamestown, New York, and was the son of Leo James Willise and Mary Maude Bennett.
After graduating from Chautauqua High School in 1930, Mr. Willsie went on to the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in 1935. Employed by the United States Forest Service and the United States Soil Conservation Service for most of his professional career, he worked in Massachusetts, Michigan, and Arkansas, before being employed in New York State. He retired in 1972, after thirty-one years of service, as the Chautauqua County district conservationist. During his professional career, he also attended the New York University Summer School Extension Program at Chautauqua (1940); St. Bonaventure University at St. Bonaventure, New York (1941); and the University of Miami, at Coral Cables, Florida (1941 and 1942). After retiring, he did consulting for a forestry firm and for a golf course near his home.

During the Second World War, Mr. Willsie served in the United States Army Corps of Engineers as a Corporal in England, North Africa, Sicily, Italy, France, and Germany, participating in eight campaigns, the landing in Europe on D-Day, and the invasion of Africa at Oran, Algeria.

Mr. Willsie was a member of the Society of American Foresters for more than fifty years and the Soil Conservation Society of America. He was a member and past master of Peacock Lodge No. 696, F. & A.M., in which he served as District Deputy Grand Master of the order. He was a member of the Valley of Jamestown Scottish Rite of Free Masonry; a past commander of Dunkirk Commandery No. 40, Knight Templar; and was past Thrice Illustrious Master of Council No. 25 of Royal Select Masters of the Cryptic Rite. In addition, he belonged to the Fenton Historical Society of Jamestown, New York; the Empire State Society; the Sons of the American Revolution; the Dutch Settlers Society of Albany; the International Seniors Amateur Golf Society; the Society of Scottish Golfers; the National Rifle Association; and the former South Shore Archery Club. He also served on the planning board of the town of North Harmony, New York, for twenty years and as the town historian for a number of years.

Mr. Willsie enjoyed golfing, hiking, camping, archery, hunting, and reading. His hobbies included painting, photography, genealogy, numismatics, wood carving, history, and travel (Caribbean, Canada, Mexico, Scotland, England, France, Austria, Belgium, and, of course, Holland). His politics were “Democrat from 1932 to 1950” and “Republican from 1950” on. His religion was Methodist, and he was a member of the Hurlbut United Methodist Church of Chautauqua, serving as a trustee.

Mr. Willsie married Bertha Jeanette Spooner at Jamestown, New York, on June 30, 1951. The had one daughter, Anita Ruth Willsie, who was born on May 19, 1955. Surviving are his wife; his daughter Anita Willsie Kerr, of Columbus, Ohio; two granddaughters; and a sister, Ruth Willsie Pettigrew, of Ventura, California.

Funeral services were held on August 8, 1994, in the Freay Funeral Home in Mayville, New York, with the Reverend Ted Anderson of Hurlbut Memorial Community Church officiating. Burial was in Magnolia Cemetery.
Dutch and Swedish Presence in the Delaware Valley in the Seventeenth Century

Sponsored by

The American Swedish Historical Museum

The Holland Society of New York, South River Chapter

Swedish Colonial Society

Saturday, April 1, 1995
1:30 pm - 5:00 pm

American Swedish Historical Museum
1900 Pattison Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Free Parking

Speakers:

John Cameron, Governor, Swedish Colonial Society.

Dr. Charles T. Gehring, Director, New Netherland Project, New York State Library:
"Dutch-Swedish Relations along the South River."

Dr. Peter Stebbins Craig, Author of The 1693 Census of the Swedes on the Delaware (1993): "The Swedish Nation on the Delaware, otherwise known as the Upland Court, 1656-1682."

Dr. Robert S. Grumet, Archaeologist, Mid-Atlantic Region, National Park Service:
"New Information from an Old Source: Stuyvesant's 1653 Journey to the Delaware."

Dr. David William Voorhees, Editor, Papers of Jacob Leisler, New York University:
"Bound to Cap May with orders: 'The Leisler Rebellion in the Delaware Valley."

To register: please send reservation and check for $25.00 payable to: American Swedish Historical Museum, 1900 Pattison Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19145, before March 20. For further information call 215-389-1776.